# THE CEYLON JOURNAL OF HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL STUDIES

NEW SERIES Vol. III

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### BUDGETARY REFORM IN CEYLON: THE INTRODUCTION OF PROGRAMME BUDGETING

#### N. BALAKRISHNAN

In the government Budget for the year 1973 the estimates of expenditure conforming to Programme Budget classification¹ covered altogether nineteen ministries and seventy seven departments under them. There are now only four ministries and their departments (and the Heads of expenditure not falling within any ministry), which remain to be converted to the new budgetary classification.2 The purpose and aims of this major re-organisation in Ceylon's budgetary procedure and practice are summed up as follows: "as part of the effort to improve the system of public fiscal administration reforms in budgetary classification aimed at more meaningful allocation of financial resources through a Programme Budgeting framework have been introduced...The Programme Budgeting format....seeks to present expenditure in terms which are more relevant to present day conditions. In its full development it will be concerned with the evaluation of administrative performance, the promotion of efficiency and economy in the use of resources through the application of sound management techniques, and the facilitation of the achievement of development goals".3 Government budgeting, like any other aspect of public administration, has to be adapted to meet the changing needs of fiscal administration. The role of the government budget has assumed greater significance in recent years in many developing countries largely due to the increasingly greater role assigned to public sector and development plans in economic and social development; and the traditional budgeting procedures and practices have been found to be ineffective and inadequate in many ways to cope with the additional tasks and responsibilities. This calls for basic reforms in concepts

Programme Budget classification was first introduced in last year's (1971-72) budget
for only three Ministries—Education, Finance and Health—comprising seventeen
departments. See, Programme Budgets for the Ministries of Education, Finance and
Health (Extract from the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of the Government
of Ceylon, October 1971 to December 1972) 1972.

<sup>2.</sup> It is expected that the four remaining Ministries—Defence and External Affairs; Irrigation, Power & Highways; Foreign & Internal Trade; Public Administration, Local Government and Home Affairs—will be converted to Programme Budget classification by next year.

Budget Speech, 1971-72, Minister of Finance, (1971), p. 37

and procedures relating to government budgeting and fiscal administration. In this respect Programme Budget structure has a great deal to offer.

#### Traditional Budgeting Vs Programme Budgeting: Some General Features

Traditional budgeting process in government generally embodies the following main characteristics: (i) budgets are organised in terms of executive departments and their sub-divisions, (ii) budgets usually cover a period of one year, and (iii) expenditure-budgets are input-oriented or controloriented. The primary emphasis in the traditional budget-making process is on inputs or objects of expenditure—like personnel, materials, and other supplies—rather than on outputs or results achieved and/or the cost involved in relation to the end product or service arising from government outlays. While this emphasis on inputs or objects of expenditure serves well the objective of expenditure control, it provides little information on "what a government is actually doing and what it gets for the money spent".4 The main focus of the traditional budgetary process is on matters such as expenditure authorisation. observance of appropriation limits by departments and their sub-divisions and financial accountability (to the legislature). Such considerations are, no doubt. important and necessary in government budgeting. However, it is increasingly recognised that as the government budget grows in size and complexity this type of expenditure-budgeting with input-orientation and/or control-orientation prepared and presented annually cannot properly be geared to meet the requirements of effective planning and management in budget making and budget implementation. Given the increasingly significant role of the government budget and its complexities in the present day context, the basis for the allocation of public funds, the linkage between the functionally oriented spending plans and the goals or objectives and the evaluation of performance and effectiveness in public spending become matters of most vital importance. Programme Budgeting, in contrast to the traditional budgeting structure, provides a more systematic and rational approach for decision making in matters relating to the allocation of funds and for the evaluation of performance and results associated with the numerous and varied spending activities of the government.

In Programme Budgeting the government (expenditure) budget is organised primarily on the basis of 'programmes' and their sub-divisions rather than in terms of administrative units and objects of expenditure as the traditional budgets are usually organised. Programme Budget approach, which places considerable emphasis on the planning and management aspects in budgeting, is designed to organise the budget in terms of functions, programmes

<sup>4.</sup> A Manual for Programme and Performance Budgeting, (United Nations, New York 1965), p. 1.

and projects or activities related to specified goals or objectives. Programme Budget structure generally embodies three principal inter-related characteristics, which have been summarised as follows:5 (i) it involves the drawing up of meaningful programmes and operational sub-divisions designed to carry out the function or functions associated with a government agency or department, showing clearly the work objectives or goals wherever possible; (ii) the system of government accounting and financial procedures are suitably adapted so as to conform with the type of budget classification in terms of programmes and their sub-divisions; and (iii) under each programme and its operational subdivisions work measurement and work-performance data and other yardsticks are established for evaluation of performance and efficiency in relation the work operations directed towards specified goals. Formulated in terms of functionally-oriented programmes with specific purposes and emphasising the relationships between outputs or accomplishments and the inputs necessary to achieve them, Programme Budgeting structure also provides a suitable basis to measure or evaluate performance in physical (and financial) terms. Within this basic programme structure it is possible to incorporate more advanced and sophisticated techniques of budget analysis and planning conforming to what has come to be known as "Planning-Programming-Budgeting system" (PPBS), which has been adopted recently in some advanced countries, particularly the United States and Canada. Planning-Programming-Budgeting which is an extended and more refined version of Programme Budgeting structure, seeks to integrate long-term planning of governmental activities. programming of specific activities and the budgeting process. The main characteristics of this system centre around the following principles (i) appraisals and comparisons of various government work-programmes in relation national goals or objectives, (ii) assessment of how given objectives can be achieved with minimum expenditure of resources and (iii) the projection of government plans over a longer time horizon (and the revision of objectives and programmes in the light of experience and changing situations).7 A key element in the

<sup>5.</sup> A Manual, op. cit., p. 2. In our discussion, what is termed 'performance budgeting—the principal emphasis of which is on the use of management tools, such as, work measurement, unit cost, and other standards of performance analysis—is treated as part of Programme Budgeting.

<sup>6.</sup> Programme Budgeting has found its early and extensive application in the United States. Early efforts to introduce new budgetary techniques began with the first Hoover Commission (1949) which recommended that the budgetary structure of the Federal Government should be re-organised by the adoption of a budget based on "functions, activities and projects".—designated as 'Performance budgets'. The second Hoover Commission (1955) re-emphasised its earlier recommendation and used the phrase 'programme budget', instead of the earlier one. The more advanced Planning-Programming-Budgeting system came to be first introduced in the Defence Department in 1961 and later in 1965, it was extended to cover all federal agencies. See, Programme Budgeting: Programme Analysis and the Federal Budget, David Novick (Ed.) Massaschussets, 1965, and The Planning-Programming-Budgeting System: Progress and Potentials, Report of the Sub-Committee on Economy in Government, US (1967).

Arthur Smithies, Conceptual Framework for the Programme Budget, in Programme Budgeting, (Ed.) David Novick, op. cit., p. 26.

Planning-Programming-Budgeting system is the development of long-range planning and programme forecasts and the application of analytical or quantitative techniques (cost-benefit analysis', 'cost-utility analysis', 'cost-effectiveness analysis' and 'systems analysis' are the various names given to such quantitative techniques of analysis) to systematically examine alternative courses of action that might be proposed to achieve specified goals or objectives and to arrive at an appropriate 'mix' of programmes and projects given the available resources. It is obvious that the institution of a full scale Planning-Programming-Budgeting system would require a high degree of expertise at the executive level, a highly efficient administrative machinery and extensive application of refined quantitative techniques. To some extent these techniques are already in use in developing countries in the formulation of long-term or medium term plans, though not necessarily fully integrated with government budgeting.

#### Government Budgeting in Ceylon: Traditional Budgeting Processs

Ceylon's traditional budgeting process is basically input-oriented and control-oriented. The annual estimates of expenditure are prepared, presented and authorised (by the legislature) in terms of standardised 'Votes' and 'Subheads'. The estimates of expenditure to be incurred during the financial year are prepared, subject to the overall priority allocation and control, in respect of each department under a particular ministry; and each department for the purposes of official appropriation represents a 'Head' of expenditure. Financial provision is authorised by the legislature in terms of Votes under each Head of expenditure. These Votes have been standardised into seven categories and they are listed below:

Vote 1— Personal emoluments and other allowances of staff.

Vote 2— Administrative charges—recurrent expenditure

Vote 3— Administrative charges—capital expenditure

Vote 4— Services provided by the department—recurrent expenditure

Vote 5— Services provided by the department—capital expenditure

Vote 6— Economic development—recurrent expenditure

Vote 7— Economic development—capital expenditure

The above is a very broad economic—functional<sup>8</sup> classification. Votes 1, 2 and 3 cover administrative services; Votes 4 and 5 make provision for specialised services—including social services—provided by various government

<sup>8.</sup> Economic-functional classification combines the two types of expenditure classifications, namely, classification in terms of current outlays, transfer outlays and capital outlays, and classification in terms of functions performed or services undertaken such as, administration, defence, education, health and economic development. In the budget estimates the functional classification is in terms of very broad categories—Administration, Social services and Economic development; the division into capital and recurrent expenditure is incomplete and not very clear-cut. A more valuable and comprehensive economic—functional classification of government expenditure is regularly undertaken (outside the budget) by the Central Bank of Ceylon and published in its Annual Reports)

departments and Votes 6 and 7 provide for economic services and development expenditure incurred by the relevant departments engaged in such activities. The above classification also provides for capital expenditure (Votes 3, 5 and 7) and recurrent expenditure (Votes 1, 2, 4 and 6) separately. Each Vote is further divided into, and accounted for in terms of, numerous sub-heads, consisting of detailed cost-components. The number of sub-heads would vary depending on the activities of different departments. There are, however, many subheads common to all departments which cover the following categories: cadre and salaries; allowances; travelling and transport; stationery; office furniture and requisites; fuel, water, and electric current; rents and rates; maintenance of vehicles and other capital assets, etc. These and other sub-heads (and detailed 'items' under each) represent the inputs or objects of expenditure—personnel, materials and other supplies—for which financial provision is made under different Votes for each department to enable it to provide the services or undertake the various activities. The presentation of expenditure estimates and authorisation of financial provision on the basis of object-classification of expenditure constitute the outstanding feature of the traditional budget making process that existed for so long, and still exists, in Ceylon. Although the traditional budgeting process has served fairly well and met the relatively limited requirements of fiscal administration in the past, many of its disadvantages, especially in the context of a greater public sector involvement in the courtry's economic development, have been stressed more frequently in recent years. A major disadvantage of this type budget classification and presentation is that it gives no clear idea as to the objectives or purposes for which the authorised funds are to be spent or about the results to be achieved. Nor does this presentation reveal the cost of such outlays in relation to what is being accomplished. Broadly, the estimates show that a particular department is engaged in providing certain services, it employs staff at different levels and purchases materials and other supplies. The input-oriented budget does not provide a sound basis for budget planning and budget management because under this system no proper relationship could be established between the inputs of expenditure and the end-product or accomplishments arising out of many government spending activities. Whatever information available on various departments as to what they are doing and seeking to achieve in terms of outlays and results is largely outside the budget and is mostly post-budget information.

#### The Change-over to Programme Budgeting in Ceylon

The change-over from conventional budgeting procedures to Programme Budgeting would basically involve three important tasks. The initial task would be the one associated with the re-grouping of functions and operations of the departments or agencies into meaningful and identifiable programmes to evolve a purpose-oriented or objective-oriented programme structure for the whole budget. In the case of most operations (of a department) it should be possible

to group them under identifiable work-programmes. Programme formulation would also involve the drawing up of the operational components or subdivisions, known as 'projects' or 'activities'.9 The other important and more or less simultaneous operation is that of integrating the system of accounting and financial procedures with the new budgetary classification in terms of programmes and their sub-divisions. Once the programme classification (together with their sub-divisions) and the accounting and financial procedures are integrated and harmonised, the next important job would be to evolve appropriate physical measurement data to evaluate performance or efficiency in various operations of the agencies or departments. This is perhaps the most difficult and complicated task in Programme Budgeting. The physical measures of performance can be of various types depending on the nature of work or service undertaken by different departments. The evaluation of performance might involve the measurement of physical output or end product, the volume of work-load and how it is accomplished, unit cost in relation to inputs and outputs, etc. The UN Mannual identifies the following measures or indicators of performance at different levels:10 (i) productivity ratios that relate total resource use to the end product or service at the programme level; (ii) unit cost information that relates work completed to the cost of inputs used in carrying it out; (iii) workmeasurement ratios that establish relationships between work completed and employment utilisation for the completion of the work, and (iv) work-load information that identifies the volume of work accomplished or to be accomplished. For each of these above categories appropriate units of measurement should be developed wherever possible to evaluate efficiency and perfermance at programme and project-levels. These measures are useful to evaluate performance under programmes and their sub-divisions within the department and for comparisons between similar types of operations in several departments. In addition to the physical measures referred to above techniques of cost-benefit analysis can also be used to evaluate the effectiveness of resource use in maximising benefits.

In the formulation of Programme Budgets for the relevant ministries and departments in Ceylon, the traditional budgetary classification has been re-designed on the basis of a three-tier structure consisting of 'programmes' 'projects' or 'activities' and 'objects'. Each programme is made to cover a group of functions or activities of a department which are undertaken for the purpose of accomplishing a major purpose or objective. Each department could have, and indeed it has, several programmes depending on the nature and scope of functions involved. Each programme has been sub-divided into its com-

<sup>9.</sup> Projects or activities as sub-divisions of a programme are sometimes treated differently; the former are treated as part of investment programme for the purpose of producing capital goods and the latter are taken to mean a sub-division of programme devoted to the production of goods or services of current use. This distinction, however, is ignored here.

<sup>10.</sup> A Manual, op. cit., p. 94.

ponents, known as projects at the operational level, which will contribute to the accomplishment of the purpose or purposes associated with a programme. Each project is further sub-divided into relevant objects or the cost components. which identify the various inputs required for the work operations at the project level. The cost-components consist of various items and these have classified into twenty standardised categories. 11 The object-classification is still retained, but it is now a secondary classification unlike in the traditional presentation and the objects or inputs are now tailored to each programme and its sub-divisions. The Programme Budget structure has been organised so as to embody the following pattern and principal characteristics:12 (i) statement of main objectives, functions and general work programme of the department. (ii) department summary of expenditure by programme, listing the various programmes of the department, giving as well recurrent and capital expenditure separately and (iii) each programme is divided into (a) programme expenditure by project, showing the appropriate breakdown of the programme into its operational sub-divisions and the sources of finance, (b) employment summary showing the cadre assigned by the department for carrying out the total work effort of the programme and (e) project expenditure by object, showing for each project the expenditure in terms of objects or cost-components. Apart from the nariative account about functions, objectives and general work programmes of departments, in many cases the specific activities and operations falling under each project have also been enumerated. In the programme budget classification the terms such as 'Votes', 'Sub-heads' and 'Item' used in the traditional budget presentation are still retained for the purposes of appropriation requests (as a temporary measure) and are made to correspond to programmes, projects and objects respectively in the new classification.

To illustrate the Programme Budget structure that has been introduced the Dept. of Health (chosen quite arbitrarily) is taken up for detailed study. <sup>13</sup> Of the total estimated expenditure for the Ministry of Health for the year 1973 (Rs. 282,526, 262) the biggest share (Rs. 269,969,605) is allocated to the Dept. of Health. For budgeting purposes the functions and activities of the Dept. of Health are grouped under four programmes with their corresponding project sub-divisions. These programmes, which will cover the entire work to be under-

<sup>11.</sup> The standardised categories consist of the following: Salaries and wages; allowances and other compensation; travelling expenses; transportation of things; communication services; utility services; rents; other services; supplies and materials; repairs and maintenance of equipment; repairs and maintenance of structures, facilities and other capital assets; interest and dividends; grants subsidies and contributions; awards and indemnities; pensions, retirement benefits and gratuities; equipment outlay; loan re-payments and sinking fund contributions; land, land improvements; investment outlay; and loans outlay.

<sup>12.</sup> Explanatory Note on the Form of Estimates, 1973, Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure of the Government for the financial year 1st January 1973 to 31st December 1973, (Draft Estimates), Vol. 1, 1972, p. (i) (Financial year now corresponds to the calendar year).

