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Arrack, Toddy and Ceylonese Nationalism: Some Observations on the Temperance Movement, 1912-1921

By Tissa Fernando

Introduction

This paper[1] makes no claim to being an exhaustive study of the prohibition campaign of early 20th century Ceylon. Such a study is long overdue, for scholars on Ceylon have inexplicably neglected this important social movement which had such a major impact on Ceylon politics of this period. In this paper I attempt to throw some light on the organization of the campaign, especially on the role of its western educated leadership. I have also attempted to assess the achievements of the movement and the impact of the movement on the broader nationalist agitation.

The Excise Ordinance of 1912

The abolition of the existing system of excise in Ceylon and the introduction of the system in force in Madras Presidency were recommended to the Colonial Office by Governor McCallum in October 1908. The Secretary of State approved the change but wanted the scheme brought before the Legislative Council for discussion. On 7 April 1909, the Legislative Council approved the proposal and in September, 1909, R. M. Thurley, Assistant Commissioner of the Madras Salt, Abkari and Customs Department and B. Horsburgh of the Ceylon Civil Service were appointed to report on how the Madras system of excise could be introduced into Ceylon.[2]

According to existing arrangements,[3] the production of arrack[4] was by the "outstill system" whereby liquor was produced in some two

1. This is a revised version of a paper presented to the Ceylon Studies Seminar, University of Ceylon, on 7 June 1970. I am grateful to members of this seminar for their valuable comments.
2. See, *Ceylon Hansard*, 1909, 7 April 1909 and *S.P.* 1, (1911), *Proposed Excise System for Ceylon.*
Changing the existing excise system had been recommended by F. R. Ellis in his report on the system of farming rents *S.P.* XXX*I* (1897), but it was only in Governor McCallum's term of office (1907-13) that the question of excise reforms was taken up once more. McCallum sent the Controller of Revenue, H. L. Crawford, to Madras to report on the system followed over there. Crawford submitted a memorandum recommending the abolition of the existing system and its replacement by the system of excise prevailing in the Madras Presidency. It was as a result of Crawford's report that Thurley and Horsburgh were called upon to draw up a scheme for Ceylon on the Madras model.
3. *Sessional Paper* XXXI (1897), *System of Farming Arrack Rents* (Report of F. R. Ellis). *Sessional Papers* are hereafter referred to as *S.P.*
4. In Ceylon usage refers generally to a spirit distilled from fermented coconut toddy.

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hundred and fifty small and scattered stills (mainly along the coastal belt of the island), licensed but otherwise uncontrolled. Distribution was through "renting," the monopoly of the retail sale in defined areas being sold to the highest bidder who was known as the "renter." As for toddy,[5] its supply and distribution were subject to no legal control and were in that sense "outside the law." In practice, however, the renting system gave the monopoly of retail sale of both arrack and toddy to the "arrack renter," who either re-sold the toddy to sub-renters or kept the toddy in his taverns, pushing the sale of arrack at the expense of toddy by keeping the retail price of the latter disproportionately high. In either case, the arrack renter enjoyed the revenue from toddy in addition to his profits from arrack, and this was a source of revenue that proved attractive to the government. It is clear from their Report that Horsburgh and Thurley were concerned with this new source of revenue and were interested in devising a means of channelling the money from toddy for the government's use. They observed, "it is absolutely certain that Government does not get its fair share of revenue that should accrue from the actual toddy consumption, if, indeed, it gets any share at all, the renter in this case being generally supposed to omit toddy altogether from his rent collections." The Report blamed the government for the existing state of affairs which did not provide the consumer with any "legitimate" means of obtaining toddy.[6]

The Madras excise system had the following features radically different from the system existing in Ceylon:[7]

(*a*) the complete separation of the sale of arrack and toddy.

(*b*) concentration of distillation, by the establishment of a few large distilleries.

(*c*) a fixed duty per proof gallon before arrack was sold.

5. A relatively mild liquor derived from the coconut and palmyra palms.

6. *S.P.* I (1911), p. 3.

7. When the Dutch controlled the maritime provinces of Ceylon (1658-1796) they established a remunerative overseas trade in arrack with places as diverse as Penang, Singapore, Madras, Bombay, Malabar and the Coromandal Coast. The British tried to maintain this trade but met with little success, especially after 1813. This was partly due to prohibitive tariff restrictions and excise duties imposed by importing countries and partly due to competition from Batavian and Coromandal arrack. The result was that the British had to depend on local consumption for revenue. Thus, although the Dutch had prohibited the sale of arrack to the Kandyan kingdom, the British extended the renting system into the Kandyan provinces and also established new taverns throughout the country. The British also consolidated the laws relating to excise by Ordinance No. 5 of 1834 which was superseded by Ordinance No. 10 of 1844. Licences were required for tapping *fermented* toddy for consumption and for arrack manufacture. The distillation and wholesale distribution of arrack were also controlled by licences, while retail sale was given to 'renters,' who bought the right at public auctions or by tender. Renters purchase a 'revenue farm' which gave them control over the retailing sale of a specified area: they usually sub-let individual taverns. The arrack was obtained by renters direct from numerous small, unhygienic and decrepit 'stills.'

(*d*) the division of the country into contract supply areas, for the wholesale supply of which one of the distilleries had a monopoly.

(*e*) sale by auction of the right to sell arrack at each tavern separately, i.e., the abolition of the renting system.

(*f*) the division of the country into toddy selling areas and the sale by auction of the right to sell toddy within each area.

(*g*) arrack revenue from a fixed duty per gallon and tavern rents; toddy revenue from a fixed tree tax and tavern rents.

It is clear that on considerations of revenue the Madras system was attractive to government, and it is probable that this was a strong motive for the proposed changes. The government, however, was reluctant to acknowledge fiscal considerations and even claimed that the reforms would result in loss of revenue and an increase in expenditure. The government's motive, according to McCallum, was its "moral obligation to make a beginning in the direction of dealing with the evil of drink in this Colony."[8] He emphasized that the goal of reduced consumption could be achieved only by government's control of the manufacture, distribution and sale of liquor throughout the island. Although the government thought it judicious to play down the revenue factor, the European-owned *Times of Ceylon* expressed what could well have been also the official expectations: "We hope that one effect of the new proposals will be to increase the revenue and we see nothing inconsistent in this and a real desire to make the people more sober."[9] The revenue aspect of the reforms was obvious and a Ceylonese-owned daily commented: "The most superficial man can see that this scheme has been devised more with a view to increasing the revenue rather than with any intention of serving the best interests of the country."[10]

The Horsburgh-Thurley Report was submitted to government on 16 July 1910 and was unanimously approved by the Executive Council. However, due to the "vast amount of work, both legislative and administrative" that had to precede the implementation of the recommendations, it was decided to continue the existing system until 30 June 1912.[11] The Excise Ordinance embodying the new scheme was finally adopted by the Legislative Council in May 1912,[11] replacing an ordinance in existence since 1844.

8. *S.P.* XLII (1912), *The Ceylonese Excise System*, McCallum to Harcourt, No. 333, 13 June 1912.
9. *Times of Ceylon*, 13 Feb. 1911, editorial.
10. *Ceylonese*, 10 June 1913, editorial.
11. C.O. 54/736, McCallum to Crewe, No. 540, 7 Sept. 1910.
12. *Ceylon Hansard*, 1912, 31 May 1912.

The opposition to the proposed changes was voiced as soon as they were known to the Ceylonese public. There were many aspects of the Madras system which were not popular in Ceylon, but the action which aroused most criticism was the establishment of separate toddy shops. An early critic of the new scheme was a leading Ceylonese physician and proprietory planter, Marcus Fernando, who stressed that the idea of encouraging temperance and at the same time obtaining a large revenue from alcoholic consumption was "bound to prove a signal failure".[13] The government invited criticism by its own actions which were not always well considered or tactful. For instance, while the new Bill was under discussion in the Legislative Council, the government proceeded to establish, under the old ordinance that was about to be repealed, an enormous number of new toddy taverns numbering well over a thousand. "The general public is said to have been unaware of the whole proceeding until after it had become an accomplished fact."[14]

The government claimed that the separation of the vend of arrack and toddy was a fundamental feature of the proposed reforms, for until separation was achieved arrack would be pushed at the expense of toddy. Theoretically, toddy was available at every arrack tavern, but in practice this was not always so, since the sale of arrack was more profitable to tavern keepers. There were, however, numerous places where fermented toddy was sold illicitly, and government claimed that their plan was merely to establish places where toddy could be obtained legally, in order to suppress this illicit sale. The government further argued that the increase in the availability of liquor was more apparent than real because (a) toddy was no longer to be available in arrack taverns, and (b) there would be a reduction in illicit sales.[15]

Despite assurances by government, the opening of so many toddy shops was viewed by some Ceylonese leaders as a national calamity. Thus, in addition to 845 arrack taverns in existence, the government introduced 1,072 new toddy taverns by June, 1912.[16] In October 1912, their number had increased to 1,167.[17] The anxiety felt in Ceylon was shared by the Secretary of State who declared: "... I cannot view without some concern so considerable an addition to the number of premises licensed for the sale of alcoholic liquors...,"[18] but he went no further than to advise the government to reduce the number of taverns when it was practicable to

13. *Ibid.*, 6 Dec. 1910.
14. *S.P.* XLII (1912), enclosure in Harcourt to McCallum, No. 326, 26 July 1912. Deputation to the Secretary of State from the Native Races and Liquor Traffic United Committee.
15. *S.P.* XLII (1912), McCallum to Harcourt, No. 333, 13 June 1912.
16. *Idem.*
17. *S.P.* XLIV (1912), *Arrack and Toddy Taverns*, p. 29.
18. *S.P.* XLII (1912), Harcourt to McCallum, No. 326, 26 July 1912.

do so. Although reluctant to reprimand the local authorities, there is no doubt that the Colonial Office disapproved of the manner in which these toddy shops were introduced. Lord Emmott, the Parliamentary Under Secretary, minuted: "There is no getting away from the fact as it seems to me that this enormous number of toddy licenses was an error and done in unnecessary haste and without due consideration."[19]

The Western Educated Elite and the Temperance Campaign

The campaign against the Excise Reforms was organised and led by western educated Ceylonese who were quick to realise that in a Buddhist country public anxiety could be exploited on an issue like this in order to embarrass the government. In fact, public fears were sometimes extreme as, for example, the complaint that "the amount of toddy drinking to be encouraged through the new system of opening taverns at every corner will raise a generation of physically deformed men...."[20] One newspaper even claimed that the people of Ceylon were being "slowly converted into a nation of drunkards."[21]

The campaign of the Ceylonese leaders was, on the whole, more sophisticated and took the form of a reasoned debate with the government. They did not hesitate to give the government credit where credit was due, as for example, on the decision to eliminate the renter and to exercise greater control over the distribution and sale of liquor.[22] However, they were equally insistent on exposing some of the asssumptions on which the new scheme was based.[23] Particularly vulnerable was the assumption that the new toddy shops would eliminate illicit sales, for it was well known that "the illicit booths are the satellites of licensed taverns, depending upon them and deriving from the licenses the spirit they vend. Hence, an increase of taverns means a proportionate increase in the illicit traffic..."[24] Since there was inadequate reason to think that the separation of arrack and toddy would eliminate illicit sales, it became natural to suspect the government's motives. It was thus widely believed that the "decision to keep the sales separate [was] intended to encourage the consumption of toddy for revenue purposes."[25]

19. C.O. 54/766, Lord Emmott's minute, 22 Feb. 1913.
20. *Times of Ceylon*, 16 Jan. 1911, letter by 'S'.
21. *Ceylonese*, 4 June 1914, editorial.
22. For example, *Ceylon Independent*, 15 April 1912, editorial.
23. Although there was no movement in the 19th century comparable to what I describe in this paper it is important to note that temperance ideology was an integral aspect of Buddhist revivalism in the second half of the 19th century. Hence, the ground had in a sense already been prepared for a concerted campaign.
24. *Ibid.*, 24 April 1912, letter by Dr. Marcus Fernando.
Also letter by Dr. John Attygalle on 16 April 1912.
25. *Ibid.*, 9 May 1912, editorial.

The public protest meeting was a popular device of the Ceylonese elite to rally mass support. On the 21st May 1912 a public meeting was held in Colombo to protest against the excise policy.[26] On the 25th May another meeting was held attended by about 1500 persons.[27] On the 4th June, a protest meeting was held in Nuwara Eliya,[28] and similar meetings were held in several of the large towns of Ceylon including Moratuwa, Alutgama, Mirigama, Kalutara, Chilaw, Hatton, Tangalle, Kurunagala and Matara. These meetings were organized by the western educated elite.[29] The most important of these meetings was the one held in Colombo on 15th June 1912 with James Peiris in the chair.[30] A protest meeting of Buddhists was held on 25th July 1912, and it was at this meeting that the decision was taken to form a central temperance society in Colombo to guide the island-wide temperance campaign.[31] On the 18th November 1912, the Low Country Products Association, the main commercial organization of the Ceylonese, condemned the toddy scheme.[32] Similarly, the government's excise policy was condemned by the Jaffna Association, the principal organization of western educated Tamils of the north.[33]

The holding of protest meetings had hardly any effect on the local authorities and the Ceylonese leaders were compelled to seek redress in memorials to the Colonial Office. One of the early memorials of protest was sent by the Friends Mission in Ceylon.[34] The Low Country Products Association sent two memorials to the Secretary of State.[35] In the memorial sent by the committee appointed by the protest meeting held in Colombo on 15th June 1912, it was argued that the proposed reforms would lead to "increased facilities for the consumption of alcohol."[36] This memorial also called for a Royal Commission to inquire into the working of the Excise Ordinance. The Plumbago Merchants Union had more mercenary

26. *Ibid.*, 23 May 1912.
27. *Ibid.*, 27 May 1912. Among the speakers at this meeting were F. R. Senanayake, Anagarika Dharmapala, C. Batuwantudawe and John de Silva.
28. *Ibid.*, 7 June 1912.
29. For example, the protest meeting at Matara was organized mainly by lawyers; see *ibid.*, 18 June 1912.
30. *Ibid.*, 17 June 1912. The large gathering present at this meeting included many prominent members of the contemporary elite—E. J. Samerawickrame (Advocate), Arthur Alvis (Proctor), C. P. Dias (Headmaster), Dr. Solomon Fernando, Dr. (Mrs.) Ratnam, D. S. Senanayake, Dr. C. W. Van Geyzel, E. W. Perera, H. L. de Mel (Proctor), R. L. Pereira (Advocate), J. G. C. Mendis (Headmaster), and Armand de Souza (Editor of the 'Morning Leader').
31. *Ibid.*, 29 July 1912.
32. *Ibid.*, 19 Nov. 1912.
33. *Ceylonese*, 12 June 1913.
34. C.O. 54/745, Clifford to Harcourt, No. 560, 13 Sept. 1911.
35. *Ceylon Independent*, 18 April 1912 and C. O. 54/761, enclosure in Stubbs to Harcourt, No. 167, 20 March 1913.
36. *Ceylon Independent*, 11 July 1912.
C.O. 54/755, enclosure in McCallum to Harcourt, No. 633, 17 Oct. Memorial signed by James Peiris and the Rev. W. J. Noble.

objections to the new scheme. Their memorial emphasized that the new scheme would "increase very materially the facilities for intemperance afforded to their labour and thus... add a new element of grave danger to the industry..."[37] Opposition to the Excise Bill was also expressed in a memorial sent by the Buddhist clergy, signed by 4,478 high priests and monks of Ceylon.[38] In their memorial, the inhabitants of the Hapitigam Korale of the Negombo District asked that they "be delivered from the newly established temptation to drink introduced in their midst under the new Excise scheme."[39] A memorial was also sent on behalf of the meeting of Buddhists held on 25 May 1912, in which it was argued that "whereas a drinker of toddy may give it up for the stronger liquor, arrack, it is extremely rare, and they are not aware of a single instance, where an arrack drinker has given up the stronger drink for that of toddy."[40] Similarly, the Ceylon Excise Reform Association lodged their protests and called for an independent inquiry.[41] A memorial signed by 236 prominent residents of Ceylon was also sent to the Secretary of State. The signatories of this memorial were a large number of foreign missionaries, and a cross-section of the Ceylonese elite including 32 barristers and advocates, 50 proctors and notaries, 21 doctors and 14 landed proprietors.[42]

The lobbying in England

Protest meetings and memorials to the Colonial Office did not prove as effective as was hoped and the Ceylonese elite therefore resorted to direct campaigning in Britain. A delegation of Ceylonese left for England to put their case before temperance organizations and influential persons both inside and outside the House of Commons. The Native Races and Liquor Traffic United Committee was one of the associations approached, and they were quick to take up the cause of Ceylonese temperance workers. In February 1912, the United Committee appealed to the Colonial Office not to sanction the new excise scheme as it "would be seriously injurious to the native population."[43] The assurances given by the Colonial Office did not satisfy the United Committee, which continued to insist that the "recommendations are calculated to make worse instead of better the present condition of affairs."[44] On 22 July 1912 a deputation of its mem-

37. C.O. 54/753, enclosure in McCallum to Harcourt, No. 459, 21 Aug. 1912.
38. *Ibid.*, McCallum to Harcourt, No. 458, 21 Aug. 1912.
39. C.O. 54/755, enclosure in McCallum to Harcourt, No. 648, 29 Oct. 1912.
40. *Ibid.*, enclosure in McCallum to Harcourt, No. 652, 30 Oct. 1912, Memorial signed by W. A. de Silva, C. Batuwantudawe, F. R. Senanayake and A. Mendis.
41. C.O. 54/764, enclosure in Stubbs to Harcourt, No. 591, 24 Sept. 1913.
The Excise Reform Association was formed by the elite to oppose the new scheme.
42. C.O. 54/760, Stubbs to Harcourt, No. 94, 13 Feb. 1913.
43. C.O. 54/758, J. Newton, Secretary, United Committee to Harcourt, 2 Feb. 1912.
44. *Ibid.*, J. Newton to Under Secretary, Colonial Office, 18 March 1912.
Also see, *ibid.*, J. Newton to Secretary of State, 13 May 1912.

bers,[45] led by Sir Herbert Roberts, M.P., met the Secretary of State for the Colonies to discuss the new excise scheme for Ceylon. The deputation also included representatives of the Ceylonese elite—D. B. Jayatilaka, Dr. Marcus Fernando, Dr. David Rockwood, Dr. C. A. Hewavitarana, H. C. Sproule and D. R. Wijewardene. Stubb's biographical notes on the Ceylonese in the deputation reveal that the Colonial Office was kept well informed on personal matters concerning Ceylonese leaders. He refers to Fernando as "an exceptionally able and well informed man," to Sproule as "a truculent, fluent and witty talker with an outstanding knowledge of scandal" and to Rockwood as "a bounder right away from the word 'jump.'"[46]

The arguments adduced by the deputation were typical of the general objections to the government's scheme, and were especially concerned with the proposals for separate toddy taverns and for government owned distilleries. They pointed out that the large increase in taverns implied an increased temptation to drink and an increased difficulty in controlling sales. They also disapproved of establishing government distilleries; "The traffic will appear as having Government sanction and approval, as it does in India, and so will obtain an additional attraction."[47] Marcus Fernando criticized the government's method of introducing the taverns: "The wholesale dumping of toddy shops throughout the country, with a suddenness almost dramatic, at the time when the Excise Bill was being considered in the local legislature, has created a profound sensation in the Colony." Fernando stated that "speaking from an experience of over thirty years, I can most emphatically assert that never before in the Island has a government policy received such widespread condemnation and disapproval."[48] Jayatilaka, speaking on behalf of the Buddhists, criticized the government for its indifference to public opinion on excise matters.[49] The Secretary of State, Lewis Harcourt, assured the deputation that he was not unsympathetic to their point of view. The establishment of toddy taverns, he pointed out, was merely a device to control the illicit sale of toddy by giving people "legalized toddy," and disagreed that it would lead to increased consumption of liquor.[50]

45. *S.P.* XLII (1912), enclosure in Harcourt to McCallum, No. 326, 26 July 1912. The deputation consisted of many M.P.s and also included the Rev. W. H. Rigby of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, John Ferguson, C.M.G., a former editor of the 'Ceylon Observer' and a resident of Ceylon for nearly fifty years, and the Rev. G. A. Thompson, Secretary of the Church of England Temperance Society.
46. C.O. 54/759, R. E. Stubb's minute, 15 July 1912.
47. *S.P.* XLII (1912), enclosure in Harcourtto McCallum, No. 326, 26 July 1912, Statement on behalf of the United Committee read by the Rev. Thompson.
48. *Ibid.*, statement by Dr. Marcus Fernando. As a person connected with Ceylon for 30 years, the Rev. W. H. Rigby was also able to say: 'I do not remember so wide-spread and so strong a feeling against any action of the government as there exists against the proposed licensing policy.'
49. *Ibid.*, statement by D. B. Jayatilaka.
50. *Ibid.*, L. Harcourt's reply.

The lobbying done by the Ceylon delegates in England met with considerable success and proved a source of embarrassment to the Colonial Office. The National Temperance Federation of Britain was another of the associations that actively supported the Ceylonese cause, and made many attempts to influence the Colonial Office.[51] In the period May-October 1913 alone, the Colonial Office received 51 memorials from voluntary bodies in Britain protesting against the excise policy in Ceylon.[52] These Christian and temperance associations opposed separate toddy shops in the belief that they would give rise to drunkenness and demoralization.[53] This missionary spirit of safeguarding the moral welfare of native peoples was the primary motive for these associations joining hands with the Ceylonese elite. But these societies were not devoid of broader humanitarian feelings and were prepared to campaign against acts of injustice committed on colonial peoples, as was revealed in their attitude to the 1915 Riots in Ceylon.[54] The Ceylonese lobby also worked in the House of Commons and many Members of Parliament were won over to their cause.[55]

Stubbs' General Order to Government Servants

R. E. Stubbs who succeeded Clifford as Colonial Secretary of Ceylon was earlier an official of the Eastern Department of the Colonial Office. He was thus more than familiar with the opposition to the new excise policy both in and outside Ceylon. As an official at the Colonial Office Stubbs was not unsympathetic to the Ceylonese point of view, and on more than one occasion expressed his misgivings on the wisdom of the proposed reforms. With regard to the hasty creation of over a thousand toddy taverns, Stubbs wrote: "It may be admitted that the Ceylon government

51. C.O. 54/758, Charles Smith to Harcourt, 15 Feb. 1912.
C.O. 54/766, Secretary, National Temperance Federation to Harcourt, 13 Feb. 1913.
Ibid., Secretary, National Temperance Federation to Harcourt, 15. Oct. 1914.
C.O. 54/800, Secretary, National Temperance Federation to Bonar Law, 21 Oct. 1916.

