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## Open Letter to Dr. Colvin R. de Silva

### “ARE YOU AT VARIANCE WITH YOUR OWN PARTY AS YOU ARE WITH THE PEOPLE?”

Says Vernon Phelps



Dr. Colvin R. de Silva

Stop saying the things you do, Doctor,  
please, because even the more garrulous  
females in the constituency are aghast!  
Yours Until the Revolution,  
VERNON PHELPS

Dear Doctor de Silva,

FOUR weeks ago a challenge was thrown out to you in this journal to resign and re-contest the constituency you represent on the Indian issue. The challenge was based on your speech after your victory, in which you declared that the voters elected you because “they accepted the International standpoint that no country should restrict the entry of the nations of another.”

A subsequent sensational disclosure has been made by the General Secretary of the Union Society of the University who is reported to have stated: “I invited Dr. Colvin R. de Silva to speak for the proposition in a debate on “Indian Immigration to Ceylon should not be Restricted.” As the subject suggested did not express the views of the Party on the Indian immigration issue, he was not in a position to accept the invitation.”

Now that, Doctor, is indeed a pretty pickle, isn't it? Your mandate from your constituents is that no restriction to the entry of the nationals of another country into this country should be restricted. The views of your Party (and presumably that of the Parliamentary Fraction of your Party) is something else!

In view of this painful conflict, what do you propose to do, Doctor? Resign from your Party or break faith with your constituents?

Nor is this the only occasion on which you have surprised your electors. When the voters of the Wellawatte-Galkissa electorate were called upon to choose their representative in Parliament they had seven candidates to choose from. Your six rivals warned the voters that if they returned you to Parliament you would not raise a finger to prevent this country being flooded with Indians who would take away the jobs of Ceylonese and help to lower wage levels and the standard of living of the proletariat and the salariat of this country.

This warning made many voters falter. You sensed the crisis with commendable foresight and knew that unless you met this issue squarely your chances of being elected, were pretty thin. In fairness to you (and I will never cavil at granting you your due) you accepted that challenge and replied to it in more than one election speech. You declared in several election speeches that the

fears raised by your opponents were baseless. Did it stand to reason, you asked your voters, whether after all your efforts to win freedom and better living conditions for the people of this country, you would be so Satanic as to jeopardise the enjoyment of those benefits by the people by permitting the exploitation of this country by the nationals of another? No, a thousand times, No—was your emphatic denial.

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YOU went further. You described your detractors as the stooges of their Imperialist masters who sought to ensure your defeat by spreading insidious propaganda and hoped thereby to throw dust in the eyes of the electors.

But when you were not electioneering, Doctor, you whistled another tune. In a lecture in your constituency before an audience which you were invited to address by a certain Association you spoke on “The Road to Freedom.”

The lecture was open to the public and naturally a number of the voters in your constituency were present at the meeting. Despite this you took the risk and delivered, I readily concede, a most illuminating address the theme of which was that “the road to Ceylon's freedom was through an Indian Road.” This, I admit, was NOT an election speech.

You will appreciate, Doctor, the perplexity of the electors in your constituency who, frankly, are finding it difficult to reconcile your aforementioned election speeches and the disclosure that your Party does not favour unrestricted immigration, with Ceylon journeying to freedom “through an Indian road.”

May I ask, Doctor, why you say things that your constituents feel might best have been left unsaid? A more recent instance of this was your first utterance in the House of Representatives as the Party spokesman conveying the congratulations of your Party to the Speaker, Mr. A. F. Molamure, on his election to office. In winding up you declared that in offering Mr. Speaker the congratulations of your Party you wished to join the Government Benches in doing so as it would be “the only occasion on which we would be able to join the other side.”

Does that mean, Doctor, that you will oppose every Government measure for the sake of opposing it, irrespective of its merits? Does it not mean that you have already passed adverse judgment on the Government's policy and programme even before you have examined it? And does it not also mean that passing judgment in this way displays a lack (if not an absence) of judicial detachment (with which the voters credited you) to weigh the merits and demerits of a proposition before deciding to accept it or oppose it?

THINK it over, Doctor. Your mandate is something more serious and worthwhile than what you have construed it to be. A preponderant number of voters in your electorate, who do not subscribe to your political views, voted for you in the hope that you would use your many talents to do something creative and practical.

They therefore legitimately expect you to regard the interests of the country and that of your constituency in the responsible role of a Member of Parliament. What you do in your spare time to peddle your particular political “ism” is, so far as your constituents are concerned, your private business.



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# MR. MOOSAJEE APPEALS FOR UNITY

"There is so much in common in our ways of thinking, our social habits, our mental outlook and the general feeling of friendliness."

IT is evident to all persons who have studied the reforms dispassionately that it is possible for this country to advance very rapidly by their aid, as the measures which are proposed and accepted have been designed with a view not to hampering but to helping this country along a path of reasonable progress.

The political leaders of Ceylon have year in and year out maintained that they needed more power than they possessed to enable them to improve the country's position in all directions in which they wished to develop. They legitimately desired power as they would apply it to Ceylon's improvement. They felt that whilst the direction of affairs rested with others, the country's aspirations would not be treated with the fairness and justice which they deserved. And in answer to this demand reforms have been progressively granted until at the present time it would be impossible to deny that the people of this country are to be practically a self-governing unit. This is not only an immense advance on the conditions obtaining several decades ago but it is also a culmination of achievement in the political field for which many generations of the most enlightened and public-spirited politicians of this country have worked for many long, weary and effort-filled years.

At this moment of realisation of their purposes we must not forget that men like Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Mr. F. R. Senanayake, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, Sir James Pieris, Mr. E. T. de Silva and a whole host of other enthusiasts toiled for those advantages which we have secured today.