All the relevant details on programme/project classifications and estimates are drawn from the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure, op. cit., Vol. II, pp. S7-S11.

taken by the Dept. of Health have been drawn up indicating the broad purposes or goals to be achieved. The programme classification with the relevant project sub-divisions (showing as well recurrent and capital expenditures separately) are listed below:

#### (1) Vote (Programme) 8: Medical Services

#### (recurrent expenditure)

Sub-head (project)

1: Hospital services (general)

Sub-head (project)

2: Hospital services (tuberculosis)

Sub-head (project)

3: Assistance to private organisations and local authorities

Sub-head (project) 4: Maintenance of buildings and facilities (capital expenditure)

Sub-head (project) 101: Construction of permanent improvements

Sub-head (project) 102: Purchase of equipment and vehicles

Sub-head (project) 103: Improvement of co-operative hospitals

#### (2) Vote (Programme) 9: Public Health Services

#### (recurrent expenditure)

Sub-head (project) 1: General preventive services and environmental

Sub-head (project)

sanitation
2: Family health

Sub-head (project)

3: Health education

Sub-head (project)

4: School health including school dental health

Sub-head (project)

5: Quarantine

Sub-head (project)

6: Eradication of malaria

Sub-head (project)

7: Eradication of filariasis

Sub-head (project)

8: Leprosy control

Sub-head (project)

9: Venereal diseases control

(capital expenditure)

Sub-head (project) 101: Purchase of equipment and vehicles

Sub-head (project) 102: Environmental sanitation and facilities

#### (3) Vote (Programme) 10: Laboratory Research and Specialised Services

#### (recurrent expenditure)

Sub-head (project) 1: Laboratory services

Sub-head (project) 2: Other diagnostic and ancillary services

Sub-head (project) 3: Maintenance of equipment

Sub-head (project) 4: Medical research studies, routine investigations and production of vaccines

(capital expenditure)

Sub-head (project) 101: Purchase of equipment and vehicles

#### (4) Vote (Programme) 11: General Administration and Staff Services

(recurrent expenditure)

Sub-head (project) 1: General administration

Sub-head (project) 2: Training and scholarships

Sub-head (project) 3: Transport services

(capital expenditure)

Sub-head (project) 101: Construction of permanent improvements

Sub-head (project) 102: Purchase of equipment and vehicles

The total estimated expenditure (Rs. 269,969,605) for the Dept. of Health has been allocated between the different programmes in the following manner:

Table 1
Dept. of Health (Head 155)

Dept. Summary of Expenditure by Programme (Est. 1973, Rs.)

Vote (Prog- ramme) No.	Vote (Programme)	Recurrent expenditure	Capital expenditure	Total
8	Medical Services:	170,652,372	8,087,898	178,740,270
9	Public Health Services:	52,681,185	1,260,010	53,941,195
10	Laboratory Research and Specialised Services:	15,598,920	1,645,000	17,243,920
11	General Administration and Staff Services:	19,859,210	185,010	20,044,220

For one of the programmes listed above namely Medical Services—which expenditure-wise is the biggest item—the proposed outlays in terms of project sub-divisions with the relevant estimates are shown in the following table:

Table 2
Programme Expenditure by Project
Vote (Programme) 8: Medical Services

Sub-head (project) No.	Sub-head (project)	(Est. 1973 Rs.)
	(recurrent Expenditure)	
1	Hospital Services (general)	160,159,652
2	Hospital services (tuberculosis)	8,891,653
3	Assistance to private organisations and	
	local authorities	1,268,557
4	Maintenance of buildings and facilities	332,510
	Total recurrent expenditure	170,652,372
	(Capital expenditure)	
101	Construction of permanent improvements	2,453,898
102	Purchase of equipment and vehicles	5,559,000
103	Improvement of co-operative hospitals	75,000
	Total capital expenditure	8,087,898
	Total expenditure	178,740,270

Finally, the various cost-components or objects of expenditure (limited to recurrent expenditure) of one of the projects, namely Hospital services (general)—under the programme Medical Services—are listed in the table below:

Table 3
Project Expenditure by Object
Sub-head (project): Hospital services (general)
(recurrent expenditure)

Item (object code)		. /	(Est. 1973, Rs.)
01:	Salaries and wages	:	96,390,532
02:	Allowances and other compensation	:	14,035,200
	Total personal emoluments	:	110,425,732
<b>03</b> :	Travelling expenses	:	2,620,000
04:	Transportation of things	•	337,000
05:	Communication services	:	230,000
06:	Utility services	:	3,768,000
07 :	Rents	:	392,840
08:	Other services	:	1,168,000
09:	Supplies and materials	:	37,662,580
10:	- Repairs and maintenance of equipment	:	160,000
11:	Repairs and maintenance of structures,		,
	facilities and other capital assets	;	20,000
16:	Equipment outlay	:	3,375,000
	Total recurrent expenditure	:	160,159,652

In the above programme budget classification for the Dept. of Health (giving only selected items) the proposed outlays are shown in terms of fairly specified work-programmes directed towards some common purpose or purposes. Although it would appear that the Dept. of Health will be engaged in more or less the same types of functions and activities as allowed for in the traditional budgetary framework there is, however, a fundamental difference in the basic approach to budget making in the programme budget structure. Basically it is designed to enable the particular department to plan out more systematically the work it undertakes or the service it provides and to execute them more efficiently. The grouping of the work and functions of the Dept. of Health under different programmes intended to accomplish major objectives, the division of the programmes into various projects which are the operational components of such programmes and linking the required objects of expenditure or inputs to the different projects should provide a sound basis for a better budget formulation and management. By relating the purposes and objectives with the different work programmes (and their sub-divisions) for which the allocations of funds are accordingly made and by providing on the same basis the relevant information on the costs of respective programmes, the programme budget structure can contribute effectively to the legislature's role in relation to the government budget. It also enables the legislature to exercise more effective control over government activities; and the question of expenditure control and review by the legislature acquires greater relevance and meaning in the programme budget framework. The executive branch. which is intimately associated with the formulation and execution of the budget, finds in the programme budget structure an appropriate mechanism for sound budgetary planning, for exercising effective control and supervision over the operations and activities of the government departments and for evaluating the efficiency of the performance of programmes by comparing costs and achievements wherever applicable.

The change-over from the conventional budgeting to Programme Budgeting, which may have to be spread over a number of years, will inevitably give rise to many problems during the early stages. What has been accomplished so far in Ceylon is confined largely to the first phase involving the restructuring of the expenditure budget to conform to the new budgetary classification. As more experience is gained in the actual operation of the new budgetary arrangements many refinements and improvements can and will have to be introduced. As it is, the programme budget structure reflects much of the traditional department-centred classifications; this is to some extent inevitable in the initial phase. In many cases the programme objectives or goals are stated in rather broad terms; they have to be more specific as far as possible. Programme classification should reflect the more clearly defined functional tasks and responsibilities in the conduct of government business. Many departments have programmes related to the same broad governmental function and in such cases there should be effective co-ordination in programme

formulation without, of course, endangering organisational responsibilities. It is also important that programme classification in relation to various agencies or departments should reflect more clearly the broad national goals in relation to various fields of governmental activities. As Programme Budgeting becomes more fully operational it would be useful and necessary to undertake on a systematic basis pre-budget evaluation of alternative ways of accomplishing departmental programmes and goals. Government budgeting in Ceylon is still too much of an annual affair. With the introduction of the new budgetary structure emphasis should be given to the planning of government activities over a longer time period into which the operational (annual) Programme Budgets can be integrated. This will no doubt take the budget much closer to the national development plans or programmes, their implementation and the achievement of their goals.

A great deal remains to be done in relation to performance analysis and evaluation in the programme budget structure that has been introduced. In this respect a significant start has already been made in the budget structure by providing for physical measurement of work and work performance at the project level through "project work measurement" on a highly selective basis for the departments in the ministries of Finance, Education and Health, where programme budget classification has been introduced a year earlier. The project work measurement schedule has been drawn up to furnish information and quantitative data, 4 wherever possible, on the following items at the project level: (i) units of work measurement giving suitable units of physical measurement of the work involved at the level of project operations; the work units chosen will differ as between projects and within the same project depending on the nature of work operations; (ii) units of unfinished work at the beginning of the year and total work units on hand during the year; (iii) total work units accomplished (actual/estimated), giving information on total work units accomplished in the past year and total work units estimated to be realised during the current period; (iv) total man-years of employment engaged in direct project operations; (v) rate of production per man year which expresses the relationship between total work units accomplished (iii) and total man years of employment in direct project operations (iv), and (v) cost per unit of work which relates the total project expenditure to total work units accomplished. Such data given in terms of project work measurement are useful both at the budget preparation level and subsequently at the operational level to assess efficiency in work operations of particular projects. In many work operations at the project level the staff time utilised for purely administrative work can be considerable. The projects which involve purely administrative work under departmental programmes are named as "general administration". On this basis information on administrative cost is provided by way of "general

<sup>14.</sup> Programme Budget; Form of Submission, Annex-8A & 81, General Treasury, Ministry of Finance (unpublished) 1972, p. 64, 72 & 73.

administrative employment ratio" and "administrative expense per man year". General administrative employment ratio expresses the relationship between total man years of employment for the department (or ministry) and the total man years of employment engaged in general administrative work in the department concerned. Administrative expense per man-year shows the relationship between total expenditure of the project, general administration, and the total man years of employment for the department as a whole (or ministry). In the two schedules referred to above the quantitative information is given only in a limited number of cases; and it is expected that their coverage will be extended to most other projects. Gradually additional measures or indicators of performance will have to be introduced to evaluate efficiency at the programme or departmental level in the new budget system.

Although Programme Budgeting embraces both current and capital budgets of the government, the latter, no doubt, have special importance in the context of the country's development efforts. The approach to the government capital budget in Ceylon (under the conventional budgetary arrangements) has changed and become more rationalised to some extent in recent years. Since the mid-sixties and largely under influence of "project-oriented" annual development plans or programmes some significant improvements were effected with regard to both the technical and administrative aspects in planning; consequently the allocation of capital funds through the government budget came under close scrutiny, and a system of 'progress control' or evaluation in the execution of capital projects was also introduced in some key departments. In the preparation of the annual budgets the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs (and later the Ministry of Planning & Employment) was entrusted with a greater responsibility for the capital budget (and supporting outlays) of the government with a view to securing proper allocation of investment funds and better coordination between the government capital budget and development programmes. As the management of the country's foreign exchange resources began to assume greater importance, the proper co-ordination between the domestic budget, development programmes and the foreign exchange budget

<sup>15.</sup> Immediately after 1965 the government approach to planning was summed up in the following words: "It is not the immediate objective of the new planning organisation to devote all its energies at the initial stage towards the preparation of a macro economic plan..... Rather, the objective at present is to concentrate on the formulation of concrete programmes for the key sectors of the economy and the identification and preparation of specific projects suitable for early implementation and where relevant, for external financing. It is expected that the various elements of a comprehensive overall plan would emerge out of this work", quoted in Albert Waterston, Recommendations on Economic Planning in Ceylon, IBRD, Colombo, 1966, p. 1. During the late 'sixties important steps were taken to improve the functional classification of budgetary expenditure and to provide estimates of expenditure, particularly those involving developmental outlays, on the basis of programme/project classification. These efforts resulted also in an earlier attempt to formulate Programme Budgets (1969/70) for departments in a few Ministries. For such and other related developments during the 'sixties, see, R. M. Withana, Introduction of Programme and Performance Budgeting in Ceylon, (Academy of Administrative Studies, Colombo 1973).

became all the more important. Nevertheless, the degree of integration between government budgeting and development plans or programmes still leaves a great deal to be desired. Programme Budgeting can perhaps provide the best remedy to correct this situation as it helps to achieve what is referred to as the "structural integration between the plan and the budget".16 Both development plans and Programme Budgets possess the same basic approach and concepts and employ more or less the same terminology. Programmes and objectives and their operational units (projects), physical inputs and results and the evaluation of performance in relation to costs involved, are all features common to both an operational development plan and Programme Budgeting. It has been observed quite rightly that "these similarities in form and operational orientation make Programme Budgeting particularly suited for plan implementation and evaluation of plan progress'. 17 In this connection, the planning of government activities within the framework of medium or long term overall development plan and the integration (within this framework) of the annual Programme Budgets and the operational development plan might provide the best arrangement. Where public expenditures to finance capital projects and supporting outlays constitute the hard core of an overall development programme, Programme Budgeting can be very useful. When development programmes and their implementation are hampered scriously by the deficiencies in budgetary process and arrangements in Ceylon, a properly developed and administered programme budget structure should be able to correct many of the deficiencies and contribute more effectively to the achievement of development goals.

Proper allocation of resources and efficiency in the management of resource use in government activities are two of the most important objectives that a government budget should seek to achieve. These tasks become more complex as the size of the government budget becomes larger and the scope of government activities becomes more diverse. Generally the allocative decisions involve two basic problems at two levels. Firstly, there is the question of allocating resources conforming to broad policy goals at the aggregate level; this involves questions about basic choices to be made—such as, for instance, how much of the total resources available should be devoted to education, health, economic development, etc. Such basic allocative decisions are usually based upon judgements governed by a number of considerations, including political, social and economic considerations. Budgetary techniques or quantitative techniques of analysis, however sophisticated they may be, can at best only provide the relevant information in a systematic manner for the authorities to make the decisions. Once such basic decisions about priorities at the broad policy level

<sup>16.</sup> Gamani Corea, Planning and Budgeting, Proceedings of a Seminar on the Role of Audit in a Developing Country, Ceylon Branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, (Colombo, 1966), p. 30.

<sup>17.</sup> A Manual, op. cit., p. 13.

are made then at the lower level the task of decision making (e.g. how best the resources allocated to, say, education can be distributed in order to achieve the desired goals) is rendered more effective by the kind of budgeting process, procedures and techniques in operation. This is where programme budgeting structure and techniques are particularly useful; at this level they not only provide a rational approach to decision making but help to secure the efficient use of resources. The type of programme budgeting structure envisaged in Ceylon is still a relatively "simple" one; but more sophisticated techniques and procedures can be introduced at a later stage. The success of the new budg stary arrangements and the advantages to be gained from them will depend, needless to say, on their effective implementation. Programme budgeting structure because of its complexity will require a more efficient executive machinery for both its formulation and implementation. The administrative organisation at all levels should be properly geared to programme-project implementation and evaluation of progress more systematically; the new budgetary arrangements will particularly require an efficient system of information and reporting that will provide reliable data to facilitate the evaluation of progress in relation to programme accomplishments. There is no doubt that the demands that will be made by the new budget system on the country's administrative machinery will be greater than those of the traditional budgetary arrangements. In view of the many technical and administrative problems involved in setting up a programme budget structure in Ceylon it would be desirable to adopt a selective and/or gradualist approach to this aspect of budgetary reform. To start with, it is advisable to bring under Programme Budgeting only certain areas of the government budget, either those that involve large outlays or those closely associated with economic development, so that all efforts can be concentrated on a few selected areas. Gradually it can be extended to cover other areas. However, the present policy seems to favour a more or less complete switchover to Programme Budgeting within a period of two or three years. This will require during the initial phase itself considerable changes in both technical and organisational aspects so as to ensure a high degree of planning and management effort at all the key levels of budget-making and budget implementation.

## THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS IN DISARRAY II: THE TRIUMPH OF SIR WILLIAM MANNING, 1921-1924\*

#### K. M. DE SILVA

Arunachalam's departure from the Ceylon National Congress was the climacteric event in the disarray in that organization which became evident in the latter half of 1921. Without Arunachalam the Congress could hardly sustain its claim to the status of a national political organization, and with the emergence of the Tamil Mahajana Sabha the Congress had lost its right to speak on behalf of all communities in the island, for the Tamils were now clearly alienated. It is at this point that Ramanathan emerged as one of the central—and most controversial figures—in the island's politics in the years 1922-24.

The careers of Arunachalam and Ramanathan afford a study in contrasts as regards their aspirations for the people of this country: Arunachalam was the advocate of constructive co-operation between the Sinhalese and Tamils as associates in the building up (and eventually in the government) of a multiracial polity; Ramanathan emphasised the virtues of a separate identity for the Tamils, of a Tamil nationalism to be fostered in collaboration with the British, and if necessary in opposition to Sinhala nationalism. Arunachalam's achievements were much the more remarkable, if not the more significant, of the two. He stood for harmonious association between the Sinhalese and Tamils in nationalist politics, and nation building, for mutual trust and responsive co-ordination of sectional interests in the struggle for a common goal of swaraj. But if his achievements were noteworthy and distinguished, they were also singular and unusual, for he attained a towering pre-eminence in national political leadership (a pre-eminence which was ungrudingly acknowledged by Sinhalese leaders themselves) on the basis of his talents, achievements and merits. Ironically, however, this distinction was possible largely because of the elitist political structure of the reform and nationalist movements. He was the advocate of radicalism and democratisation, the twin political processes which would eventually guarantee the permanent Sinhalese domina-

<sup>\*</sup>The first part of this article appeared in New Series Vol. 2 (2) of this journal, pp. 97-II7.

tion of the politics of the island, when talent, achievement and merit by themselves would be inadequate to reach the pinnacle of political leadership if one happened to be a Tamil. Besides, Arunachalam's eventual dissenchantment with the Congress served to underline the fact that for many Sinhalese responsive co-operation between the Sinhalese and Tamils pre-supposed the acceptance by the Tamils of an essentially subordinate position by virtue merely of their numerical inferiority, and that their status in a Ceylonese polity could seldom be anything more than that of a junior partner.

Ramanathan, on the other hand, was much less visionary and idealistic. For him, the numerical inferiority of the Tamils needed to be accepted as a fact, and on that realistic basis it was imperative to protect the special interests of the Tamils by emphasising their distinctive communal identity. Under British rule it would mean unabashed, collaboration with the imperial power in return for the protection of minority interests, and an insistence on a special if not privileged status as the price of acceptance of the eventual transfer of power by the British. G. G. Ponnambalam's "fifty-fifty" campaign was the reductio ad absurdum of this process of political activity, just as the Tamils' pursuit of a federal political structure is its apotheosis. Common to all this were two basic considerations: the emphasis on Tamil nationalism as something essentially divergent from, if not positively hostile to, Sinhalese nationalism; and second the rejection, tacit or explicit, of Arunachalam's concept of a Ceylonese nationalism (and a Ceylonese polity). There was a hard-headed pragmatism in all this for events were to demonstrate that for the Sinhalese themselves, the concept of a Ceylonese polity could hardly hold its own against the compelling attractions of Sinhalese nationalism. But this is to anticipate events.