52. The following are the associations that sent memorials to the Colonial Office: Christian Endeavour Union; Wesleyan Methodist Church; United Kingdom Alliance; International Order of Good Templars; United Methodist Church; Native Races and Liquor Traffic United Committee; Congregational Church; Western Temperance League; Society of Friends in Ireland; Scottish Christian Union; Irish Women's Temperance Union; Baptist Missionary Society; Band of Hope Union; Church of England Temperance Society; Wesleyan Gospel Temperance Society; Scottish Temperance League; Sons of Temperance; Street Teetotal Society; Evangelican Free Church and the British Women's Temperance Association. See C.O. 54/767 for details.

53. See, for example, the address by the Grand Chief Templar of England to the Native Races and Liquor Traffic United Committee, reported in the *Ceylonese*, 16 June 1914.

54. For further information on the riots, see Tissa Fernando, "The British Raj and the 1915 Communal Riots in Ceylon," *Modern Asian Studies*, vol. 3, no. 3, 1969, and "The 1915 Riots in Ceylon: A Symposium" in *The Journal of Asian Studies*, vol. 29, no. 2, 1970.

55. The Members who asked questions in the House on excise policy in Ceylon were Keir Hardie, Sir John Jardine, Sir Herbert Roberts, H. G. Chancellor, Leif Jones, Ferene, Mitchell-Thomson and L. Ginnell. See *Debates of the House of Commons*, 5th series, vols. XL, XLI, XLIV, XLVI, XLVIII, L, LII, LIII, LIV, LV, LIX, LXXX, LXXXII, LXXXIV.

acted in a tactless and irritating way—I regret to say I think they usually do..."[56] In July, 1912, after a conversation with Marcus Fernando, Stubbs confessed that he was "rather shaken in the conviction that the Government's proposals are all for the best."[57] And these doubts persisted, for in November 1912 he minuted: "I have really rather an open mind on this question..."[58] Yet no sooner did he assume duties as Colonial Secretary of Ceylon than his attitude towards the temperance question underwent a conspicuous change. He showed none of his liberal spirit[59] and was responsible for what was perhaps the most unpopular governmental action during the whole of the temperance episode—a General Order in April, 1913, which was intended to discourage government servants from participating in temperance activity.[60] The General Order stated that (a) any public servant who wished to join a temperance society must first obtain permission from the head of his department; (b) If permission was granted, it was to be on condition that the officer took no part in the management of the society and that he did not attend public meetings organised by the society; (c) Permission to join temperance societies was not to be given to administrative officers, including headmen.

The government was apparently forced into this arbitrary action by the vehemence of the agitation by the large number of temperance societies that had sprung up throughout the island. Explaining the reason for the Order, Stubbs wrote:

> Even in cases where the object of a society is genuinely the furtherance of temperance principles, its methods have frequently been open to grave objection, the weapons of boycotting and intimidation having been freely used; while in other cases Temperance meetings have been made the occasion for incitements to disaffection and for personal abuse of government officers.[61]

The restrictions imposed on government servants, he said, were to avoid possible friction between governments and its servants, "since public meetings are only too apt to degenerate into indiscriminate attack on the Government." Whether these were the real motives behind Stubbs' action is controversial. What was clear, however, was what would have been the

56. C.O. 54/758, Stubbs' minute, 23 July 1912.

57. C.O. 54/758, Stubbs' minute, 1 July 1912.

58. C.O. 54/759, Stubbs' minute, 29 November 1912.

59. This change was also manifest in his reaction to the 1915 riots. See Tissa Fernando, "The British *Raj* and the 1915 Communal Riots in Ceylon," *op. cit.*

60. *Ceylon Independent*, 22 April 1913.

61. There was some truth in this assertion. Sir John Kotelawala recalls the temperance activities of his father who was a well-known temperance campaigner in the 1900's. "Their temperance was of the militant type. When they caught a man who had drunk to excess they would march him through the streets the next day, making him wear a chain of coconut shells, in order to render him an object of ridicule and contempt among the people." Sir John Kotelawala, *An Asian Prime Minister's Story*, London, 1956, p. 14.

consequence of the Order. Jayatilaka commented: "No shrewder blow at the temperance movement could have been devised;"[62] for the movement could not be sustained without the cooperation of government officials, especially the headmen who were a vital element in the temperance organization at the village level. From the point of view of the Ceylonese leaders this Order exposed government's true intentions: "though the ostensible object of the scheme may be to have the control, the real one seems to be not to check consumption of intoxicants but to foster it, and thereby increase the revenue."[63]

The Ceylonese leaders rose to the occasion once more and organized opposition to the circular with an efficiency that won them a conspicuous victory over the local authorities. On 3 May 1913, they organized a public meeting in Colombo, to condemn the Order and to memorialize the Secretary of State appealing for its withdrawal.[64] A protest meeting of Buddhists was also held on 4 May 1913.[65] The Colombo Total Abstinence Central Union was among the many local societies which joined in protest against Stubbs' circular.[66] In May 1913, Jayatilaka wrote to the Secretary of State denying the government's allegations against temperance societies, and suggested that the true reason for these drastic measures could be "the growing strength of the temperance societies," which being organized and controlled by leading Ceylonese "are therefore likely to be of permanent power in the land."[67] Jayatilaka was suggesting that Stubbs' action was a retaliatory measure intended to inhibit the growing strength of the western educated elite.

The protests in Ceylon did not seem to have any effect on the government and the Ceylonese leaders were once more compelled to approach temperance societies in Britain and Members of Parliament for assistance. And they were successful in arousing considerable opposition to the government circular among influential persons in Britain. Questions on the Order were asked in the House of Commons by Sir Herbert Roberts[68] and Mitchell-Thompson.[69] P. Acton Shaw warned the Secretary of State for the Colonies that the Order was creating a "profound feeling in temperance circles in this country."[70] Sir Herbert Roberts wanted it conveyed to Harcourt "that there was a very strong feeling in the House among

62. D. B. Jayatilaka, *The Buddhist Temperance Movement: a Vindication and an appeal addressed to the temperance Reformers of the United Kingdom*, London, 1916, p. 2.
63. *Ceylonese*, 24 May 1913, letter from P. Dalagoda.
64. *Ceylon Independent*, 5 May 1913.
65. *Idem.*
66. *Ceylonese*, 14 June 1913.
67. C.O. 54/768, D. B. Jayatilaka to Harcourt, 13 May 1913.
68. *Debates of the House of Commons*, 5th Series, vols. LIII and LIV, 3 and 16 June, 1913.
69. *Ibid.*, vol. LIII, 11 June 1913.
70. C.O. 54/769, P. Acton Shaw to Harcourt, 20 May 1913.

the Liberal and Labour Members on the subject of the recent Temperance Order in Ceylon,"[71] and he further emphasized that the dissatisfaction was shared by a number of Members of the House who were "not directly associated with Temperance work in any way..."[72] J. S. Higham objected strongly to the Ceylon government's interference with the freedom of public servants,[73] and B. R. Cleave commenting on the circular said: "It reads more like an excerpt from the Middle Ages."[74] Many Christian clergymen in Britain condemned Stubbs' action. The Bishop of Lincoln wrote: "There must be some hideous mistake. Or else there must be something seriously amiss with the Ceylon Government, if its administration cannot be carried on without orders so reactionary and so absurd as this."[75]

Strong as were these pressures brought to bear on the Secretary of State, it would be wrong to conclude that they were responsible for converting him to a point of view sympathetic to the Ceylonese agitation. The fact was that Harcourt needed no pressure from outside, for he was by his own admission, "a life long temperance worker."[76] He expressed his horror at the Ceylon government's "monstrous interference,"[77] long before receiving many of these representations. As early as 16 May 1913, Harcourt minuted: "I cannot imagine any reason which could justify a prohibition of public servants from joining Temperance societies. Somebody must have gone mad in Ceylon and perhaps bitten others."[78] By 23 May he had definitely decided not to sanction the Order,[79] but postponed making this public until he received Stubbs' explanatory despatch. Stubbs, meanwhile, realising the strength of the opposition against him, withdrew the Order[80] before receiving instructions from the Colonial Office. This was a major victory for the temperance movement and it was achieved largely by the efficient lobbying carried out by representatives of the Ceylonese elite in Britain.

71. C.O. 54/766, H. A. Beckett to Harcourt, 20 May 1913.
72. *Ibid.*, Herbert Roberts to Harcourt, 20 May 1913.
73. C.O. 54/768, Higham to Harcourt, 2 June 1913.
74. *Ibid.*, Cleave to Harcourt, no date.
75. *Ibid.*, Bishop of Lincoln to Harcourt, 31 May 1913.
76. *S.P.* XLII (1912), enclosure in Harcourt to McCallum, No. 326, 26 July 1912. Harcourt's reply to deputation. It is interesting to note that the Secretary of State's father, Sir William Harcourt, had been a "strongly convinced Temperance reformer" of the late 19th century. "Apart from Brougham, no prominent politician identified himself with licensing and temperance reform until Sir William Harcourt embraced local option in the 1880's." See Brian Harrison, "Drink and Sobriety in England, 1815-73," *International Review of Social History*, XII, 1967, part 2, p. 216, and Henry Carter, *The English Temperance Movement: a study in objectives*, London, 1933, p. 219.
77. C.O. 54/769, Harcourt's minute, 22 May 1913.
78. C.O. 54/768, Harcourt to Butler, 16 May 1913.
79. *Ibid.*, Harcourt's minute, 23 May 1913.
80. C.O. 54/762, Stubbs to Harcourt, No. 391, 11 June 1913.

Advisory Boards and Local Option

One of the important demands made by the Ceylonese leaders was that the opening of taverns should be subject to local control. A grievance they had with regard to the toddy shops was that they were established without consulting the wishes of the people. The demand for some form of local option was a main theme in the interview granted to the Native Races and Liquor Traffic United Committee by the Secretary of State. The Horsburgh-Thurley Report had recommended against the adoption of local option and Ceylon's unsuitability for it was emphasized by Sir Hugh Clifford who introduced the Bill in the local legislature. Yet, as Sir Herbert Roberts who led the deputation to the Secretary of State pointed out, in the Madras system (the model for the new system for Ceylon) there was provision for advisory boards. The Ceylonese representatives in the deputation strongly urged the adoption of local option and denied that local option was not practicable in Ceylon. Jayatilaka maintained that the people of Ceylon had a regular and settled form of government, under which people enjoyed some local self government, centuries before the arrival of Europeans.[81]

The representations made by the deputation evidently impressed the Secretary of State who instructed McCallum that the issue of licences should be placed more directly under the control of public opinion. This was to be done by the establishment of licensing boards in each province or district. The licensing officer (who was the Government Agent) was to be guided by these Boards which were to include representatives of Municipalities, Local Boards, Village Councils, etc.[82] This was indeed a major concession, especially in the light of the Ceylon government's denial of the possibility of consulting local opinion. It seems that the Secretary of State was influenced in making this decision by a memorandum submitted by Marcus Fernando.[83] Lord Emmott, the Under Secretary, thought the memorandum "able and moderate"[84] and A. E. Collins of the Colonial Office confessed that "there seems to be cogency in his representations,"[85] even though the Governor had attempted to prejudice Collins by asking him, in a private letter, not to take Fernando's views seriously.[86] The Colonial Office realised that there was no obvious reason why Fernando should oppose government, for "He is not a prancing patriot."[87]

81. *S.P.* XLII (1912), enclosure in Harcourt to McCallum, No. 326, 26 July 1912.
82. *Ibid.*, Harcourt to McCallum, No. 326, 26 July 1912.
83. C.O. 54/752, memorandum by Marcus Fernando.
84. *Ibid.*, Lord Emmott's minute, 12 July 1912.
85. *Ibid.*, A. E. Collins' minute, 9 July 1912.
86. *Idem.*
87. C.O. 54/758, R. E. Stubbs' minute, 1 July 1912.

The Secretary of State's instructions to establish licensing boards surprised and annoyed the Ceylon government. In what they construed as a struggle with the Ceylonese elite it was necessary for the local administration to feel that they had the power of the Colonial Office behind them. McCallum, therefore, cabled to the Colonial Office that the Secretary of State's instructions could destroy the proposed scheme, as licensing boards with popular representation might well veto the separation of arrack and toddy which was fundamental to the reform. The Governor said that he had no objection to representative boards but insisted that they should only be advisory. The delegation of licensing authority by the government to a non-governmental agency, he argued, was "wholly not suitable for existing local conditions."[88] J. Robinson[89] and A. E. Collins[90] of the Colonial Office tended to agree with the Governor that "the Boards should be advisory only, in the first instance anyhow." But the Secretary of State, with his temperance inclinations, was adamant and minuted, "If the Governor will not meet me on the local option plan I will not assent to the Ordinance."[91] Accordingly, Sir George Fiddes, a senior official of the Colonial Office, drafted a reply to McCallum pressing him to reconsider the matter.[92]

The reasons for McCallum's objections to licensing boards were elaborated in the despatch that followed his telegram of 20 August.[93] The Governor argued that the ultimate power of deciding whether or not to establish taverns must not be given to the Ceylonese because "there is in Ceylon a strong and wealthy body of individuals" who have for many years benefited from the arrack industry and who would try to influence the local licensing committees if they had absolute power. McCallum maintained that these persons have "made a tool of the sincerity of *bona fide* temperance advocates, and have successfully captured a large mass of uninstructed public opinion in this Colony during the recent agitation..." It may at first seem improbable that a renter would want the closing of taverns in his area. The Governor's argument, however, was that since all the arrack sold and consumed in his area was provided by the renter, the abolition of taverns only meant that he could dispose of the liquor illicitly, in places free from "the disadvantages of publicity, and from harrassing supervision and restrictions." The arrack renter was of course opposed to the new toddy taverns as they deprived him of an additional source of revenue.[94]

88. C.O. 54/753, McCallum to Secretary of State (Telegram), 20 August 1912.
89. *Ibid.*, J. Robinson's minute, 22 August 1912.
90. *Ibid.*, A. E. Collins' minute, 22 August 1912.
91. *Ibid.*, Harcourt's minute, 23 August 1912.
92. *Ibid.*, Fiddes' minute, 24 August 1912.
93. *Ibid.*, McCallum to Harcourt, No. 466, 22 August 1912.
94. The Ordinance prohibited arrack renters from having an interest in toddy shops, although in practice this was difficult to enforce.

The Ceylon government was embarrassed by the attitude of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In a private letter to Sir John Anderson, the Permanent Under Secretary of State, McCallum said:

> As regards Excise Reforms it is a calamity that the Secretary of State is so keen on "local option" thus throwing himself into the arms of the enemy—the arrack renters—who know what an important weapon it will be in their hands.[95]

The Governor said that even in the case of advisory committees his Executive Committee acquiesced only very reluctantly; "so rampant is bribery and corruption in the island." McCallum was probably unaware that the Secretary of State's view was shared by others in the Colonial Office, including C. W. Dixon[96] and Sir John Anderson himself.[97] The latter confessed that: "The Governor's arguments do not impress me in the least..." The Colonial Office was, however, generous to McCallum for they were aware that "Sir H. Clifford is the real author of this policy, which the Governor defends so stoutly."[98] Sir Hugh Clifford was due to arrive in England in October and Harcourt decided to postpone the final decision on the matter until he saw Clifford.[99] Clifford's personal intervention proved decisive. After discussing the matter with Clifford and Anton Bertram, the Attorney General of Ceylon, the Secretary of State agreed that the Boards should have only advisory powers.[100]

Having won this major concession from the Colonial Office, the Governor outlined his plan for instituting advisory committees. These Boards were to be appointed annually and were to consist of an equal number of officials and non-officials, with the Chairman having the casting vote.[101] In the Colombo municipal area, for example, the officials were to be the Government Agent (Chairman), Chairman of the Municipal Council, and the Superintendent of Police. One non-official was to be nominated by the chairman, another by the Colombo Municipal Council, and the third by the Governor from among the Justices of Peace. They were to advise on the establishment, supervision and transfer of taverns, but the question of sites was specifically excluded from their jurisdiction. These proposals failed to please the Colonial Office. Anderson was in favour of an unofficial majority in the committee, "to allow scope for a better or more representative expression of public opinion."[102] The Secre-

95. C.O. 54/753, McCallum to Anderson (private letter), 29 August 1912.
96. *Ibid.*, C. W. Dixon's minute, 14 Sept. 1912.
97. *Ibid.*, Anderson's minute, 18 Sept. 1912.
98. *Ibid.*, A. E. Collins' minute, 17 Sept. 1912. Clifford was the Colonial Secretary of Ceylon
99. C.O. 54/753, Harcourt's minute, 23 Sept. 1912.
100. *S.P.* XLII (1912), Harcourt to McCallum, 25 Oct. 1912.
101. C.O. 54/756, McCallum to Harcourt, No. 744, 12 Dec. 1912.
102. *Ibid.*, Anderson's minute, 4 Jan. 1913.

tary of State too wanted an unofficial majority and he went further in suggesting that the chairman should not have a casting vote.[103] Besides, Harcourt felt that there was no reason why the committees should not be allowed to advise on the question of sites. The Ceylon government, realising the mood of the Colonial Office, conceded the principle of an unofficial majority, by including one additional non-official nominated by the Governor.[104] The casting vote of the chairman was also revoked, but the Ceylon government persisted on the question of sites, arguing that it was impracticable for a committee to advise on specific sites for taverns. But Anderson and the Secretary of State[105] were both insistent that the jurisdiction of the committee should not be so curtailed, and the Ceylon government had to concede this too.[106]

In their actual operation, the advisory committees functioned in harmony with the government despite the unofficial majority. In 1913-14, for example, out of a total of 252 excise decisions made by Government Agents throughout Ceylon, only 53 were made contrary to the wishes of Advisory Boards.[107] This cooperation between government and advisory committees was a result of the composition of the committees, since all non-officials were nominated by the Governor.[108] Thus Ceylonese leaders soon began to ask for elected non-officials instead. It was only in 1918, however, that the election of unofficial members was permitted.[109]

There was a more serious grievance with regard to these committees. The Buddhists who formed the large majority of the population[110] and were the chief critics of government's policy, were conspicuously underrepresented on these Boards. In 1914, for example, in 28 out of 32 committees in Sinhalese districts, there were no nominated unofficial Buddhists. In 24 committees there were no Buddhists at all, official or non-official.[111] In 1915, 43 committees were appointed, including only 18 Buddhists out of a total of 149 non-officials nominated by the Governor.[112] The result was that these Boards became "a huge farce."[113] As Jayatilaka pointed out, "the conclusion is irresistible that the Buddhists have been deliberately excluded from these Boards."[114]

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103. *Ibid.*, Harcourt's minute, 5 Jan. 1913.
104. C.O. 54/760, R. E. Stubbs to Harcourt, Confidential, 5 Feb. 1913.
105. C.O. 54/760, Harcourt's minute, 27 Feb. 1913.
106. C.O. 54/761, Stubbs to Harcourt, Confidential, 9 April 1913.
107. *S.P.* XV (1914), *Excise Advisory Committees: Return to an Order of the Legislative Council of Ceylon, dated* 15 *July* 1914.
108. C.O. 54/769, Herbert Roberts to Harcourt, 15 March 1913.
109. *Ceylon Morning Leader*, 29 July 1918.
110. At the 1911 Census, Buddhists formed 60.3% of the population.
111. C.O. 54/790, John Newton to Harcourt, 21 May 1915.
112. C.O. 54/785, Chalmers to Bonar Law, Confidential, 4 Nov. 1915.
113. *Ceylonese*, 24 Jan. 1915, speech by W. A. de Silva at a meeting of the Colombo Total Abstinence Central Union.
114. D. B. Jayatilaka, *The Buddhist Temperance Movement, op. cit.*, p. 7.

The composition of the Advisory Boards was criticised in Britain by the Native Races and Liquor Traffic United Committee. A deputation of the United Committee met the Secretary of State[115] and the Colonial Office had to seek information from the Ceylon authorities. The Ceylon government in reply denied deliberate discrimination, and explained the paucity of Buddhists as showing that there were few Buddhists of sufficient standing to be recognised as representatives of the people.[116] The absurdity of this explanation did not go unnoticed in the Colonial Office,[117] but they were not prepared to question the *bona fides* of the local government.

Loss of faith in these advisory committees had an important consequence. It redirected the energies of the Ceylonese elite towards an uncompromising demand for local option. The Ceylonese temperance leaders were never enthusiastic about Advisory Boards, for they always wanted a direct voice in excise matters. The demand for local option was therefore a central theme of the early temperance agitation.[118] The government, in response to widespread dissatisfaction, appointed a Commission in 1916 to consider "the arrangements for the manufacture and sale of spirits in Ceylon."[119] The Commission included two Ceylonese, W. A. de Silva and A. Kanagasabai, both active temperance workers. This Commission made the important recommendation that if 75% of the road tax payers of an area served by a tavern were opposed to it, the tavern should be abolished. This recommendation was accepted by the government, and the principle of local option was thus introduced. The privilege was first confined to foreign liquor, but was extended to arrack in 1918,[120] and in the next year to toddy as well.[121]

The Government's acceptance of the principle of local option was a major victory for the western educated elite who had organized and led the temperance agitation. It was also an impetus to further temperance activity, for it was now clearly the responsibility of temperance workers to prove that their demand for local option was justifiable. As the Rev. W. J. Noble pointed out:

115. C.O. 54/777, Proceedings of a deputation of the United Committee to the Secretary of State on 21 July 1914.

116. C.O. 54/783, Chalmers to Bonar Law, Confidential, 22 July 1915.

117. *Ibid.*, J. Robinson's minute, 19 Aug. 1915.

118. For example, *Ceylon Independent*, 31 Jan. 1913, Presidential Address of W. A. de Silva to the Convention of Temperance Workers; *Ceylonese*, 25 April 1915, Report of the Hapitigam Korale Total Abstinence Union for 1913-15; *ibid.*, 11 Jan. 1914, Half-yearly Convention of Buddhist Temperance Societies.

119. *S.P.* IX (1917), *Report of the Commission appointed to consider the arrangements for the manufacture and sale of spirits in Ceylon.*

120. *Report of the Excise Commissioner*, 1918.

121. *Report of the Excise Commissioner*, 1919.

> "Many of us have claimed for years that the overwhelming majority of the people of Ceylon are opposed to the existence of all facilities for obtaining liquor. Now is the time to prove the truth of the claim."[122]

The energies of temperance societies were thereafter concentrated on rallying mass support to make local option a success. The Colombo Total Abstinence Central Union, for example, sent members to hold meetings in different areas in preparation for local option polls.[123] The task of educating the people in this responsibility was a hard one. "It means that the whole male population of a village had to turn out walk for miles, remain there patiently till their turn came, deliver their vote through formalities to which they were strangers, and win through an experience of which they had no previous conception."[124] The temperance leaders were fully conscious of the implications of the concession granted by the government and of their own role in obtaining it. Thus, Jayatilaka, addressing a convention of temperance workers, declared: "This is a priceless boon, but it must not be considered as an unexpected and unmerited gift from above. It is the fruit of our persistent labours for several years."[125] He emphasized that local option was the weapon with which the temperance workers could achieve their goal. "If this right is properly exercised we shall be able in a few years to get rid of the drink evil from this island."[126]

The requirement of having to obtain the support of 75% of all the road-tax payers in an area was a difficult one and the temperance leaders soon began to complain against it. The Colombo Total Abstinence Union, for example, wanted the condition relaxed to 75% of those who voted, provided that not less than half the total number entitled to vote arrived at the poll.[127] Ramanathan appealed in the Legislative Council for this stringent requirement to be modified, but he met with no success.[128] In 1921, however, the government granted many important concessions to the temperance workers. The required poll was reduced from 75% to 60%. Permission was given to hold ballots to close all taverns in an area simultaneously, instead of having separate polls for separate taverns. And the cost of duplicate road-tax receipts was reduced from 50 cents to 15 cents.[129] These concessions were so important that the Excise Commissioner claimed that "1921 has been an *annus mirabilis* for the temperance reformer."