If there was one purpose on which they were all agreed, it was that the people of this country should go forward unitedly to a common freedom. If today we do not stand united, then I think that we cannot but own that one of their cherished dreams has been frustrated. But I think that this is not the position. We all feel that today there is a need, more than ever before, for the people of this country to stand together. With a world which is moving so fast, and in which barriers are being cast down, and in which it is made evident that the dominant need is for goodwill and sound understanding, I cannot believe that Ceylon will not conform to the ideal of an united people.

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WE must be willing to take our chances with the majority community and see that their interests and ours are identified as much as possible. It is for them to justify the confidence which we have deliberately decided to place in them under the new order which is to be shortly inaugurated. I trust that they will make the generous effort which is necessary to endow us with an ample measure of security for the future in all matters which pertain to our well being as a minority community which has agreed to stand by them in working for the general good in the years to come. It is only in this way that we can enjoy the full benefits of the constitution.

It is not possible for us to be isolated and to be strong. As a minority we can do nothing by ourselves. We must act courageously in the living present, throwing in all the weight of our own contribution in talent, goodwill and political power into the working of the new constitution and demonstrating that we mean to do our best by the majority community and by the constitution which is the common heritage of all communities in the Island.

We cannot fail to realise that the political leaders of the past have won political rights not only for the majority community but also for the minorities. What was meant for the country was meant for all communities in the country. We are as much beneficiaries

under the new system of government which is being imposed upon this country as the majority community or any of the other minorities.

I therefore think that it would be a duty on our part to do our very best to see that the new constitution is worked on the soundest possible basis by the combined action of all communities in the Island in a spirit of goodwill, toleration and confidence so that all difficulties will be overcome by a sensible spirit of co-operation. This is the only way in which any constitution can be worked. It must be our endeavour to so act that we do not impair the smooth functioning of the constitution by our

failure to do our duty in making it a great success.

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IN making the constitution the success it deserves to be we cannot do better than give our fullest support to the United National Party which is the strongest and most active party in existence today, and which has the largest body of varied and tried talent in the country. It is through this Party that the country will be able to demonstrate that it is equal to the responsibilities which have been thrown upon it under the new constitution.

The art of government is not one

which can be acquired in a day. It is a most laborious and difficult task; one of the most difficult in which people can engage. It is evident that there are more men of experience in the art of government in the United National Party than in all the other parties put together, and it is therefore proper that we should decide to be on the side of experience rather than of enthusiasm for reform without that element of actual acquaintance with the functioning of the complicated machinery of government which alone would enable persons to achieve success in running the new constitution.

(Continued on page 6)

## REVIEW OF NEW BALLOTING PROCEDURE

By  
"Lex"

NOW that the hurly burly of the election is over, there is time to consider whether the new balloting system has been a success or not. It will be remembered that in previous elections each candidate had a ballot box of a distinctive colour and voters had to drop their ballot paper into a blue box, red box, or whatever coloured box his or her candidate had been allotted.

The Soulbury Commission, however, after careful consideration, recommended that the coloured box system of balloting be done away with and that in its place should be used the current system of common ballot box, the preference of the voter being indicated by the marking of a cross on the ballot paper against the name and symbol of the preferred candidate.

When the Soulbury Report was issued doubts were expressed as to whether an illiterate village voter could correctly mark a ballot paper in spite of the fact that all he had to do was to mark a cross against easily recognizable symbols like lamps, chairs or keys. It was felt that unless election agents had drilled into the head of such a voter that he should mark the paper in the compartment alongside the particular symbol of his candidate, the voter was likely to go astray in his marking, either writing on the wrong side of the ballot paper, or marking the cross in the wrong compartment or in no compartment at all but at random on the printed name of any candidate.

This seems to be what happened in the early elections. Crosses were marked haphazardly and in every conceivable place, thereby making the ballot paper count as a spoilt vote and negating the exercise of the franchise of the voter purely owing to his illiteracy and inexperience in the use of a pencil on paper. In backward areas, there were many voters who had never handled a pencil in their lives. Consequently in the early elections the proportion of spoilt votes was high.

The number of spoilt votes might have been still higher but for the fact that counting officers had instructions according to which although a cross had not been marked in any particular candidate's compartment, if it could be presumed from the marking on the paper that the intention of the voter was to vote for such and such a candidate, such a ballot paper should count for that candidate. So that a cross on a candidate's name was presumed to be an intention on the part of the voter to vote for that particular candidate.

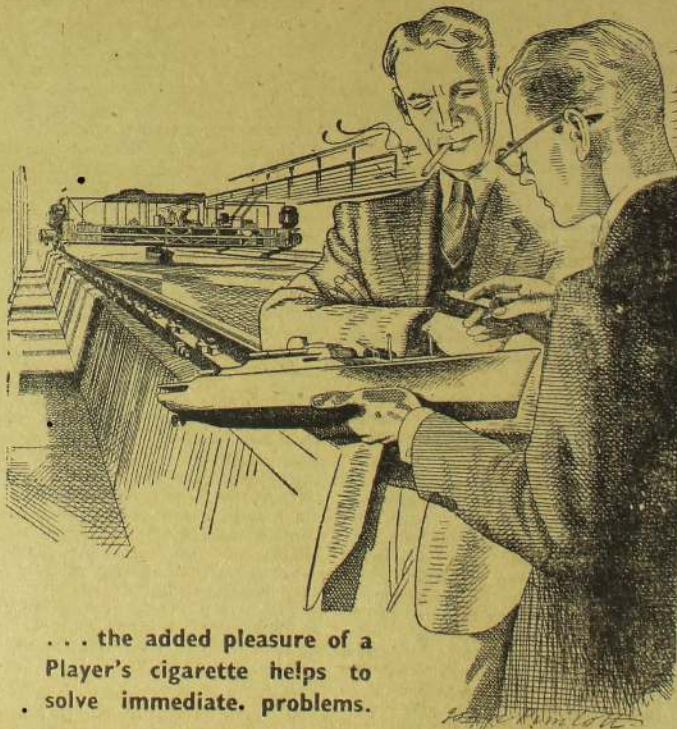
Candidates fighting later elections were quick to realise that spoilt ballot papers constituted a menace to their safe return to the House of Representatives. Accordingly educative propaganda was stepped up. Leaflets and posters began to appear containing facsimiles of ballot papers with the candidate's name and symbol and a drawing