If the crucial weakness of the policy of responsive co-operation was the acceptance by the Tamils of a role of junior partner vis-a-vis the Sinhalese, Ramanathan's political activities of the 1920's were to demonstrate the fact that fostering a Tamil communal identity or Tamil nationalism, presumed the willing acceptance of the role of collaborators in the maintenance of imperial interests, and the price of collaboration was subordination to British interests. Ramanathan despite his decisive role in the politics of the country between 1921 and 1924 never achieved anything approaching the status of political pre-eminence which Arunachalam enjoyed till his departure from the Congress; he was subordinate always to that master political manipulator, Sir William Manning.

Indeed the prime beneficiary of these shifts and changes in the political and scene was Manning, for the initiative in politics was now unmistakably with him and he seized it with amazing dexterity to fashion the further discomfiture of the Congress. This present essay is a study in depth of Manning at work in organizing the resistance to political reform with the assistance of Ramanathan and the latter's associates. If affords a splendid case study in the systematic application of a policy of divide-et-impera. All the necessary ingre-

dients were there in full measure: a determination on the part of the imperial power to maintain its position, without substantial concessions to demands for a transfer of a share of political power, by resorting to the exploitation of existing or potential 'communal' disharmony; willing collaborators among minority groups; and lastly, the failure of the leaders of the majority community to adopt a policy of concession and compromise sufficiently flexible to retain the support of the more articulate and numerous minority groups.

Manning knew that the next phase in the evolving political crisis in the island would begin with the discussion of firm proposals on constitutional reform which the Congress leadership were due to submit to him soon. Ever since their meeting with him on 29 November 1920 the constitutionalist leadership in the Congress had been preparing a scheme of constitutional reform. And James Pieris on whom the leadership in these matters had devolved, had adopted a policy of keeping Manning informed of the nature of the changes they wished to ask for. At the same time James Pieris regarded an accommodation with the minorities as vital to the success of his endeavours, and he sought first of all to reach an understanding with Ramanathan (then a nominated unofficial member of the Legislative Council) who was by now the most influential of the Tamil leaders. In a letter to Ramanathan on 15 October 19211 he attached a "scheme of Reform which has been drawn up on lines agreed upon by the members of the Council who have taken the loyalty pledge but had not yet been submitted to them for approval". He added that these proposals were still "confidential". They were intended to form the basis for discussions between the Congress group and the minority representatives. "When we meet at the Finance Committee on the 20 [October]", he informed Ramanathan, "we can arrange a day for a conference..."

When the conference did take place, James Pieris presented his proposals for discussion—he intended eventually to introduce them in the form of a resolution in the Legislative Council—and it soon became clear that there were sharp differences of opinion between the Congress group and the minority representatives. These differences of opinion were so far-reaching that agreement on the principles of constitutional reform—not to mention unanimity—became patently impossible. One outcome of the discussion and something which Pieris did not anticipate, was that a group of unofficial members of the Legislative Council under Ramanathan's leadership, minority representatives, but with one or two Sinhalese members who had not taken the Congress pledge,

Ramanathan MSS. Pieris's letter to Ramanathan, 15 October 1921.

The reference is to a loyalty pledge taken by Congress candidates under the terms
of a resolution adopted at the Congress sessions of 18 December 1920.

took up the position that just as a group of Congress members had met the Governor to discuss the question of constitutional reform, they should themselves meet Manning to place their views before him. This decision was taken ("unanimously agreed to") in the presence of the Congress members themselves. On 4 November Ramanathan led this delegation to a discussion with Manning and his advisers. It was composed of Tamil, Muslim, European, Burgher and Indian representatives. One Sinhalese member, O. C. Tillekeratne appeared on this delegation, while Ramanathan claimed that he had the tacit support of two others, the two Kandyan nominated members, Meedeniya and Panabokke.<sup>3</sup>

The main theme of discussion at the conference with Manning was with regard to the composition of the Legislative Council and the related question of representation on the basis of constituencies. Two sets of proposals were reviewed: James Pieris's scheme set out before the unofficial members of the Legislative Council (Ramanathan brought a copy of this document with him to the conference), and a scheme prepared by the Tamil Mahajana Sabhai in accordance with a resolution adopted on 15 August 1921 at the inauguration of that organisation.4 Both schemes envisaged the enlargement of the Legislative Council to about fifty members four-fifths of whom were to be elected, but where the guiding principle in James Pieris's scheme was election on the territorial principle, that of the Tamil Mahajana Sabhai was based on a dilution of the territorial principle and an emphasis on communal electorates (although on a territorial basis).5 This latter scheme envisaged the distribution of seats in the Legislative Council in the proportion of two Tamil seats to three Sinhalese, and in addition the reservation of seats for important minorities. Thus the city of Colombo would have no less than six reserved seats, one each for the Sinhalese, Tamils, Indians, Mohammedans, Burghers and Europeans.

One significant point emerged from these discussions, that the Tamils were dissatisfied with the representation accorded to them under James Pieris's proposed scheme. The manner in which Manning drew this out and sought to exploit it to the disadvantage of the Congress is revealed in the following extract from the official minutes of proceedings of this conference.<sup>6</sup>

"His Excellency the Governor. I do not know whether the Tamils will say they are satisfied with their representation.

<sup>3.</sup> Minutes of Proceedings of the conference with Manning, held on 4 November 1921 (hereafter, *Minutes*, 4 *November* 1921). These minutes were printed and distributed under confidential cover to those who attended the conference. They were not meant for general circulation.

<sup>.</sup> ibid, p. 1.

<sup>5.</sup> The constituencies would be territorial, but the votes would be determined on the basis of communal interests.

<sup>6.</sup> Minutes, 4 November 1921, p. 3.

The Hon. Messrs. E. R. Tambimuttu and W. Duraiswamy. We are not, Sir.

The Hon. Sir Thomson Broom. If the Tamils are given more members, we shall want more members too. It is quite obvious that the Tamils are not in favour of the Congress proposals.

The opening provided by this exchange of views was too good to miss, and Manning went on at this stage to suggest a totally different line of action from that discussed at the Conference up to this point.

"You must remember as regards the Congress", he said, "that it is an organised and powerful body; that it has funds, and has been able to send home, not only a deputation, but also agents on its behalf. I have always said that if you do not agree with the views of Congress, you must take steps to bring your own views to the notice of the Secretary of State".8

But this hint was not immediately taken and though the discussions were cordial enough no firm conclusions were reached; instead a decision was taken to prepare a set of concrete proposals to be set before the Governor. The important point was that Ramanathan still hoped that it would be possible to prepare such proposals in conjunction with other members of the Legislative Council as well, including those who belonged to Congress.

Immediately Manning responded by setting what amounted to practically impossible conditions for such proposals. We turn to the official minutes again for this illuminating extract.9

"His Excellency the Governor: In talking over this matter with Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, I told him: "If you put up a scheme to which you all, without exception, agree, and you say that the scheme is one which the present Members of the Legislative Council have authorised you to put before me as a scheme which has been accepted by all, I must forward it to the Secretary of State and say: 'It is the unanimous opinion of the Members of the Legislative Council that the further reforms in regard to the Council should proceed on these lines'." I may criticise them, but in the circumstances I must accept them.

The Hon. Sir Thomson Broom. It is impossible for us to be unanimous. The Hon. Sir Ponnambalan Ramanathan: I am still in hopes that we may be unanimous.

The Hon. the Attorney General [Sir Henry Gollan]: I think, Sir, all that is wanted is that there should be practical unanimity.

<sup>7.</sup> European representative.

<sup>8.</sup> Minutes, 4 November 1921, p. 3.

<sup>9.</sup> ibid., p. 5.

His Excellency the Governor: If the whole of the communities are agreed, we could say that we had practical unanimity.

The Hon. Sir Thomson Broom: If we are not able to be unanimous, we must put forward our views".

Unanimity was impossible to achieve in the context of the strained relations between the Sinhalese and Tamils, and nobody knew this better than Manning. He was merely setting up—for the Congress—an insuperable obstacle, making certain that when, inevitably, unanimity would prove impossible to attain, the initiative would shift irretrievably away from it.

Throughout November 1921 there was still a faint hope that Congress could reach an accommodation with the Tamil Mahajana Sabhai on the question of constitutional reform. Two conferences were held on 16 and 17 November (at 'Sravasti', the residence of Dr. W. A. de Silva) organised by C. E. Corea, and presided over by St. Nihal Singh an Indian journalist at which attempts were made to reach an understanding, if not a settlement, but without success. For the Tamils the special reserved seat in the Western Province was a nonnegotiable demand, while James Pieris on behalf of the Congress was equally adamant in not conceeding it. When the Colombo Tamil Association also finally and unexpectedly supported the demand for a reserved seat for the Tamils an impasse was reached. Nor would Pieris consider the acceptance of the principle that no two communities together should command a majority in the Legislative Council. He made only one minor concession: in response to Tamil pressure he reduced the number of Legislative Councillors envisaged under his projected scheme of reforms from fifty to forty five.

To Pieris the failure to reach substantial agreement with the Tamils was a bitter blow. For he could not postpone much longer the publication of his reforms scheme. The proposals were published in their entirety on 26 November. Apart from spelling out the demands of the Congress on constitutional reform, these proposals also sought to meet the substance of Tamil claims for the modification of the territorial principle by giving special weightage to the Tamils on a territorial basis. It was also announced that this scheme was to be incorporated in a formal resolution which James Pieris was scheduled to introduce for discussion in the Legislative Council in early December. This resolution, as it finally appeared, had thirteen clauses of which the eighth dealt with the distribution of constituencies on a territorial basis; and a breakdown of the constituencies so delimited was provided.

It was characteristic of James Pieris that he should have announced his intention to introduce a formal resolution on constitutional reform, and given publicity to this, without first ensuring its endorsement by the executive

<sup>10.</sup> For his reforms proposals, see below Appendix A pp. 39-40.

committee of the Congress. At first it did appear that the constitutionalist leadership in the Congress would give this resolution their support, and E. J. Samerawickreme, F. R. Senanayake, and A. St. V. Jayawardene among others gave it their blessings. <sup>11</sup> But it soon became evident that their endorsement was both lukewarm and conditional. Within a few days of the publication of the scheme a newspaper campaign was launched (most prominently in The Ceylon Daily News) against the eighth clause, and the allocation of constituencies embodied in it. This newspaper campaign reflected a sharp difference of opinion among the Congress leadership on this aspect of the reforms. <sup>12</sup>

In the first week of December 1921 the Legislative Council began to debate Pieris's resolution on constitutional reforms. In introducing his motion he deleted the original eighth clause of the motion and substituted in its place the following: "(8) That the distribution of seats be made on the recommendations of a commission to be appointed for the purpose". He explained that he had personally always been of the opinion that the distribution of seats should be made on the recommendation of a commission, but that there had been disagreement on this in the committee of the National Congress where the view was expressed that the scheme of constituencies embodied in his original motion might have formed the basis for agreement with the minorities, in particular the Tamils. This expectation had not been realised, and therefore he had reverted to his original proposal of dealing with the matter by means of commission.

Though Pieris himself did not say so, it was obvious that a section of the Congress leadership were critical of the allocation of seats embodied in the eighth clause, and obvious too that the substitution of a clause about a commission was introduced largely to meet their criticisms. The immediate effect of the substitution was to create suspicion among Tamils. Representatives of Tamil opinion urged the Tamil members of the Legislative Council to oppose Pieris's motion in its entirety if the eighth clause were amended in the manner proposed by him. This was a curious stand to take for the Tamils had even more reason to be perturbed by the allocation of seats incorporated in Pieris's original eighth clause, than any section of the Congress.

Evidently the Tamil opposition to the substitution was a tactical move. On a closer look the leading spokesmen for the Tamil Mahajana Sabhai saw advantages in the change made by Pieris. <sup>14</sup> They urged Ramanathan to stress two points:

<sup>11.</sup> See, Ceylon Daily News, 28 November 1921.

<sup>12.</sup> Ceylon Daily News, 29 and 30 November 1921.

<sup>13.</sup> See, for instance, a telegram from W. D. Niles to Ramanathan (telegram 361 of 1 December 1921) which read as follows 'If Pieris moves Commission please see Tamils not committed by earlier resolution to exclusive territorial electorates'. Ramanathan MSS in the possession of Mr. J. T. Rutnam.

<sup>14.</sup> Ramanathan MSS. A. Sabapathy's letter to Ramanathan, 7 December 1921, enclosing a note from Ambalavanar Kanagasabhai, on points of discussion for the forth-coming Legislative Council debate. This note too bore the date 7 December 1921.

"we are anxious that the principle of twenty eight territorial seats required by the Hon'ble Mr. James Pieris should not be admitted by the Council. It should be left to the committee or commission to decide the matter".

They believed that a committee of the council was better for the purpose of allocating seats than a commission. The second point was that:

"In no case should any single community be allowed to have such a majority as would not require the co-operation of at least a few members of other communities for passing or adopting any measure".

They reckoned that under James Pieris's original proposals there would be twenty two Sinhalese members of the Legislative Council (including Kandyans) while there would be seventeen seats for all other communities. 15

Briefly, the Tamils themselves saw great potential advantages in the substitution effected by James Pieris, but they desired a committee of the Legislative Council rather than a commission. When Ramanathan made this proposal in the course of the debate Pieris eagerly accepted it. The terms in which the acceptance was made were to cause difficulties later on. Pieris said:

"I am glad that the nominated Tamil member [Ramanathan] does not want a Commission but is content to leave it to a Committee of this house. I accept that proposal. Just now proposals have been made to me to come to an understanding. That can be done after the present discussion, and after the votes have been taken on my motion. Government would then be in a position to understand what the opinion of the different members would be on the points raised in the motion. During the holidays, to which we are looking forward, it may be possible to see whether we could in any way lessen the burden of the Committee, or dispense with it altogether".

One amendment to Pieris's eighth clause was moved by the Attorney General, Sir Henry Gollan, that the committee would determine not merely the distribution of seats, but the allocation of seats as well. These amendments, were adopted without a division.

James Pieris had not intended that his resolutions should be voted upon, but merely that there should be a full discussion and statement of views. The idea of a vote at the conclusion of the debate was Manning's, but Pieris did not object when the governor decided on this. Manning proceeded to use the voting strength of the government to delete sections of the resolutions which he was opposed to, and to amend others. Indeed during the debate he had intervened with decided effect to secure the rejection by the Legislative Council of the first clause of Pieris's resolution—viz.

<sup>15.</sup> ibid.

"That the Legislative Council should be constituted, so that, with due safeguards for minorities, it should consist of forty-five members, of whom six should be officials and twenty-eight elected on a territorial basis".

Also rejected in a similar manner was the second clause, closely connected to the first:

"That the non-territorial electorates and the representation of minorities provided for in the present constitution be retained; but the Burgher and Mohammedan communities be represented by two members each".

The governor had used the 'official bloc' to defeat these clauses. At the Colonial Office, there was some criticism (not conveyed to Manning) of the governor's tactics.

"If the Official Vote had not been used the first section would have been carried by a majority of one, since all the communities except the Sinhalese voted against it, and the Governor and the Secretary of State would have been clearly entitled to give full weight to this fact when considering the Resolution, which effected nothing but was merely a recommendation to the Secretary of State".<sup>17</sup>

But Manning knew that Tamil opinion was hostile to this clause and from his own point of view the use of the 'official bloc' to defeat it was tactically sound for it demonstrated his commitment to support the Tamils.

James Pieris, it was clear, had the hope that negotiations between Congress representatives and the minorities would continue during the months ahead when the Legislative Council was in recess, and that eventually the Allocation Committee would be presented with a scheme which had the support of the two groups. But this did not happen. For one thing the view was widely expressed by influential Congressmen that he had made a tactical blunder in accepting the proposal for an Allocation Committee consisting of members of the Legislative Council. But more important, the question of a reserved seat for Tamils in the Western Province continued to prove an insuperable obstacle to an agreement with the Tamils.

On 14 December The Times of Ceylon carried an interview with Arunachalam in which he came out with a strong attack on the Congress.

<sup>16.</sup> On 10 December 1921 when a vote was taken only one Sinhalese member—Dr. Marcus Fernando—voted with the government and the minorities against the first and second clauses. There was not a single minority member voting for the resolutions.

<sup>17.</sup> C.O. 54/853. H. R. Cowell's Memorandum of 7 August 1922.

"My feeling is one of profound distress", he declared, "not with regard to the Legislative Council resolutions, or the reforms debate which are of transitory interest, but with regard to the position of the Ceylon National Congress and Ceylon's goal of responsible government. Everyone must see that the goal cannot be reached unless there is mutual trust, harmony and co-operation between the various sections of our island population..."