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122. *Ceylon Morning Leader*, 9 March, letter by the Rev. W. J. Noble.
123. *Ibid.*, 8 July 1918. Also, Half-yearly Report of the Society, in *Daily News*, 27 Jan. 1919.
124. *Daily News*, 28 July 1915. Speech of D. S. Senanayake at half yearly convention of Colombo Central Union.
125. *Ibid.*, 7 Feb. 1920, D. B. Jayatilaka's presidential address.
126. *Idem.*
127. *Ceylon Daily News*, 27 Jan. 1919, Half yearly convention of the Colombo Total Abstinence Central Union.
128. *Ceylon Hansard*, 1918, 10 July 1918.
129. *Report of the Excise Commissioner*, 1921.

In 1925 further concessions were granted. For Colombo, the support of 51% of voters in the electoral list was considered sufficient for closure of taverns. And hotel public bars were also included within the jurisdiction of local option ballots.[130] Thus, in little more than a decade the government had conceded many of the demands of temperance leaders, even if only in instalments.

The Organization of Temperance Societies and their Activities

The Buddhist temperance societies throughout the island were controlled by the Total Abstinence Central Union of Colombo. This Central Union was formed in July 1912 as a coordinating society, to which provincial societies could be affiliated;[131] its main object was to give leadership to the Temperance Movement.[132] The Central Union had about a score of active members who met once a week for such matters as organizing new societies and arranging propaganda meetings.[133] At the village level there were societies which met at least onee a month. When several societies were established in a locality they were placed under a District Union, composed mainly of office-bearers of affiliated village societies. Many such Unions were established, the most well known being the Hapitigam Korale Union. Once every three months representatives of the Central Union and the District Unions met in conference to discuss organizational matters. And bi-annual conventions were held in Colombo, attended by delegates of all societies affiliated to the Central Union. The total membership of temperance societies in the early years was about 50,000.[134]

In September 1916 a Federated Council of temperance workers was established to "secure the cooperation of all societies, whether Christians, Buddhists, Hindu, Mohammedan or Non-Sectarian in the promotion of this common object."[135] The Federated Council organized the World's Temperance Week celebrations with an annual rally and held quarterly meetings of temperance workers of all denominations and creeds.

The enthusiasm of temperance societies was conspicuous in the initial phase. In November 1912, for example, a meeting of the Hapitigam Korale Union was attended by some 25,000 persons.[136] Another mass

130. *Report of the Excise Commissioner*, 1925.

131. *Ceylon Independent*, 29 July 1912.

132. Among its original members were W. A. de Silva, F. R. Senanayake, C. Batuwantudawe, Edmund Hewavitarana, Arthur V. Dias, Martinus C. Perera and W. Harischandra.

133. D. B. Jayatilaka, *The Buddhist Temperance Movement, op. cit.*, pp. 3-4.

134. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

135. *Souvenir: Women's Christian Temperance Union*, Colombo, 1952, p. 5.

136. *Ceylon Independent*, 20 Nov. 1912. Among those who addressed this meeting were some of the most prominent Ceylonese of the day, including P. Ramanathan, Dr. Marcus Fernando, W. A. de Silva, C. Batuwantudawe, F. R. Senanayake, H. A. P. Sandrasegara, D. S. Senanayake, Arthur V. Dias, and D. R. Wijewardene.

meeting of the same Union drew an attendance of over 30,000.[137] This Temperance Union deserves special mention as it was easily the most successful of the temperance organisations in Ceylon. Founded on 18 August 1912 under the presidency of Don Spater Senanayake, it was guided and financed by the Senanayake family, the dominant elite family of the locality. On the death of the father, the eldest son D. C. Senanayake became president of the Union and his brothers F. R. and D. S. Senanayake were active members of it. By April 1915 the Union was able to claim 9000 members with 50 affiliated societies.[138] Subsequently, this Union also had the distinction of organizing the most successful local option campaign, leading to the closure of all the taverns in the areas.[139]

At the first convention of the Total Abstinence Central Union held in January 1913, delegates of over 60 district societies were represented.[140] By 1915 the Central Union was able to claim a membership of nearly 50,000.[141] The growing strength of temperance societies saw a reversal after the riots which occurred in May-June 1915.[142] The government had been alarmed by the temperance agitation and was inclined to attribute political motives to it. It was natural, therefore, for government to suspect some connection between the temperance campaign and the riots. Whether temperance societies were "seditious," as government claimed they were, would depend on how broad an interpretation one gives to this term. There is no doubt that sentiments critical of the government were expressed at these meetings,[143] which, after all, were organized to oppose government's excise policy. At a protest meeting in Colombo in 1912, a speaker who said "let us have Ceylon for the Ceylonese" was greeted with applause,[144] and the government may have interpreted such remarks as being seditious. It is also true that the temperance leaders themselves visualised the temperance organisation as being a possible basis on which a nation wide political movement could be initiated. For instance, C. A. Hewavitarana in his presidential address to the Central Union in January 1915, only four months before the riots, declared: "It is becoming evident that our Temperance Convention will in the near future become our National Convention and we should all work with that object in view."[145] Such

137. *Ceylonese*, 31 Aug. 1913.

138. *Ceylonese*, 25 April 1915.

139. *Daily News*, 20 Jan. 1921. This Union covered the Negombo District of the Western Province.

140. *Ceylon Independent*, 30 Jan. 1913.

141. *Ceylonese*, 26 Jan. 1915.

142. See Tissa Fernando, "The Post Riots Campaign for Justice," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, XXIX, 2, 1970.

143. C.O. 54/783, Chalmers to Bonar Law, Confidential, 22 July 1915. See enclosure I, Report of the Inspector General of Police, 8 July 1915.

144. *Ceylon Independent*, 17 June 1912, speech by the Rev. F. D. Ederisinghe.

145. *Ceylonese*, 24 Jan. 1915.

speeches may have alarmed government and it is significant that the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Steel-Maitland, in the debate on the Colonial Office Vote, referred to the above remark as an example of the political use of temperance societies.[146] Yet there is no evidence that the temperance leaders were responsible for organizing the riots or that they were plotting to overthrow the British *raj*. This was acknowledged by Governor Anderson after examining the police files on the arrested Ceylonese leaders.[147]

The Government had been uneasy about the growing strength of the westernized elite and their emergence as national leaders after their participation in the temperance campaign. When the riots occurred it was a good opportunity for retaliatory action. Many temperance leaders were imprisoned without trial for varying periods and the Education Code was amended to authorise withholding of grant-in-aid payments to schools whose owners, managers or teachers were involved in temperance activity.[148]

These actions proved disastrous for the temperance movement. It was widely believed throughout the country that the government was opposed to temperance work and that people could indulge in temperance activity only at the risk of incurring official displeasure. "The mere indication that the local official is against a movement is often enough to kill it in a country like this, where few people care to offend the ruling body."[149] The consequences were serious. At the half-yearly convention of the Central Union in December 1915, the secretary called attention to "the spirit of inertia and inactivity now prevalent in most of our affiliated societies." In May 1916, at a conference of temperance workers it was reported that "in most districts temperance work was to-day in a deplorably somnolent condition."[151] Jayatilaka observed in 1917 that "one hears now but rarely of a village temperance gathering, whereas in pre-riot days perhaps a dozen meetings were held every day."[152] The decline of temperance work was reflected in the Colombo Central Union too, and in 1917 it could claim no more than sixty active members in all its affiliated societies.[153] In 1917, "some effort was made to revive the village societies but did not meet with quick satisfactory results."[154] Reviving interest in temperance work was difficult so long as government was thought to be

146. *H. C. Deb.*, 5th series, LXXXIV, 3 Aug. 1916.
147. C.O. 54/804, Anderson to Secretary of State, Telegram, 9 April 1917.
148. See Tissa Fernando, *Journal of Asian Studies*, *op. cit.*
149. *Ceylon Morning Leader*, 22 Nov. 1916, editorial.
150. *Ibid.*, 7 Dec. 1915.
151. *Ibid.*, 3 May 1916.
152. D. B. Jayatilaka, *The Buddhist Temperance Movement*, *op. cit.*, p. 8.
153. *Ceylon Morning Leader*, 9 July 1917.
154. *Ibid.*, 29 Jan. 1918. Proceedings to half-yearly convention of Colombo Central Union.

against the movement. It was the granting of local option which acted as a stimulus for renewed activity, for it was a recognition that government was at last prepared to abide by the wishes of the people. With the granting of local option the relations between temperance leaders and the government improved, and D. S. Senanayake was able to say in 1919 that "the government, if not yet with us, is not against us."

The activities of temperance societies took many forms. At a meeting of the Central Union in 1915, it was decided to initiate work beneficial to different localities, in addition to the usual temperance propaganda.[156] The recommended activities included,

(*a*) establishing a Savings Bank for members,

(*b*) encouraging home gardening by awarding periodical prizes,

(*c*) encouraging cooperative planting enterprise among members,

(*d*) promoting trade by established limited liability companies with shares of small value,

(*e*) establishing market places for sale of village produce,

(*f*) holding exhibitions of planting and industrial products.

Most of these activities were never put into practice. Yet the list shows that the temperance leaders were clearly concerned with the broader social and economic problems facing the village population. C. A. Hewavitarana declared in his presidential address to the Colombo Union,

> We have been realizing that mere abstinence is not sufficient, but that a channel should be found for the proper direction of the energies of our village population. Our programme of work therefore is beginning to extend more and more towards social and economic problems.[157]

The day to day activities of societies, however, were far less idealistic and tended to be merely temperance propaganda. Distribution of booklets and leaflets on temperance, organizing regular sermons by Buddhist monks on the evil of drink were typical of the work of village societies. The principal work of the Central Union was "helping to establish societies at different centres and sending representatives to lecture at the village centres."[158] Thus, in the second half of 1915 "37 members....visited 76 villages and delivered 188 speeches."[159] A Sinhalese temperance periodical, *Total Abstainer*, was published for free distribution, and by 1918, 28,000

155. *Ceylon Daily News*, 28 July 1919.

156. D. B. Jayatilaka, *The Buddhist Temperance Movement*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.

157. *Ceylonese*, 24 Jan. 1915.

158. *Ibid.*, 26 Jan. 1915. Report of the Secretary, Central Union.

159. *Ceylon Morning Leader*, 7 Dec. 1915.

copies had been distributed.[160] Every opportunity was utilised by temperance societies to dramatize their strength through mass rallies and processions. The distribution of leaflets and pamphlets was a regular activity at these rallies.[161] Resolutions were also passed regularly at the half-yearly conventions and these were communicated to government. With the granting of local option, temperance societies channelled their energies into the organisation of public opinion to ensure the heavy polling necessary for a successful ballot.

One important aspect of the temperance movement was its Buddhist bias and the consequent opportunity for some Buddhist leaders to emerge as national leaders. As Jayatilaka remarked, "the movement has been from the beginning mainly Buddhist. It has been the conscious endeavour of leaders to give it this religious turn."[162] This is understandable for the large majority of Sinhalese were Buddhists and a fundamental teaching of Buddhism is total abstinence from intoxicating drinks and drugs. The relative indifference of the Christian churches in Ceylon to this crusade was a perennial complaint of temperance workers; it was widely accepted that "the Anglican Ministers and Roman Catholic priests are not paying that attention which is expected of them."[163] The apathy of the Christian churches was a source of embarrassment to individual Christian missionaries sympathetic to the temperance cause.[164] Christian cooperation, however, was not completely lacking and some Christian organizations, notably the Women's Christian Temperance Union played a leading role in the campaign.[165] The Federated Council of Temperance Workers also had many Christian representatives. The Christian influence was also felt indirectly through temperance work in other countries which provided useful propaganda for local temperance workers. Thus, temperance activity in the United States was often cited as worthy of emulation.[166] A source of even greater inspiration proved to be the visits to Ceylon of a number of prominent Christian temperance workers. These included Sarah Nolan, the delegate from Australia to the World Convention of the Women's Christian Temperance Union,[167] Flora Strout, Women's Chris-

160. *Ceylon Morning Leader*, 29 Jan. 1918.

161. *Ibid.*, 20 Sept. 1917, Annual Report of the Federated Council of Temperance Workers.

162. D. B. Jayatilaka, *The Buddhist Temperance Movement*, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

163. *Ceylon Independent*, 18 Sept. 1913, Letter by George E. de Silva.

164. See comments of the Rev. W. J. Noble in the *Daily News*, 6 Feb. 1920.

165. *Souvenir: Women's Christian Temperance Union*, Colombo, 1952.

166. *Ceylon Daily News*, 7 Feb. 1920, D. B. Jayatilaka's presidential address at convention of Central Union.
Ibid, 21 July 1920, Letter by J. Simon de Silva.
Ibid, 1 Aug. 1921, P. de S. Kularatne's presidential address at convention of Central Union.

167. *Times of Ceylon*, 19 January 1911. She delivered two lectures in Colombo, on "Total Abstinence."

tian Temperance Union World Missionary,[168] and the well-known American temperance personality, W. E. "Pussyfoot" Johnson.[169]

Some Reflections on the Temperance Campaign

A comprehensive evaluation of the working of the Excise Ordinance and of the achievements of the temperance campaign are beyond the scope of this paper. It is of some interest, nevertheless, to examine briefly the results of the movement, to see what and how much the Ceylonese leaders were able to achieve by their efforts. How successful was the temperance campaign? The answer to this would depend on what criteria we adopt to evaluate success. If reduction in the number of taverns is the criterion, it was clearly a successful movement, as the following table reveals.

Number of Taverns

Year	*Arrack*	*Toddy*
1912	844	1,165
1913	832	989
1915	780	810
1917	738	787
1919	566	667
1921	452	474
1923	321	330
1925	272	281
1927	225	221
1929	139	143
1931	130	148

Source: Administration Reports of the Excise Commissioner.

A large number of these reductions were achieved by successful local option ballots as is seen by the marked reduction in taverns after 1919-20, when local option was granted for arrack and toddy.

The reduction of taverns, however, is not synonymous with the growth of temperance and it is necessary to consider whether the temperance campaign led to a fall in the consumption of liquor. The consumption of arrack appears to have fallen with the closing of taverns, as is seen in the following table.

168. *Souvenir: Women's Christian Temperance Union, op. cit.*, p. 6.

169. *Ceylon Daily News*, 10 November 1921. It is interesting to note that Johnson on being interviewed in London on his return from Ceylon prophesied that Ceylon would go 'dry' in two years. *Ibid.*, 29 December 1921. Johnson appears to have even told American audiences that he had introduced 'Prohibition' to Ceylon. See Andrew Sinclair, *Prohibition: The Era of Excess*, London, 1962, p. 477, fn. no. 5.

Consumption of Arrack and Toddy (by gallons)

Year	*Arrack*	*Toddy*
1917	1,144,132	4,489,427
1919	1,029,269	4,570,395
1921	848,376	4,443,800
1923	726,172	4,143,801
1925	772,067	4,736,440
1927	752,031	4,501,608
1929	612,761	4,219,989

Source: Administration Reports of the Excise Commissioner.

The consumption of arrack was 1,551,544 gallons in 1913 and thus, in 16 years, consumption, according to official statistics, had been reduced to nearly a third. This was in proportion to the reduction in the number of arrack taverns. The consumption of toddy,[170] however, remained steady despite a large reduction in the number of taverns. These figures may suggest that although the temperance campaign had little effect on toddy it did affect the sale of arrack. If this means that a number of arrack drinkers had been weaned to toddy, the credit must go not merely to the temperance workers but to government as well. For it would clearly vindicate government's policy of having separate toddy shops to wean people from arrack to the "less potent and less harmful liquor,"[171] toddy.

The interpretation of these figures, however, becomes less simple because of the prevalence of vast illicit traffic in both arrack and toddy. Thus, although there was a marked drop in consumption of arrack according to official statistics, it was generally accepted that there was a corresponding increase in illicit sales. In practically every annual report of the Excise Commissioner during this period, the complaint is made that the closing of taverns had only led to an increase in illicit selling. There is no reason to doubt the accuracy of this observation as it is supported by many non-official sources as well.[172] The temperance leaders themselves conceded the existence of an illicit traffic. In his presidential address to the Central Union in 1920, D. B. Jayatilaka said: "Let us not delude ourselves with the belief that the abolition of a tavern must necessarily mean the abolition of the drink evil. There is reason to think that illicit liquor traffic is widely prevalent."[173] On another occasion, Jayatilaka confessed that "sometimes the very men who recorded their votes against a tavern in a particular area joined in the manufacture and illicit sale of

170. Consumption figure for 1913 was 3,104,775 gallons.

171. *S.P.* XLII (1912), McCallum to Harcourt, No. 333, 13 June 1912.

172. *Ceylon Independent*, 7 November 1923, letter by J. M. Benjamin. Also see 7 September 1923 and 5 December 1925, editorials.

173. *Daily News*, 7 February 1920.

arrack."[174] The existence of illicit sales makes the drop in consumption of arrack in the official statistics illusory. Even if we accept the drop in consumption of arrack as genuine, there was a marked increase in the consumption of equally potent foreign liquors. The consumption of whisky, brandy and gin, for example, increased from 66,659 gallons in 1918 to 150,415 in 1923 and 303,774 gallons in 1926. That this sharp rise in the consumption of foreign liquor was not a coincidence was recognized by temperance leaders themselves.[175] The evidence therefore, seems to favour the observation of the Excise Commissioner that in most districts the closing of taverns only served to "multiply illicit traffic and divert consumers from one sort of drink to another."[176]

Even if its success with regard to the consumption of alcohol was limited, the temperance campaign was functional in providing the Ceylonese elite with an intensive training in leadership. It was to them a stepping-stone to national politics and it is significant that many of the distinguished Ceylonese politicians of the post-1920 era came to prominence through the temperance movement.[177] The immediate motivation for the movement was, of course, the Excise Ordinance, but one could surmise that this alone was unlikely to have succeeded in rallying middle class Ceylonese to such concerted action. The fact was that, deprived of any political responsibility and denied satisfactory employment in the country, there were many well educated Ceylonese who were in need of a sense of participation in national affairs. Their lack of power and influence caused frustration and discontent among wealthy, professional and western educated Ceylonese. A Ceylonese-owned newspaper wrote in 1913,

> every man who goes abroad for his education comes back here humiliated to find that in his own home he is the subject of a despotic administration. He is barely tolerated. His opinion is worth nothing. He has no voice in guiding the affairs of his country.[178]

174. *Ibid.*, 1 August 1920. A prominent Tamil Legislative Councillor was "discovered to be importing drink into a 'dry' area in his car." P. R. Smythe, *A Ceylon Commentary*, London, 1932, p. 61.

175. See, for example, *Ceylon Independent*, 29 April 1925, letter by S. Rajaratnam. The case of Jaffna District demonstrates well that reduction in the number of taverns need not necessarily mean a decrease in the consumption of arrack. In 1913 when there were 35 taverns in Jaffna, 38,373 gallons of arrack were consumed. In 1926 when the number of taverns had been reduced to 6, the consumption had increased to 44,078 gallons. In 1927 when all the taverns in Jaffna were closed by local option, there was a sharp rise in the consumption figures of neighbouring districts. The consumption of arrack in Mannar and Mullaittivu rose from 20,650 gallons in 1925 to 39,270 gallons in 1927. The evidence suggests that arrack was smuggled into 'dry' Jaffna. For instance, railway tickets issued from Mankulam station to Jaffna for the three months October to December rose from 256 in 1925 to 1,961 in 1927. See Reports of the Excise Commissioner.

176. *Report of the Excise Commissioner*, 1921.

177. For example, W. A. de Silva, D. B. Jayatilaka, D. S. Senanayake, W. Duraiswamy and S. Rajaratnam were Members of the Legislative Council under the 1924 Constitution. D. S. Senanayake, C. Batuwantudawe, W. A. de Silva, George E. de Silva and D. B. Jayatilaka were Ministers under the Donoughmore Constitution of 1931.

178. *Ceylon Independent*, 19 April 1913, editorial.

It is significant that many of the temperance leaders were educated in England and a number of them had excellent degrees from Oxford, Cambridge or London. They were not anti-British. A Ceylonese newspaper claimed: "There is no desire here to break away from Great Britain. There is not a breath of disloyalty anywhere."[179] The educated Ceylonese aspirations in the first two decades of this century were mainly for greater participation in the affairs of the nation. Refused recognition as partners by the government, they had no choice but to turn to the masses for psychological sustenance. The temperance question provided the opportunity. Alienated from the people themselves by their foreign language and dress,[180] the westernized elite needed to dramatize their rejection of at least some western values if they were to be accepted as popular leaders. It is interesting, therefore, that they always referred to the consumption of alcohol as an evil introduced by western rule and repugnant to indigenous culture. Typical was the remark of P. Arunachalam: "In ancient times only degraded persons and the lowest castes used intoxicating liquor. After the Europeans came here drinking has become fashionable and spread far and wide."[181] Indeed, westernization implied the acceptance of alcohol as a social beverage, and liquor had gradually become an integral part of Ceylonese urban culture. "It is fashionable to drink and to offer drinks, to serve intoxicants at public dinners, at private gatherings, at weddings and at funerals."[182]

The popular argument of temperance leaders was that liquor was enjoyed only by the westernized urban element and that the majority of villagers who were Buddhists, looked on alcohol with abhorrence. Jayatilaka, for example, referred to Ceylon as "the home of Buddhism" and emphasised that "Buddhism condemns as a low, vicious, and unrighteous occupation the manufacture and sale of any kind of intoxicating drink or drug."[183] Since Buddhism discouraged the use of intoxicants it was assumed that Buddhist villagers were opposed to drink and were in favour of the ultimate goal of total prohibition espoused by temperance societies.[184] This assumption was questionable. As early as 1912, Harcourt in reply to a question in the House of Commons expressed his regret that, although

179. *Idem.*

180. "The country's independence was achieved by a group of leaders whose most outstanding characteristic was their extreme degree of western sophistication. In the colonial period, the Sinhalese upper middle class was more westernized than any other Asian group outside the Philippines. It was quite cut off from the masses," Francis Carnell, "South Asian Nationalism and the West," *St. Antony's Papers*, No. 7, 1960.