of a pencil marking a cross in the correct compartment. Every opportunity was taken to teach the voter that he should vote for the key, for the flower or for the lamp. Candidates were known mainly by their identifying symbol, their personalities magically merging into the inanimate personalities of tables, chairs and houses.

The public has still to get used to the common box system. They still with charming guilelessness ask for the box of their particular candidate and are rather suspicious when told that all

papers go into one box. This, however, is to be expected as old customs die hard in this island. Again, the village voter seems disappointed that everything is all over one he drops his ballot paper into the box. He looks round with an expectant look which seems to say "Is this all? Is this the end of all the weeks of ballyhoo? Don't I get some present or bonus?" He walks away disappointed when brusquely directed to the exit line.

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IT is noteworthy that the first Speaker of the State Council is also first Speaker of the new Parliament. Mr. Molamure, curiously, also won his first election for the Speakership by 17 (35 to 18) as much as he won last Tuesday's election by 17 votes (58 to 41).

The contestants for the first Speakership of the State Council were an ex-master and his pupil, Sir Stewart Schneider being the mentor and Mr. Molamure the pupil.

The late Mr. W. A. de Silva proposed and Mr. W. T. B. Karalladde seconded Mr. Molamure's name. Mr. T. L. Villiers proposed and Mr. (now Sir) Mohamed Macan Markar seconded Sir Stewart's name. The pupil won.

It was a popular choice and the cheering that followed was tremendous. The Governor received Mr. Molamure immediately after the latter's election at Queen's House and drank to his health.

The election of the second Speaker (in 1936) was triangular. There were three polls, the results of which were: Mr. (now Sir) Waitlingam Duraiswamy 27, Mr. Francis de Zoysa 17, Mr. C. Batuwantudawe 14. The last was eliminated. The second poll was: Duraiswamy 29, de Zoysa 29. In the third poll one member changed his mind, and the result was: Duraiswamy 30, de Zoysa 28.

#### Overhead Bridge

I FIND that the idea of an overhead bridge connecting Norris Road with McCallum Road in Colombo is being mooted again. There is no doubt that this bridge will cut short the journey to the Fort, Slave Island and the coastal suburbs, which is now down by the circuitous route past the Fort Railway Station.

A decade ago this question cropped up and the idealists dreamt of a super highway connecting the roads with ultra-modern concrete pillars, lamp-posts and railings—and shade trees. What lies between these two roads is the railway line. A part of the Beira Lake will have to be bridged if the proposed road is to extend to Slave Island.

The idea is a splendid one, and the project may be worth the cost. Certain public-spirited citizens as well as interested bodies are, I hear, preparing a memorial to the Prime Minister and the particular Minister concerned.

#### Rowdiness—The Cause

A CERTAIN was remarked recently that the main reason for the comparative absence of rowdiness during the elections was due to the fact that many of the "toughs" were shipped off to Malaya. This is no insinuation against the pioneer force that went to Malaya; he merely means at least a handful of "roughs" whom he knew how to get beaten into civilisation in his words.

The late Justice Akbar, who was a leading campaigner against crime, once said that it was not the rowdy's fault that he was a rowdy. Speaking on "Crime and Religion" at the Galle Y.M.B.A. many years ago he confessed that he had "a sneaking regard for rowdies."

The rowdies, he added, had not been given a "dog's chance" in life. That was why they were rowdies. It was our duty as educated men and women to ameliorate the condition of the rowdies. "The rowdies must be given a chance in life. They must be provided with reading-rooms and other means of amusement."

Admiral Geoffrey Layton, when he was Commander-in-Chief in Ceylon during the war, deplored the fact that brawny youths were idling in the villages. Justice Akbar's solution might have been applied to them. Or else, according to our wag, the "Army's the best, my boy."

#### Our Zoo

THE wide attraction the King Cobra at the Dehiwala Zoo attracted recently and the variety of new arrivals now being introduced (including Malayan monkeys that pick coconuts!) should spur us on to make our Zoo the best in the East.



Mr. Molamure

Major Aubrey Weinman has taken great pains over the lay-out and development of the Zoo. He should be encouraged to make it one of our main attractions for tourists.

With the granting of Dominion Status many distinguished visitors from all over the Commonwealth are expected here for the inauguration. Let our Zoo be one of the magnets luring them.

The lease of the site of the Zoo expires in 1951. Steps should be taken to acquire it for all time. The stipulation said that the authorities have the option of renewing the lease at the end of twenty years.

It was Mr. John Hagenbeck who really made Ceylon zoo-minded with his collection of lions, tigers, panthers, camels and other creatures, which he exhibited to the public, housed in temporary shelters at the site.

He sold his collection to the Ceylon Zoological Gardens Co., Ltd., "as on and from the 15th day of June, 1931, for Rs 24,085.34 payable as to Rs 20,085.34 in cash and as to the balance Rs 4,000 in 400 fully paid shares of Rs. 10 each."