#### He charged that James Pieris

"and his friends have by their blunders wrecked the Congress, destroyed its power and prestige, reduced it from a National Congress to one representing mainly a section of the Sinhalese, destroyed the feeling of mutual confidence and co-operation between the various communities, and put back the attainment of the goal of swaraj indefinitely".

This statement was issued against the background of the Legislative Council debate on constitutional reforms, and more important, of the forth-coming sessions of the Ceylon National Congress for which preparations had been made. Among these preparations were preliminary negotiations with the Tamils in the hope that an influential delegation from the North would participate. The failure of the conferences of 16 and 17 November did not leave much hope in this regard, and Arunachalam's statement to the Times of Ceylon made it clear that he would not attend, and it is certain that the stand taken by him would have discouraged any Tamil politicians of influence from the North, from participating. When the Congress sessions were held on 22 and 23 December one very very striking feature was the absence of the prominent Tamil politicians from the North.

As Arunachalam's interview to *The Times of Ceylon* on 14 December had made clear, one of the crucial factors in the breakdown of negotiations was the failure to honour the pledge given by Pieris and Samerawickreme in December 1918 about a reserved seat for the Tamils in the Western Province. It became one of the major themes of discussion at the Congress sessions, but the whole tone of it was one of denial of responsibility by Congress as a body for undertakings given by individual members at an earlier date. Thus, H. J. C. Pereira as President of Congress argued that

"... it may be that for political reasons, individual members with perfectly honest intentions, with the idea of maintaining unity have entered into certain compromises and bargains with individuals of the North. The Congress as Congress knows, nothing of all this. We are not responsible for all this..."

<sup>18.</sup> Handbook of the Ceylon National Congress (hereafter, Handbook, CNC) ed, Bandara-naike, S. W. R. D. (Colombo, 1928) p.

And G. A. Wille moving the first resolution at the Congress sessions said:

"A promise regarding a reserved seat for the Tamils of Colombo made by one or two prominent members of the Congress out of excessive regard for the fears of men of the isolated North.... had been so distorted as to implicate the whole of Congress". 19

The outcome of this was easily predictable—any hopes that James Pieris may have entertained of an agreement with the minorities, especially the Tamils on the allocation and distribution of seats in a reformed Legislative Council were now shattered beyond repair. Moreover, the rift between the Sinhalese and the Tamils had not only been made public, but had assumed the level of a serious political crisis. At the centre of the crisis, and assuming a significance out of all proportion to its intrinsic worth, was the special seat for the Tamils of the Western Province.

Though the Legislative Council had on 10 December 1921 endorsed the proposal to appoint an Allocation Committee, the actual appointment was not made till the middle of June 1922 by which time the political situation in Ceylon had changed unmistakably to the detriment of the Congress. Manning now scarcely concealed his hostility to the Congress—he was constantly referring to it as the "so-called National Congress" in his private letters to the Colonial Office<sup>20</sup>—and he threw his weight behind the minorities.

When James Pieris suggested to Manning that a detailed review of the debate (and votes) in the Legislative Council on his resolutions of December 1921 should be sent to the Colonial Office, Manning acceded to this request with great reluctance. The review was eventually sent, with a far from friendly commentary by Manning, and more significantly, only after he had resumed negotiations with the minorities on a course of action he had suggested to them on 4 November but which had not been acceptable to them till the breakdown in relations between the Sinhalese and Tamils appeared to indicate it as a viable alternative to any further efforts to a search for a consensus. The course of action decided upon was to prepare a detailed memorandum setting out the views of the minorities on constitutional reform, and drafting a scheme of constituencies and representation on a communal basis to be prepared in consultation with Manning. This memorandum21 as it finally emerged ready for signature on 21 February 1922 was the work, in the main, of Ramanathan. though it had the endorsement and encouragement of Manning. Moreover, Manning, had come to the conclusion that the Allocation Committee was in fact a superfluity though he was still publicly committed to its appointment.

<sup>19.</sup> ibid.

<sup>20.</sup> See particularly, C.O. 54/851, Manning's private letter to Grindle, 1 March 1922, C.O. 54/852, Manning's private letter to Grindle, 1 April 1922.

<sup>21.</sup> This memorandum is in C.O. 54/852.

The first hint that Manning gave of his new line of policy came in a private letter of 1 March 1922 to a Colonial Office legal expert, Sir G. Grindle in which he stated that:

"The minorities have succeeded in settling their differences and I shall shortly send you in a separate despatch the results arrived at; but as you will see by the despatch I hope to send today we are first bound to refer to a Committees of the Legislative Council for their proposals in regard to the allocation and distribution of seats for the territorial electorates.

"My private opinion, and as is foreshadowed in the memorandum of the minority communities which will scon reach you is that the Committee to be appointed if the Secretary of State agrees to the suggestion, may possibly [be] coming to no agreement; and in that case it is Government that will have eventually to adjudicate upon the various proposals placed before it, and that which I am about to send you [the minorities memorandum] is certainly a very well thought out scheme..."

On 1 April when he sent the minorities joint memorandum he told Grindle, that

"...the Congress is no longer the body that it was, and, as they say, it is somewhat discredited though it is still vocal.

"There is a complete split between the Sinhalese and the 'rest' and I doubt very much, as do the signatories of the Joint Memorandum, whether the deliberations of the suggested Committee of the Legislative Council on the subject of the allocation and distribution of seats will result in anything definite being produced, though I hope they may be able to settle their differences. I think they will not try; since it will be left to Government to endeavour to draw up a scheme which, [sic] when promulgated they will proceed to tear to shreds with vicious clamour and dishonest protestations.

"However, we are so inured to that sort of thing that we shall not feel it deeply, and if we attempt to satisfy all we shall dissatisfy the lot".

He sent the joint memorandum to the Colonial Office on 1 April with his warm approval and strong endorsement, while simultaneously a Congress memorandum on constitutional reform sent along with it, was accompanied by a blistering confidential memorandum on the Congress in which it was both condemned and reviled.

It was in mid-June 1922<sup>22</sup> that the question of the appointment of the Allocation Committee came up for discussion in the Legislative Council. By this time Congress representatives in the Legislative Council had second thoughts about this committee. Pieris, in particular, had been criticised for accepting Ramanathan's proposal for a committee—a commission may have been more acceptable—and he was not disinclined to think of some plausible reason for abandoning the whole thing. As it was Manning's decision to use

<sup>22. 16</sup> and 22 June 1922,

the official bloc to outvote Pieris's supporters on the first clause of his resolution provided the latter with the excuse they needed. They now took the view that there would be no point in proceeding with the discussion until the government informed them what was to be the total composition of the new Legislative Council. This was a patently poor argument since it was open to the proposed committee to make any recommendations which they thought fit to report. One of the Tamil representatives subsequently proposed that the committee should contain a majority of territorial members and when the government accepted this proposal, they were depriving Congress representations of much of the force of their argument that the committee would effect nothing. Nevertheless the Congress representatives would not change their minds on this, and when Manning proceeded to appoint the committee, seven members of the Legislative Council refused to serve on it. Even though the majority of territorially elected representatives refused to serve on it or cooperate with an Allocation Committee, Manning proceeded to appoint one nevertheless without any Congress members on it.23

Both sides were indulging in noisy pretension. Pieris and his Congress supporters were relieved that they were not serving on a committee which had become a political embarrassment to them, and in whose deliberations they had no faith. The Congress committee, meeting on 24 June, only two days after the conclusion of the Legislative-Council debate on the Allocation Committee, endorsed the stand taken by James Pieris and the Congress representatives in the Legislative Council on this issue, but the resolution they adopted went far beyond anything stated by their party supporters in the course of the debate. It read thus:

"This Committee is of opinion that the appointment of the [Allocation Committee] ... can serve no useful purpose and that such proceeding can only delay the Reform of the Constitution. It deprecates the adoption by the Legislative Council on the 10th December 1921, of a resolution for the appointment of such a committee and approves the action of those elected members who refused to serve on the Committee".24

As for Manning, the appointment of the Allocation Committee was a piece of elaborate pantomime, for he had already committed himself to a strong endorsement of the scheme of distribution and allocation of seats outlined in the joint memorandum of the minorities. When the Allocation Committee made its report in July, 25 its recommendations bore a striking similarity to those in the joint memorandum.

<sup>23.</sup> The members of the Committee were: F. A. Stockdale [an official member] Chairman, J. Thomson Broom, C. E. Corea, Allan Drieberg, E. R. Tambimuttu, O. C. Tillekeratne, W. Duraiswamy, N. H. M. Abdul Cader, E. G. Adamaly, T. B. Panabokke.

<sup>24.</sup> Handbook, CNC, pp. 414-15. See, also MSS Minutes, CNC, 24 June 1922.

<sup>25.</sup> The report of the Allocation Committee was laid on the table of the Legislative Council on 20 July 1922. This report is printed in *Handbook CNC*, Appendix D, pp. 101-119.

One intriguing feature—for the Congress—in the report of the Allocation Committee, was the reference in it to the joint-memorandum of the minorities of 21 February. This provided confirmation of rumours prevalent at this time of Manning's secret negotiations with Ramanathan and a delegation of minority representatives led by him, and the despatch of a secret joint memorandum to the Colonial Office. Immediately there were demands from Congress representatives for information on the joint-memorandum, and requests for publication of that document, but Manning would divulge no information on it and resisted every attempt to secure its publication. But it did not remain a secret for very long, for on 16 August 1922 enterprising journalists on the Ceylon Daily News achieved a memorable scoop when, to the consternation of the government, they published the full text of the secret memorandum. Even at this stage the Governor would not himself officially publish this document.

In a strongly worded letter to the Colonial Office some of the Sinhalese members of the Legislative Council protested against Manning's partisanship and expressed their surprise at the failure to publish a document which though secret had nevertheless been referred to in the official report of the Allocation Committee.

As for Manning's own recommendations on constitutional reform, he had simply followed both in regard to principle and detail suggestions made in the secret joint-memorandum of the minorities. Some years later Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan in his oral evidence before the Donoughmore Commission (2 January 1928) confirmed that Manning's own despatch on reforms in April 1922 was based on the secret memorandum of the minorities presented to him on 21 February 1922 with "one or two words added here and there". Not only was a 2:1 ratio between Sinhalese and Tamil representation maintained, but the Tamils also obtained a reserved seat in the Western Province.

It is difficult to discern any distinct Colonial Office policy on constitutional reform in Ceylon, except the understanding that "there is nothing to be gained by expediting the further reform of the constitution so long as we do not openly delay the decision." Beyond this there was a tendency to leave the initiative to the man on the spot—the Governor—if he was inclined to take it, and to be guided by him.

In March 1922 Manning sent home a despatch on constitutional reform in Ceylon which was no more than a critical commentary on Pieris's resolution of December 1921 as it had emerged in its final form in the debate in the Legislative Council. To this Manning added a few suggestions of his own. The idea was that this despatch should form the basis of a policy statement from the

Secretary of State to be published in Ceylon. This the Colonial Office was willing to do, and a despatch (dated 19 April) was sent to Ceylon incorporating the bulk of Manning's suggestions, though some were adopted with modifications, with instructions that it be published. The date of publication was to be left to the Governor's discretion. The Secretary of State did not commit himself at all on the distribution of territorial constituencies, and the possibility of allocating a communal seat to the Tamils. On the other hand he did come to a firm decision not to increase the territorial seats beyond fifteen which was about half the number asked for by the Congress, and this was done with the interests of the minorities in the colony in mind.<sup>26</sup>

But there was a change of policy with the receipt of the secret joint-memorandum of the minorities at the Colonial Office. The immediate response of the Colonial Office was not especially encouraging to Manning. Thus though it was conceded that the memorandum is of great importance as showing the strong insistence of "all the races in Ceylon, apart from the Low Country Sinhalese", on the maintenance of communal representation, "and the great reluctance of the other communities in Ceylon to submit to the domination of the Low Country Sinhalese...", it was nevertheless recognised that the "... the demands of the Tamils in this joint memorandum are somewhat excessive..." and that it would be "a doubtful measure to agree to communal representation for the Tamils who are a numerous and progressive class". As regards the reserved seat for the Tamils, the point was made that "the Secretary of State would naturally be somewhat reluctant to extend the communal principle of election any further than at present if it can be avoided".27

Manning however made the shrewd decision to send his closest associate in the Ceylon government, the Attorney General Sir Henry Gollan, to the Colonial Office to put his point of view across. And this move was immediately effective. The Colonial Office was won over completely to the view that the reform of the Legislative Council should follow the principles laid down in the secret joint memorandum of the minorities.

After preliminary discussions with Gollan, H. R. Cowell the Colonial Office expert on Ceylon came to the conclusion that

"It has clearly became necessary to modify the views expressed in the Secretary of State's despatch of the 19th April. This is necessitated by the subsequent receipt of the joint memorandum from the Minority Communities and by the explanations furnished both by the Governor and the Attorney General regarding the attitude taken up by those communities. The fact that all the communities in Ceylon, other than Singhalese [sic], have for the first time come together for a political purpose, and have drawn up unanimous recommendations for the reform of the Constitution

<sup>26.</sup> C.O. 54/854. H. R. Cowell's memorandum of 16 May 1922.

<sup>27.</sup> C.O. 54/852. H.R. Cowell's minute of 3 May 1922.

is, of course, important, and sufficiently justifies the modification of views expressed before this fact was known and based on a despatch from the Governor written before this joint memorandum had reached him. ...It is now very desirable that the Secretary of State should definitely express his views in favour of a system of Communal Representation based on that recommended by the joint minorities..."

Cowell went on to add that:29

"... if the Secretary of State should ignore the joint memorandum of the Minorities and take the Congress side, the effect will be only to drive into opposition a very large section of the population without ensuring the support of the Sinhalese, many of whose demands are in any case inadmissible. We had indeed recognised this to some extent even before the receipt of the joint memorandum, and the despatch of the 19th April was intended to leave the door open for future discussion as to the distribution of seats. But the Attorney General argues with considerable force that it is essential definitely to accept the views expressed in the joint memorandum as to communal representation as soon as any public pronouncement is made...."

Cowell and the Colonial Office had been convinced by Gollan's argument that:

"To support the minorities.... [will] make for stability since it will mean a large and important section of the population will work in harmony with the Government, while to meet the demands of the Sinhalese would drive the minorities into opposition and would only lead to fresh demands from the Sinhalese".30

It is also evident that the Colonial Office, like the Ceylon Government, treated the Allocation Committee and the report it was expected to produce, with engaging cynicism. Thus Cowell on 12 July 1922 asked to prepare a draft despatch on constitutional reform which was to be a substitute for that sent on 19 April, "pending the report of the Allocation Committee" urged that since ... "seven of the Sinhalese members have declined to sit on that committee it may be assumed that contrary to expectation, it will produce a report, and that report will follow the lines indicated in the joint memorandum. But the report must be awaited in order that reference may be made to it in the despatch".

By the middle of July 1922 the Colonial Office had taken the decision to

"prepare a scheme for the composition of the Council which was to be based on the principle of the joint memorial, and which would not advertise itself as being the same scheme".31

Though Manning's despatches and private letters to the Colonial Office should have provided strong evidence of a persistent policy of deliberate exacer-

<sup>28.</sup> C.O. 54/857. H. R. Cowell's Minute of 12 July 1922.

<sup>29.</sup> ibid.

<sup>30.</sup> C.O. 54/857. H. R. Cowell's minute of 6 July 1922.

<sup>31.</sup> ibid.

bation of communal rivalries in order to thwart the Congress and the low-country Sinhalese, it was only in September when a letter from Sinhalese members of the Legislative Council, <sup>32</sup> written in the wake of the Ceylon Daily News scoop of the secret joint-memorandum of the minorities, made grave charges against the Governor, of collusion with the minorities, of distortion of information to the Colonial Office, and of gleeful fanning of the flames of communal rivalry, that the Colonial Office began to take a fresh look at these problems. This letter did create doubts in the minds of the permanent officials as regards the line of policy on constitutional reform in Ceylon so far adopted. H. R. Cowell commented that "... I have several times expressed doubts as to the propriety of extending the communal principle to the Tamils who should be large enough a community to look after themselves".

More important was Cowell's statement that

"... it would be very difficult to resist the claim for a majority of territorially elected members in the next Council. Nothing less will satisfy the great majority of the unofficials in the present Council, and the government cannot shelter themselves indefinitely behind the signatories of the joint memorandum, who only represent the smaller communities in Ceylon, since it is quite clear that a large body even of Tamil opinion favours such a majority. After all, the Governor always has his reserve powers, the representatives of the smaller communities must exert themselves to convert to their views some members of the territorial majority..."

He realised, of course, that the great obstacle to the introduction of this principle was the Governor who "will not give up without a struggle his desire to have a practical majority in the Council in addition to his reserve powers..."<sup>38</sup>

When the reforms of 1923 were announced<sup>34</sup> it was clear that Manning's views had prevailed. For one thing there was no majority of territorially elected members in the new Legislative Council. But more important the reforms of 1923 were a decidedly meagre advance on those of 1920 and like the latter their major premise was that the various communities in Ceylon had different and conflicting interests which could be promoted and safeguarded only by diluting the principle of territorial representation with a strong dose of communal representation. The distribution of seats in the Legislature was so arranged that no two communities could between themselves have a majority in the Council, taking into consideration the elected as well as nominated members. Thus the government could still outvote the Sinhalese and Tamils who between them controlled twenty two seats, provided that the minorities other than the Tamils rallied to its side. In addition, there was no dimunition

<sup>32.</sup> C.O. 54/854, Letter of Sinhalese members of the Legislative Council enclosed in Manning to Churchill, 507 of 5 September 1922.