181. *Ceylonese*, 25 April 1915. Also see D. B. Jayatilaka's remarks in *The Buddhist Temperance Movement*, 1916, p. 3.

182. Ceylonese, 2 June 1914, editorial.

183. *S.P.* XLII (1912), *The Ceylon Excise System*, enclosure in Harcourt to McCallum, No. 326, 26 July 1912. Statement by D. B. Jayatilaka.

184. *Daily News*, 28 July 1919. See, for example, D. S. Senanayake's presidential address to the Central Union.

the use of alcohol was contrary to the tenets of Buddhism, the Sinhalese consumed large quantities of it.[185] The consumption figures for alcohol and the large illicit traffic were ample testimony to the truth of this assertion. It seems to be clear that there was not in Ceylon overwhelming opinion in favour of total abstinence; for if there was, abstinence would have come without the need for legislation.

It was also significant that after the constitutional reforms of 1921-1924 which gave Ceylonese greater representation in the Legislative Council, elite participation in temperance activity diminished. One reason for this, no doubt, was that many of the temperance demands had been met by the mid '20s. But equally important was the fact that some of the more influential temperance leaders had been elected or nominated to the legislature and their ambitions were thus greatly satisfied. By being given a greater share in the government of the country many temperance leaders had achieved a sense of participation in national affairs. The western educated elite had gained a major break-through in national politics and their enthusiasm was deflected away from the temperance cause. It would obviously be wrong to think that no sooner were they elected to the Legislative Council then the temperance leaders abandoned their cause. What was true, however, was that their views became conspicuously moderate. They were, for example, now less insistent about enforcing "total prohibition," which had all along been the ultimate goal of the temperance movement.[186] Even the strong advocate of prohibition in the Legislative Council, S. Rajaratnam, became reconciled to enforcing prohibition "in about 35 years."[187]

It is true that the nationalist movement of Ceylon was never a mass movement in the Indian sense. However, for the effective leadership of a nationalist agitation some degree of mass support is necessary. Two events in the early 20th century helped the western educated middle class to attain unprecedented rapport with the masses. The first was the temperance movement, which was closely followed by the 'campaign for justice' after the 1915 riots. The temperance movement is important not merely for bringing the elite and the masses together in a common cause, but also for providing the elite with an opportunity to get acquainted with the methods of constitutional agitation. This experience was to prove invaluable in the decades that followed when the elite launched a well organized political campaign which depended entirely on constitutional means.

185. *H. C. Deb.*, 5th series, Vol. XLII, 16 Oct. 1912. Also see speech of acting Colonial Secretary, S. A. Pagdon, in reply to Ramanathan in the Legislative Council, *Ceylon Hansard*, 1918, 10 July 1918.

186. See, for example, proceedings of temperance meetings in *Morning Leader*, 7 Aug. 1917. 15 Jan. 1917, 29 July 1918; *Daily News*, 8 Sept. 1918, 29 July 1919.

187. *Ceylon Independent*, 29 April 1914.

Language and Colonial Educational Policy in Ceylon in the Nineteenth Century

By Swarna Jayaweera

The role of language in education in any colonial context is necessarily conditioned by the demands of general colonial policy and the passive and active pressures of the colonial situation. On the one hand, the contact of any two cultures leads to the inevitable impact of important components of the expansionist civilization on the receiving culture. On the other hand colonial powers or their auxiliaries are often imbued with a desire to transform the traditional way of life of colonial societies, or at least to promote the adjustment of the local population to colonial needs. Education is conceived as an important agent of such social changes and the problem of the medium of instruction in educational institutions is thus inescapably linked with colonial aims.

The attitude of colonial governments to local languages and the role of the language of the metropolitan country in the educational structure differed from empire to empire. The French and Americans believed in assimilating their subjects through the instrument of language. The French felt that no one could claim to be educated unless he spoke French, while the Americans were led by their experience in their own homeland, during which different European peoples were assimilated into one nation through the English language, to attempt a similar task in their non-European dependencies. In contrast the Dutch preferred to insulate the local culture from foreign influences and were reluctant to share their language with their subjects. The British devised a policy which involved the use of both their own language and the local languages but which envisaged an assimilationist policy with regard to those favoured with an English education.

The policy of assimilation was in the long run a failure in Asia and Africa. However intensive the process, only a very small elite became assimilated and an unhealthy dualism was created by the separation of the westernized minority from the inarticulate masses in colonial societies. In all colonies the colonial language functioned inevitably as an agent of economic and social mobility, and in British and Dutch colonies in particular a two-track system of education based on linguistic divisions further complicated the process of social stratification.

As a British colony for a century and a half Ceylon too underwent this process of language substitution, dualism and conflict. In the nineteenth century the gradual evolution of an articulate language policy

took place in an environment relatively uncomplicated by nationalist pressures and educational theory, and a study of the respective roles of the imperial and local languages during these years serves to illustrate one aspect of an important phase in the colonial relationship.

Colonial educational policy in Ceylon was evolved in the nineteenth century by the officials of the Colonial Office in London and of the colonial government in Ceylon and was largely influenced by their personal predilections and by the immediate socio-economic needs and the strength of pressure groups.

The British attitude to the languages of their colonial subjects stemmed from the image they had of themselves. In the nineteenth century an increasingly affluent and expanding British society moved forward with ebullience and self-confidence to spread their "superior" civilization through Asia and later Africa. In addition, the empire-builders came from the British ruling class who carried overseas with them their patronizing attitude to the general population in their own country.

Through the nineteenth century two forces were at work in the colonies. One of these forces was the Utilitarian philosophy of nineteenth century England which favoured an efficient but cheap administration, which, in turn, needed subordinate local personnel trained in western techniques. Education policy was accordingly geared to the production of a limited pool of manpower proficient in the English language.

Cultural imperialism was another determinant of language policy. A colonial elite moulded by English educational institutions and acting as "intermediaries" between rulers and masses was viewed as a political and cultural necessity in colonial societies. In the early nineteenth century in particular, this cultural imperialism was strongly tinged with Christian evangelicalism. Religious fervour diminished after 1850 but imperialism became an even stronger emotive force in England after 1870 when historians, statesmen, explorers and writers gloried in Kipling's concept of the "White Man's Burden" and preached a secular evangelicalism in which Britain's civilizing mission necessitated the export of British norms and institutions.

In Ceylon, as elsewhere in the empire, a relatively *laissez-faire* approach to education policy permitted the free play of these forces and pressures, notwithstanding the fact that Sinhala, the language of the majority, and Tamil, the language of the minority, had been in use as media of instruction for over two thousand years. The chief agencies involved in policy making—the colonial officials in London and Ceylon—were mostly products of the British Public and grammar schools. They typified the ethos of the British upper and middle classes, and very often, also, its evangelical zeal. The most important pressure group in this sphere, both in London and Ceylon, were the missionaries who served as important agents of acculturation through religion and education.

As far as official attitudes and responses to situations were concerned, language policy in Ceylon can best be studied by tracing its evolution (*a*) in the early decades of the nineteenth century, (*b*) in the era after Colebrooke through the mid-years of the century, and (*c*) during the first phase of the administration of the Department of Public Instruction from 1869 to the end of the century.

(a) 1796-1832

These early decades of British rule were years of military conquest and consolidation of political power over the whole island. As no education policy was laid down by the Colonial Office during these uncertain years, educational activity, such as it was, depended largely on the personal views of the four Governors who were successively responsible for the administration of the Island.

One key factor in educational development was the decision to make English the official language of the country. The first British Governor, Sir Frederick North, was faced with the need for English-educated Ceylonese to function as interpreters and translators, and generally as liaison officers between the colonial government and an alien population. The first English school—the Academy at Wolvendhal—was established by North in 1800 as a measure intended to meet this immediate problem—to produce "a set of well qualified candidates for all the offices which are obtainable by Burghers and by natives."[1] It provided instruction in both English and the mother tongue to a small number of Burgher, Sinhala and Tamil boys, and four of its students were appointed as interpreters in government departments and the courts as early as the year 1802.

This institution continued to supply administrative personnel at subordinate levels during all the vicissitudes which the next three decades witnessed but the selection of students was governed by the elitist outlook of the British ruling class. From the beginning of his administration North endeavoured to draw the attention of the Colonial Office to the importance of creating a colonial elite, which could assist in disseminating British values. This elite was to be educated in the Academy and the best of them sent abroad to complete their education in British universities so that they could fulfil an important political and social role as "a set of respectable individuals connected with England by education and by office and connected by the ties of blood with the principal native families in the country."[2]

AR refers to *Administration Reports*
S.P. to *Sessional Paper*
D.P.I. to the Director of Public Instruction.

1. C.O. 54/1, North to Court of Directors, East India Company, 10 of 30th Jan. 1800.
2. C.O. 54/1, North to Court of Directors, East India Company, 9 of 5th October 1799. North made this proposal earlier in despatch 5 of 26th February 1799 and again later in 10 of 30th January 1800.

North was also personally influenced by the evangelical fervour of the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth century England. As a first step in the task of spreading Christianity among the masses he appointed Rev. J. A. Cordiner as Principal of Schools and from 1800 to 1803 he revived 170 of the Dutch parish schools which had served the same function under the auspices of the Dutch government. These schools were conducted in the local languages or the 'vernaculars' (as they were termed during the colonial period) as the most effective medium of reaching the general population, and their limited curricular provision of teaching, reading, writing and Christianity indicated that they were envisaged mainly as instruments of religious instruction.

Although North thus laid the foundations of an education system which reflected very clearly the aspirations of the rulers, his enthusiasm was not shared by the Colonial Office which rejected in particular his ambitious scheme of educating Ceylonese in Britain. In 1803 the Secretary of State's instruction to reduce educational expenditure in the interests of economy led to the abolition of the parish or 'country' schools, while the English Academy barely survived with diminished prestige. Cordiner was recalled and North himself resigned soon after in 1805 having thus formulated the outline of a language policy which linked the English language with a privileged class.

His successor Sir Thomas Maitland was not sensitive to the educational needs of the island but the powerful evangelical group in London was severely critical of the neglect of Christian education in Ceylon and was successful in pressurizing the Colonial Office to compel Maitland to revive the parish schools in 1809.[3]

Sir Robert Brownrigg, Maitland's successor in 1812, was also indifferent to the fate of the government parish schools but he was an ardent supporter of the Evangelical Movement and an active patron of the educational and religious activities of the missionary societies. The London Missionary Society had already sent a few ministers to Ceylon in 1805, but under Brownrigg's patronage four important missionary societies– the Baptist Missionary Society (1812), the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society (1814), the American Mission (1816), and the Church Missionary Society (1818) laid the foundations of their educational work in Ceylon. As the missionaries had to counter the influence of the Buddhist and Hindu priesthood and reach the villagers they favoured the use of Sinhala and Tamil in their schools. At a time when the state's interest in education, and particularly in mass education, was minimal, the missionaries organized a system of vernacular schools which used the local languages as the media of instruction.

3. C.O. 55/26, Castlereagh to Maitland, 10 of 12th September 1808.

Brownrigg preferred to promote English education in urban areas, and he himself, his wife, his brother-in-law the Archdeacon, and other clergy and officials opened several small English schools from 1813 to 1819. He was also impressed by what he considered to be a general diffusion of a knowledge of the English language among the Sinhala people and the desire of the younger generation of Dutch Burghers to regard English as their mother tongue.[4]

The missionaries also took their cue from his policy, and assessing correctly the political needs of the colonial government, built up a system of elementary English schools in small towns and elite English boarding schools in the more important centres. These were organized to train local preachers, ministers and teachers but the majority of their students found employment in the new government departments which were creating a demand for English education. The American Mission's Batticotta Seminary and the C.M.S. Institute at Kotte provided a western-oriented secondary education for the able and the affluent.

Sir Edward Barnes, the last of the Governors of this period, discouraged educational enterprise, state or private, and all but killed the state schools; the latter were reduced to four English and ninety parish schools by 1830. Missionary educational activity, however, continued despite the absence of official patronage. The Colebrooke Commissioners who inquired into the administration of the island at this time found that educational development had been very limited and the state schools unsatisfactory. Nevertheless it is evident that the dualism in language policy—which helped to create a cleavage between the English educated on the one hand and the Sinhala and the Tamil educated on the other—had been set in motion and the demand created for English education as an agent of economic and social mobility.

(b) 1832-1867

The first official pronouncement relating to language policy in education is to be found in the Colebrooke Report. The public service was to be open to Ceylonese proficient in English, a knowledge of English was to be made compulsory for schoolmasters, an English College was to be established and English education in general to be promoted by the government. Indigenous education was condemned as being unworthy of notice.[5]

The problem of the medium of instruction was also a live issue in contemporary India where the Anglo-Orientalist controversy was settled in 1835 by Macaulay's pronouncement in favour of English education.

4. C.O. 54/70, Brownrigg to Earl of Bathurst, 257 of 17th December 1817.
5. C.O. 54/122, Report of Lt. Col. Colebrooke upon the Administration of the Government of Ceylon.

The Governor-General, Lord Bentinck's Minute gave official sanction to a policy of encouraging English education and of withdrawing state assistance from education in the local languages. Although Lord Auckland's Minute of 1839 promised a more liberal attitude to oriental educational institutions it confirmed the official policy of promoting English education and further stated that state efforts should be directed to the extension of higher education to the upper classes of society whose culture would filter down to the masses.

Such policies could not but have their repercussions on Ceylon. The Secretary of State for the Colonies endorsed the views of the Colebrooke Commission and wrote thus to the Governor. "Since the dissemination of the English language is an object which I cannot but esteem of the greatest importance, as a medium of instruction and as a bond of union with this country, no schoolmaster should be in future employed who does not possess a knowledge of English."[6] Similar instructions were issued with regard to employment in the public service.

Unlike in the early decades of the nineteenth century vernacular education was completely discouraged, the parish schools disappeared gradually till only five were left in 1839, and English schools were opened by the School Commission which was established in 1834 to organize educational activities in the island. Eleven English elementary schools were opened in 1835 in different towns and these increased in number to 35 in 1837. The rules of the School Commission formulated in 1837 make specific reference to its function of opening only English schools,[7] and under this rule a petition to open a vernacular school in Colombo was refused.

In 1835, too, in response to a request from a delegation of leading Burgher families in Colombo, the government took over a private English academy successfully managed by Rev. J. Marsh and re-opened it as the Colombo Academy—a state secondary school—under the same head. The Colombo Academy became the school of the colonial elite. Colonial Governors presided at its prize-distribution functions, and the institution flourished as a Classical and High School under government control and patronage.[8]

From 1834, therefore, the colonial government embarked on a policy of using English as the sole medium of instruction—a policy similar to that followed later by the Americans in their dependencies. Nevertheless this policy conflicted with the Evangelical interests which from 1837 to 1848 dominated the educational administration, while practical experience both in Ceylon and India had also served to illustrate

6. C.O. 54/127, Viscount Goderich to Horton, 23 March 1833.
7. C.O. 54/161, Mackenzie to Glenelg, 145 of 4th April 1837.
8. *Ibid.*, Enclosures Nos. 1, 2 and 5.

the futility of attempting the impossible task of educating a large section of the population through an alien language in the absence of a sufficient number of qualified teachers.

Sir Wilmot Horton, who had to implement the Colebrooke recommendations, had a rather negative attitude to education but his successor, Mr. Stewart-Mackenzie, was keenly interested in education as well as in the promotion of Christianity through the education system. Drawing from his experience of the educational activities of the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge in the Gaelic areas of the British Isles he felt that in the case of the "heathen, ignorant and wretched population" of Ceylon too, "conversion to Christianity must be preceded by education, after learning to read in their own language."[9] In pursuance of this policy he suggested the establishment of a Native Normal School to train teachers in the local languages and a Translating Committee to translate the Bible and other books to the local languages. The real author of these proposals was the able Methodist, Rev. William Gogerly,[10] whose service in the missionary field had convinced him of the need to use the local language in any scheme of mass education such as that envisaged by Mackenzie and himself.

Although Stewart-Mackenzie stressed that he was merely proposing the encouragement of general elementary instruction in Sinhala and Tamil as a prelude to English education,[11] the Colonial Office was not interested in vernacular education or in mass education. Leading officials were firm adherents of the Macaulay school of thought and the Secretary of State's reply to Mackenzie's proposals in 1840 re-stated the official language policy of the metropolitan government that

> It would be unnecessary for the government to direct its attention to devote the funds available for education to instruction in the native languages and that the preferable plan would be to encourage the acquirement of the English language by conveying instruction in that language to the scholars, both male and female, in all the schools conducted by the Government.[12]

The colonial government accordingly adhered to the "English only" policy for a few years more. In 1841 the Governor's Minute reorganizing the School Commission as the Central School Commission enjoined it to "promote the education in the English language of their fellow subjects of all religious opinions" in the colony.[13] The Central School Commission's

9. C.O. 54/179, Mackenzie to Russell, 42 of 11th March 1840.
10. C.O. 54/181, Mackenzie to Russell, 124 of 10th August 1840.
11. C.O. 54/184, Mackenzie to Russell, 135 of 12th August 1840.
12. C.O. 54/181, Russell to Mackenzie, 162 of 20th December 1840.
13. C.O. 54/188, Campbell to Russell, 14 of 27th May 1841—Enclosure 2, Governor's Minute of 26th May 1841.

Chaplains' Schools and Ministers' Schools were conducted in the English language. Vernacular education was left entirely to the missionaries.

From 1843, however, for five years, a strong Commission, under the leadership of Gogerly, which worked in co-operation with the Governor Sir Colin Campbell and the Colonial Secretary Sir Emerson Tennent, carried out several constructive educational schemes. Three English Central Schools and three English Superior Girls' schools extended facilities for the education of the well-to-do social classes. At the same time, the dual policy of English education for a limited number and vernacular education for the general population was once again put into operation without the prior sanction of the Colonial Office despite the opposition expressed earlier to the promotion of vernacular education.

In 1843 a Central School Commission resolution permitted the provision of vernacular instruction in elementary schools as a prelude to English education. In 1845 Gogerly's scheme for a Native Normal Institution was implemented and two years later 30 vernacular schools were opened. These were the first vernacular schools to be established by the government since the Dutch parish schools had been revived almost forty years earlier.

Official statements indicate that the language policy had been reviewed by the colonial government though not by the Colonial Office. Sir Colin Campbell questioned the neglect of mass education in favour of "a liberal education almost entirely at the public expense, for no more than a very limited number of scholars."[14] Tennent, when acting Governor, wrote to the Secretary of State that "there is too good reason to apprehend that at present English education can scarcely be carried with advantage much beyond its present extent." Referring to the new vernacular schools he wrote,

> I trust the result may be such as to justify the opinion which is gaining ground among thinking people, that education in the vernacular, especially of females, is likely to do more for the improvement of the character and usefulness of the natives than attempts to impart a knowledge of English in places where there is no demand for it, and where the little that is learned at school is soon forgotten on learning it.[15]

Despite such statements this interest in vernacular education proved to be ephemeral. A financial crisis in 1848 reduced expenditure on education and the self-supporting principle favoured by the colonial administration after 1848 was a barrier to the promotion of mass education in particular. Even after the financial situation had improved and the island

14. C.O. 54/226, Campbell to Stanley, 46 of 14th April 1846.
15. C.O. 54/235, Tennent to Grey, 19 of 10th May 1847.

had moved into an era of prosperity based on the rising fortunes of the coffee industry, the lethargy that overcame the educational administration resulted in the almost complete neglect of educational activities till 1865.

In India the Wood Despatch of 1854 initiated several educational changes including the promotion of mass vernacular education. But in Ceylon the impetus which had directed educational development in the forties seemed to have died completely. The heyday of Evangelicalism was over and the local influence of missionaries like Gogerly in the Commission was considerably reduced. The Governors of the time, Sir George Anderson, Sir Henry Ward and Sir Charles Macarthy, were indifferent to both state education and missionary enterprise. The Legislative Council was dominated by merchants and planters who were busy promoting their economic interests. The Commission itself had lost many of its powers and was largely an effete body during this period. In such a situation the school system which had been taking shape in the previous fifteen years was an inevitable casualty.

The indecisive approach to language policy during this period was typical of this negative attitude of the administration. Lack of interest and restricted finances checked the expansion of English Central, Superior and Elementary schools. Vernacular education suffered in its turn from a vacillating policy. It seems as though the Central School Commission could not quite make up its mind as to what should be done with the vernacular schools opened after 1845. In 1851 the Commission stressed the important role of these schools in rural areas. In 1853 it proposed that State funds should be restricted to the maintenance of English schools. In 1857 it recommended the extension of free vernacular education where no other education was available.[16]

One major result of the official thinking of these years was the closing in 1858 of the very useful Native Normal Institution which had been the mainstay of the vernacular schools. The schools themselves were not abolished and the demand for education led to their increase in number, but their quality deteriorated after 1860 due to the shortage of qualified teachers.

The category of 'Mixed Schools' created in 1849 reflected very clearly this conflict in language policy. They were intended to provide instruction in the local languages in the early stages and subsequently instruction through English. In fact their organization illustrated the language policy favoured by most administrators—that English should be the principal but not sole medium of instruction, while vernacular education should be clearly subordinate to English education. In actual practice the Mixed Schools tended to function exclusively in English and to neglect almost completely the local languages.[17]

16. Report of the Central School Commission 1851-52, 1853-54, 1857-58.
17. Twenty fifth Report of the Central School Commission 1868-69.

Missionary enterprise continued in the fields of both English and vernacular education—English education to meet political needs and social demand on the one hand, and vernacular education for religious purposes on the other—but the missionaries too had their own financial problems and were embroiled in the sixties in a conflict with the colonial government over the question of grants.

Nevertheless the trend set in motion in the forties was to persist in these barren years and the Sinhala and Tamil schools alone showed any increase in number (Table I). These schools, however, provided very rudimentary instruction and were analogous to the Charity Schools of nineteenth century England. English schools continued to cater to the small Burgher population and to the upper and middle class sections of the Sinhala and Tamil population. The move to promote universal English through education was never revived even though the tendency to treat the local languages as poor relations and the absence of any interest in the education of the general population left the language question still unsolved.

TABLE I

Govt. Schools (1851 & 1868)

	1851	1868
English Schools	17	18
Mixed Schools	44	41
Vernacular Schools	25	63
Total	86	122

By 1865 interest in education was once again manifest among officials and influential Ceylonese. A new Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson, was responsive to the demand for educational reform and the Morgan Report, prepared by a sub-committee of the Legislative Council appointed to inquire into the education system, opened a more definitive phase in language policy.

(c) 1867-1900

The publication and implementation of the Morgan Report in 1868 marked the end of an era of indecision and lethargy in education and two principles affecting language policy now received official recognition in Ceylon. Colonial governments accepted the obligation to foster mass elementary education instead of confining themselves merely to moulding a western-oriented colonial elite and the local languages were to be the media of these elementary educational institutions.