#### Might Have Been Shot

CEYLON would have been poorer by two of her greatest statesmen, the late Sir Baron Jayatilaka and Mr. Don Stephen Senanayake, if only the order to shoot them during the 1915 riots were carried out. We may not have got our Soulbury Reforms nor our Dominion Status if this tragedy had occurred. But the dice of the gods turned beneficial. They were "cell prisoners" together with the late Mr. C. Batuwantudawe for nearly 50 days.

The statement of the late Sir Baron is typical of the conditions in which the three were imprisoned:

"The cell in which I was placed..... had just been vacated by a convict and the stench was so unbearable that I begged one of the jailers to put me in another cell....."

"At noon ordinary penal diet was served to us. The food was uneatable, it smelled so vile, and the manner of serving it in a dirty plate with a tin of water pushed through an aperture at the bottom of the door, made it still more repellant. Most of us preferred to starve."

"For two days we did go without any food and on the third day, through the interference of some kind friends, the authorities allowed us to get our meals from outside."

#### "Locked For 18 Hours"

SIR BARON continued to say in his statement that he and the others were "locked in the cells for over 18 hours each day." Though they were allowed to get books the concession was not of much use as no lights were permitted in the cells.....

"The noise of shouting and singing and cursing which went on among the prisoners made sleep well nigh impossible," he concluded.

So now we know how our patriots suffered. As Home Minister, Sir Baron was 15 years later in charge of prison administration! And one of the other men they wanted to shoot, is our Prime Minister now!

#### Tail-Piece

AN extract from a letter to a Ceylon journal over fifteen years ago read: "At present much money is spent on razors, razor-blades and other shaving materials. Further, the growing of these facial appendages act as a protection against throat trouble—a complaint which must be common among loquacious politicians!"

The writer has not followed his own advice. For now he is a clean-shaven M.P., and when he was an M.S.C. he was the most loquacious, nuisance-value politician!

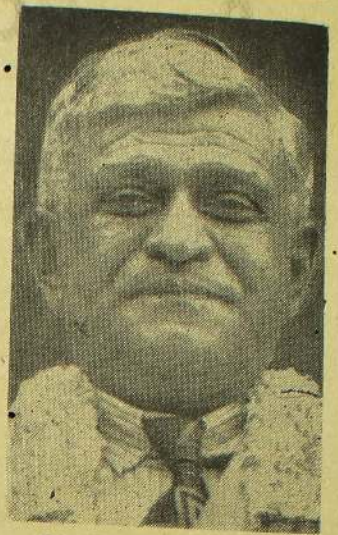
#### Senatorial Elections

MANY quarters which once campaigned for a Second Chamber have expressed lofty disdain at the elections to the Senate just concluded. It is a pity there were no "practice elections" before these Second Chamberites made up their minds!

Anyway, the following story is considered apposite:—

Some winters ago a small Pennsylvania town had a disastrous fire which could not be controlled because the fire plugs were frozen. The City Council met to take measures to prevent a recurrence of the catastrophe.

After hours of hot debate one man jumped to his feet and shouted: "I



Sir Baron Jayatilaka

move that the fire plugs be tested three days before every fire!"

In a flash another member seconded the motion and the resolution was passed.

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## PLANNING FOR CHANGE

It is recognised in modern studies on sociology that changes in environment can radically alter the manners and methods of a people. When the Government plans to bring about changes in the country it will certainly take this into account. In doing so we shall have to weigh the evidence that is already at hand, and that evidence shows that eight-tenths of the city populations live in filthy surroundings and in ill-ventilated and ill-constructed homes. In the rural areas the villagers have no houses worthy of the name. Pokey little wattle-and-daub structures with thatching of straw or cadjan, house millions of our people. It is easy enough to shut our eyes to these facts and dole out sunshine stories, but the United National Party has no intention of evading the issues before it. It has always declared itself to be a Socialist Party and will soon have the opportunity of carrying out a socialist programme. For purposes of election propaganda the L.S.S.P., the B.L.P.I., and the C.P. have called it a capitalist caucus. There may be individual members of the party who may have capitalistic inhibitions, just as similar inhibitions are evident in members of so-called Left-Wing parties. The majority of the United Nationalists, however, are strongly in favour of socialization and will support progressive measures in the coming months. The Manifesto of the Party will be the basis of a major Plan, and the several salient features of it can be worked out in greater detail and with the utmost despatch.

Marxism is not the panacea for the ills of the world, but its slogans appeal to millions throughout the world because of the lack of organised efforts to translate into practical measures such democratic ideals as may guide the political leaders of different countries. It is not sufficient to declare ourselves in favour of liberty; we must stake all on the achievement of it. It is magnificent to challenge the full might of the British Empire; it is more practical to meet the challenge of the 20,000 people registered as unemployed.

In another sphere, we must take into immediate account the fact that after two years of peace the cost of living in this

# "A BRAINS TRUST" MUST PLAN

Says Maha Amerasingha

WITH the opening of Parliament we enter a new era of self-Government in Lanka. It is given to few to detach their minds from the passions that Party Politics bring and consider the moving events from the point of view of the making of history. The gains or losses of a campaign or of particular resolutions in Parliament may appear to us of great importance, but when we realise the fact that they may have only a passing reference in history we shall begin to have a sense of proportion.

An event that seems to shake a Government to its foundations will, in the final reckoning, move away from the glare of contemporary attention into the shadows of the past. The hard lines of the problem will soften and merge into the background. Our own shouts of victory or anger will appear ridiculous and inconsequential.

So that all those who love this country have one clear line to follow in deciding the parties and policies they can support. That line is the best interests of the country in which we live and call our home.