<sup>33.</sup> C.O. 54/854, H. R. Cowell's minute of 28 September 1923.

<sup>34.</sup> They were announced in the Duke of Devonshire's despatch to Manning, 11 January 1923. For this despatch see, *Handbook CNC*, pp. 120-127 of the Appendix.

of the governor's reserve powers. Congress proposals, mild and hesitant in themselves, for an extension of the franchise were rejected; and the Executive Council continued to be a predominantly official body, its unofficial members nominated by the governor and without any pretension or legal claim to serving as a link between the executive and the legislature. Only one provision in the new constitution, and that a relatively minor one, could have given the Congress leaders some satisfaction—in the new council a member elected by the Council was to preside over its deliberations, a change from the practice that had prevailed since 1833 of the Governor presiding at sessions of the Legislative Council.

Manning had deftly outmanoeuvred the Congress leadership. The latter, confronted with the very meagre concessions made to them in this constitution were too dispirited and demoralised to devise any but the most conventional means of demonstrating their disatisfaction. They rejected the appeal of the radicals in their midst to adopt more forceful agitational tactics to demonstrate their antipathy to Manning's policy. Instead they persisted in their normal mode of agitation which without in any way disturbing Manning only drove the radicals to despair. When A. E. Geonesinha at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Congress held in December 1923 moved a resolution "that the Ceylon National Congress do reject the Order in Council [of 1923] as utterly inadequate and formulate a scheme of non-coperation with a view to boycotting the new Legislative Council", the committee rejected this by fifteen votes to six. Sec. 1997.

The Congress leadership preferred to help in working the new constitutional machinery as an exercise in political education. Thus H. J. C. Pereira in his presidential address at the annual session of the Congress in April 1923, urged his audience to

"offer thanks for what had been given, just as much as condemn anything that was not given... Political rights could not be secured in a day or two

<sup>35.</sup> An elected member of the Legislative Council, if nominated to the Executive Council, was required to resign his elected seat and (at best) accept a nominated one at the Governor's hands

<sup>36.</sup> At the Congress sessions held on 23 March 1923, with the Vice-President, C. E. Corea in the chair, the following resolution (proposed by C. E. Corea, and seconded by E. T. de Silva) was unanimously adopted "This Congress condemns as unsatisfactory and reactionary the scheme of Reforms proposed in the Secretary of States Despatch dated 11th January and reasserts the necessity for a substantial territorial-elected majority in the Legislative Council". Thereafter the sessions were adjourned for 20-21 April.

<sup>37.</sup> At the Congress sessions of 20-21 April H. J. C. Pereira presided. For the resolutions adopted on that occasion see below p. 35

<sup>38.</sup> Handbook, CNC, p. 605

or even in a hundred years in certain cases. The present British Parliament was evolved generally into its present representative character and even now they must realise that the House of Lords, thwarts legislation sent up by the Commons in England just as much as the Governor was able to do here in this country. They had progressed to a certain point. They must bide their time in patience and by constitutional agitation they would achieve their ends..."<sup>39</sup>

In a sense they really had no other choice, given their total lack of faith in the masses (which concealed an inarticulate fear of their potentialities). Many thought in terms of A. E. Goonesinha as revealing what Gandhian tactics would lead to here. Besides Congress leaders feared that the adoption of more forceful tactics of opposition would be self-defeating, in that this would have contributed to the irrevocable alienation of the minorities. And they persisted in their belief, despite convincing evidence to the contrary, that the breach with the minorities could be healed.

Manning in the meantime continued to help widen the rift between the Sinhalese and Tamils. In June 1923 a public meeting was organised in Jaffna for the purpose of arranging a "fitting welcome to the Governor". Sir Ambalavanar Kanagasabhai (a nominated member of the Executive Council), as chairman of the Committee appointed to make arrangements for the governor's reception, remarked that the Tamils were beholden to Governor Manning "who had actually fought their case for them after having shown and advised them what they should do. And it was [he] who obtained for the Tamils the preferential treatment and concessions as outlined in the Draft Scheme of Reforms".

Congress leaders complained that in his speeches at Jaffna on this occasion, Manning amply confirmed Sir A. Kanagasabhai's "account of the genesis of the proposed scheme of representation". The *Times of Ceylon* in its issue of 13 June 1923 published the following summary of Manning's speech in reply to an address of welcome:

"His Excellency replied at length and thanked the Tamils for the welcome given him and [for] supporting his reforms despatch, and intimated that it would please them to hear that all his recommendations, including the seat in the Western Province had been sanctioned, and that the Secretary of State had further thanked the Tamils for simplifying his task. A high compliment was paid to Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan for the assistance given in drafting the reform proposals. The seats given to them, His Excellency said, were their birthright, and they were justified in fighting for them".

Manning's political instincts were as sharp as ever, and he had picked on the one point—the reserved seat in the Western Province—which kept the

<sup>39.</sup> Handbook, CNC, p. 502.

Sinhalese and Tamil leadership apart, the one issue on which neither side was willing to compromise. As recently as 22 October 1922 the Secretary of the Congress Committee had, in a letter to the Tamil Maha Jana Sabhai<sup>40</sup> made the point that:

"With regard to the claim for a reserved seat in Colombo for the Tamils, a strong feeling prevails here that the integrity of territorial representation should be maintained and even furthered as the only means of ultimately attaining responsible government..."

"This Committee feels that this [is a] question... upon which an agreement is hardly possible... This Committee trust that with the reservation of this one question your Association will find it possible to send delegates to the coming sessions of the Congress and co-operate with the rest of the country in regard to matters of common interest..."

In September 1923, H. J. C. Pereira as President of the Congress had proposed that 'the reserved seat' in the Western Province be converted into a seat for the Tamils for the whole island. But even this compromise was unacceptable to the Tamils.<sup>41</sup>

The Congress responded to the reforms proposals of 11 January 1923 by adopting unanimously at a meeting held on 20 April 1923, two resolutions: that

- (1) "This Congress condemns as unsatisfactory and reactionary the scheme of reforms proposed in the Secretary of State's despatch of 11th January, and re-asserts the necessity for a substantial territorially-elected majority in the Legislative Council".
- (2) "This Congress views with great misgivings and grave concern the reversion to Communal representation as the basic principle of the scheme, as undemocratic and calculated to cause disunion among the different communities in the Island".42

It was decided also to send a reform's delegation to Whitehall to place the Congress case before The Secretary of State for the Colonies, and the Colonial Office. The delegation prepared two comprehensive memoranda on constitutional reform setting out their proposals in detail, which they submitted to the Colonial Office.<sup>43</sup>

Their efforts were not without success for a modification of the scheme was promised for early 1924 after elections to the new Legislative Council had been held. These modifications did not amount to any fundamental changes in the structure, but as a gesture of conciliation two more territorial scats were allowed,

<sup>40.</sup> See, The Hindu Organ 10 May 1923, The Ceylon Independent, 16 May 1923.

<sup>41.</sup> The Ceylon Independent, 10 September 1923, 17 September 1923.

<sup>42.</sup> Handbook, CNC, p. 522.

<sup>43.</sup> See, Handbook, CNC, pp. 530-563. The memoranda was presented by James Pieris and D. B. Jayatilaka on behalf of the Reforms Delegation.

one each in the Western and Southern Provinces,<sup>44</sup> and the Colonial Office also yielded to the representations of the Muslims and the Indians (who were supported in this by the Ceylon National Congress) and agreed to the election instead of nomination of the Muslim and the Indian members, thus increasing the number of elected members to twenty eight. Thus a principle which Cowell had enunciated in September 1922 was at last adopted. This change gave Ceylon a representative legislature within the meaning of Section I of the Colonial Laws Validity Act. This may be regarded as a compromise on the first of the two resolutions adopted by the Congress in April 1923. But there was nothing done to give satisfaction on the second of the resolutions.

Under the 1920 constitution the Kandyans were given communal electorates, largely because of Manning's insistence. But within a year or so of the elections to the Legislative Council of 1921, the Kandyans were assured by the Congress leadership that territorial seats in the Kandyan Provinces under a reformed Legislative Council would not be contested by the low country Sinhalese, and these assurances won the adherents of the communal principle among the Kandyans, over to a support of the territorial principle. Manning had watched this development with dismay. In a private letter to Grindle of 1 March 1922 he remarked that:

"... the Kandyans, I am afraid... have thrown in their lot with their Sinhalese Low-Country friends: up to a point I can understand their attitude, but it is not a pleasing revelation to me of their change of spirit. We shall hope, however, to protect them even against themselves in the long run". 45

The undertaking given by the Congress leadership to the Kandyans could never have been honoured for Congress did not have either the party machinery or the party discipline which could have enforced this decision on their supporters. In the 1924 elections only three Kandyan seats returned Kandyans to the Legislative Council. To explain the defeat of the Kandyans as being the result of their lack of sophistication in political matters, and a consequence of their resistence to the liberalising influences of western rule, as many did at that time, 46 afforded little consolation to the Kandyans. Indeed after the elections of 1924 the prominent Kandyan members of the Congress most notably A. F. Molamure, Dr. T. B. Kobbekaduwa, and P. B. Ratnayake associated themselves with the agitation for separate representation for "the Kandyan race"...

"... in our Legislative Assembly, and that our entity as a separate and distinct community should otherwise too be recognised".47

<sup>44.</sup> Eventually there was no second seat for the Southern Province, but seats were assigned to two divisions of the Western Province (designated A and B) and one for the town of Colombo.

<sup>45.</sup> C.O. 54/851. Manning to Grindle, letter of 1 March 1922.

<sup>46.</sup> For example, an editorial in the Ceylon Independent, 13 November 1924.

<sup>47.</sup> The Ceylon Independent, 28 February 1925.

A Kandyan communal organisation, the Kandyan National Assembly was formed in 1925 in opposition to the Congress, and at the inaugural sessions of the Assembly held in December that year the Kandyan demand for separate representation was affirmed.

ByNovember 1927 the Kandyan National Assembly put forward a demand for the creation of a federal state in Ceylon, with regional autonomy for the Kandyans. Ulster was apparently the analogy they had in mind. The faith in federalism as the solution to the Kandyan problem remained a keynote of their political demands for over a decade thereaster. They found Manning and his successor Sir Hugh Clifford very sympathetic to their demands and indeed quite eager to support their claims to a special status, in the hope of using the Kandyans as a conservative buffer against the forces of political agitation and reform.

By 1925 the Congress had been reduced to a demonstrably low-country Sinhalese organization. Manning's tactics had proved to be ruthlessly effective. Only a small group of radicals who adhered to Goonesinha had the resilience, imagination and tactical skill to attempt a new initiative in politics. The urban working class of Colombo was pushing its way into the political arena, and with that came glimpses of a new dimension in Ceylon politics. Indeed one of the most striking developments in Ceylon in the early 1920's was the emergence of a radical challenge to the domination of the island's politics. Political activity could no longer be confined to the upper strata of society to be manipulated by them in their own interest with total disregard of the rest of the population.

Within the Congress the radicals were a small and uninfluential force. While they shared with the Congress leadership a desire for self-government as a political objective, they recognised, as the Congress leadership did not, the need for far-reaching social and economic reforms as the concomitant of political reform. Besides, the Congress leadership were totally opposed to a radicalisation of political activity, and to the introduction of agitational techniques which involved the bringing in of the masses into political activity. When the radicals eventually broke away from the Congress, that organisation, already weakened by the defection of the minorities, became more than ever a conservative organisation out of tune with the emerging political forces of the day.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>48.</sup> See, The Ceylon Independent, 7 December 1925, 31 January 1927, 17 November 1927,

<sup>49.</sup> C.O. 54/886—File 32020, A.G.M.F[letcher]'s minute of 18 August 1927, enclosure in Hugh Clifford's confidential despatch of 19 September 1927 sent from Kuala Lumpur.

<sup>50.</sup> For discussion of these points see; de Silva, K.M. "The Reform and Nationalist Movements in the Early Twentieth Century," in ed., de Silva, K.M. The University of Ceylon, History of Ceylon, Vol. III. (Colombo, 1973). pp. 387-407, especially pp. 403-407; and de Silva, K.M. "The History and Politics of the Transfer of Power," pp. 489-533, especially pp. 489-497, in the same volume

# Appendix A-JAMES PIERIS'S REFORMS SCHEME

"That His Excellency the Governor may be pleased to forward to His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies the following suggestions for the reform of the Constitution of Ceylon, and the amendment of the Order in Council, 1920:—

- (1) That the Legislative Council should be reconstituted, so that, with due safe-guards for minorities, it should consist of forty-five members, of whom six should be officials and twentyeight elected on a territorial basis.
- (2) That the non-territorial electorates and the representation of minorities provided for in the present Constitution be retained; but the Burgher and Mohammadan communities be represented by two members each.
- (3) That the Legislative Council should be presided over by a Speaker elected by itself.
- (4) That the Legislative Council should continue to have control over the Budget as hitherto.
- (5) That residence in an electoral area should not be a necessary qualification for a candidate for election.
- (6) That disqualification for election by reason of dismissal from Government Service be limited to cases where the dismissal has taken place in consequence of an offence involving moral turpitude; and as regards disqualification by reason of imprisonment, the same provisions do apply as in England for Members of Parliament.
- (7) As regards the qualification of voters, that (a) imprisonment be not a disqualification after the period of imprisonment; (b) the qualifying residence in an electoral area be reduced from one year to six months; (c) the franchise be widened by the reduction of the property and the income qualifications.
- (8) That the distribution of seats in the territorial electorates should be as follows:—

Colombo		3 seats
Colombo District		ı seat
Negombo District		I seat
Kalutara District		I seat
Galle Town	-	I seat
Nuwara Eliya District	-	I seat
Province of Uva	_	I seat
Ratnapura District	7-100mm	I seat
Kegalla District	*****	I seat
North Central Province	To the same	I seat
Galle District		
Matara and Hambantota Districts		1 seat
Chilaw District		I seat
Puttalam District		I seat
Kurunegala District		I seat
Kandy Town		I seat
Kandy and Matale Districts		I seat
Jaffna Town		I seat
Jaffna District		3 seats
Mullaitivu and Vavuniya Districts		I seat
Mannar District		I seat
Batticaloa Town		
Batticaloa District		I seat
Trincomalee District		I seat
**IIICOIIIAICC LAISITICE		I seat

- (9) That all persons irrespective of race resident in any electorate, otherwise qualified, be entitled to vote for the election of a member or members to represent such electorate.
- (10) That the Executive Council should consist of the Governor as President and three members, with whom should be associated three ministers entrusted with portfolios chosen from Members of the Legislative Council elected on a territorial basis.
- (11) That sub-section (1) of section 5 of the Order in Council making provision for the appointment of Nominated Unofficial Members be repealed.
- (12) That clause 51 of the Order in Council be repealed.
- (13) That a proviso be added to clause 52 of the Order in Council as follows: "Provided, however, any member or members dissenting from the certification of the Governor may put in a written statement of his or their reasons for such dissent and such statement be appended to the report required in the succeeding section".

# PARLIAMENTARY SUPERVISION OF ADMINIS-TRATION IN CEYLON, 1947 TO 1956: PROBLEMS AND ISSUES

#### W. A. WISWA-WARNAPALA

Sir Ivor Jennings, reviewing the operation of the Soulbury Constitution in its first year, identified a number of defects which he thought would interfere with the proper functioning of Cabinet government in Ceylon. Some of them related primarily to the question of parliamentary supervision of administration. His complaint was that members of Parliament continued to exhibit a great interest in the details of administration, and this development, he contended, had been reinforced by the failure of the parliamentary machine to provide adequate opportunities for debate on general policy. He argued that this interest of the ordinary members in details of administration, was a continuation of the practice which developed during the Donoughmore dispensation under which the members of the State Council intervened in matters of administration.2 This, though quoted often to justify interference in matters of administration by members of Parliament, does not provide an adequate explanation. The availability of opportunities for parliamentary supervision of administration needs to be investigated to see whether it was the ineffectiveness of parliamentary instruments of control which encouraged this development. While taking into consideration the relative significance of electoral and political factors, the main aim of this essay is to examine the efficacy of those instruments of control which are at the immediate disposal of the members of Parliament.3

Parliament carries the prime responsibility for the control of both taxation and expenditure, and therefore, the concept of the member as taxpayers' defender is not obsolete. It is this concept that strengthens the need to exercise

I. Jennings, Ivor. Constitution of Ceylon. (Oxford, 1951), pp. 125-135.

<sup>2.</sup> Ibid., p. 88.