The sub-committee of the Legislative Council—the Morgan Committee—which recommended these policies seems to have been influenced less by local opinion than by current trends in England and India which

favoured some form of state responsibility for education. The officials, clergy and Ceylonese elite consulted by the Committee were in agreement in their views regarding English, but were divided in their attitude to the status of the local languages in education. While influential education officials like W. S. Sendall and G. Steward, important British civil servents like Macready, and no less a personage than the Bishop of Colombo, in their evidence considered vernacular education a waste of time and resources, missionaries, members of the clergy and many local witnesses (such as James Alwis) advocated the use of the local languages as vehicles of a minimal form of mass instruction, leaving English education entrenched in its prestigious position.[18]

The Wood Despatch had initiated the latter policy in India almost fifteen years earlier and the Morgan Report which repeated, with one or two exceptions, the main provisions of this despatch, now introduced in Ceylon a similar policy of promoting vernacular elementary education as the most economical form of education possible under the colony's financial circumstances. Implicit in the policy statements of the time was the assumption that vernacular education was inherently inferior and destined to remain so indefinitely if not permanently:

> And by the term vernacular education it is here intended to imply only elementary education whereby the rudiments of knowledge should be conveyed to the masses of the people in their own tongue. It is not the wish of the sub-committee to promote the cultivation of the classics in the vernacular..... The object aimed at in the vernacular education recommended by the Sub-Committee is a very simple one. It is to impart *Primary Education*, and nothing beyond this, in the Sinhala and Tamil languages.[19]

English education was to be restricted to a small elite, and the Anglo-Vernacular schools, the English Central Schools and the Colombo Academy were to form a hierarchical structure corresponding to a socio-economic-cum-linguistic social pyramid. In order to limit the supply of English education, government would withdraw as much as possible from this sphere and leave it mainly to private enterprise to meet the need on a demand and supply basis.[20]

In contemporary England, educational controversy had culminated in the Forster Elementary Education Act of 1870 which marked the beginning of state elementary education in that country, and in two

18. *Sessional Paper VIII of* 1867, Report of a Sub-Committee of the Legislative Council to inquire and report on the state and prospects of education in the Island, Legislative Council, Ceylon.

19. *Ibid*, p. 11.

20. Governor's Addresses to the Legislative Council, 12th January 1870 and 4th October 1871, *S.P.* 1870 & 1871.

respects at least policies in the metropolitan country seem to have influenced the implementation of the Morgan proposals. The subsidiary role played by the State in England in supplementing denominational enterprise in educational provision was emulated by the colonial administration in Ceylon to such an extent that the promotion of State vernacular education received less official patronage than did the growth of the grant-in-aid school system organized on the English model.

The other British tradition which affected language policy in Ceylon was the social class bias which dominated English education policy in the nineteenth century. The Forster Elementary Education Act was specifically concerned with mass education and the report of the Newcastle Commission (1861) as well as Lowe's Revised Code of 1862 had been directed towards providing a cheap elementary education for the masses in England. The education of the middle and upper classes was left to private enterprise and the Taunton Report (1868) further classified the school system in accordance with the hierarchic social structure of nineteenth century England.

The echoes of these social distinctions are to be found in the statements of colonial administrators in Ceylon and the situation was aggravated here by the invidious association of language and social structure. The vernacular schools in Ceylon were to be copies of the Board schools in England, providing a cheap, inferior education to the lowest socio-economic strata. English education, like secondary education in England, was to be restricted to the privileged who could afford to buy it, and was to be left largely to private enterprise. In 1873 Helps, Inspector of Schools, even urged the classification of schools on the basis of social class as in England and the place of English in the curriculum was a key factor in his proposed system of classification.[21] Statements repeated by administrators from decade to decade stressed the policy of retaining Royal College (the former Colombo Academy) as a select institution for the colonial elite.[22]

Apart from these religious and social nuances in colonial education policy, language policy in Ceylon was also affected by the conflicting theories held by educational administrators regarding the respective roles of the local languages and English. There was agreement that vernacular education should be confined to the masses and that English schools were to provide an exclusively English education, divorced from all local traditions and influences, for future administrators and social elite. Each type of school would operate in its own medium to the complete exclusion of other languages.

21. *A.R.*, Director of Public Instruction 1873, Report of E. A. Helps, Inspector of Schools.
22. *A.R.*, D.P.I. 1833 and 1884.

The area of controversy lay in the organization of the transitional stages of education which was to provide those who could afford it with a stepping stone to English education. The administrators' answer was to reorganize the Mixed Schools of the previous phase as Anglo-Vernacular schools which would use the local languages in the initial stages and English subsequently and which would suffice to meet the demand for English in small towns and rural areas. These Anglo-Vernacular schools were the chief victims of the conflicting views of successive administrators, views which often veered from demands for their abolition to policies of active encouragement. Policy makers were not always agreed on the efficacy of this three-tier education structure based on linguistic classification and their decisions sometimes swung between the desire to restrict English education to a minimum number and the ambition to teach English to as many as possible. At the same time the educational history of this period shows that language policies cannot operate effectively in a vacuum or in an environment determined by diametrically opposing pressures created by general colonial policies.

The decade immediately following the acceptance of the Morgan Report by the Colonial Office were years of economic prosperity and educational activity spearheaded by the newly created Department of Public Instruction and its successive Directors appointed from England. The first Director, J. S. Laurie, was one of those who did not subscribe to the policy of an exclusively English education even for the elite. He suggested that all schools should use Sinhala or Tamil as the medium of instruction to Grade Three after which those parents who could afford it could send their children to English schools[23]—a view not shared by the majority of educationists and administrators who believed that the efficacy of an English school depended on its complete alienation from the local languages and culture. Laurie, however, barely survived a year in office as a result of an acrimonious conflict with the Governor and his views made little impression on the direction of colonial policy.

The Morgan proposals regarding vernacular and English education were implemented under Laurie's successor, Sendall, and the administration reiterated its intention of giving priority to the promotion of vernacular elementary education. Government Vernacular schools increased in number from 64 in 1869 to 347 in 1881, and in 1879 it was estimated that 85% of all schools were conducted in Sinhala or Tamil.[24]

In actual practice, however, both financial policy and general colonial policy worked in favour of the promotion of English education and against the progress of vernacular education. Although the Governor informed the Legislative Council "that the policy of the Government

23. *S.P. V of* 1869, Special Report on Public Instruction—J. S. Laurie.

24. C.O. 54/566 Longden to Kimberley, 513 of 30th October 1879.

should be to devote as large a portion as possible of funds voted for Public Instruction to vernacular education leaving English and Anglo-Vernacular instruction mainly, though not altogether, to private enterprise",[25] the proportion of the education vote expended on grants to aided schools increased from 6.8% in 1869 to 46% in 1899. The Governors

TABLE II

Expenditure on Education

	Total expenditure	*Expenditure on grants*
	Rs.	*Rs.*
1871	253,222.66	52,431.44
1881	454,799.21	186,947.81
1891	508,361.43	220,663.55
1899	778,133.85	357,284.17

of the time and their officials were very appreciative of the contribution made by the missionaries and were ever willing to meet their needs.[26] In addition, grants were allocated on a system of payment by results according to differential rates which discriminated against Vernacular schools.[27] It was natural, therefore, that grant-school managers should opt to earn a larger grant by opening English schools in urban centres in preference to establishing Vernacular schools in remote rural areas. Although the vernacular schools opened by denominational agencies were numerically greater they suffered financially and socially in comparison with their English schools.

At the same time the policy of giving priority to the establishment of Vernacular schools was subject to several qualifications which militated against the success of this policy. Apart from avoiding encroachments on missionary preserves the Department also pursued the policy of opening Vernacular schools only in areas where the community was willing to provide the necessary buildings, thereby making the expansion of vernacular education dependent on the limited economic resources of the less well-to-do sections of the population.

The result of such policies was to limit the expansion of both government and aided Vernacular schools in areas which were greatly in need of such facilities. The curriculum prescribed for vernacular schools was such as to render them both unattractive and useless as educational institutions. The colonial framework which made English education the only avenue to remunerative employment and social prestige robbed the Vernacular school of any utilitarian or social value and applied a permanent brake on its development.

25. Governor's Addresses to the Legislative Council, 30th July 1873, *S.P.* 1873.

26. Governor's Addresses to the Legislative Council, 25th September 1872, *S.P.* 1872.

27. *S.P. VII of* 1870, Rules for grant-in-aid.

The only serious effort to restrict English education was made in the eighties when the coffee crash temporarily crippled the financial resources of the government and retrenchment and economy in government expenditure led to a drastic reduction of the education vote. During this decade the government restricted its activities in the field of English education to a minimum, and it was estimated in 1889 that the portion of the total vote for education expended on the teaching of English was reduced by over half in five years.[28]

Even before the financial crisis the Department had followed a policy of closing down Government English schools where missionary provision could meet the demand for English education. The Colombo Female Seminary was closed in 1879, the Kandy Superior Girls' School in 1880 and the Kandy Central School in 1881. These were three of the leading government schools and their places were taken by English missionary schools for the elite. Influenced by the important role played by local bodies in England and India, the Director of Public Instruction, C. Bruce formulated a scheme by which all government English schools, with the exception of the Royal College and the Normal School, could be transformed to the status of grant-in-aid schools.[29] Missionary objections to the use of local rates to support these schools ruined this scheme and legislation introduced in 1884[30] to effect this transfer proved to be abortive. Nineteen Government English schools were finally closed down and the majority taken over by the missionaries and run as denominational English schools.

Bruce had hoped to use the funds saved by the closure of these for the expansion of vernacular education, but the Vernacular schools improved neither in quality nor in quantity during these years. Curriculum improvement was limited by the decision to permit secondary school subjects only in English schools. General retrenchment policies affected the expansion of these schools. The grant-in-aid scheme swallowed up the reduced education vote and left hardly any provision for opening new vernacular schools.[31]

This economy decade also coincided with the term of office of H. W. Green, Director of Public Instruction (1883-1889) whose personal views on the teaching of English in the colonies seem to have had a greater impact on the education situation than any retrenchment measures. Green believed in diminishing the quantity of English taught in Ceylon and improving its quality. The 1884 Bill had reduced the government English

28. *S.P. XLIII of* 1889, Supply Bill 1890.

29. Director of Public Instruction to Col. Sec., No. 373 of 13th December 1882.

30. *S.P. XVI of* 1884, Bill to Transfer Schools to Municipalities, and Ordinance No. 33 of 1884.

31. *A.R.*, D.P.I., 1884 and 1886.

schools to two but Green was also very critical of the quality of English instruction in the grant aided English schools in the rural and small urban areas and in the government and aided Vernacular schools. Although the vote for grants had been reduced and very little money was now available for new schools, the higher grant paid to English schools from the inception of the grant system had tempted managers to open English schools outside large urban centres. In the Revised Code for Aided Schools for 1885 Green reduced the grants for English schools to the same rate as that for Vernacular schools despite vehement protests from managers.[32] As a result no new English schools were registered for grants from 1886 to 1890.

The Anglo-Vernacular schools were his next target for attack. Sendall had permitted them to teach English and the local languages from Grade Two but Bruce had reorganized them in 1880 to provide instruction in the local languages to Grade Four and in English in the higher grades. Most Anglo-Vernacular schools aspired to become English schools and failed to function effectively because they hung midway between two worlds. Green introduced a new scheme[33] in 1889 whereby Anglo-Vernacular schools were abolished and Primary and Middle English schools were recognized "on a vernacular basis", using the local languages as media and teaching English as a subject. Those who wished to pursue a liberal English education could attend the government or aided English High Schools which he proposed to limit in number and which would prepare students for English University examinations and for the professions.

Apart from centralizing the teaching of English in the chief towns Green had another aim which he refers to in his reports. "In short, I wish the class of natives who learn English to know both English and their own language thoroughly and neither to exclusion of the other."[34] He even contemplated organizing the English High School from Grade Four so as to ensure that every child received a basic instruction in his own language, but the English High School had become too strong a vested interest for one individual to challenge, and the scheme finally left this institution intact as an exclusive English school moulding a western-oriented elite. Green went so far as to brush aside the protests voiced on behalf of the Burghers on the grounds that they could patronize the English High Schools, and if they could not afford to do so, receive instruction in the local languages in the Primary English and Middle Schools. "An Englishman born and bred in France or Germany will be

32. D.P.I. to C.S., No. 490 of 4th October 1884.

33. The details of this scheme are described and discussed in the *Administration Reports* of the Director of Public Instruction 1833, 1884, 1885 and 1886.

34. *A.R.*, D.P.I. 1887.

ashamed not to know French or German and I think it is an equal shame that a Burgher or other Eurasian born or bred in Ceylon should ignore the languages of the people of Ceylon."[35]

Green's scheme did not affect the Vernacular schools or the English High Schools which continued to function in their disparate cultural worlds. It only served to check for a brief period the spread of inferior English medium schools in small town and rural areas which divorced children from their own languages without giving them an adequate mastery of the English language. In fact the policy followed since 1880 attempted to restrict the elite to an even smaller group who were, in effect, exposed to a more intensive process of Anglicization as a result of the introduction of the Cambridge and London University examinations. But the employment structure enhanced the value of English education as an agent of mobility and the demand for English could not be contained for long within the narrow limits enforced in the eighties.

Economic conditions improved in the eighteen nineties with the growth of the tea industry but the outlook for educational expansion continued to be gloomy as a result of the cheeseparing policy of the colonial administration. Government Vernacular schools which had suffered under financial restrictions in the previous decade gained little from the era of prosperity, and from 1895 to 1897 economy in financial management was carried to such an extent that the vote for new schools was deleted from the estimates.[36] The aided schools, however, flourished as additional grants were voted annually for their support by a very sympathetic and co-operative colonial government.

Green's departure from the Department of Public Instruction improved the prospects of the grant-aided English schools. This was the period when the export of English civilization was considered an integral part of Britain's colonial mission and colonial governors, as well as Green's successors, felt that the government should not discourage the growth of English High Schools which were the best instruments of westernization in Ceylon.[37] The colonial administration now thought it also necessary to revive the Anglo-Vernacular school jettisoned by Green in order to extend the influence of English beyond the limits of large urban centres. The 1894 Code therefore provided for Anglo-Vernacular schools which would use English as the medium of instruction after Grade Three. These schools were "to become the focus of higher culture"[38] in the villages, and in the process of promoting this aim, the earlier policy was completely reversed so that several Vernacular schools in populous areas were converted into Anglo-Vernacular schools.[39]

35. *A.R.*, D.P.I. 1885.
36. D.P.I. to Col. Sec., No. 290 of 31st July 1897.
37. D.P.I. to Col. Sec., No. 48 of 16th February 1891.
38. D.P.I. to Col. Sec., No. 484 of 4th December 1896 and A.R., D.P.I. 1898.
39. *A.R.*, D.P.I. 1899.

Government enterprise however was mainly limited to the expansion of Anglo-Vernacular and Vernacular schools and to the provision of financial support to aided schools, and despite pressure from the middle class a proposal in 1895 for the establishment of a Government Girls' High School, presumably of the same status as Royal College, was rejected by the government on the grounds that denominational effort was adequate to meet the needs of this social group.[40] Royal College itself was the object of missionary rivalry and hostility but was able to survive in its role as a privileged colonial institution equivalent to many such colleges in different parts of the Empire.

Conclusion

The end of the nineteenth century therefore left the situation very much as it had been in the 'seventies. A limited number of English High Schools, a small number of Anglo-Vernacular schools and a large number of ill-equipped Vernacular schools provided educational opportunities for the different levels of the socio-economic structure.

TABLE III

Govt. & Aided Schools 1871-1900

	1871	1881	1891	1900
Govt. English Schools	17	26	3	4
Govt. Anglo-Vernacular Schools ..	34	25	13	12
Govt. Vernacular Schools ..	129	347	422	484
Aided English Schools	37	77	51	144
Aided Anglo-Vernacular Schools ..	40	82	66	16
Aided Vernacular Schools ..	237	680	854	1,168
Total	494	1,237	1,409	1,828

Vernacular schools were numerically the largest group but they were throughout the century the underprivileged poor relations of the education system. The English schools were well-favoured by all education agencies—even by the Buddhist and Hindu organisations which entered the field in the late nineteenth century and had to compete with the missionaries. They received from the Government higher *per capita* grants than the Vernacular schools. They were also richly endowed with educational incentives such as prestigious British university examinations and university scholarships, and the economic and social incentives engendered by job opportunities in the public service and in the new capitalist economy dominated by British interests.

The size of the elite emerging from these schools was a vexed problem for policy-makers especially in view of the leadership given by this group to the national movement and to political agitation. They therefore

40. *S.P. XVIII of* 1895, College of Higher Education for Girls.

endeavoured to fix arbitrary limits to the output of these schools but their policies were always in conflict with the pressures created by the status and role given to the English language in the colonial structure. Much of the confusion in the minds of educational administrators as well as the difference between policies and their actual outcomes was the result of the greater force exerted by general colonial policy which created a demand for English education of any quality.

Educational policy, particularly in respect to language, had educational, social and psychological consequences which increased in intensity in the twentieth century. Even at the end of the nineteenth century language policy had already created an under-privileged and largely inarticulate majority whose position in the community vis-a-vis the small English educated elite (which even in 1946 at the end of colonial rule formed only 6.3% of the population) was fraught with grave consequences for the future. Equally unfortunate was the fact that the English schools were already creating a nucleus of denationalized Ceylonese, divorced from their traditions, isolated from the majority of the population, and like all other victims of assimilationist policies, forming a marginal group on the fringe of colonial society.

New forces appeared on the educational horizons in the twentieth century, thereby complicating the situation and subjecting the education system to fresh pressures, but without bridging the gulf between the 'two nations' created by nineteenth century policy. Cultural imperialism had been so in-built into the English schools by 1900 that such twentieth century concepts as compulsory education and such pressures as nationalism failed to deflect the language policy of the colonial administration from its nineteenth century direction. The English schools had already become a vested interest in language policy and turned out articulate protagonists of the status quo.

Revitalizing Movements in Developmental Change*

BRYCE RYAN‡

Less developed societies throughout much of the world have undergone or are in the throes of collective social movements expressing their unrest, xenophobia, and vaguely articulated aspirations. Many of these movements are tenuously related to the specific requirements or goals of modernization. They involve peoples questing for modernity while acting to revivify some ancient legendary past or seeking, perhaps passively, an emotionally satisfying future state which may or may not be rationally pursued or be even remotely realistic. Many are vague as to what lies beyond national or ethnic autonomy: still others seek secular reforms through methods and leaders legitimated by sacred tradition or by supernatural sanction. Some pursue magically a utopian dream world.

In this strange potpourri of collective actions one finds a secularly guided Buddhist "reformation" in South Asia which is more mediaeval than modernizing in aim, while in Africa prophetic millenarian movements are instruments in the creation of modern political states. Vinoba Bhave can press a secular land reform program in India through the re-affirmation of *guru* worship, much as Gandhi acted toward national autonomy for a secular state in his role as saint and associated it with almost primitivist concepts of the future economy. In contemporary Korea, a major industrialization program proceeds with startling success under the mobilizing powers of charismatic leadership and a dream of the millennium. Long established Muslim institutions in North Africa have been challenged by reformists who would "out-traditionalize" the traditionalists as they modernize both religious and secular ideologies and structures. In most of Africa south of the Sahara syncretically rooted movements offer millenarian, nativistic utopias with a bonus in faith healing and collective ecstasies. In Melanesia the cargo cults continue to appear, as do similar movements in the circum-Carribean region and elsewhere.

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This wealth of revitalizing, expressionistic cults and movements in developing countries is not without interesting parallel in the development of Europe and North America. It is possible that some major comparative analysis would find a universal patterning in movement types as associated with different "stages" of development. In any event it is probable that much the same array of movements as shown today in the "Third World" was evidenced in the West. Worsley (1968, p. 227) has observed that whereas "Marx described the agrarian history of the Roman Empire as its 'secret history', the secret history of the Middle Ages is the history of Millenarian and allied sects, a history only now being written." For America it is notable that "The Great Awakening" reached a crescendo in 1740, and while the accumulation of worldly goods was a latent consequence of Puritan self-realization, the support for American nationalism was loud and clear. The millenium was indeed to come—and in the American colonies, (Heimert).

It is perhaps ironic that in the "Third World", struggling toward rational social organization and technology, so many forces should be marshalled around expressionist cults, prophetism, millenarianism and traditionalism. Yet, modernization does not descend as some substitute world imposed through rational, goal oriented and individualized decision making. Innovations are always filtered by traditional beliefs however revolutionary they may become in their ultimate effects. Dissatisfactions and associated innovative wants which are closely related to the moral fabric of society most acutely require reconciliation with tradition. Even when the past does not legitimate the future, it colours the perceptions of what the future should be and how it is to be reached. Most secularly inspired movements take pains to reconcile their goals to some traditional values, or at least devise plausible theories as to the spuriousness of those values. Although movements which revitalize through messianic and millenarian orientations represent breaks with tradition, they stand for still sharper breaks with the status quo. Charismatic leaders "repudiate the past" in the sense of being unbound by established rules and norms, but they are not without historical sensitivity when they define their people's destiny, (Gifford).

In many "Third World" situations an existing social structure is less traditional than it is representative of the exploitative ends of an indigenous or colonial establishment. Here the power of a *greater* traditionalism as a movement basis is usually supported by nativism, populism and xenophobia. Although messianic movements involve calculated ruptures of tradition, they do so within the larger process of reconstituting primordial bonds. Serious polarization between messianism and traditionalism may be inevitable, however, as political interests develop. Thus in situations such as that in Ghana, those who held the vision of the new society came into overt conflict with upholders of the colonial and feudal past. Forced choices rather than reconciliatory gestures were demanded

(Apter, 1965, Ch. 3, 1966). Ultimately the seriously dysfunctional traditions must be drastically modified. Since every society possesses such a wide range of traditional truths, it is always possible to find ancient bases for reconciling an immense range of innovation—unless, as for Nkrumah, a traditionalist opposition is polarized and adamantly organized.

It is understandable that societies in which the world view has been more supernaturally directed than that of Western society should also invoke the legitimating powers of religion and the supernatural. These are frequently—perhaps always in contemporary developing societies—syncretically fused with messianic and apocalyptic concepts in Christianity and, to some extent, in Islam. The expressionistic satisfactions found in charismatic relationships, and in ecstasies, and the emotional joys in miracles of faith-healing are powerful sources of enthusiasm regardless of the social direction toward which the movement may direct itself. Indeed social goals may not even be apparent. Enthusiasm is the first crucial ingredient in revitalizing movements. Collectivity goals in contrast to individualized or competitive ones demand that the participants be galvanized into unity. Under conditions of supernatural orientation wherein societal goals and ideologies can be but loosely and vaguely formulated, enthusiasm can readily rest on religiously induced rapport. As R. A. Knox has observed rather elliptically in regard to the Anabaptists, Latter Day Saints and others, ".....in times of social unrest, otherwordliness is tempted to fish in troubled waters...." (Knox p. 585). Yet, escapism and expressionism should not be permitted to obscure social significance in the movements which dignify such rewards for participation.