This is not as easy as it appears on the surface. No two people can agree on all points of policy. Honest differences of opinion are bound to arise. It would be foolish, therefore, for us to assume that all those who are not in agreement with us are enemies of the nation. Patriotism is not our monopoly. Neither do we have a monopoly of brains. We cannot close our ears to the voice of those against us, nor can we close our minds to the new trends that are fashioning the political doctrines that guide political parties.

What we can do is to examine the different points of view, always having

country is still as high as ever. The Government index is calculated on the imaginary basis that the people buy and use only a few selected commodities. If the index calculations are more broad-based we shall be able to have a fuller view of the actual living conditions.

These are a few of the aspects we can touch upon in discussing the national trials at this juncture. All these affect the "environment in which the people live." Radical changes are therefore necessary. The country demands that dynamic action is necessary to force down the cost of living, to open up the country and to make new-found freedom felt in every part of the land and by every section of the nation.

in mind the effect our decisions and attitudes will have on the future of this country. The United National Party has published its Manifesto. That Manifesto is not claimed as the last word in political thought. It is a sketch of the various measures that the Party's Executive Committee felt should be taken to develop the country and increase its productivity. It is necessary to amplify that document and work out with more realistic detail the blue-print for national development. Such a blue-print will have to bear the imprimatur of the Party Executive Committee as well as of the Party rank and file. Before that stage is reached we shall have to make searching inquiries into the financial resources at our immediate command and also the effect our efforts will have in increasing our national wealth.

A top-priority measure is the immediate setting-up of a Planning Committee which will prepare such a blue-print by a given date. As Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike told me a few months ago, the Party needs a Brains Trust of a few quick, clear thinkers

who will also have the energy to produce such a document without dilly-dallying.



IT is delightful, no doubt, to have ceremonial luncheons and enjoy the feeling of exuberance that such occasions usually bring. It is wiser to realise that elections are not won at luncheon tables but in the countryside where our rural populations cannot yet afford anything more substantial than dried fish and boiled jak, where the school children are yet being given a few slices of bread and a little gravy of sorts as a mid-day meal.

I have heard it being said that Dominion Status, when it comes, will mean precious little to the average citizen and that the ruling class will have yet more offices, yet more powers, yet more limousines and will be yet more removed from human contact with the voters who returned them to power. There is substance in this cynical comment. There are many who imagine that there is and must always be positions of authority for them in the State. Such complaisance should have been rudely shattered by the recent General Elections; but strangely enough realisation does not appear to be universally evident.

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# LET'S RETAIN THE NATIONAL DRESS

Says  
"Caliph"

A CEYLONESE graduate, with his English wife, entered a Fort firm for a day's shopping. The wife went ahead with the purchasing and at the end the salesman informed her: "I have handed your parcels to your 'podian'." To her horror it was her own husband!—but he was in national dress (as we call it). In this manner were those national dress enthusiasts estimated. This was about two decades ago.

But this episode is mere fizzle compared to an incident in a Court when the Judges declined to hear a Proctor in national dress.

However national dress has held its own, and is being widely adopted, though with a few modifications. Some prefer the Jaffna Tamil "verti" style while others wear the Santiniketan mode of dress (without the ridiculous long hair)—a ridiculous imitation by some of our Santiniketan-returned folks. The principles of comfort, economy and general appearance have been observed in all of these dresses.

Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, when Principal of Ananda College, was one of the pioneers of national dress. Despite his English education and the prevalent craze for Western dress, Mr. Kularatne clung boldly to his costume. The staff of Ananda College followed suit and soon the idea spread.

Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, another pioneer, was among those who were "commanded" in 1924 to a Royal garden party at Buckingham Palace in connection with the Wembley Exhibition. Despite the command that Court Dress should be worn, the Lord Chamberlain had no objection to Dr. Malalasekera wearing national dress.

"There was not the slightest unpleasantness in fact," Dr. Malalasekera said, "in fact there were several who expressed envy at my cool dress, the day being very hot."

When Sir Hugh Clifford was Governor of Ceylon, he had no objection to Dr. Malalasekera going to Queen's House in national dress.

The late Sir H. L. de Mel was also one of the first to discard Western dress for "khaddar" national dress in the style of Pandit Motilal Nehru and the other Nehrus, who though they got their Western suits tailored in London and ironed in Paris, gave up all for the national cause.

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OUR Minister of Health, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, set the style for politicians. He has stuck to his national costume for nearly two decades. He attended the Dinner at Queen's House as well as the State Council opening in 1931 in national dress (cloth, banian and shawl) made of cloth, the cotton for which had been grown in Ceylon, handspun by villagers in his centre at Urapola, Veyangoda, and hand-woven.

For footwear he wore a pair of sandals made of Ceylon leather by a poor Ceylonese cobbler living in the Maradana Ward (which he represented in the Colombo Municipal Council at that time).

On the question of the craze for national dress he was heard to say:

"I am very pleased to see that the use of Khaddar and a national form of dress is gaining ground throughout Ceylon."

"There may be some divergence of opinion as to the exact form of national dress we should adopt. Until this is decided, I think we might reasonably adopt the form of national dress indicated—(cloth, banian and shawl)...."

"It is simple, comfortable and becoming, and may well be employed for ordinary use for ceremonial occasions. For special needs other forms of dress suitable for those occasions may be used, i.e., for riding, a pair of riding breeches, a suitable pair of trousers for tennis, a loin cloth for tramping in the field, etc."

He announced he would be pleased to help all those interested in the manufacture of Khaddar.