<sup>3.</sup> This paper does not seek to discuss the Auditor-General, the Public Accounts Committee and the Select Committees. The petitions and the role of the Petition Committee too have not been discussed. The petitions, when tabled, are referred to the respective Committee, which after sometime refers them back to the bureaucracy for action. Their impact, however, is very negligible. The more important institutions of parliamentary control of administration, which do not enter into the discussion in this paper, will be examined in another paper.

that critical function more effectively in an epoch when the size and complexity of Government activities have increased considerably. The view has been expressed, in relation to the House of Commons, that 'the adaptation or extension of existing devices could meet the requirements'. The devices that obtained in the House of Representatives of Ceylon, though patterned on the procedure that prevails at Westminster, represented a compromise between the procedure of the House of Commons and the previous legislative experience of the island. A number of procedural difficulties have arisen because of this amalgamation of procedures, and despite this, such instruments as the Budget Debate, Supplementary Estimates, Questions, Adjournment Hour and Private Member Resolutions have proved effective in exercising a certain degree of control over administration.

# **Budget Debate**

The debates, which provide the House with one of its more effective occasions for criticism, take a variety of forms; the annual budget, supplementary estimates, periodical censure motions and bills. In Ceylon, the Appropriation Bill is presented at the first reading, and the second reading is the occasion on which the Minister of Finance presents the budget. There is no debate immediately after the Budget Speech, and the House adjourns by prior arrangement for 10 to 14 days in order to enable the members to study the budgetary proposals. The Second Reading is allotted 7 days, and the allocation of time for speeches is done in consultation with the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition. The Standing Orders were amended in 1969, and now 9 days are allotted for the Second Reading. Attempts have been made to organise the debate and control speeches but experience has shown that these have had little or no effect. Indeed it could be said that the discussion at the debate on the Appropriation Bill has deteriorated, and there is a variety of reasons for this.

In Ceylon, unlike in England, the second reading of the budget attracts a large number of speakers, and the discussion is not necessarily dominated by the Opposition. In the 1954-55 and 1955-56 budget debates, 55 and 69 speeches were made respectively. The general convention is that this debate shall be confined to matters of policy and important issues. It provides members with an opportunity to review the policy of the Government and examine the financial implications of the budgetary proposals. The main policy issues are discussed, but the emphasis is on the adequacy or inadequacy of the expenditure in terms of the constituency needs. But members, instead of speaking on general policy issues, take up issues which normally should be dealt under Votes,

<sup>4.</sup> Hanson, A. H. and Crick, Bernard. House of Commons in Transition (Fontana Books, 1970), p. 46.

Perera, N. M. 'Financial Procedure in the House of Representatives', in Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1956, p. 25.

despite reminders from successive Speakers, in an effort to direct the debate, that speeches based on specific needs and parochial grievances could well be made at the Committee Stage.<sup>6</sup> Thus there is in practice little difference between the speeches made at the Second Reading debate and at the Committee Stage. The utilisation of this occasion for the ventilation of parochial grievances has minimised its effect as an instrument of control over the administration.

### Committee Stage

As in the Second Reading, the Committee Stage has certain characteristics that are peculiar to Ceylon. The Bill is committed to the whole House and Standing Order 74 (5) provides that 'not more than sixteen of the days allotted shall be allotted to the Committee Stage of the Appropriation Bill, and on the last of such days at 8 p.m the Chairman shall, unless the bill has previously been reported, put forthwith the Question on any amendment then under discussion and then successively on any Government amendments to that Head and the Ouestion necessary to dispose of that Head, and then proceed successively to put forthwith the Question with respect to each Ministry's Heads, that the total amounts of the Heads outstanding in the Ministry's estimates be inserted in the Schedule for the services defined in those estimates and then that the several Schedules respectively stand part of the Bill, and the House shall not be adjourned until the Bill has been reported'. This was the procedure adopted in the Committee Stage discussion, and the 1969 amendment to the Standing Orders increased the number of allotted days from twelve to sixteen days. Though this has been done to accommodate the enlarged membership of the House of Representatives, the nature of the Committee Stage discussion remains unaltered.8 The procedure that came into operation in 1947 is that the debates on sub-heads will be in respect of Amendments to Votes, and the relevant Standing Order required that notice should be given for amendments. Mr. Speaker, Sir Francis Molamure, for example, adhered to the requirements of this Standing Order. This kind of procedure was fairly cumbersome, and it interfered with the enthusiasm of the ordinary member of Parliament.

In Ceylon, the Committee Stage is not entirely an occasion for the members of the Opposition; in fact, there is equally active participation of the members of the Government Party. They are not concerned with the elimination of wasteful expenditure but only with getting certain of their constituency grievances redressed. This, in fact, has become a procedural problem, and it creates special difficulties for the Chairman. At these detates, there is no party control, and the members speak for themselves. The Chairman in order to avoid such situations, often reminds the House of the need to draw up a programme for the Committee Stage, and that this could be done by convening a joint meeting

<sup>6.</sup> Hansard (H[onse] of R[epresentatives]) Vol. 18, column 595.

<sup>7.</sup> Vide Standing Orders of the House of Representatives.

<sup>8.</sup> The House of Representatives was enlarged in 1960 and the membership increased from 101 to 151 members, and this required a revision in the Standing Orders.

of the Leader of the Opposition, the Leader of the House and the Chief Government Whip'. In 1952, the Leader of the Opposition began consulting the leaders of the parties within the Opposition, and this practice was continued in the subsequent years. Though this did result in a certain degree of discipline into the ranks of the Opposition, was nevertheless a total success.

A number of difficulties have arisen at the Committee Stage of the discussion. Often members did not take directives from the Opposition. Others have spoken four or five times under the same Head of Vote. The speeches were generally of a repetitive character, and successive Chairman have had to remind members of the need to avoid 'tedious repetition'. There is also the practice of interruptions by members, accompanied by heated arguments. This, which should normally happen at the Second Reading where principles of policy are discussed, happens often at the Committee Stage, and the Chairman has, on certain occasions, been compelled to issue warnings running to nearly 50 lines in one column of the Hansard. In fact, Mr. H. S. Ismail, as Chairman of Committees, complained that the standard of the proceedings had deteriorated, and this was particularly so in the Second Parliament.

The other defects relate to the order in which the Ministries are taken up for discussion. The estimates in Ceylon are in an order, according to which the Votes of the Governor-General, the Prime Minister and the Minister of Finance could be taken up at the initial stage of the discussion. As a result of this, three or four Ministries receive the maximum amount of discussion within the 16 days allotted for the Committee Stage. Despite repeated warnings from the Chair to the effect that 'members cannot take too much time over one Minister', the estimates of the Prime Minister once took up as much as  $4\frac{1}{2}$  hours. 11 The explanation is that certain departments, for instance the department of Police which came under the purview of the Prime Minister, invited criticisms from practically every member. This type of conduct results in two things. Time needs to be saved for the discussion, and the Chairman is compelled to impose a ceiling for the discussion of certain Ministries. In 1955-56, he allowed two hours for the discussion on the Ministry of Home Affairs. The next is the scant attention which certain Ministries receive at this stage of the discussion. On the last day of the discussion, quite often, the votes of as many as five or six Ministries are taken up, and consequently no proper examination of their estimates take place. When the time is limited, members take a Ministry's votes together apart from Heads, and examine them, and thereby the effect of parliamentary supervision is minimised. The most glaring defect is that certain departments do not get any attention at all, and in fact, no word is spoken on them. In 1955-56, nearly 24 departments were not discussed at all. The minor departments such as Wild Life, Social Services, Town and Country Planning, National

<sup>9.</sup> Hansard. (H of R.) Vol. 22, 1955-56, column 1348.

<sup>10.</sup> *Ibid.*, column 1348.

II. Ibid., column 547.

Housing, Postal and Telecommunications Services, Meteorology, Broadcasting, Aviation, Ports other than Colombo, Motor Traffic, and Coastal Lights received no attention at all. All this illustrates the ineffectiveness with which certain instruments of parliamentary supervision of administration are employed in Ceylon.

Despite these criticisms, the general view is that it had served a useful function. Dr. N. M. Perera, the present Minister of Finance, has stated that 'Ministers have been at their wit's end to go carefully through their estimates studying all the details of their proposals and be ready to answer any question that might be put to them. It has made the Committee Stage alive, interesting and useful. Much wasteful expenditure has been avoided as a result of this detailed criticism. Ministers have found that they could not get away with vague generalisations, that they could be pinned down point by point'.12 The truth of this assessment could be illustrated by a number of examples. The procedure is to propose a cut in respect of a sub-head, and thereby the opportunity was seized to discuss the department or specifically the officer who came under the particular item, or amendments were moved to obtain information. Thus, in one instance, a member moved that 'the Vote be reduced by Rs. 10/in respect of sub-head-Puisne Judges'. The same member, in fact, stated that he needs 'some information with regard to the remuneration of Puisne Judges'. 13 If this appears to indicate that the members were conscious of their lack of knowledge of such points, the main reason for this is the form in which the estimates are presented. Not much supplementary information is appended to estimates in Ceylon. An explanatory note on the variations ir the year's figures could reduce the number of questions that may be asked. In addition. the estimates run to about 800 closely printed pages, and very few members go through each and every item. Ministers of Finance have established the practice of submitting a 'Survey of the Economy' report along with the Annual Budget. This report, though a useful source of information, does not serve a special function in the discussion of the budgetary proposals. As a result of the lack of information members tend to indulge in detailed criticism, and this has become a source of irritation for Ministers. Again the practice of members to ask questions on matters of detail is equally irksome to Ministers who, as a result, find it difficult to discuss some of the important principles and issues involved. Successive Speakers have strived to establish the function of the Committee Stage, by repeatedly reminding the members that they must address themselves to matters that are within the knowledge of the Ministers. 4 but to no avail for the trend continues, and members still attempt to control the bureaucracy and examine the performance of the administration, through detailed criticism at the Committee Stage.

<sup>12.</sup> Perera, N. M. op. cit., p. 26.

<sup>13.</sup> Hansard (H of R) Vol. 6, column 1417.

<sup>14.</sup> Hansard (H of R.) Vol. 22, column 757.

# Supplementary Estimates

Supplementary Estimates form yet another stage at which the departments and the bureaucracy come under parliamentary supervision. 'There are Supplementary Estimates', stated Dr. N. M. Perera, 'which in Ceylon have become a very useful opportunity for the average member to draw the attention of Government to any administrative shortcomings on the part of the Government or policy shortcomings'.15 It was the large turnover of Supplementary Estimates, which perhaps encouraged members to utilise the occasion for the examination of the performance of departments. For example, in the financial year 1953-54, as many as 108 supplementary estimates were passed, and in addition, 5 such estimates were outstanding. They dealt with the finances of 53 departments. 16 The increase in supplementary estimates has been due to the adoption of the procedure current in the Donoughmore period. Jennings, referring to this, stated that 'the State Council regarded the sub-heads as binding on the Departments: but this produced a ludicrous situation that a Supplementary Estimate was often proposed to increase the expendituré on a sub-head although there were savings on the other suo-heads and no Supplementary Estimate was legally required. The result was to increase enormously the number of Supplementary Estimates, and most of them were quite unnecessary legally'.17 Though some of these suggestions have been adopted, they are still a recurring feature in Ceylon. Its undesirability was often emphasised, and Mr. Felix Dias Bandaranaike, as Minister of Finance, in the course of a Budget Speech, argued that 'not in the case of the last budget but also in the case of every budget in the last several years the scale on which Supplementary Estimates have been presented to this House shows a deplorable indifference on the part of the Government to the responsibility of revealing from year to year the true financial position of the country and the true financial implications of the Government's proposed undertakings'.18 This, in effect, represented a stricture on the competence of the bureaucracy. Officials have failed in the determination of expenditure, and more particularly, they suffer from the notion that it is possible at any moment to go to the legislature to obtain approval for supplementary provision. Also the frequent transfers of departments from one Ministry to another have interfered with correct forecasting of expenditure.

The resort to Supplementary Estimates is indicative of the fact that the figures presented at the budget were not correctly drawn up in the first instance. In certain cases, the virement power was used, and savings were transferred from one sub-head to another sub-head. In 1954-55, there were about 1,800

<sup>15.</sup> vide Dr. N. M. Perera's comments in Constitution and Public Finance in Ceylon (Institute of Chartered Accountants of Ceylon, Colombo, 1964) p. 22.

<sup>16.</sup> Hansard. (H of R) Vol. 20, 1953-54. column 407.

<sup>17.</sup> Jennings, Ivor. op. cit., p. 116.

<sup>18.</sup> Quoted in Jayawardane, N. U. Public Einance in Ceylon (Combb., 1964).

sub-heads, and the virement power was exercised in 473 cases. <sup>19</sup> Yet a number of Supplementary Estimates came before the House, and the opportunity was used to make comments by way of criticism of the sums asked for, and always in the form of pointing out the methods by which the money is to be expended. The debate on a Supplementary Estimate, though the rule was to concentrate on the subject matter of the estimate, dealt with a variety of matters pertaining to the particular department. This, as pointed out by Sir Ivor Jennings, was another legacy of the Donoughmore system. <sup>20</sup> The members of the Opposition dominated these discussions, and one or two of them made it a practice to refer to a variety of administrative matters. It was perhaps this feature which made this instrument of parliamentary supervision effective in the Ceylonese context.

#### **Private Member Motions**

There are private member motions which incidentally also provide some sort of control for they may be pleading for a particular line of policy'.21 This assessment by Dr. N. M. Perera needs further explanation to see whether such motions exercise a 'definite control'. In the period 1948-56, 116 private member motions were tabled, and they reflected both constituency-grievances and administrative matters. A large number of such resolutions dealt with policy issues, and some of them were subsequently incorporated in Government legislation. Of the 116 motions, 36 dealt with policy problems; they either sought changes or implementation of new proposals, on issues such as the nationalisation of bus transport, the take-over of foreign owned plantations, unemployment, swabasha policy, and US planes refuelling in Ceylon. These not only contained political overtones, but the discussion also provided opportunities for the examination of the performance of the administration. The constituency grievances attracted nearly 39 private member's motions during this period, and some of them dealt with such specific needs as the anicuts in Welimada, landless peasants in Kandy, a new Post Office for Dehiwala, the housing problem of the apothecary at Maldeniya Rural Hospital etc. Such motions provided the members with the opportunity to examine the policy of the department, and at the same time to criticise the bureaucracy for their lethargy, negligence and inefficiency. The members, when introducing such motions, often make statements such as these--'No action has been taken in the last  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years by the Department of Agriculture'. The motion, therefore, was introduced in order to draw the attention of the Government to the slowness of the pace of village expansion schemes. There were occasions on which they referred to particular officials. A member, speaking on his motion, said that 'I could not meet the Director of Medical and Sanitary Services. The

<sup>19.</sup> Hansard (H of R) Vol. 18, 1954-55. column 403.

<sup>20.</sup> Jennings, Ivor. op. cit., p. 117.

<sup>21.</sup> Perera, N. M. Constitution and Public Finance in Ceylon, op. cit., p. 22.

<sup>22.</sup> Hansard (H of R) Vol. 9, column 735.

papers are suppressed by the Deputy Director.'23 Such allegations are not infrequent at these discussions, and therefore, the instrument of the private members' motions kept the bureaucracy alert and sensitive to the needs of the constituencies.

These motions emanated largely from the members of the Opposition, and the Government, in the early years of parliamentary Government, was hostile to such motions. They rarely provided the House with a quorum to discuss the motions, and even the Ministers concerned did not take any interest to be present in the House. The Opposition, on the other hand, fought tenaciously for the recognition of this parliamentary opportunity, and it was able to obtain a certain amount of assistance from Speaker Molamure. Two or three members from the Opposition always spoke on such motions. The effective utilisation of this opportunity by them influenced the members of the Government Parliamentary Party to introduce motions, which primarily dealt with electoral needs. For instance, members of the Government Party tabled five or six motions at a time, and practically every one of them dealt with constituency matters. Apart from their impact on the Government and the bureaucracy, it helped in the recognition of this occasion as a legitimate parliamentary opportunity of the private member.

#### Votes of No Confidence

The formula of the Vote of No Confidence, which the Opposition successfully utilised to embarass the party in power, formed yet another instrument of parliamentary control. There were periodical censure motions sponsored by a party, or by a group of parties or the Opposition as a whole, though sometimes divisions within the ranks of the Opposition imposed limitations. They dealt with defects in the Government, in the administration and the inadequacy of governmental policy and executive control, and reference to these aspects demanded discussion over both specific and general issues. In the period 1948-70, 18 such motions were tabled in the House of Representatives, and it would be useful to examine the issues involved.

11 out of 18 censure motions expressed lack of confidence in Government, while the rest was tabled to censure individual Ministers for their acts of commission and omission. The Votes of No Confidence in Government dealt primarily with policy issues, the discussion of which created embarrassment for both the Government and the bureaucracy. The Opposition moved a motion of No Confidence in the Government over the issue of a budget leakage in December 1948. At the budget debate, it was pointed out by the Opposition that there had been a leakage of budget secrets, and they demanded the appointment of a Committee of investigation. <sup>25</sup> This Committee held that a definite leakage had

<sup>23.</sup> Hansard. (H of R) Vol. 16, column 2365.

<sup>24.</sup> Hansard. (H of R) Vol. 7, column 1207.

<sup>25.</sup> Hansard (H of R) Vol. 5, 1948-49, column 609.

taken place and the Opposition seized this opportunity to table a censure motion on the Ministry of Finance. In the course of the debate, the Minister, the Permanent Secretary and the officials of the Treasury and the Department of Customs were pilloried.