Social movements are a principal vehicle through which the valued traditions and solidarities of the society are fused with the prerequisites of modernization. This is not to say that social movements invariably act toward developmental change but rather that developmental change cannot proceed without an enthusiastic marshalling of a collective support possible only through the formation of movements. Rational technological devices may be spread through the calm and calculated processes of diffusion. New structural equilibria may be sought in the deliberations of social planners, but rapid transformations in total community or societal institutional structure come only out of the cumulative interaction of unrestful people who generate the vehicle, as well as the goals, of change as they move along. When dissatisfactions touch central institutional values, collective actions toward change supersede distributive ones.

The professed goals of movements at any stage may or may not correspond to their functional consequences. Generally the sociology of social movements has been more concerned with the internal structure of

movements and their individual, psychological functions than with their societal functions. Such an approach to millenarian movements, has, for example, brought to them a simplistic explanation in terms of quest for salvation, with personal escape through expressionistic satisfactions. Much theory of millenary movements seems to apply more to their psychological and theological roots than to their functional significance. In fact the eminent historian of medieval millenarianism, Norman Cohn, seems deliberately to reject social functional analysis— "as one is impelled, rather, to consider the psychic prerequisites for these movements" (Cohn, 1962, p. 42). To be sure, firm answers to this position will be found in the respective works of Schlosser, Balandier, Bastide, Guiart, Hobsbawm, Worsley and others. However the latter group's more sociological views were not much evidenced in the conference of millenarian scholars brought together in 1960, in which Cohn's position is asserted (Thrupp, *ed.*).

It is perfectly reasonable that historians and psychological sociologists should be concerned with the situational press out of which movements arise as well as the psychological satisfactions derived from participation in them. But to deny the validity of the search for social evolutionary significance in movements turns personal predilection into scientific soothsaying. Distributive change in the sense of diffusion of cultural innovations among individuals is a much simpler orientation to the study of social change. So also is the equilibrium-disequilibrium model in the functional analysis of change. Perhaps it has been the relative simplicity of these approaches which seduced the American sociology of change from interactional and historical orientations. But the fact remains, that the massive transformations in societies are typically attended by the cumulative interaction of disquieted people seeking, through *collective action*, a structure for the expression of shared dissatisfactions, and in this process asserting *something* about the direction of evolutionary change. In this context, "development" and "modernization" become the popular catch-words for what was "evolution" and "progress" at the turn of the century.

A social movement is conceived here as an emotionally concerned collectivity undergoing increasing formalization in structure at it moves toward some common goal. This concept would exclude purely expressive and transitory groups, such as those in sporadic dancing manias, unless these develop some structure and persistence in time. However, persisting but *purely* expressive groups would not be considered movements. Where a separatist group engages strictly in actions of self-realization and emotional release they are better understood as cults than as movements. Cults are frequently forced to come to terms with the community and so lose their "pure" status. Many separatist and expressionistic collectivities develop into social movements (e.g. Methodism) as instrumental and societal goals are articulated and internal structure is generated. Social

movements arise in collective unrests and emotional interactions and so long as a movement *moves* it must have emotion as a binding and mobilizing agent. Without enthusiasm there is no movement; nor is there one without a posture in reference to the larger society.

Social movements imply a dynamic process of internal growth through the interaction of participants and leaders and the interaction of both with the public, "The Establishment," and counter-movements. They evolve from an emotionally affiliated collectivity toward an increasingly structured organization. Leader-follower relationships typically shift from the charismatic to the bureaucratic. With increasing social orientation and rationality the expressionistic qualities of the movement usually diminish. As a movement becomes an institution, "converts," "followers," and "adherents," become simply "members." Where a movement is not separatist, it may die with success, as did the Womans Suffrage Movement or, through failure in social objectives it may wither away, or retrench its social goals and revert to an expressionistic cult.

The present paper is concerned most explicitly with a range of movements which have been termed "revitalistic" (Wallace). Revitalization movements seek to activate a people toward broad transformations in the social fabric. They are expressionistic in their appeals and in their participant satisfactions. Manifestly they pursue goals which may or may not be directly germane to modernization but which are contrary to the status quo. Although the complexity of social movements, with their chameleon-like capacity for re-orientation, have largely defeated classificatory attempts, the nature of revitalization is best shown through certain movement types. We are dealing here with movements of the order of cargo-cults, millenarianism, prophet and messianic movements, traditionally oriented movements of nativism and revival. These various categories of movement all connote feverish enthusiasm associated with what are broadly religious feelings in the pursuit of collective goals which would transform the status quo if they are achieved. The religious component often includes conversion in its literal sense, magical and supernatural techniques and gratifications, and either religious or traditional legitimation of goals or both. Cargo cults have widely appeared in Melanesia, with closely similar phenomena in other world regions, as native peoples collectively prepare for the ship (or air-ship) which will bring them the white man's goods and his productive magic. Millenarian movements range from passive preparation for a heavenly world to come to the active construction of earthly utopias, often in preparation for a time of supernatural perfection. Prophet and messianic movements involve supernaturally legitimated leadership toward goals which may be millenarian. Although the past is fulfilled through messiahs, the emotional power of their movements are enhanced by the very breaking of traditional taboos (Worsley, 1968, p. 250). Nativistic movements act toward the revivification of primordial, usually ethnic bonds, often with xenophobic

themes. Revivalist movements awaken collective concern with traditional institutions toward reinstating values which appear threatened in the existing state of affairs. It is evident that these various movement types do not usually exist in pure form. Cargo cults involve "prophetic leadership" and nativism, nativistic movements not only stir the fire of "nationalism" but also extoll the greatness of ancient institutions, etc. Many years ago Ralph Linton offered a typology of nativistic movements which has since undergone substantial critical review. It is useful, however, to recognize that active nativistic movements may pursue the magical revival of the ancestral world or may pursue what Voget terms "reformative nativism," which assumes a critical appraisal of the past.

While we may create a typology of movements for heuristic purposes, such classificatory devices involve the dominance of one feature compared to others. Revitalization movements partake in varying degrees of several or even all of these movement types. Practically all movements of this general class have religious or magical elements and some degree of traditionalism, and a strong component of expressive satisfactions. Their societal goals, when formulated, generally include the usual connotations of social reform; but also go considerably beyond these connotations.

There are many studies of the conditions under which revitalization movements have arisen in particular regions. This is especially true of millenarianism. Attempts to deal with revitalization as a generic phenomenon are fewer, although a wealth of monographic data, historical, psychological, ethnographic and sociological material has been accumulated. Outstanding analyses have been done for the Melanesian cargo cults, medieval millenarianism, African prophet movements and American Indian movements such as the Ghost Dance, peyotism, and Handsome Lake's reformatory revitalization. Considerable attention has also been focussed on the syncretic, counter-acculteration movements in Middle America, millenarianism in Brazil and Indonesia, as well as a wide range of revivals in various locales. Additionally there are strong but unstudied revitalization themes in reform and revival movements in South Asia and such secular revolutionary movements as witnessed in contemporary China.[1] Revolutions are frequently revitalizing movements with the special sense that they are first of all "power control" directed. They often pertain to utopian goals sought through groups which are expressionistic and perhaps messianically inspired. Although the introduction of historical European movements is enticing, attention is here directed to contemporary "non-Western" societies moving into that confused stream of events known as "development" or "modernization."

1. The present paper has arbitrarily disregarded the Red Guards and similar political power control movements as well as the quasi-social movements which Hobsbawm has termed "social banditry."

Conditions Underlying Revitalization Movements in Developing Societies

Considerable theorizing has been done regarding the conditions stimulating or "causing" revitalizing movements, especially those of millenarian style. Except for a few works like V. Lanternari's *Religions of the oppressed*, most causal theorizing has pertained to particular species of movements in similar cultural contexts. The emphasis upon causal factors usually depends upon the academic orientation of the research scholar. Something like a cross section of points of view on the roots of millenarian movements is found in the Thrupp symposium. Thrupp concludes (pp. 25-27) that of all explanatory theories presented, that of deprivation in its various guises was the most forceful. Other explanations presented there included a universal propensity to suffer distress and anxiety, the powerful aesthetic attraction of movement imagery, and response to tensions arising between formal leaders and a set of rivals. In general, these explanations were not mutually exclusive or particularistic. The approaches were more historical and psychological than situationally oriented. In the Thrupp symposium, Norman Cohn continues to prefer to translate situational forces into psychological terms (Cf. Cohn, 1957, pp. 307-314). He does not pursue his earlier use of concepts like "mass paranoia" but he continues to support the view that mediaeval millenarian movements were pathological and fanatical side-shows, while wholly unrelated movements pursued the true social reforms.

As one surveys a range of movements, histories and generalizations from a sociological standpoint, there appear to be at least four types of conditions which stimulate and activate revitalizing movements. All seem to be present in situations giving rise to revitalizing movements in the developing countries. These are: (1) The pre-existence of an extensive "moral order" associated with a magical world view and frequently with Dionysian themes which are intensified by ecstatic versions of Christianity; (2) Acculturative contact with the forces of "developed," usually "Western," societies creating pressures for modernization while adversely affecting the integrity of traditional institutions; (3) Social tensions arising from oppression, exploitation and deprivation at the hands of an indigenous or alien elite, usually associated with acculturation forces; (4) Dissatisfactions arising from (2) and (3) above are diffuse in the sense of affecting a wide range of life situations, both expressionistic and instrumental.

(1) The pre-existence of an extensive "moral order" associated with a magical world view and Dionysian themes.

Practically by definition societies entering the developmental race have a more encompassing moral or sacred order than has the secular West. Revealed truth and the authority of tradition are generally more powerful than in Western society and feelings of a broadly religious

nature infuse into a wider range of actions. In the absence of a dynamic, scientific technology, traditional societies have been more deeply concerned with the technology of magic. Sharp distinctions are often not drawn between the realms of the supernatural and the natural. Revitalization movements draw upon religious and sacred sentiments of many sorts; some of them frankly favour the revival of supernaturally sanctioned, as well as traditional, symbols. Virtually all involve some degree of mysticism and generate exhilaration which is religious in tone even if not supernaturally directed. Prophets and messiahs are publicly defined in terms of superhuman power and prowess. These ingredients of revitalization are also present in developed societies but usually in attentuated and more restricted forms.

Although chiliastic Christianity has been influential syncretically in many of these societies, there is substantial basis for believing that revitalization themes are frequently consistent with indigenous beliefs and practices.

A peyote cult, for example, was observed in Mexico as early as 1560, (Lanternari pp. 67-68). Ribeiro (pp. 55-58) notes that mass migrations of the Tupi-Guarani in Brazil toward the "Land Without Evil" occurred under religious inspiration even before European contacts. Van der Kroef finds deep cultural roots underlying the messianic upheavals in Indonesia in the early decades of this century. Cosmic regeneration with the return of the dead was a fundamental theme in Melanesian religion, (Eliade). The ubiquitous prophet movements in modern Africa are so strongly supported by indigenous cultures that Herskovits argued that they are merely reinterpretations of movements prevalent before European contact (Fernandez pp. 533-534; Cf. Andersson, chapter 13). Although India has been singularly lacking in millenarian movements, mass religious excitement with spirit possessed leaders is surely not new. In all of these regions, ancient cultural themes provided ready ingredients to be fused with diffusing ideologies and sparked by acculturation and oppressive tensions.

(2) Acculturative contact with "developed" societies

As we view the sudden spurts toward modernization, it is easy to forget that, for four centuries in much of the undeveloped world, the xenophobic embers have been glowing and indigenous institutions responding to "Western" culture contact. Although the acculturative influences were usually associated with oppressive and exploitative ones as well, the social response to threatened cultural integrity is somewhat different from response to social domination and exploitation. The first is more conducive to traditional revivalism, the second to nativism and xenophobia. Often these responses can be merged within a single revitalizing movement.

The white man's religion threatens the sacred institutions as well as the indigenous elites having vested interests in them. A money economy, and instrumentalism with reference to nature and one's fellow men are upsetting to sacred ecological systems as well as to status reciprocates. As the encroaching acculturative patterns extend into the sacred fabric of institutions, they also hold the tantalizing promise of great rewards.[2] These are evident in the material amenities available only through a money economy. Still greater promises are made of a glorious society to come through the blessings of Christianity. In some places such as India, the humane values of the Western tradition made a strong impact on an intelligentsia. When implied or explicit promises are weakly fulfilled, feelings of relative deprivation (and hostility) arise with reference to actual contrasts and with reference to images of the future, and of the past as well (Aberle). Even the native intellectual finding joy in Western humanism comes up short before the rigorous colonial administration and missionary dogmatism. Except perhaps in rare places like Hawaii where missionaries settled into the role of indigenous benevolent despots, the white man ultimately was found to have been "speaking with a forked tongue."

J. Guiart (p. 229), writing with reference to cargo cults, has observed that the "*common element is a lack of balance in the actual native society*, the traditional frame having been undermined or destroyed, through the failure of administrators or missionary methods or even simply through depopulation...." Belshaw has referred to the "half-way millennarian" whose dual problem is to explain European success and then to achieve a method to parallel it. In South America, the source of acculturative and especially exploitative tensions has been an indigenous elite. The problem for the peasant or Indian is little different here, except that the indigenous oligarchy has even deeper interests in a repressive status quo than does a colonial administration.

Not least among relevant acculturative consequences is the deteriorating effect upon traditional sources of emotional and expressive satisfaction. Fernandez attaches considerable importance to this factor in relation to the rise of prophet movements in Africa and it seems probable that the weakening of traditional mechanisms of emotional self expression have widely supported the growth of exhilarating movements, particularly as these can be charismatically directed toward instrumental goals, many of which also carry strong emotional tones.

If acculturation threatens much it also promises much, but the fulfilment of promise has rarely occurred before the threat to cultural survival and social integrity became evident. In her study of the Ghost Dance,

2. In some regions acculturative pressures were not induced by Western societies. Xenophobic and traditionalist elements in the Korean Park Chang No Kyo movement are responding to Japanese domination while the religious ideology is a derivation of Presbyterianism, (Cf. Moos.).

Cora Dubois concludes that movements of this order arise when tradition has been eroded but while *faith* in tradition is still strong. It is noteworthy too that missionaries, while a major force in discrediting tradition, have commonly intensified the social technology of revitalization movements. Acculturative contacts yielded an evident threat to native institutions while intensifying crucial mechanisms for movements in their support, e.g. messianism, millenarianism, and perhaps even religious militancy.

(3) Social tensions arising from oppression, exploitation and deprivation at the hands of an indigenous or an exotic elite.

There are few "Third World" instances in which the troubled operations of traditional institutions cannot with some accuracy be attributed to outsiders. While there are cases, as in West Africa (Plotnicov) and in Korea (Moos) where the chief villains were non-Westerners, mainly the responsible parties have been associated with colonial powers or with indigenous elites identified with Western culture. The threat and promise inherent in acculturative relationships has typically occurred in conjunction with white or at least "whiter" domination, which at its worst has been forthrightly oppressive and at minimum, condescending and paternalistic. Specific, rational reform movements by natives, where they arose, were rendered ineffective by the colonial powers. Thus when early African moderate reform movements and associations began to appear, a governor of Rhodesia could direct that leaders of such movements should be ridiculed and treated as "errant children" (Rotberg). Widely, the colonial and quasi-colonial elites approximated true caste status in both their structural relationship to "natives" and in their reconciliatory ideologies. Missionaries preached brotherhood while maintaining rigid social segregation. Brutally exploitative and even exterminative policies were not uncommon. With few exceptions, the modern world of amenities was physically evident but the routes to its achievement either blocked or taught unintelligibly while the unfilled promises of acculturative contact were dramatically exemplified by the elite. Beyond absolute and relative physical deprivation, even human dignity and pride of culture were denied to the masses. Hostility was added to frustration. Whereas simple deprivation and the disorganization of valued institutions may lead to diffuse anxiety and perhaps apathy, the domination-exploitation patterns associated with irregular acculturation focuses and personalizes these ills. In some instances, particularly in South America, feelings of oppression have long smouldered more or less removed from concern over the decay of some traditional social order. Elsewhere the decay of traditional institutions has been attributed to European domination without much feeling of instrumental deprivation but with hostilities associated with the decline of indigenous institutions. An example of this is in the Buddhist revival movement in Ceylon where mildly xenophobic themes had less to do with *oppression* or instrumental deprivation than with what was in recent centuries a covert *repression* of Buddhism under Western rule,

(Smith, 1966). It was further charged that the indigenous Westernized elite succeeding the colonial administration was little more concerned with traditional institutions than had been the British.

It is difficult to conceive of a revitalization movement which is fully supportive of The Establishment. Such movements are concerned with major reconstructions in the social order rather than with patching up the status quo. The designation of an elite as the effective cause of social ills is a catalyzing perception. Under simple acculturative deprivation this perception may be slow in appearing. Under acculturative deprivation and oppression the personal agency is made evident and diffuse feelings of dissatisfaction can be given an emotional focus. Guilt for the existing state of affairs is assignable to a culturally distinct elite. With such focus, nativistic and xenophobic themes in revitalization are practically assured.

The slowness with which many revitalizing movements take on xenophobia is surprising. A critical factor activating this powerful stimulant has been the unreasoned and often violent suppression of messianic and mainly expressionistic cults, by colonial authorities. Suppressive measures, especially in the punishment of prophetic leaders, seem to have brought the dissatisfying truths home to native peoples and so added the invigoration of hate to revitalizing movements. The attribution of evil to those who maintain the status quo sometimes extends to fantastic, but nonetheless socially effective, lengths. In Melanesia it was alleged that missionaries tore the first pages from Bibles to prevent full knowledge from coming into native hands (Worsley, 1968, p. 43). The writer has heard sophisticated South Asians contend that their countrymen studying in English universities had certain critical demonstrations withheld from them.

(4) Dissatisfactions arising from (2) and (3) above are diffuse in the sense of affecting a wide range of life situations, both expressionistic and instrumental.

Chalmers Johnson has observed that revolutions are generated under conditions of diverse and extensive dysfunctions adversely affecting many spheres of life. The same condition probably applies to revitalization movements generally. All signify the broad reconstruction of the social order and imply the immediate or eventual overthrow of an established power elite. (Revolutions are revitalization movements in which the legitimacy of the elite is denied and violence has been added.) It is doubtful if very broad social reconstruction is seriously pursued except as the pains of deprivation and of resentment extend into a considerable range of life activities. Deprivation can exist in any aspect of life and be relative to imaginary ideals as well as to actual contemporary contrasts. That such extensions occur is inevitable once collective unrest arises. It is a major function of movement leadership to expand the range of perceived

dissatisfactions. Glorious histories can be imagined on the theory that the invader never existed. The actual depth of wounds matters less than this extensiveness of hurt and the increasing conviction that there is a potential world in which such ills need not exist. When these perceptions can be supported by a personalized, emotional focus of blame based on oppression and deprivation, movements gain momentum. Needless to say, the generation of charismatic leadership is crucial if collective unrests are to be transformed into revitalizing movements, (Cf. Gifford).

The Functions of Revitalization Movements

We must reject Norman Cohn's intimation (1960) that the search for the role of millenarian movements in the evolutionary process is a fruitless undertaking, in contrast to the search for their psychic prerequisites. While the historian may decline such theorizing, the sociologist has some obligation to accept the responsibility. And if mediaeval millenarian movements were indeed unproductive of long range change, we cannot reach similar conclusions regarding similar movements in the contemporary developing world. There are undoubtedly circumstances where such movements, like anarchists or Anabaptists, "though not unarmed, did not know what to do with their arms, and were defeated for ever," (Hobsbawm, p. 92). But there is solid evidence that cargo movements in Melanesia, prophet movements in Africa, and certainly widespread nativistic reformative movements, have had substantial effects on the course of colonial and post-colonial history. It must be confessed that there are circumstances when the escapist and expressionist aspects of movements drain and redirect energies from tangible social goals. But more typically the expressionist movements are generated in circumstances wherein pragmatic reform movements are incapable of forming, or require the emotional power derived from convergent revitalization. Such circumstances may arise due to the suppression or ineffectiveness of rational reform actions or in states of "pre-political" organization wherein sophistication in the rational techniques of unity and the exercise of pressure are lacking.

Millenarianism, and revivalism superficially appear to be dysfunctional from the standpoint of modernization. Even movements of reformation frequently profess to seek the re-establishment of a still "more traditional" tradition than that which is currently in vogue. Often in the seeking they also utilize and reaffirm non-rational bases for action. It cannot be argued that the manifest goals of cargo cults, peyote cults and chiliastic Christian sects are functionally positive from the standpoint of developmental change. Many of the movements considered here are not directed toward the resolution of realistic problems in the pathway of modernization; and as has been suggested, some may actually drain efforts from potential or existing rationally directed programs. However, the fact that manifest goals are "unrealistic," or that personal rewards

for participation are expressionistic, does not have much to do with the latent functions of such movements. Whatever else revitalization movements may or may not do they shake up The Establishment by calling the status quo into question. Even successful revival movements attempting outright reinstatement of tradition eventually threaten their own leadership when those leaders find themselves forced to make terms with the exigencies of real twentieth century situations.[3]

The case of the Colombian *Violencia* is interesting in this connection although it ends, as of this time, in something of an anti-climax. For a generation Colombia has been involved in a massive unrest known as the *Violencia*. The Violence had no manifest goal to pursue and was not a social movement so much as a massive, endemic expression of hostility arising out of the brutal suppression of a liberal political movement. Although the liberal movement disintegrated, the repressiveness practiced by the conservative, established elite resulted in widespread violence on such a scale that unknown thousands of persons were butchered by their neighbours, bands of brigands killed victims without regard for their politics, and thousands of families fled their homes for somewhat greater safety in the vast unsettled regions of the country. Soon removed from political goals and social reform or even controversy, the unrest became a "conflict of annihilation." Concerning this period, Orlando Fals-Borda wrote that "it doesn't appear to be a jump to the opposite pole of secularism. Instead, it is a conglomeration of conflicting values juxtaposed and fused to the point of being contradictory and confusing." But in this anomic, goalless struggle, Fals-Borda concluded that bases were being laid for new institutions. Goalless massacres, and banditry, with a vast uprooted population, forced the oligarchy to face up to some facts of life in the twentieth century. We may not conclude that the *Violencia* was an efficient or a rational modernizing movement. It was anything but this. But it so shook a national social structure and an oligarchy so concerned with its twentieth century image, that the *developmental* consequences have been positive.