Mr. Bandaranaike

THE first move taken by any body for dress reform was by the members of the Post and Telegraph Department. At a meeting held in July, 1931, they discussed the Departmental rule published in the Postmaster's Manual in which two costumes were described and were allowed to be worn—one the Western and the other, the national dress. It was decided to adopt the costume described as the national costume in the Manual.

The departmental rule, pertaining to the dress, reads:

"There is no objection to wearing national dress, but in view of the difference of opinion as to what constitutes national dress and in order to observe uniformity it has become necessary to prescribe that it should consist of a white cloth, long-sleeved white banian, worn outside the cloth, and shawl; if footwear is worn to this dress it should consist of shoes or boots fully covering the feet with socks or stockings."

The meeting also decided that those adopting the national dress should wear out the present Western shoes and later take to locally-made Roman sandals. It was also decided that the postal officers shall wear national dress to office the next day (Friday) and continue it every Friday and as time went on to wear it regularly every day.

One of the main objects of the movement being economy, what Western dress the "reformers" had was also to be worn to office until they wore out—thus wisely obviating the necessity to incur expenditure on the newly-acquired national dress.

About 50 Sinhalese and 62 Tamil officers took the pledge to wear the national dress. But next day only 50 kept the pledge! And none of the men at the counters, who had direct dealings with the public, followed their colleague's example.

However the idea spread to all other departments though some pessimists thought that the national dress enthusiasts may be tempted to invest in silk garments, thus defeating the object of the economy movement.

The staff of the Municipal Council of Colombo got a severe jolt when they tried to emulate the Post and Telegraph Department workers. The clerical staff approached the Mayor for permission to wear the national dress. They forwarded a largely-signed memorandum, and were quite certain of a reply in the affirmative.

But the memorandum was sent back with the caustic suggestion:

"Why not wear Mahatma Gandhi's dress, loin cloth and scarf?"

There was a talk that another officer, and not the Mayor, was responsible for the suggestion. But the clerks were indignant and protested—in vain.

● \* ●

WOMEN, too, joined in the fight for the national dress and for "Khaddar" clothing. I attended a meeting of the Sadachara Baudha

Kulangana Society about sixteen years ago. The women showed more enthusiasm than men and some of the fighting speeches made by prominent women were worthy of record in the history of the national dress movement.

Mrs. W. A. B. Soysa, in an excellent speech said: "The people of India have their heart and soul in the weaving of 'Khaddar' which they consider a great national asset. The Ceylonese, too, should make a move in this direction and thus save the millions which went out yearly on this score."

They discouraged the idea of short frocks for our girls. Even before maidenhood our girls were dressed in sarees, especially when attending parties and functions. Like the Indian women our females became more nationalised. Go to any meeting, party or promenade. You will find our women gliding gracefully in true national costume. It is no secret that our schoolgirls prefer to "look big" in sarees off schools. Twenty years ago our schoolgirls would look forward to Paris or English fashion styles for their next "big dress."



Mr. P. de S. Kularatne

spreading in popularity. Let us not damp or clog its progress, if only it will help to make us drop the snobbish idea that Western clothes—with ties, shirts, coats, waistcoats, and shoes—in a tropical climate are the thing.

Let us not quarrel over it as we do over the national flag, for after all, as Mr. Bandaranaike said: "It is simple comfortable and becoming." That is all we want.

NOTE BY EDITOR: "Caliph" repeats the old fable that the Nehrus got their washing done in Paris. Panditji has categorically denied this. Let us accept the Pandit's version!

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COVER-POINT

THE main theme of this week's review is, of necessity, Racing. Not only does the second day of the C.T.C. October Meet come within the purview of this summary but there were also races of considerable importance in England and Australia to which reference must be made.

Taking the home event first, the dismal weather conditions last Saturday were matched by dismal results so far as the majority of punters were concerned. On going which has never been heavier since racing was re-started in Ceylon after the war, there were some startling reversals of form.

The biggest upset of the afternoon was provided by Field Glide, whose well-known aversion to a right-handed course was negated by the admirable nursing of his jockey, DON BENJAMIN, who kept him in the bunch till near the turn for home and then rode a rousing finish when tackled in the Straight by the ungenerous Seafire.

Almost as unexpected as Field Glide's success was Mahub Khalid's victory over 7 furlongs in the penultimate race on the card. The bay pony, it is true, ran an encouraging race the previous Saturday to finish behind Ranjit but he had always given the impression of not being able to see the 7 furlongs out. But this time he tracked the runaway Noble Duke, and, when the latter compounded at the turn, came home on his own.

The principal race of the day went to the very consistent Luzon after an objection had been sustained against the bottom-weight, Bobnic, who had actually won the race by the better part of two lengths. Luzon tried make every post a winning one but Bobnic tackled her below the distance and had her beat. Unfortunately there was a certain amount of interference with Luzon and the Judge's verdict was reversed. Luzon has now won four times and run second twice in her six races in Ceylon and is the biggest money-spinner after Kunj Lata.

Two stable jockeys were concerned in the finish of the Auckland Stables for Class II horses and SAWYER, who had been specially retained for Sri Lanka, beat his own stable representative, Tehmina with a bustling run in the last furlong. Redpoll, evidently appreciating the conditions underfoot ran well enough to merit support in her later engagements.

Backed as unbeatable, in the Arab Arab Handicap, Qamar Adnan, tired in the Straight and Jutland, who had chased him all the way, won pretty comfortably. Jutland is a pony of many parts and all distances seem to come alike to him.

Quite the easiest victory of the day was scored by Shandy in the last race over the straight course. Shandy is only a "baby" so far as Arabs go and it may be well to restrict him to the shortest possible races before asking him to take on older horses over longer distances.