Such issues as allegations against a Minister in the Cabinet, the attitude of the Government towards members of the public service, the utilisation of the machinery of Government for party purposes, the cost of living, the continuation of emergency powers etc. became subjects for censure motions, and the policy of the Government, the performance of a particular Minister and officials came under attack. The Government, knowing the impact of these censure motions, attempted in many an instance to prevent a discussion. Some excuse, constitutional or tactical, was used to achieve this objective. A point of order was raised when aVote of No Confidence dealing with the dissatisfaction of the public servants was tabled in the House, and the original motion was amended to suit the constitutional position regarding the Public Service Commission.<sup>26</sup> There were occasions when they refused to debate certain censure motions because of the 'nature of political embarassment' inherent in them.27 However, the strategy of the Vote of No Confidence has been effectively utilised by the Parliamentary Opposition in Ceylon. Its impact has been fairly effective in controlling the bureaucracy and making Government sensitive to the needs of the people. This strategy could have been more successful and effective if the Opposition had displayed the characteristics of an alternative Government.

#### **Ouestions**

Seven Standing Orders govern conditions relating to the Question Time in the House of Representatives, and Standing Order No. 36 imposes a number of restrictions on the right to ask questions.28 The object of a question is to seek information; not more than half an hour is allocated to questions and no member is entitled to ask more than three questions for oral answer on any day. This is now insufficient because there are 156 members to avail themselves of this opportunity. In addition to the three questions which a member is entitled to ask on any one day, each member has the right to put three supplementary questions to each question. There are not too many supplementaries in Ceylon, and the reason is the lack of sufficient information.29 Question Time, however, is overburdened in Ceylon, and it is in this context that conditions of ad nissibility assume a certain degree of importance. Standing Order No. 37 empowers the Speaker to decide admissibility and there are eleven rules which could be used to determine admissibility. The advantage of these rules is that the Speaker may be able to allow a manageable number of questions on any one day.

<sup>26.</sup> Hansard (H of R) Vol. 9, 1950-51. Column 13. 27. Hansard (H of R) Vol. 11, 1951-52, Column 376.

<sup>28.</sup> vide Standing Orders of the House of Representatives.

<sup>29.</sup> Perera, N. M. Constitution and Public Finance in Ceylon, op. cit., p. 22.

In Ceylon, all questions appearing in the Order Paper are not taken up, and something in the range of 23 questions are put down for answer. This, it is said, has been adopted in order to defend the right of the members in asking supplementary questions.<sup>30</sup> During the first two Parliaments, the number of questions increased, and as many as 3944 questions were answered in the House of Representatives. 3025 of them were oral questions, and the written and supplementary questions numbered 718 and 201 respectively. The growth of governmental powers and the expansion in the organisation of Government encouraged the members to seek information; the need to share the 'pork-barrel' was perhaps the basic reason for this increase in the number of questions. The extension of social and economic welfare affected their electoral interests, which demanded a dialogue between the bureaucracy and the politicians. The delay in the realisation of this dialogue, in effect, compelled the members of Parliament to ask questions in regard to the performance of the bureaucracy. The constituency-grievances were more often than not related to things pertaining to the ad ninistration, and therefore the members specialised in matters of administrative detail.

Questions, as in the House of Commons, were used as an element in the doctrine of individual Ministerial responsibility. In respect of this, the Standing Orders of the House of Representatives stated that 'questions relating to public affairs may be put to the Prime Minister or to any Minister or Parliamentary Secretary relating to subjects with which the member questioned is concerned. In the problem of Ministerial responsibility arose from the official actions of Ministers and Departments, and questions relating to his authority and responsibility help to keep the Minister within the confines of his specific powers. In Ceylon, a great deal of their powers are laid down in Acts of Parliament, and this assists both the Minister and the member to remain in the respective areas of authority.

Number of Oral questions asked in respect of Ministries during the first two Parliaments.\*

	1947-1952 First Parliament	1952-1956 Second Parliament
Local Government & Health	131	303
Education	103	<b>268</b>
Defence & External Affairs	86	93
Agriculture & Lands	59	207
Transport	58	129
Finance	54	115
Labour	52	71
Industries	35	39
Home Affairs	31	105
Food	31	101
Tustice	17	18
Posts	12	45
Total	669	1474

<sup>30.</sup> Hansard (H of R) Vol. 3, column 623.

<sup>31.</sup> Standing Orders of the House of Representatives.

<sup>\*</sup>For the compilation of this data, Hansards were perused, and the questions were counted on the basis of their relationship to Ministries. The changes in the allocation of subjects in the Cabinets were taken into consideration.

It will be seen from the above table that in the years 1947-52, the Ministries of Education, Health and Local Government, Agriculture and Lands, Labour and Social Services, Defence and External Affairs, and Food and Cooperatives received the greatest attention while Justice, Posts, Finance and Commerce received very scant attention. This is understandable in view of the fact that Education, Health, and Local Government were directly engaged in social welfare, and their impact was felt quite acutely at the constituency level. In such areas of governmental activity, parliamentary supervision through oral questions, in fact, came to be exercised effectively. In 1952-56, as indicated in the table, question time came to be more widely used, and the basic reason was the emerging unity in the ranks of the Opposition. Though this had an impact on the use of parliamentary opportunities, the questions asked in the House displayed the same trend. Such Ministries as Education, Health, Local Government, Lands, Agriculture and Food, etc. invited more questions. Also there was the desire of the ordinary member to seek information, often on matters relating to his constituency. This, however, does not mean that issues of policy were not involved at Question Time. Questions, though used largely to ventilate electoral grievances and partially as a basic parliamentary strategy, functioned as a valuable method of parliamentary supervision of administration.

# Adjournment Hour

In addition to Questions, the half hour adjournment may be used to discuss the affairs of Ministries and departments. According to Standing Order 18, a member could move 'the adjournment of the House for the purpose of discussing a definite matter of urgent public importance'. Despite this particular requirement, matters pertaining to Ministries and Departments are taken up for discussion. Though some of these adjournment motions were useful in drawing attention of Ministers to minor deficiencies of various Departments, they rarely referred to 'definite' matters of urgent public importance. In fact, routine matters of administration came to be discussed during this half hour, and its original function underwent a change to make it another Question Time.

On the Half Hour Adjournment, 657 issues have been debated during the period 1947-56. These motions concentrated heavily on matters of administrative detail, and it was this aspect which needed to be investigated. An average of 5 to 10 members competed at adjournment hour to initiate a discussion on some matter, and the daily average of issues raised varied between 5 and 10. The interest with which certain issues were raised at adjournment hour shows the political significance of the Ministries and Departments. In the period 1947-56, after the Prime Minister (103 adjournment motions discussed matters pertaining to his Ministry) followed the Minister of Food with 71, the Minister of Education with 68, the Minister of Health and Local Government

<sup>32.</sup> Standing Orders of the House of Representatives.

with 61, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands with 60, the Minister of Finance with 50, the Minister of Labour and Social Services with 38, the Minister of Transport with 37, the Minister of Trade with 35 whilst the Minister of Industries received only 27 and the Ministry of Posts only 14. It would be difficult to say that all these adjournment motions discussed matters of public importance, and this increase in such motions suggests that in Ceylon the adjournment hour functioned more in the form of a 'postponed Question Time'.33 The explanation for this is that the conventional rules pertaining to Question Time imposed certain limitations, and therefore, this parliamentary device was used in the form of another Question Time. There is also the fact that all parochial problems could be raised at Question Time, and this perhaps brought in a number of constituency-oriented issues at adjournment time. Despite these characteristics, the fact remains that these debates enabled useful information to be obtained and examined without making too heavy a demand on the time of the House or on Ministers and their officials. The Ministers, though they accommodated these motions, were seldom very enthusiastic about them and some of them often allowed the discussion to be led by his deputy. Yet, the adjournment hour, even in the form of an extended Question Time, has served a useful function in exercising some form of control over the bureaucracy in Ceylon.

All this indicates, that Ceylon, in the course of her parliamentary history, has evolved a procedure that is unique to Ceylon. It is this aspect which makes it difficult to examine the Ceylonese system exclusively from the point of view of the conventions available at Westminster. The Ceylonese interpretation is that all these instruments of parliamentary control of administration have functioned successfully. The heterogeneity of the Opposition, however, minimised the efficacy of these parliamentary opportunities.

Weerawardene, I. D. S. The Senate of Ceylon At Work. (University of Ceylon, 1955) p. 25.

# THE HISTORY OF CEYLON (circa 1500-1658) A historiographical and bibliographical survey

C. R. DE SILVA AND D. DE SILVA

Paul E. Pieris in the introduction to his Ceylon: the Portuguese Era Vol. I published in 1913 stated that the period 1505-1658 in the history of the island may be "conveniently, if somewhat inaccurately, termed the Portuguese era". In a book published two decades later, A History of Ceylon for Schools, 1505-1911 (item 283) Fr. S. G. Perera was much less cautious, and he divided the more recent history of the island into three periods, of which the first was the Portuguese period, 1505-1658. Fr. Perera's work, as well as another book by David Hussey entitled Ceylon and World History, (Colombo, 1932), also tended to foster the related concept that 1505 also marked the beginning of modern Ceylon, thus establishing a modern period of Ceylon history which happily coincided with that of Western Europe.

These ideas were, however, by no means unchallenged. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy writing in 1908 on Sinhalese arts and crafts in the eighteenth century had entitled his book *Medieval Sinhalese Art*. H. W. Codrington in his work, A Short History of Ceylon (London, 1926) placed little emphasis on 1505 as the crucial date, although a decade later he thought of the medieval Sinhalese kingdom ending in the early sixteenth century (JCBRAS, Vol. VII, New Series 1960, pp. 93-103). Indeed 1505 has always been a rather doubtful starting point for even the evidence that the Portuguese arrived in Ceylon in that year has never been conclusive (See item 223).

A different view point was also advanced by G. C. Mendis who maintained that the modernisation of Ceylon originated only "with the British occupation of the Maritime Provinces" in 1796. (G. C. Mendis, Ceylon under the British, Colombo, 1944, p. ix). Nevertheless, the immense popularity of Fr. S. G. Perera's work ensured his ideas wider currency than those of his opponents. His book was reprinted seven times between 1932 and 1955. A Sinhalese translation, first published in 1948, was reprinted thrice by 1963. His views received added impetus by being embodied in an extremely readable school text written by Horace Perera entitled Ceylon under Western Rule, (Colombo, 1954).

A frontal attack on these ideas was first delivered by K. W. Goonewardena. In a series of lectures on Ceylon history delivered at the University of Ceylon,

Peradeniya between 1954 and 1969, he argued that the demarcation of periods in the recent history of the island "on the basis of the European power controlling the island or a part of it" though perhaps convenient for various reasons could give "a false idea of the shaping of history during these periods". He argued that "for instance, though their connection with Ceylon began in 1505, the Portuguese did not exercise political authority until from about 1592. Even then the area they controlled was limited and their hold tenuous. In the day-to-day administration, in economic, social, cultural and religious matters, what was indigenous was far more important than what was Portuguese during this period". The above extracts are derived from an article by him entitled Ceylon in The Historiography of the British Empire-Commonwealth, edited by Robin W. Winks, (Durham, North Carolina, 1966) but much the same views had been expressed by him a decade before this. Though Gconewardena might possibly have overstated his case, his argument is certainly valid. So indeed was his salutary warning on the "type of periodisation which stems from the experience of European history". These views however have as yet had rather limited currency. Recent secondary school texts in Sinhalese show little trace of them. More significant, The University History of Ceylon, Volume I, Parts I and II, published in 1959-1960 were so designed as to end with "the arrival of the Portuguese in 1505".

Mere alteration of terminal dates of periods of history is generally of little practical value. Nevertheless, for a Ceylonese student interested primarily in the historical evolution of the island, a study of history based on indigenous politico-cultural units such as the Kotte period circa 1410-1597, the Kandyan period 1593-1815 and perhaps an intervening Sitawaka period 1521-1593 might be more meaningful than those based on the nationality of the Europeans present in the coastlands. It might also help to avoid the tendency to view Ceylon history from the decks of visiting European ships.

On the other hand the period circa 1500-1658 may be usefully retained in any study of the western impact on Ceylon. Due to the nature of extant literature it is also useful for bibliographical and historiographical surveys. For the first time in the history of the island foreign sources became more useful than local ones in the study of the history of the country.

The first group of historians who dealt with this period of Ceylon history were of course the chroniclers of the Portuguese Eastern Empire—Gaspar Correa, Lopez de Castanheda, Joao de Barros, Diogo do Couto, Antonio Bocarro and Manoel Faria de Souza. These form a motley crowd—differing in style, accuracy and attitudes. Only one of them is known to have visited Ceylon. Two never came to the east at all. Couto went to some length to check his information 'consorting with Sinhalese princes, Moghul ambassadors, Ethiopian Jesuits, learned Brahmins and Banyans'. (The Tragic History of the Sea, 1589-1622, edited by C. R. Boxer, Cambridge, 1959. p. 35). On the other hand Bocarro writing his Decada XIII in Goa in the 1630's did not check

on the clauses of the treaty of 1617 between the Portuguese and the king of Kandy although a copy was available in the archives of which he was the keeper. Yet, they had one obvious characteristic in common. They were all concerned primarily, indeed almost wholly with the activities of the Portuguese whether in Ceylon or elsewhere. There were exceptions. Couto for instance provided a summarised and rather garbled version of the Rajavaliya, one of the Sinhalese chronicles. But generally aspects of Ceylon's literature, life and customs, economy and even those political developments which did not directly affect the Portuguese were regretably, if understandably omitted. Further information on these Portuguese historians can be obtained from C. R. Boxer, 'Three Portuguese historians' in the Boletim de Instituto Portugues de Hongkong Macao, 1948 and articles by J. B. Harrison and I. A. MacGregor in Historical Writings on the Peoples of Asia. London, 1960.

The work of Fr. Fernao de Queyroz also composed in the seventeenth century was somewhat unlike the previously mentioned works being a study centred on Ceylon. Queyroz's book still remains the best single source for the period 1500-1658, although it is open to some of the criticism that is levelled against the other Portuguese writers. In fact, his ability to write a book of over 1000 pages on the temporal and spiritual conquest of Ceylon with so few references to Buddhism and Hinduism would have seemed amazing even considering the author's background, had not there been textbooks published as late as the 1960's on the same period of history with much the same attitude. Due to the specialized nature of his work, however, the scattered references to social and economic conditions found in the *Conquista* are of greater use than those in worksofother contemporary Portuguese writers save perhaps Joao Ribeiro's.

Ribeiro's work is more a descriptive essay than a historical account and embodies the Portuguese common soldier's view of Ceylon. Fortunately for us, Ribeiro proved to be interested in the way of life of the people of southwest Ceylon with whom he lived for eighteen years. His work, together with that of Robert Knox, the English captive who lived in Kandyan territory between 1660-1679, re-inforced by Sinhalese sources help us to form some idea of life in seventeenth century Ceylon. Ribeiro, however, was even more prone than other Portuguese writers to exaggerate the role played by the Portuguese especially in battle fields. He, like his countrymen, often exaggerated the number of their opponents to almost unbelievable proportions, while mestico, Sinhalese, Indian and African auxiliaries who fought for the Portuguese were, as often as not, conveniently forgotten. On the whole, however, the Portuguese writers, if often prejudiced and unable to appreciate the opposite point of view, proved ready critics of their countrymen in refreshing contrast to many contemporary chroniclers of more modern colonial empires.

The Dutch contribution to investigations on the history of Ceylon in the period under survey was somewhat meagre, the most notable effort being that of Baldeaus. Baldeaus, no friend of the Portuguese, though he had an occasional

word of praise for their religious organizations, utilized Sinhalese and Tamil sources for his account. His book, as far as the period up to 1658 was concerned was little improved by Valentyn. In any case the view of Ceylon as a country to be civilized and Christianised' persisted untilwell into the nineteenth century. This is well illustrated by the title of Emerson Tennent's book published in 1850—Christianity in Ceylon with a historical sketch of the Brahmanical and Buddhist suberstitions (Item 333).

In the late nineteenth century the growth of English education among Ceylonese stimulated investigations into the island's past. English education also brought with it some idea of the growth of critical historical scholarship in the west. Interest in antiquity is well in evidence in the Proceedings of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. However, as K. W. Goonewardena aptly remarked, "generally speaking the education which these Sinhalese imbibed and the environment in which they moved led them to look at the past history of the island from the longitude of Greenwich". This was perhaps to be expected from a system of education which placed the knowledge of not only English but even of Latin and Greek above that of the local languages. The tendency was thus to go to the Portuguese and Dutch sources and generally accept their priorities if not their points of view. Yet, these pioneer Ceylonese scholars did indeed render one great lasting service. They translated many of the relevant extracts of the old Portuguese chronicles into English, thus bringing them before a wider public.