The *Violencia* is perhaps the "limiting case," since it was manifestly a collective emotional horror, not a revitalizing movement. In the range of true social movements as considered here, there are more specific and tangible latent functions played by movements which, in the beginning

3. The political appeals of the late S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in Ceylon were more traditional and restorative than reformative and he was swept into power by a movement of ethnic and religious revivalism. His election owed greatly to the support of the Buddhist monks and the ayurvedic medical practioners (traditional herbalists in distinction from "Western" medical practioners). Although Bandaranaike's traditionalistic goals wavered little, the facts are that modern health conditions required a strong *Western* medicine and that modern governmental bureaucracy did not merge readily with historical concepts of Buddhist clerical autonomy and a "state religion." Bandaranaike was assassinated by a disillusioned follower who was both an ayurvedic physician and a Buddhist monk.

at least, are unrelated, tangential, or even contrary, to requirements of modernization. At least four types of consequences may be distinguished which are potentially functional for modernization and development.

1. **Direct, social reform goals are frequently attached to movements which are generated on expressionistic satisfactions and messianic or utopian visions.**

Millenarian movements such as Park Chang No Kyo are expressive, and utopian but their emotionalism is geared to secular expression and their millenarianism is more Zionistic than chiliastic (Moos). Not only has the Park Chang No Kyo produced large and prospering industrial communities, it is providing Koreans with a more reliable and mobilizing interpretation of the Protestant ethic than Presbyterian missionaries have been able to do. Similarly inspired movements culminated in economically progressive utopian communities in the Western world and have left some heritage of economic rationality albeit in the midst of religious conservatism.

Millenarian themes have been vitalizing forces in many separatist movements which addressed themselves to the preliminary task of building a communal life consistent with messianic revelation. In contrast with chiliastic and apocalyptic sects, these might well be distinguished as movements of "messianic social reconstruction."

The distinction between reform movements and those of social reconstruction is of course a matter of degree. Frequently, social reforms are pressed as campaigns within deeper movements in which utopian dreams are pursued. Thus Vinoba Bhave can lead a neo-Gandhian movement toward an ideal state—rather like one envisioned by philosophical anarchists—but he also leads an affiliated action movement toward the immediate secular end of land redistribution (Koestler; Bondurant and Fisher).

Still different reformative actions are derived from movements which are immediately directed to the effective reinterpretation of tradition and sacred teachings. Diffuse neo-traditionalist movements frequently are associated or merged with movements which use the fervour of revitalization to accomplish specific structural reforms consistent with the broad ideological goals. Modernizing effects from such sources are evidenced in the Islamic reform programs in North Africa, and in some nativistic movements south of the Sahara. They were evident earlier in movements such as the Arya-Samaj in India. It is notable that in the Islamic reform movements the rejection of established Sufi power, much as in the anti-Brahmanical Hindu movements, is activated through recourse to sacred teachings more sacred and more fundamental than those supporting the status quo and its religious elite. The restoration of supernaturally and traditionally sanctified principles of social order is an effective route

to rational reform and modernization. Traditions need not die with modernization. Revitalizing movements selectively redefine them and utilize them as constructive forces for developmental change. Voget has shown that nativistic movements among American Indians have similarly yielded a new life meaning and self-realization through critical reflection on the past. Ultimately every traditionalistic and nativistic movement must, if it achieves greater than a temporary or a cult significance, come to terms with current realities and so justify Voget's designation, *reformative nativism*.

Reform functions adhere to general revitalization movements in differing relationships while deriving emotional and ideological nourishment from the broader movement. In some circumstances the relationship between revitalization and specific action-reform goals is sequential rather than parallel. This is particularly true of movements with highly expressionistic appeals and pragmatically unrealistic images of the future. Such movements may arise as cults and after a stage of popular excitement subside into cults again. On the other hand they may grow into expressionistic movements which set the stage and give thrust to "realistic" reform programs. The direction of such transformations are dependent upon a complex balancing of situational factors, including increased sophistication in the rational techniques of social power, fluctuations in the repressiveness of the established authority and the fortunes of available leadership. It is not argued that chiliastic movements usually turn toward rational reform, but rather that it is unjustified to dismiss them as being typically abortive from the standpoint of evolutionary change.

Worsley (1968) has observed that millenarian and secular movements of protest can coexist or that either one may precede or follow the other, but as the dominant form of protest, millenarianism always gives way to secularized forms. It remains a matter of interpretation as to the genetic connections between millenarian cults and movements and secular reform programs spawned in their wake. No doubt the greatest contribution of the cult which matures into an expressionistic movement is in the realm of social solidarity and ethnic dignity. However, there are striking examples of the direct application of highly expressionistic millenarian movements to explicit action programs. Such a relationship was evidenced in the Kimbangist movement of the Congo wherein this messianic movement lent its force to the Bakongo nationalist party in an open political alliance, (Michael Baton, cited by Worsley, 1968, p. xlvii). Where formal affiliations are not made, the political leaders must take into account the power of the messianic movements, (Balandier, ch. 7). In the Massinga Rule Movement (Marching Rule) in the Solomon Islands in 1945 a cargo-cult-movement rapidly *matured* into an organized and disciplined political mass movement which was to become a force in governance and development—despite, or perhaps because of, repressive and punitive police actions, (Worsley, 1968, ch. ix).

Revivalist movements do not always reveal their functional potentials while at their most feverish pitch. The recent (i.e. 1956) Sinhalese revivalistic and nativistic movement, as well as Buddhist revivals in Burma, were manifestly negative from the standpoint of rational social development (Smith, 1965). In the Sinhalese case, skilled political leadership coupled nativist pride in the restoration of their Buddhist civilization with the activation of hostilities toward a Hindu Tamil minority. Bandaranaike came to power upon a program which had little to do with basic developmental issues or reforms. His policies of Sinhalese domination caused massive riots which, coupled with priorities given to the Sinhalese language and religion, brought the country to the margins of economic chaos. Yet despite all this, the movement exposed the crucial need in this developmentally apathetic situation for modernizing reforms in the organizational structure and ideological emphasis of Sinhalese Buddhism. Hopefully, in the creation of Buddhist universities as part of a manifestly dysfunctional nativism, potential intellectual vehicles for modernization were created. These institutions will require an intellectual leadership which may find the fuller truth of the teachings in a greater emphasis on the positive values of secular life (Rahula, chapter 8).

2. Revitalization movements are organizational and mobilizing sources for ethnic dignity, solidarity, and the rise of nationalistic and "pan-" movements.

Each major region in the "Third World" has known a variety of movements which have functioned to retrieve ethnic dignity in the face of social denigration and acculturative threats. Even in the Melanesian cargo cults with their emphasis upon material goods, Kenelm Burridge has made clear the fact that the precious cargo had deeper symbolic significance than utilitarian. The crux of the matter was the search for dignity, and in these movements came organizational structure toward that quest and a renewed ethnic identity. The cargo movements were organized thrusts toward national self-consciousness. Worsley and Guiart have found these movements to be the "forerunners" of nationalism and significant pressures toward true national development. Through time cult expressionism is divorced increasingly from secular reform programs. However this does not deny the *mobilizing* functions of the movements as lines are drawn between the exploiter and exploited, hopes generated, and solidarity and confidence intensified by the opposition measures of colonial authorities. In some regions, cargo movements receded into passivity, but elsewhere their thrust and organization were transformed into potent political-economical movements. Marching Rule became in fact a political party and the Paliau Movement among the Manus was a political and economic action movement which grew in the soil fertilized by cargo dreams, xenophobia, and emotional contagion (Worsley, 1968, pp. 182-194).

If cargo cults are no more than "proto-nationalistic", many African prophet movements are literally the embryonic phases of nationalism and continue as energizing sources for political movements which have become parties and governments.

There has been some controversy over whether the African religious movements were more political than religious. In terms of societal function, the political consequences are surely more significant, since the ecstasies of religion have been synthesized with secular political ends. While this has been more obvious for the non-separatist and millenarian "political religions", the separatist sects have also contributed to anti-colonial sentiment, nativism, and nationalism. The separatists are revisionary sects, "Africanizing" the major Protestant denominations. The millenarians have been prophetically led and loosely organized movements emphasizing the "Black Saviour" and the "Black Jerusalem". These movements were given immense stimulation by the American exports of apocalyptic Christianity, especially through the Salvation Army and Jehovah's Witnesses (The Watchtower Movement), and to some extent by the American Negro's search for the golden age, in Africa. Christianity in Africa has been transposed through messianic nativism from its concept of individual salvation to one of "We" rather than "I" (Bastide 1966, pp. 469-470).

Rotberg has concluded that African religious movements have made a major contribution to nationalism through the revival of African self-respect. The prophets and their followers asserted the conflicts of interest in the colonial context. They defined alternatives to submission to white power. They glorified that which was African while Africanizing those diffusing values which they also glorified. The movements did more than establish a trend and platform for nationalism. They were in the life stream of the rising political states. No fine distinctions were to exist between "church and state". Political religions bloomed into political states which, if not theocratic, elevated the secular to the level of the sacred (Apter, p. 73). That this was no forced marriage is illustrated by James Fernandez's conversation with a backbush cult leader who explained that "politics is a way of searching for God, and religion is the way of worshipping Him once you have found Him" (p. 532).

In North Africa the early religious purification movement was the core for the nationalistic neo-Salafiyya reform movement. Nationalistic political ends were clothed in the garments of religion (von Grunebaum). It is interesting although not surprising to recall that an earlier puritan movement in the American colonies served similar functions. Among American Indians, there came close on the heels of the Ghost Dance, a number of highly expressionistic cult-movements which were to revive ethnic self-esteem to the point of a "chosen people" concept (Voget). Voget notes that more acculturated Indians even argued for autonomous Indian States.

Although some movements referred to here have been called "tribal millenarianism," they have stimulated "pan-Africanism," "pan-American Indianism" and have had similar effects among the segmented societies of Melanesia and elsewhere. In America, the roots from which the Ghost Dance arose gave birth subsequently to pan-Indian movements which have persisted into contemporary times. Only one of the great revitalizing movements, Gaiwiio, has not spread widely. Shakerism diffused extensively through the West while peyotism united peoples from the Southwest through the Great Plains and beyond. Voget considers the universalistic quality of such movements, now become churches, to be producing a nationalistic Pan-Indianism which holds the beginning of a Great Awakening.

South of the Sahara, pan-Africanism was explicit half a century or more ago in the Watchtower movement as well as in Marcus Garvey's essentially secular "Universal Negro Improvement Association," and in the Ngunzism Prophet Movement, (Andersson, pp. 250-257). Since 1945 pan-Africanism has become a potent part of African development under the leadership of such political religionists as Nkrumah (Worsley, 1968, pp. 88-92). Political religion is equally complicated in North Africa, where religious movements are both nationalistic and super-nationalistic, (Brown; von Grunebaum; Abun-Nasr). The political differentiation of the Arabs is a product of European influence and conservative Muslims can view it as the worst of Western gifts. Religious revitalization movements in this milieu face the difficult problem of reconciliation between existing national states and a tradition-supported, pan-Arab, Islamic super-state.

3. Revitalization movements are syncretistic and ultimately accommodative, adapting the diffusing symbols, norms and organizational patterns of developed societies into movement structure, tactics, and goals.

Although revitalization is not by definition syncretic, practically all such movements in developing countries are so in fact. Some represent syncretisms to the extent of developing quite novel institutions, such as the "Roman" Catholicism of Mayan Indians or the "Protestantism" in Bantu separatist churches (Edmonson *et al;* Sundkler). Other movements are frankly accommodative, emphasizing those traditional values which are consistent with Western achievement and progress orientations. Still others simply adopt modern technology and organization methods in furtherance of their own power and their objectives. Rarely do even extremely traditionalistic or utopian movements shun the mass media and bureaucratic structures for furthering their causes, just as secular reforms are pressed by movements utilizing revelation, supernaturalism and legend as instruments to some phase of modernization.[4]

4. The almost millenarian movement led by Vinoba Bhave offers an interesting exception. Leaders of this movement toward a casteless, classless and stateless society refuse to use the machinery of government to attain even immediate goals (Smith, 1966 a, p. 34; Bondurant and Fisher).

At the level of norms and values, the impact of Western society shows up in practically all movements emphasizing reform in traditional ways. For example, Western humanism and socialism have been powerful resources in the revitalizing reformation movements in Hinduism, bringing to it greater emphasis upon values of achievement and equalization of human worth. In these, much as in Salafiyya movements in Islam, modernization is sought by out-traditionalizing the traditionalists although this more ancient tradition is usually one closely tailored to the specifications of an achieving, and socialistic society. As yet similar reformation movements in Theravada Buddhism have not been much in evidence. In both Ceylon and Burma gestures have been made toward modernization and there are learned monks, particularly in Ceylon, who seek, for example, the reconciliation, or perhaps, syncretization of Buddhism and Marxism, (Smith, 1965; 1966[a], pp. 21-48; Bonn). But the significant fact is that in all of these countries "the new interpreters of religion have generally assumed the basic validity of the imported Western ideas" (Smith, 1966, p. 36). Theravada Buddhism appears to struggle rather chaotically in regard to which values will be reconciled and through what kinds of organizational devices. Yet it is clear that development will not occur associated with mediaeval Buddhism, and it certainly will not be achieved without Buddhism at all (Smith, 1965; 1966, chap. 1.2, 21, 22; Wilson; Siriwardane).

In Africa, where the culture base provided no great literary traditions comparable to those in Islamic, Hindu and Theravada civilizations, there has been more creativity in distinctive syncretic institutions. Over 2,000 separatist Bantu churches were listed in 1960 (Sundkler p. 374). While it is obvious that Christian eschatology offered excellent material for absorption into the emergent nativistic religions, there has also been substantial normative accommodation through these vehicles. Sundkler (p. 307) has noted that until 1945 the prophetic theme in South Africa was a protest against the missions, the Land Act, and the cultural patterns of whites in education and preservation of life. After 1945-1948 there was a notable shift toward accommodation even in this situation dominated by apartheid. This accommodation is particularly evident in business enterprise, education and health care. Sundkler writes that:

> In Zululand, therefore, certain prophets allow their people to visit the hospitals—whether run by missions or by the Government—to be operated on and to receive medical treatment--a course hitherto regarded by the Zionists as a mortal sin. When the patient is about to be discharged as healed, the prophet and his helpers arrive at the exit of the hospital in order to counteract the effect of the medical care.... Among the student nurses, a certain number are now daughters of Zionist preachers, and these told me with a smile that 'doctors and nurses have the spirit of Christ', (Sundkler p. 309-310).

These highly syncretic and nativistic religious movements are taking a lead in agricultural development programs and their church colonies are enterprising and energetic centers of commerce. Sundkler (p. 307) observes that there is a "modern Nguni parallel to the combination of Methodist revival and business enterprise in eighteenth-century England". In regard to a different African context, McKim Marriott (p. 496) has noted cryptically that in the wardrobes of Kwame Nkrumah and Sir Abubakar Balewa is a mixture of tribal robes and business suits.

Baeta's studies of prophetic, "spiritual churches" in Ghana indicate the revival of traditional moral injunctions consistent with the modernization of life and the inhibition of dysfunctional or inconsistent norms. To expect these heretical, magical and literalist sects to move directly and manifestly in support of a rational, secular society, would be unreasonable, but as Baeta observes, group aspirations are reflected in the selectivity of practices, and the aspirations of the people are more complicated than a simple desire to return to the past.

It is relevant that in 1945-46 Sundkler (p. 302) considered the Bantu Separatist Church to be a "bridge to the religion of the past, a bridge leading people back to 'African spiritism'." But fifteen years later he was to qualify:

> In the city, with its rapidly industrialized civilization they [the churches] functioned as 'adaptive structures'. In Zululand and Swaziland they were, relatively speaking, bridging the difficult transition period from traditional religion to new structures and a new ideology (p. 302).

The syncretic structures in which Christianity merges with indigenous concepts and rituals may of course offer no more than individual, expressionistic satisfactions. However, as cults mature into prophetic movements they must develop organizational rationality. Also, they become sensitive to the larger social context. This is the more rapid where repressive actions are taken by the established authorities, a condition which has generally been the case. There is persistent pressure for the inwardly directed cult-movement to take on complex structural forms and to develop an accommodative stance for survival in the community. To do this, modern forms of social organization are essential. Fernandez has observed, for example, how rationality in organization became essential for the viability of African prophet movements as agencies of national integration despite the strains which arise between the rational and expressive elements. Modern organizational forms are diffused and syncretized no less than are the rituals and symbols of Christianity.

Nowhere have the rational bureaucratic forms of social organization been more slavishly and meaninglessly adopted than in the Melanesian cargo cults. European structures were caricatured in fine detail from the hierarchy and red tape of colonial government to the organization of

cricket teams. Particular stress was laid upon military drills, registers and signal codes. All this was done as part of the imitative magic which would bring the millenium. But if cricket clubs did not play cricket they provided an organizational structure for conflict with colonial authorities. And if make-believe "Executive Officers" and "Home Secretaries" did not have magical effect upon the cargo to come, they were elemental gestures toward the rational devices of social power. Whatever the remoteness of the manifest ends to which these organizations were applied, they were nonetheless introductory to the social devices essential for unification and the organized conflicts which were to follow.

Where acculturative and other processes have undermined primordial group structures, revitalizing movements also create voluntary associations to take on functions no longer adequately performed by traditional groups. No one could suggest that it was a manifest and fundamental goal of African separatist churches to fill the void left by disorganized traditional groups. However, not only have the new African churches taken a "Western" denominational form, they have come to perform aid and welfare functions which traditional groups are incapable of performing. The provision of expressionist functions has been remarked upon earlier. The continued vigour of American Indian revitalization movements in a secular environment lies in their adoption of modern church structure, even to the organization of missionary programs and fraternal auxiliaries (Voget). Even in the Sinhalese Buddhist revival, traditionalism did not retard such organizational devices as the Young Mens' Buddhist Association, obviously derived from Christian sources (Ames). Nor were the Buddhist universities modelled on archaic principles. They are firmly built upon the pattern of the modern Western university.

CONCLUSION

The contemporary sociology of development, particularly in America, has not paid sufficient attention to the interactional processes through which social transformations occur. There has been an emphasis upon polar societal types, and other structural, equilibrium models. While these orientations, as well as studies of the diffusion and the integration of cultural innovations are useful for the sociology of change, they do not incorporate the recognition that change actually arises in the social interaction consequent upon valuations of the status quo or some aspect of it. Social movements provide a major organizational frame within which collective interaction occurs with reference to some image of the future. In the interactive processes of social—particularly revitalizing—movements, traditions are collectively melded, or reconciled, or rejected with reference to the attainment of idealized objectives. These objectives are qualified and redefined in response to situational realities and the confrontations which a rising movement must face. Revitalization movements are expressionistic collective actions toward major social

reconstruction, often of a utopian nature. In developing societies it is their central function to provide the organizational vehicle through which broad dissatisfactions with a status quo are articulated and mobilization facilitated toward major changes in the social order. Theoretically, revitalization movements are of two types, the one finding its legitimation and goals in the revival of tradition, the other through a concept of destiny, and revelation. Yet both types serve to invigorate primordial bonds, and movements of destiny do not necessarily require a break with *all* tradition.

There should be nothing surprising in the fact that revitalizing movements usually begin with an emphasis upon expressionistic satisfactions and vague or pragmatically unrealistic social goals, if indeed these exist, in their early stages. Such movements arise from circumstances of diffuse dissatisfactions under conditions of oppression, denigration, and deprivation. In most "Third World" regions, these conditions have been exacerbated by acculturative threat to valued institutions. The emotional satisfaction of incipient movements, sometimes more accurately termed "cults", or even "social contagions," bind followers to a collectivity capable of generating intelligible images of the future which serve further to solidify the collectivity as well as to activate it. It is improbable that revitalizing movements can develop without charismatic leaders to unite collective unrest with faith in the achievement of a better future. It is universally true of social movements that goals are unceasingly in formulation along with increasing structuralization.

Complex circumstantial and cultural factors may press an incipient revitalization movement toward emphasis on one or more of several themes. Such variables include pre-existing cultural patterns, exposure to Christian or Islamic messianism, and repressiveness of the established elite. Some movements, e.g. cargo-cults, are perhaps more "primitive" than others since they imply a pre-political society with minimal exposure to a scientific "world view."

There has been controversy as to the evolutionary or developmental significance of revitalization movements, especially those of millenarian character. Evidence precludes an unqualified judgement. It is possible that some movements of this type have drawn off energies which *might* have been expended in direct action programs. However, it is a thesis of this essay that very widely throughout the "Third World", movements which are superficially expressionistic, "escapist", and/or "traditionalistic" are serving positive, developmental functions. These functions are typically latent ones and are not always readily identifiable in the movement goals. They are certainly not to be confused with the individualistic and expressionistic functions which are also provided. Revitalizing movements arise as the aggrieved are unified by a sense of exhilaration and hope for the future. This hope, however realistic or unrealistic in the eyes of the outside observer, virtually requires the confrontation of

an awakening mass with the maintainers of the status quo. Under some conditions even a challenge is a major step. Segmentalized "pre-political" societies are moved toward integration and national consciousness. Frequently, specific reform or revolutionary actions are combined with either traditionalistic or millennial orientations. And as developing movements must face the public, the Establishment, and counter-movements, they adopt forms of rational organization and tactics which are consistent with modernization. Where expressionistic movements do not make the transition into secular reform or revolutionary movements, they may relapse into passive cults—but cults which have fertilized the soil of discontent and planted therein seeds of unity, organization and hope.

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revival movements of the 1880's led by the Sinhalese and Tamil intelligentsia. This cultural self-assertion of the indigenous religions against the religion of the foreign rulers and their agents, the Christian missionaries, was a form of incipient nationalism. For, as Lenin has pointed out, "political protests in religious guise are common to all nations at a certain stage of their development." Significantly, it was a Buddhist Theosophist teacher, A. E. Buultjens, and other middle-class reformers associated with various protest movements, who started the first trade union in Ceylon in 1893 (the Ceylon Printers Union), after a strike of printers at Cave & Co. In the period up to 1920, there were numerous unorganised, spontaneous strikes and a few organised strikes of laundry-men (1896), carters (1906), railway workers (1912) and harbour and railway workers (1920), which reflected the growing consciousness among the working-class of the possibilities of joint action against what Marx called "the mass of misery, oppression, degradation and exploitation." These strikes were led by the unorthodox fringe of the Ceylonese bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie which included Buddhist revivalists, Theosophists, social reformers, temperance workers, and the more politically conscious nationalists who first gave the urban workers an element of trade union and class consciousness. These leaders were often paternalistic, advocating conciliation and moderation to the working-class, but nevertheless championing the workers' basic right to form trade unions. They were persons who were simultaneously involved in claiming their rights, which included the right of middle-class suffrage and political representation, racial equality and equal opportunity vis-a-vis British officialdom in Ceylon.