The race for Riding Boys which opened the programme brought Kingsley to light as a stayer and also revealed the stamina limitations of Rageeb al Khair who folded up in the run home.

★

SO much for Ceylon racing. The back-end of the English season always provides some very exciting racing and last week the Cesarewitch and Champion Stakes filled the bill. The result of the Cesarewitch bore out the racing axiom that class must tell, particularly in a long distance race. The winner, Whiteway, and his runner-up, Firemaster, are both bred in the blue and ran in the Derby and St. Leger. Though meeting older horses, they were let in very favourably in the Handicap and ran up to their class. For the Cambridgeshire, which will complete the Autumn Double, two other classic horses, Mighty Mahratta and Tite Street, head the market but I am afraid I am none too sanguine of their chances.

The Champion Stakes was won, in the fitness of things, by the AGA KHAN'S Migoli, who ran second in the Derby and third in the St. Leger and won the Eclipse Stakes. Up to 10 furlongs, the grey son of Bois Roussel is a real smasher.

Second only in importance to the Melbourne Cup in Australia, the Caulfield Cup last Saturday resulted in a grand finish in which the favourite Columnist avenged his last year's defeat with a storming run on the outside which took him past the field in the last furlong. I was listening in to a commentary on the race and it was only in the closing stages that Columnist came into the picture.

The Melbourne Cup will be run as usual on the first Tuesday next month and a running commentary on the race will, probably, be relayed by the Colombo Station.

★

NO sport has recently been more the victim of the vagaries of the weather than cricket. The M.C.C. tour in Australia last year was marred even in the Tests. And now the Indian tour has had a most inauspicious opening. On the first two days of their first match in the Commonwealth, less than an hour's cricket has been possible and the match will, probably, be a wash-out. The tourists, used as they are to the iron wickets of India, will be handicapped if they have to operate on glue-pots, particularly as they are without the services of that master batsman, Merchant.

★

THE inter-club cricket tournament is now under way and the opening matches have already disclosed that it will take a really strong team to dislodge the S.S.C. from the championship, which they now hold. Though the club is a house divided against itself in the sense that they have voluntarily split up into "A" and "B" teams, the division does not seem to have weakened them. As a matter of fact their match-winning potential seems to have increased. Of course it is far too early to try to assess form, especially as a number of clubs has not yet made their first appearance in the tournament, but the wealth of talent that the champions have on call cuts the odds against their retaining the title to evens or less.

## MR. MOOSAJEE APPEALS FOR UNITY

(Continued from page 12)

We have the assurance that Mr. D. S. Senanayake embodies that sound common sense, deep-rooted experience, and genuine humaneness which will create in all those who work with him that sense of security which is necessary in all large undertakings affecting the interests of the millions in this country.

● \* ●

I HAVE very great hopes for the future. I am sure that we are on the right path which will lead to the highest prosperity for this country in course of time. If we decide to be united there is every reason to believe that Ceylon will be a very happy country which would avoid the mistakes that are being made in countries in which the spirit of sectionalism is more emphatic and disturbing. We have in this country very little reason to feel a sense of separateness because there is so much in common in our ways of thinking, our social habits, our mental outlook and the general feeling of friendliness which is the prevailing note of our inter-communal life in its social relations. We could therefore make the necessary effort to act unitedly in the political sphere and thus do the best by ourselves and by the whole Island. And in conclusion I may say that under the able, balanced and politically wise leadership of Mr. Jayah, our President the Muslim community can face the future with security.



## Art &amp; Letters

By Quintus Delilkhan

## WALTER DE LA MARE

WALTER DE LA MARE is still the master of the magic and mystery of modern verse. In his poems one escapes from the commonplace though not the common things of life, and one is admitted to a world of imagination and strangeness, whatever the theme he handles. It is this quality which distinguishes him from all other poets of the generation. When you are tired of the tiresome realism of modern poets who tell you of the anatomy of reality, ugly and hard like dry bones, you find a supreme enchantment in turning over the pages of de la Mare, and for this one should be really grateful.

"The Burning Glass and Other Poems" is his first publication since 1938. It contains 74 poems and is an odd jumble, being culled from many periods of his own writing, some of them being very recent. Here is found the old note of wise serenity in a changing world which hardly affects the dream of the poet who is far withdrawn in the meditative loveliness of a country of the mind all his own which transcends the world in which we are condemned to live, move and have our own being. There is a sense of the great maturity of art in this poetry which combines all the elements of wisdom, artistry and that subtlety in handling words and creating an atmosphere for which we have to look in vain among most of the great names in poetry today and which is a prerogative of this poet in more than a common measure of authenticity.

The first poem appears to be autobiographical, and the poet describes his present condition as—

"Old; yet unchanged; still pottering in his thoughts;  
Still eagerly enslaved by books and print;  
Less plagued perhaps by rigid musts and oughts,  
But no less frantic in vain arguments....."

Haunted by questions no man answered yet,  
Pining to leap from A clean on to Z;  
Absorbed by problems which the wise forget;  
Avid for fantasy—yet how staid a head!

A feeble venturer—in a world so wide!  
So rich in action, daring, cunning, strife!  
You'd think, poor soul, he had taken sloth for bride—  
Unless the imagined is the breath of life....."

and after making a strong claim for the value of dreams and true fantasies in a world in which action is so much more praised that the life of thought which is "ardent for what is neither no, nor here" and makes the poet feel like "an Orpheus fainting for his Eurydice," he concludes the description of himself as

"A foolish, fond old man, his bedtime nigh,  
Who still at western window stays to win  
A transient respite from the latening sky  
And scarce can bear it when the sun goes in."