Already, however, another stream of historical tradition was merging with the western one. This was composed of the Sinhalese and Tamil versions of the events of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Some of the Tamil traditions were incorporated in the Yalpana Vaipava Malai in the eighteenth century. Other traditions no doubt perished with time. The Sinhalese, however, preserved a greater variety of documents of historical value—lithic inscriptions, sannasas or deeds of gifts, seettu or records of judicial decisions, vitti poth or books of events and kadaim poth or books of local history giving local and provincial boundaries (See item 212). Apart from these works and sandesa or messenger poems which are useful for topographical information, the Sinhalese writers also composed a number of hatan kavyas or war poems and eulogistic poems to present their views on history. To these may be added the two well known chronicles, the Rajavaliya and the Culavamsa. Of the chronicles the latter is the less useful and presents as partisan an account as those of the Portuguese writers. For instance the Culavamsa account of the sixteenth century does not mention either Don Joao Dhatmapala, the Portuguese sponsored King of Kotte, 1551-1597, or Don Jeronimo de Azevedo, captaingeneral of Ceylon 1594-1612. An increasing number of these local sources have been published in the last seven decades and the growing use of such sources is a characteristic of twentieth century scholarship for this period of history.

The two great writers on our period in the early part of the twentieth century were Paulus E. Pieris and Simon G. Perera. They were the first Ceylonese to make use of the Portuguese archives and were jointly responsible for laying the foundations of the social and economic history of the period by the attention they paid to land records. There were, however, significant differences. Pieris, a brilliant Civil Servant denied of the most coveted positions in the ad ninistration by the British colonial regime, turned cut to be a prolific amateur historian with a strong nationalist bias. His unorthodox use of sources, however, often laid him open for legitimate criticism. Perera, a Ceylonese Jesuit was perhaps less imaginative but was certainly a sounder scholar except when his religious bias coloured his views. K. W. Goonewardena has persuasively interpreted the clash in the attitudes of these two men as a manifestation of a religio-cultural conflict on the historical front (Winks, ed. op. cit. 437-447).

By 1950 the efforts of earlier generations of scholars had ensured that a substantial portion of the chronicles relating to this period was published. The outlines of political history were clearly demarcated and a great deal of work had been done on the impact of Christian missions. However, it would probably be fair to say that systematic studies of social and economic conditions of the island had not been made though much information on the aspects had been made available by the publication of several land records.

The efforts during the next two decades were directed at building up a picture of events and peoples in the island by a critical use of primary sources, and the filling of gaps left by the earlier historians. In this respect considerable progress was made by the publication of several in-depth studies by members of the Department of History, University of Ceylon, Colombo and Peradeniya. This group of historians although they found the scope of their writing limited by the nature of the source material available generally contributed new perspectives to the history of this period (see items 161, 210, 240 and 330). Meanwhile, the interest in the subject shown by foreign scholars such as C. R Boxer and G. D. Winius also helped to place events in the island in their global context and the Jesuit historical tradition stretching from Fr. Fernao de Queyroz to Fr. S. G. Perera was ably continued by Fr. W. L. A. Don Peter.

Controversies of earlier days did continue to have echoes. The last salvo of Fr. S. G. Perera on religion was published as late as 1956 and a reply to it by C. R. Boxer, though written almost immediately afterwards did not appear in print till the late 1960's. However, with the defusing of religious controversies in present-day Ceylon which had occurred by the 1960's historians gradually turned to other aspects—perhaps less controversial—but certainly as fascinating.

Most of the historical writing on this period during the present century has concentrated on events in the south-western lowlands. This was primarily due to the relative paucity of source materials for other regions of the island. However, in a recent publication (L. S. Dewaraja—A Study of the political, administrative and social structure of the Kandyan Kingdom of Ceylon 1707-1760, Colombo, 1972) it has been argued that there has been a second and 'deeper' explanation of this phenomenon. As Dewaraja puts it "Until the end of World War II and the beginning of the process of decolonization, western historians were almost all what might be called Europe-centric in their writing. The kind of history they exulted in writing was about the triumphs of the west and the way western penetration had acted as a catalyst to the unchanging east. Ceylonese historians deriving their intellectual nourishment from the west, could not break away from the compulsive urge to examine Ceylon's history in terms of a challenge by the west to indigenous society and institutions. Since Kandy could not be found a place within that framework until the nineteenth century, it was best to leave it alone and concentrate on the more fashionable history that was being written'.

There is a glimmer of truth in this change in relation to historical writing in pre-1948 Ceylon though even then there were significant exceptions. However, in relation to historical research done since then, Dewaraja's explanation. though fashionable, seems to be based on erroneous assumptions and a superficial examination of data. The works of Goonewardena and Abayasinghe (items 161 and 240) for example are the very opposite of panegyrics on the triumphs of the west. They are attempts to write the history of the island from a local view point in a balanced and fair minded way and in many respects they refute the views of foreign chroniclers and those who uncritically accepted western accounts of events in Ceylon. Data in these works helped to dispel the view of the 'unchanging east' as postulated by earlier historians (see item 210). These works also make it clear that Kandy's response to the west began much earlier than the nineteenth century. Dewaraja's argument would also fail to explain why the northern regions of Ceylon directly exposed to the western impact since the second quarter of the sixteenth century has failed to attract modern historians any more than the central highlands of Kandy.

The bibliography which is appended consists of two parts. The first is a fairly comprehensive list of all primary sources together with guides and introductions to them provided by modern writers. The second part consists of a select list of published secondary works. Items have been included in the second section only when they make some contribution to our knowledge of the period or more rarely when they reflect interesting examples of historical thinking. Unpublished university theses have been included in this section. In both sections the entries have been arranged alphabetically under the name of the author in the form most widely used: thus QUEYROZ, Fernao de, rather than DE QUEYROZ, Fernao.

Those whose interests are wider than the scope of this bibliography, are referred to two key bibliographical works. The first, Biblioteca Missionum, (Aachen and Friedburg), 1916+, 25 volumes is a guide to literature connected with western trading and missionary activity. The second, H. A. I. Goonetileke's A bibliography of Ceylon: A systematic guide to the literature, on the

Abbreviations 5 4 1

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**JCBRAS** 

land, people, history and culture published in western languages from the sixteenth century to the present day. Inter-Documentation Co. Zug (Switz), 1970, 2 vols. (Biblioteca Asiatica 5) provides a comprehensive coverage of its subject.

It is perhaps relevant to make some comments here on the unpublished documents available for the period. D. de Silva's 'A biblicgraphy of manuscripts relating to Ceylon in the archives and libraries of Portugal', published in Boletim International de Bibliografia Luso-Brasileira (Vol. VIII, 1867, pp. 533-552 and 647-675 and Vol. VIII, 1968, pp. 84-157 and 499-527, also issued under separate cover by H. W. Cave & Co., Ltd. Colombo, 1972) provides a comprehensive guide to the material in the more important archives of Portugal. Some idea of the Goan collections may be obtained from C. R. Boxer's 'A glimpse of the Goan Archives' in Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies (Vol. XIV, 1952, pp. 299-324). A glance at the bibliographies of T. Abeysinghe (161), C. R. de Silva (210) and G. D. Winius (338) will also make it clear that relevant Portuguese documents are also available, though in smaller quantities at Madrid, Simancas, Rome, London and Paris. Similarly, some idea of the Dutch manuscript sources for this period may be obtained from K. W. Goonewardena's book (240). K. D. Somadasa has compiled a catalogue of Sinhalese palm-leaf manuscripts in Ceylon and the British Museum entitled Sinhala Puskala poth namavaliya, Colombo, 1959, 3 vols. but this work is not annotated and does not give a complete coverage.

#### List of Periodicals

Periodicals

	Arqueologia e Historia (Lisbon)
	Arquivo Portugues Historico (Lisbon)
	Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa
	Boletim de la Real Sociedad Geografica (Mad
	 Ruddhist (Colombo)

Aloysian (Galle)

ografica (Madrid)

Burlington Magazine (London)

CALR Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register (Colombo)

Ceylon Causerie (Colombo) Ceylon Fortnightly Review (Colombo)

Ceylon Historical Journal (Dehiwela)

CJHSS Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies (Peradeniya)

Ceylon Law Recorder (Colombo)

CLR Ceylon Literary Register (Colombo) CLR 3 Ser.

Ceylon Literary Register, Third Series (Colombo) CNR Ceylon National Review (Colombo)

Ceylon Review (Colombo) History Today (London)

Ilankathir (Peradeniya) Journal of the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon (Colombo) DBUI

Journal of the National Education Society of Ceylon (Peradeniya) Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society—Ceylon Branch (Colombo) JCBRAS NS

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society-Ceylon Branch New Series

(Colombo) Kandyan (Kandy)

Mariners Mirror (London)

Modern Ceylon Studies (Peradeniya)

MLRC

Monthly Literary Register and Notes and Queries for Ceylon

(Colombo)

New Indian Antiquary (Bombay)

Orientalist (Bombay)

The Ratnapura Aloysian (Ratnapura)

Tamil Culture (Madras)

Tropical Agriculturist, Literary Register Supplement (Peradeniya)

University Majils (Peradeniya)

UCR

University of Ceylon Review (Peradeniya) Vidyodaya Vishvavidyaliya Ithihāsa Sangarawa (Nugegoda)

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## **BOOK REVIEW**

G. KURUKULASURIYA, Co-operation: Its rise and growth in Ceylon, (Published by the Co-operative Federation of Ceylon, Colombo, 1971)

Ceylon's co-operative movement, which came to be introduced in its modern form during the early years of the twentieth century, began initially as a credit movement to assist small agriculturists and other 'persons of limited means'. Gradually not only that this part of the movement continued and developed further in the later years, but co-operative activity also spread to many other spheres of the country's economic life. Today, despite the many shortcomings and the 'poor image' that characterise the co-operative movement, its activities are widespread in such fields as retail (and wholesale) distribution of essential commodities, the supply of credit and other agricultural inputs to the farmers and production and marketing (mainly in agriculture, small industry and fishing). It would be no exaggeration to say that there is hardly any other rural institution that is more widespread and diffused as the co-operatives.

In this book the author, who has been closely associated with the co-operative movement, provides a comprehensive account of both the early beginnings and later development of the co-operative movement in all its varied aspects. The book covers considerable ground dealing as it does with the different phases and nearly all the significant events and activities associated with growth of the co-operative movement, notable among these were the following: the formation of the early credit societies, the growth of consumer co-operation during and after the second world war, the establishment of producer co-operatives, the development of co-operative banking institutions, the formation of multi-purpose co-operatives (after 1957), the re-organisation of rural credit in the 60's and the establishment of the Peoples' Bank to serve the co-operative sector, the growth of several middle level organisations and the growth of the 'special types' of co-operative institutions.

The author's work is also a study about the growth of the co-operative movement at two levels, the official or governmental organisation and the non-official or the co-operative organisation, the relationship that existed between the two levels and the problems that arose. It is important to note that the relationship between the governmental organisation and the co-operative organisation had not always been a smooth one; nor did it develop into one of equal partnership. The governmental organisation had always been the dominant partner. As the Royal Commission (1970) on the Ceylon co-operative movement observed in its report "the government acting in the earlier period as a trustee and guardian has ended up in the firm control over what was intended to be voluntary movement ....; co-operative societies are virtually agencies directed to carry out government policy". This became inevitable given the circumstances that largely determined the evolution of the co-operative movement over the years. Government sponsorship and assistance (that became indispensable in the formation of co-operative institutions), the increasingly greater role of the government in regulating economic activities and the vital role assigned to the co-operatives in this respect, and the weaknesses and the malpractices. contributed to the evolution of a co-operative movement based upon a greater degree of governmental control and direction, making the evolution of a self-governing, self reliant and voluntary co-operative movement more difficult.

As a book on the history of the co-operative movement, this work is well documented; it is also supported by extensive statistical information, assembled largely from official records, about the growth and numbers, the membership and capital base, of the different types of co-operative institutions during different periods. A noteworthy feature of this study is that the author makes it a point to link the important developments in the cooperative movement during the different periods with the deeper underlying political and socio-economic changes that occured and which are relevant to the understanding of the basic events and ideas that shaped the progress of the movement. This approach seems to provide the justification for devoting a section of the book (chapter 1, part II) to deal with the "Historical Background" to the growth of the early co-operation. This chapter is a study of the major socio-economic changes that emerged from what the author calls the growth of "agrarian capitalism" (or "the agrarian revolution") during the 19th century. The growth of the plantation economy, the emergence of 'economic dualism', the land sales policy of the colonial government and the operation of the Grains Tax and the impact of such changes, it is argued, led to the emergence of a set of socio-economic circumstances that speeded, if not contributed to, the economic deterioration of the rural peasantry. The author suggests that the socio-economic situation in which the rural peasantry found itself at the beginning of the 20th century and which flowed largely from the growth of agrarian capitalism and its ramifications, provided the initial impetus for the formation of the early co-operative movement. Since the beginning of the 20th century several measures were taken directed towards improving the socio-economic conditions of the rural peasantry. In this scheme of things the co-operatives found their rightful place. That formed the essential background to the policies and measures which governed the formation of the early credit societies in Ceylon.

The early co-operative movement in Ceylon was largely influenced by the Indian pattern. The first Co-operative Societies Ordinance of 1911 was enacted on the same lines as the Co-operative Credit Societies Ordinance of India (1904). Many similarities existed and still exist with regard to the role and problems of the co-operative movement in both countries particularly relating to its contribution to agricultural development and reconstruction of the rural economy. In this respect the author's detailed account about the Indian co-operative movement given in this book will be of added interest to many readers. This chapter deals with the major landmarks in the growth of the Indian co-operative movement during the early period, the findings and recommendations of the All Indian Rural Credit Survey (1954)—perhaps the most comprehensive and authoritative study of the co-operative (credit) movement in relation to its socio-economic environment in the context of an underdeveloped economy—and the more recent developments in the co-operative sector against the background of planned development efforts in the fifties and sixties.

The period after 1957 has been, in many ways, the most eventful one as far as the development of the co-operative movement of Ceylon is concerned. A considerable section of the book is devoted to a study of these developments, such as, the creation of the multi-purpose co-operatives, the enlarged role of the Co-operative Wholesale Establishment (which in effect made this into a state corporation rather than a co-operative institution), the re-organisation of the co-operative banking institutions, the establishment of the People's Bank and the changes initiated in the system of rural credit and the progress made in other directions; the narrative ends with a reference to some of the main observations, and a summary of the recommendations, made by the Royal Commission on the co-operative movement. Of all the changes that took place during this period, perhaps the most significant one has been the re-organisation of the co-operative structure directed towards the formation of multipurpose co-operatives. The official policy on this matter, which is well summarised in this book, gave a new meaning, purpose and direction to the co-operative movement, particularly regarding its role in the country's economic development. Within the framework of multi-purpose co-operatives, the role of the co-operative

movement came to be defined as one of active partnership in the task of national development. The proposed re-organisation initially envisaged the establishment in each village a multipurpose co-operative society replacing the different types of societies. These multipurpose societies—combining a multiplicity of functions in one single organisation were to provide the basic needs of the farmers, such as, production credit, other agricultural inputs and marketing services. It was also envisaged that the multipurpose societies will be able to initiate and execute schemes of agricultural development, undertake minor irrigation projects and construction work and promote rural industries. In short, the multipurpose co-operatives were to embrace all aspects of economic activity at the village level. Eventhough a greater and more dynamic role was envisaged through the multipurpose co-operatives the actual progress and achievements in the subsequent years were very much limited largely because of structural weaknesses and other shortcomings. Once again a radical re-structuring of the co-operative organisation is already under way at present (under the Co-operative Societies Special Provisions Act No. 35 of 1970) involving the re-organisation of the co-operatives into larger and economically viable units, mainly in line with the recommendations of the Royal Commission. The present scheme of reorganisation also envisages a major role ahead for the co-operatives in the country's economic development, particularly in rural agriculture and small industry. The primary co-operative society is expected to assume the role of a "development agency", particularly in the selection and planning of development projects in the rural areas. Once such an enlarged role is assigned it may have to be within the framework of greater governmental direction and participation. The bigger and more effective role assigned to the co-operatives will, on the one hand, enlarge the scope of their functions and responsibilities, and on the other, may limit their independence, self reliance and even democratic control. Increased governmental participation in economic and social development and the important role assigned to the co-operatives will inevitably result in a state-guided and state-controlled co-operative sector. The government will play the role of the dominant partner; already this has happened in the past and it is likely to be more so in the future as well. On this vexed question of government's role vis-a-vis the co-operative sector the issue now is not so much whether there should be government control or direction; it is really a question of the type of control and direction that could make the co-operatives more effective institutions in the country. It is doubtful whether the present policy on the form of control and regulation envisaged will provide the necessary remedies.

It is in dealing with such questions as the role of the government in relation to the co-operatives as well as those relating to inefficiency and malpractices existing in the co-operative movement that treatment in this book is inadequate in some ways. Although many references are made to these questions the author does not really come to grips with them. Another line of criticism that could be made about the book is that treatment at times tends to become merely descriptive; to some extent this may be unavoidable in a work of this nature. Despite such shortcomings the work on the whole is an important contribution to the study of the co-operative movement in its long term setting. As a record of the growth of the co-operative movement in all its varied aspects extending over a period of nearly seven decades it is comprehensive and useful. To the more interested reader this could serve as a ready source of information on several aspects connected with the development of the co-operative movement, whether it be during the early years or in more recent periods.