This is a touching tribute to de la Mare's humility but his insubstantial dreams will be valued at a much higher price by our most distant posterity because his poems have the texture which will enable them to endure to the latest time. He is one of the poets of today who has a survival value. The individual manner is present in all his poems which range over a very wide variety of subjects, the loss of friends, the pursuit of the shadowy things of the mind, a phase of intense belief, the passage of time and the sure, silent and steady approach of the shadow of death which falls on all men at last. The march of time is inexorable for all of us, and this is how de la Mare writes wistfully on this theme:

"Grieve must my heart. Age hastens by.  
No longing can stay Time's torrent now.....  
Yet, as a thorn its drop of dew  
Treasures in shadow, crystal clear,  
All that I loved, I love anew,  
Now parting draweth near."  
There is an exquisite poem which beyond others shows the infinite delicacy

of de la Mare's mind in handling a theme which would have admitted no such sense of beauty if handled by any other poet but himself. It is a characteristic of this poet that his approach to a subject which is commonplace reveals something new always. The poet represents himself as holding a candle and looking on the form of a woman he loves while she lies sleeping. The sentiments are tender, and the poetry is of a high order:

"Burn stilly, thou; and come with me  
I'll screen thy rays. Now .... Look and see,  
Where like a flower furled  
Sealed from this busy world,  
Tranquil brow, and lid, and lip,  
One I love lies here asleep....."

Venture closer, then. Thy light  
Be little day to this small night!  
Fretting through her lids it makes  
The lashes stir on those pure cheeks;  
The scarcely parted lips, it seems,  
Pine, but in vain, to tell her dreams....."

See, she stirs. A hand at rest  
Slips from above that gentle breast,  
White as winter-mourning snows,  
Summer-sweet as that wild rose  
Thou lovest thing! Ah, welladay!  
Candle, I dream. Come, come away!"

The culminating point of the poet's fantasy is reached in his attempt to describe a world beyond our human experience, and is entitled "Outer Darkness" which shows a concentration of his vision upon a very elusive region of the mind which he endeavours to make apprehensible to our own faculty of insight but it remains beautifully shadowy and undefined, allowing much room for the imagination to move in. He describes himself as traversing a stream "by that nebulous bridge which the waking call dream" and arriving at an ultimate future that in spite of being dream itself "was the dust of a past no remorse could forget" in which "the familiar was disguised as the strange." In this dream creation of his own mind, and built out of his own past, there is a significance which he admits he does not comprehend but it affords a vision which impresses itself on his mind most effectively. He retains his identity but finds himself denuded of everything which has made up his usual life, and it seems as if he makes himself the judge of himself, for the whisper of questioning comes not from some outside power but from within himself:

"Till a whisper within, like a breath from the tomb,  
Asked me, 'Knowest thou not wherefore thus thou art come  
To this judgment, this doom?'  
And my heart in my dreams stayed its pulsings: 'Nay, why?'  
But nothingness made no reply."

It is not generally realised how great a poet Europe has had in Camoes, the author of the epic known as "The Lusiads" which tells of the greatness of Portugal. Portugal was a small country but it had nurtured great heroes whose deeds had a shaping power on the history of the world. We who are used to read English history and are familiar with the names of English heroes do not allow ourselves to realise that even a small country like Portugal could, at the period of its greatest development, have possessed navigators, poets, soldiers and other types of men, who have not only moulded the mind and destiny of their own country, but also established a claim to be regarded as benefactors of mankind. Camoes wrote under the influence of the classical tradition and he had a most curious mixture of classical mythology and Christian characters in combination in his poetry. It is a classic of the European mind that he has given us, fired by his patriotism, his great learning, his wide experience and an essential nobility of mind which should win for him more readers than he has found outside his own country. Like all great classics he has suffered by translation, and it is not possible that his essential greatness can be transmitted through the mediocre work in which he is now available to readers of English. The copy I possess is in Bohn's Classics series and in many respects it lacks the quality and fire which are reputed to be abundantly present in the original. I would wish that an enterprising firm like Dent's should include in its series this great classic in a modern translation which would in some definite measure be adequate to the high praise which has been consistently bestowed by competent scholars on

the original. It is surprising that there has been so little attention paid to this work which is the epic of a people who, though they have now dwindled to a small power, at one time possessed a vast empire, and whose conquests were not only geographical but also of the more enduring empire of the mind. Tasso in his "Jerusalem Delivered" has written the epic of chivalry which revealed the soul of Europe in its struggle for the maintenance of its ideals and for preserving a heritage which was most valuable to the intensive life of Christendom. It is a powerful epic which reflects how deeply the mind of Europe could be stirred by a great cause, how magnificently life was lived in the ages of chivalry and how authentic was the genius which flourished and took like and colour from the epic movements of actual events in which people were engaged contemporaneously and which inspired the poet directly by appealing to his hopes, fears and patriotism. Our epics of wars are written in voluminous prose, but they are mere

records and not creations of high art, and lastly, as to Milton's epic "Paradise Lost" one scarcely needs to say more than he is with us, with a potency of influence that will never fail.

It would of course not be fair to assume from this poem that the poet is a nihilist who has eliminated from his universe its one transcendent reality, but it probably belongs to one of those unaccountable moods which overcome a man when he is much troubled by the lack of an answer to his immediate questioning. The poet has his own beliefs though they may not be explicitly stated at all times. These poems reveal a mind of singular beauty, with dreams that are like a woven tapestry, but also a consciousness that life and time are brief, and that even the greatest poet can say very little of what is in his heart's core; and this he admits in the lines:

"Yet not the loveliest song that ever  
Died on the evening air  
Could from my inmost heart dis sever  
What life had hidden there."

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