The 1920's form the second phase of the movement for democratic rights. This was a period of militant trade union struggle, beginning in 1923, when the Ceylon Labour Union under the leadership of A. E. Goonesinha, organized a general strike in Colombo of 20,000 workers. It was followed by a wave of successful strikes, in the harbour in 1927, among taxi drivers and industrial workers in 1928, and culminating in the violent tramway strike of 1929, during which police firing led to five deaths. The leadership of urban wage labour of the 'twenties came from the radical section of the Ceylon bourgeoisie, most notably from the staunch nationalist A. E. Goonesinha, who took the fight for democratic rights a stage further than the moderate reformers of the Ceylon National Congress, the political organisation of the bourgeoisie (formed in 1919). In a society where wage labour relationships existed alongside vestiges of feudalism, where there were class, caste, communal and religious divisions, and where the exploiting class was both foreign and local, the important political slogans of the period were "freedom", "equality," and "social reform." Goonesinha's Ceylon Labour Union (formed in 1922) and the Ceylon Labour Party (formed in 1928) called for political independence, universal suffrage, political rights irrespective of race,

religion or sex, the recognition of trade unions and the right to strike, and minimum wages, pensions and other social legislation for the working class.

The ideology of the 'advanced' elements of the bourgeoisie of the pre-1920 phase had been Gladstonian Liberalism tinged with Buddhism, Theosophy, and humanitarianism. The demands were essentially upper middle-class demands for moderate political reform, limited suffrage and equal rights. But during the 'twenties—a period of economic boom, when the Ceylonese bourgeoisie increased its economic power and urban wage labour expanded in size and acquired greater class consciousness—certain radical sections of the bourgeoisie and a section of the petty bourgeoisie came into prominence and were shrill in their agitation for political reforms and social changes. This was the 'Goonesinha era' with its ideology of Social Democracy.

The Ceylon Labour Union led by Goonesinha had no contact with the international Communist movement or even with the Indian Communist movement. Goonesinha had been inspired by Indian nationalists and by the British Labour Party; Communism held no appeal for him, though he had on occasion expressed admiration for "the heroic lion-like qualities" of Lenin. During the general strike of 1923, the Governor voiced fears about Communist influence in Ceylon, but the Inspector-General of Police reassured him that Communists were not organisers of the strike, and that European and Indian Communist publications sent to Goonesinha were confiscated at the post office. However, the fear of possible Communist influence was prevalent and the Buddhist leader, Anagarika Dharmapala, came under suspicion. His movements were closely watched and when he visited Europe and the U.S.A. in 1925, a report by the Ceylon Police stated "it may be possible that he is making this trip with the object of getting into touch with M. N. Roy, the notorious Indian Bolshevik and publisher of revolutionary papers in Berlin." The Department of State in Washington reported in December 1925 that Dharmapala was in touch in New York "with the same old crowd of trouble-makers who are left-overs from the original Irish revolutionary movement and are shouting loudly for whatever looks revolutionary at the present time."[2]

Neither the Labour Union nor the Ceylon Labour Party were at any stage influenced by Marxism. In fact, the Ceylon Labour Party was guided by the British Labour Party and revolutionary methods of action were expressly renounced by Goonesinha. He declared that the Ceylon Labour Party was a Social Democratic party which believed that "the freedom of the country must be achieved by evolution and not revolution"

2. For the article on Lenin in Goonesinha's paper see *Kamkaru Handa*, 13 September 1925, "Lenin Viraya." For the report from the Dept. of State, Washington, see Dept. of National Archives, File (Conf.) P (53), Vol. II, Report of 16 June 1925.

and that the Labour Union was "not a revolutionary or Communist organisation" but was formed to protect the worker whose interests had been neglected by the State.[3]

Class and Politics[4]

The economic and political background to the formation of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party was the catastrophic economic depression of 1929-1935 that engulfed Ceylon, the total collapse of the militant labour movement of the 1920's and the assumption of the shadow of political power by the Ceylon bourgeoisie after the implementation of the Donoughmore reforms in 1931.

Some idea of the extent of the economic depression can be gauged from the export figures of the period. From the peak year of 1926 when the value of exports was Rs. 503 million, the value fell to Rs. 170 million in 1932. There was a sharp fall in the world prices of tea, copra and graphite and a disastrous collapse of the rubber industry. Unemployment increased sharply on plantations, and there was drastic retrenchment in government departments and in the private sector. During the depression years, Goonesinha's Ceylon Labour Union was unable to sustain its earlier militant policies. There were major strike defeats—Lake House (1929), Times of Ceylon (1931), and Galle Face Hotel (1933), and a consequent cessation of trade union struggles.

An assessment of the role of the Ceylon bourgeoisie in relation to the imperialists and to the working class is necessary in order to analyse the politics of this period. The imperialists, by 1931, continued to be the dominant economic and political force, although certain concessions in the form of constitutional changes had been made to the local bourgeoisie. But the Ceylon bourgeoisie was essentially a land-owning group which had hardly ventured into other spheres of activity. The large trading interests were British and Indian and the few industries and engineering workshops that existed were foreign-owned or run by government departments. The absence locally of industrial or mercantile capitalists meant that there was no serious conflict in this sphere with British interests. The conflict on land questions (over the title to waste land) between the British administration and the local bourgeoisie had been resolved by 1930, more or less in favour of the latter. Apart from rubber plantations, where there was both foreign and local ownership, the economic fields of activity were strictly demarcated. The British planters were exclusively on the tea plantations, whereas the local bourgeoisie had their own "spheres of influence"—coconut, cinnamon, graphite and traditional agriculture.

3. *The Comrade*, 19 May 1929 and *CDN*, 17 September, 1928.

4. For a detailed account of the years 1880-1930, see Kumari Jayawardena, *The Rise of the Labour Movement in Ceylon*, Duke University Press, 1972.

By 1931, the Ceylon bourgeoisie had achieved its main demands for franchise and political representation. Without mass-based activity or violent struggles, the bourgeoisie had gradually attained political rights by the constitutional reforms of 1912, 1920 and 1923, culminating in the Donoughmore reforms. Under this constitution, for the first time general elections were held (in 1931) for 50 elected constituencies under universal suffrage. The Ceylon National Congress, which in the 'twenties had led the agitation for reforms, was almost defunct by the early 'thirties. As a class, the bourgeoisie had achieved its main purpose, that is, political concessions within the broad imperialist framework.

For the urban and plantation working class, the years around 1931 mark an important turning point. The class consciousness of the urban workers had been heightened by the militant trade union struggles of the 'twenties, and on the plantations, after over a hundred years of exploitation and oppression, trade union agitation flared up for the first time in 1930-1931. But the catastrophic economic depression of 1929-1935 effectively crushed both the urban and plantation movements and the leadership was not able to survive this disaster.

The situation was an unusual one—for almost simultaneously, in the early 'thirties, there was a collapse of the nationalist and the labour organisations which had been active in the political and economic struggles of the 'twenties. A warped plantation economy had prevented the rise of an industrial bourgeoisie; the lack of a strong bourgeoisie, in turn, stultified the development of a strong nationalist movement and gave rise to a warped type of politics. The leaders of the Ceylon National Congress turned to collaboration with the imperialists. They acquiesed in the Donoughmore reforms, enthusiastically participated in the 1931 elections and accepted Ministries in the new legislature. They did not launch a movement for full independence but were satisfied to work within the existing colonial structure. The leaders of the Ceylon Labour Union also abandoned the struggle; they drifted into racism against the workers of Indian origin and into class collaboration with the employers, and by 1933 they were actively helping the employers to break strikes. In the plantations, the leaders of the Ceylon Estate Workers Federation, after a brief period of union activity in 1931, were forced by the depression into rear-guard activity and petition writing for individual workers. In this situation, the radical bourgeoisie and petty-bourgeoisie were confronted with a difficult task—that of forming a single political party which could give leadership to both the anti-imperialist struggle and the working class movement.

The Lanka Sama Samaja Party (LSSP) which was formed in 1935, assumed this dual role. In the absence of a nationalist movement led by a strong bourgeoisie (as existed in India), it had to take over the nationalist struggle. In the absence of a party or labour movement to fight

capitalism in the urban areas and the plantations, and to fight the vestiges of feudalism in the countryside, it had to also assume a socialist role. The new party thus took over the task of leading the political and trade union struggles for political reforms and democratic rights.

The International Situation

In discussing the events leading to the formation of the L.S.S.P. some comment on the contemporary international situation in relation to revolutionary movements is necessary. In the late 'twenties and early 'thirties, Left forces in the world had suffered several setbacks including the defeat of the General Strike in Britain in 1926, the consolidation of Mussolini's Fascist rule in Italy, the defeat of the Communists in China in 1927, and the rise to power of Hitler in 1933. Meanwhile, the emergence of a Left opposition in the Soviet Union, which resulted in the expulsion from the country of Leon Trotsky in 1929, reflected the internal problems of the Communist movement. This was also a period when the Communist International had to face several important political and tactical issues concerning the threat of Fascism, the attitude to Social Democrats and the policy to be adopted towards the national bourgeoisie in colonial countries.

The eruption of strike activity in Ceylon after 1927 and the increase of Communist influence in Indian trade unions led to unfounded fears being expressed about Communism in Ceylon. In 1928, an influential Ceylonese employer (H. L. de Mel) sent a memorandum to the government complaining of the intimidation of workers by the Ceylon Labour Union and advising the government that "the immediate and close attention of the Inspector-General of Police should be secured at once... to end this Bolshevik rule over the proletariat." Another scare was raised in 1929 at the time of the violent tramway strike, when the British *Times* described the labour troubles in Ceylon as being due to the influence of Moscow; this led to protests in Ceylon and one newspaper retorted that the Conservative Party, if it was interested in Ceylon, should study the "lack of educational facilities for the masses in Ceylon rather than cry Moscow."[5]

Between 1927 and 1935, several important changes occurred in the policy of the Communist International. In 1927, the Communists had formed the League Against Imperialism to include "all political organizations, parties, trade unions and persons...fighting against capitalist imperialist domination." The League declared that its task was to mobilise, "in a world-wide resistance to imperialist offensive, all the revolutio-

5. For de Mel's memorandum (28 May 1928), see Dept. of National Archives, File CF 492/1928; see *CDN*, 8 Feb. 1929 for the quotation from the *Times* (of Britain); and for the details of the tramway strike and for the quotation in the text see the *Ceylon Independent*, January-February 1929.

nary forces fighting for *freedom and democracy* in the oppressed colonial countries." The Executive Council of the League included many non-Communist nationalists like Nehru, Mohamed Hatta (Indonesia) and Lamine Senghor (French West Africa). By 1931, however, the attitude of the League towards these nationalists had changed, and warnings were issued against "illusions spread by these nationalist reformists concerning the possibility of winning national independence without a revolutionary struggle." During this period Nehru, Gandhi and Subhas Chandra Bose were denounced as traitors and agents of Imperialism. But in 1935, the 7th Congress of the Communist International faced with the "towering menace of Fascism to the working-class," changed its line to that of a 'People's Front Against Fascism.' Communists were urged to act jointly with Social Democrats in the political field and with existing trade unions in industrial matters.[6]

The Ceylonese Socialist Students

Before the First World War, Ceylonese students who went to Universities in Britain were drawn from the families of large landowners and those in the liberal professions. With the boom in all agricultural products and plantation crops in the 'twenties (especially coconut and rubber) a section of the newly prosperous rural bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie was able to afford a foreign university education for their children. Whereas the earlier progression of rich students had been from a few select Christian schools in Colombo to Oxford and Cambridge, the new type of student often went from provincial or Buddhist Theosophist schools to the cheaper and less fashionable London University.

In the twentieth century, the Ceylon Students Association in London had always been an important centre of political discussion among young Ceylonese. By the 1920's, the Association was dominated by a group of Socialist students, who while active in the broad student organization, used to also meet separately to discuss questions of Socialism and the possibility of forming a Socialist Party in Ceylon. The group included Philip Gunawardena, Leslie Goonewardena, Colvin R. de Silva,

6. Resolutions of the General Council (December 1927) and the Executive Committee (1931) of the League Against Imperialism. The resolution of the 1935 Congress of the Comintern declared that Communist parties had to "reach agreements with the organisations of the toilers of various political trends for joint action on a factory, local, district, national and international scale." *Resolutions of the 7th World Congress of the Comintern* (pamphlet) 1935.

The importance of joint trade union activity was stressed by George Dimitrov when he said—

"We must base our tactics not on the behaviour of individual leaders of the Amsterdam unions no matter what difficulties their behaviour may cause in the class struggle, but on the question of *where the masses are to be found... and make the question of struggle for trade union unity the central issue.*" George Dimitrov. *The Working Classes Against Fascism*, p. 50. Emphasis added.

N. M. Perera and Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe.[7] Except for Leslie Goonewardena, none of them belonged to the Christianised elite, but came from Buddhist, Sinhalese speaking families. They were educated in Buddhist Theosophist or government schools and had been politically influenced by Anagarika Dharmapala's Buddhist nationalist crusade, and had reacted against the repression that followed the riots of 1915.

The two important political influences on this group of Socialist students were the Indian nationalist movement and Marxism. The late 'twenties was a period when Indian nationalism was going through a militant phase; the Simon Commission on constitutional reforms had been boycotted by the Indian National Congress, and within the Congress the Communist and left-wing factions were influential. In London, the Indian students were active in nationalist agitation conducted mainly through their student organization, the London Majlis. Some members of the Ceylon Students Association (notably S. A. Wickremasinghe) worked in close co-operation with both the Majlis and the India League in London whose leading members were Krishna Menon, Fenner Brockway and the Rev. Sorenson. S. A. Wickremasinghe on his way back from Britain in 1928 spent two months in India, where he attended the sessions of the Indian Trade Union Congress. He re-visited India frequently. He was in Benares when the news arrived of Gandhi's arrest during the Salt March in 1931 and he rendered medical aid to the injured after the police fired on those protesting against Gandhi's arrest. He also visited

7. *Philip Gunawardena* (1900-1972) was the son of Boralugoda Ralahamy, a landowner who had been sentenced to death and reprieved during the 1915 Riots. After this episode Gunawardena was taken from a Christian school, Prince of Wales College, Moratuwa and sent to Ananda College. The Principal at the time was a Theosophist, Fritz Kunz, of Wisconsin University, who was sympathetic to Indian nationalism. Gunawardena also joined Wisconsin University where there were several Marxist teachers, including Scott Nearing and John Commons. (He died in March 1972).

Leslie Goonewardena (born in 1909), whose father was a doctor in Panadura, came from a landowning Westernised family. He went to St. Thomas' College, Colombo, and to a public school in Wales. He did the B.Sc. (Economics) degree at the London School of Economics and qualified as a barrister. (He is today the Minister of Transport & Communications).

N. M. Perera (born in 1905): His father was a rent collector in Colombo who also had a cloth shop. Perera was educated at Ananda College. He did a Ph.D. on the Weimar Republic at the London School of Economics and later obtained a D.Sc. for a thesis on Parliamentary Procedure. (Today he is the Minister of Finance).

Colvin R. de Silva (born in 1907): His father was a Registered Medical Practitioner (Apothecary) who owned land. He was educated first at St. John's, Panadura, and later at Royal College. He did a degree and Ph.D. at London University and was called to the Bar. His thesis was on British rule in Ceylon up to 1833. In 1927, de Silva was the Secretary of the Ceylon Students Association. He visited the Soviet Union in 1931. (Today he is the Minister of Plantations).

S. A. Wickremasinghe (born in 1901) was from a landowning family in South Ceylon. He was educated at Mahinda College (Galle) where the Principal was the Theosophist, F. L. Woodward, and the Vice-Principal, F. Gordon Pearce, was a member of the British Independent Labour Party. During the 1915 riots, Wickremasinghe, who was a school boy, was involved in a skirmish with a British police officer. Wickremasinghe qualified as a doctor in Ceylon and went to Britain in 1926. In London he was President of the Ceylon Student Association in 1927. (Today he is the General Secretary of the Communist Party).

Gandhi in jail and spent some time at Santiniketan where he met Tagore in 1933.

Among both Indian and Ceylonese students in England during this period, there was great disillusionment with the British Labour Party, which was regarded as imperialist in colonial policy and reformist in home affairs. Hence, the revolutionary slogans of the Communist Party and the left-wing of the Labour Party seemed to have greater relevance and appeal to many of the students from colonial countries. In addition, the fact that two of the leading members of the British Communist Party (R. Palme Dutt and S. Saklatvala) were Indians, led to close contact between the Communist Party and the Indian and Ceylonese students. Philip Gunawardena and Leslie Goonewardena belonged to the Indian Communist student group in London. While in America, Berlin and Paris, Philip Gunawardena worked with groups of Indian revolutionaries.

In 1928, the conference of the Communist-sponsored League Against Imperialism, which was held in London, attracted the attention of the colonial students. The policy of the League was one of condemnation of the Socialist Second International and the British Labour Party, which was accused of having "made common cause with the British Imperialists" by participating in the Simon Commission.[8] Philip Gunawardena was on the executive council of the League from 1929-1931.

Several of the Ceylonese students acquired a theoretical knowledge of Marxism through contact with Marxist intellectuals and with Socialist teachers at British and American universities, and practical experience was obtained through membership in various Communist organizations, especially the British Communist Party. The Left Opposition views within the Communist movement influenced Philip Gunawardena who, on his way back to Ceylon, contacted Trotskyist groups in France and Spain.

It is important to note to what extent the views of this group of Socialist Ceylonese students differed from the opinions of other political associations in Ceylon. This can be gauged from the stand they took on two vital issues, the question of political reforms and the role of the trade union movement. At a time when the Donoughmore reforms and A. E. Goonesinha's Labour Party were supported by the British Labour Party, the Socialist student group in London made known their opposition to the reforms and to the politics and trade union policy of Goonesinha.

Attitude to Reforms

One important area of disagreement concerned the role of the bourgeoisie in Ceylon. After the publication of the recommendations of the Donoughmore Commission in 1928, the Ceylonese students in London

8. Resolution of the General Council of the League against Imperialism, 1927.

held a series of weekly discussions at which Krishna Menon, S. Saklatvala and D. B. Jayatilaka were the main speakers. A critical examination of the proposed reforms was made, and reports of these discussion were published as a pamphlet in 1928 by S. A. Wickremasinghe and Krishna Menon. In this pamphlet the students disagreed with the attitude adopted by the British Labour Party and A. E. Goonesinha to the Ceylonese bourgeoisie. The British Labour Party regarded the Ceylon National Congress as a set of oligarchs, while Goonesinha's objections to the Ceylonese leaders were so strong that he said he was against more responsible government unless the franchise was broadened. But the Ceylonese students in London adopted the prevalent Communist line that the 'national bourgeoisie' should be supported in the fight against foreign rule. They held that the indigenous oligarchy was preferable to a foreign one because the former "had the knowledge of the land and people, [were] of the same stock and tradition, and formed a wider oligarchy with the inherent possibility of ceasing to be one."

On the question of universal suffrage the student group argued that, although it was desirable, its immediate significance was not to be overestimated because of the danger of a "large number of votes being at the mercy of those who have the economic power to manipulate them." The Donoughmore Commissioners were accused of "treating the problem in the old way, of looking at political and evading economic issues," and of neglecting to report on labour conditions in Ceylon, which "would have at least served to draw the attention of the British parliament, and the Government of Ceylon and the I.L.O." to the exploitation of labour in Ceylon. They alleged that this was deliberately omitted as the findings would have discredited the British administration and planter interests; in this connection, the Labour M.P., Dr. Drummond Shiels, who was a member of the Donoughmore Commission, was blamed for shirking a duty which "he owed to the labour world as a whole."[9]

Attitude to A. E. Goonesinha

The Ceylon student group in London also opposed the policies and leadership of A. E. Goonesinha in the Ceylon Labour Union and the Ceylon Labour Party. It was essential for the students to take a stand on Goonesinha's position, because from 1922 until the years of the depression, the Ceylon Labour Union had led the trade union struggles of the Colombo workers, and the Ceylon Labour Party had become the most radical force on the political scene. The young generation of nationalist Ceylonese supported A. E. Goonesinha in the fight for swaraj, universal suffrage, trade union rights, better wages and better working conditions. But dissatisfaction with the leadership of the labour movement grew, especially after the Labour Union signed a collective agreement with the

9. *Study of the Report on the Constitution*, Ceylon Students Association, London, 1928.

employers in 1929 under which lightning strikes were renounced in return for recognition of the Union.

The first theoretical Marxist analysis of the role of Goonesinha and the labour movement of the 'twenties was made by Philip Gunawardena in an article, entitled "Whither Ceylon," written in 1931. Goonesinha was given credit for the militant battles he had fought on behalf of the workers and was called "a man of tremendous initiative and daring." According to Philip Gunawardena, the crucial strike, which marked the culmination of a period of offensive action by the workers, was the tramway strike and riot of 1929 during which the workers set fire to the Maradana Police Station:

> The workers rose to an extraordinary pitch of revolutionary energy, enthusiam and sacrifice... to defend their class interests and smash the symbol of capitalist authority... [They] displayed rare initiative and ability to cope with a critical situation when parliamentarians were wasting their time in hair splitting arguments over constitutional authority... The weakened nationalists shivered in their shoes and knelt at the altar of Imperalism begging it to save them from their class enemies... their class fear was more potent than their fear of foreign conquerors.

Gunawardena claimed that the strike weapon was "the manifestation of the class struggle at a fairly acute stage" and that during the tramway strike the workers, "who [were] not interested in the law and order of a capitalist society," were able to "put out of commission the authority of the decadent capitalist society." Although the workers had neither preparation nor correct leadership, they were able to challenge "the armed forces of the mightiest Empire the world has ever seen." In contrast to the militancy of the workers, Goonesinha was accused of failing to give the required revolutionary leadership during the strike and of displaying "a lamentable confusion." Goonesinha's praise of the British police officials and the cheers that he asked the workers to give the chairman of the Chamber of Commerce after the settlement of the strike, were referred to as "tactical blunders" of the first magnitude.[10]

Attack on the British Labour Party

In the late 'twenties, the Communists and the Left-wing of the Labour Party in Britain were highly critical not only of the political leadership of the British Labour Party but also of the policy of the British trade union movement and especially of the Mond-Turner negotiations. These talks between Sir Alfred Mond, the Chairman of the large combine of I.C.I. (Imperial Chemical Industries) and Ben Turner, the Chairman of the

10. Philip Gunawardena, "Whither Ceylon," *The Searchlight*, 9 Nov. 1931.

British Trades Union Congress, were the first important attempt to obtain industrial peace through collaboration between employers and labour.

Influenced by the Communist line on these two questions, the Ceylonese student group criticised the close association between the British Labour Party and A. E. Goonesinha in both political and trade union matters. Labour personalities such as Ramsay MacDonald, Drummond Shiels and George Lansbury were said to have introduced Goonesinha "to the wonders of Fabian mysticism," and in the trade union sphere, British union officials were said to have explained the nature of "Mondism" to Goonesinha, who after his visit to England in 1928, returned to Ceylon "a devout apostle of industrial peace and a class collaborator." The signing of the collective agreement in Ceylon in 1929 was also attributed to this influence. Philip Gunawardena alleged that soon after Goonesinha returned from England, the Chairman of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce, S. P. Hayley, "a high priest of industrial peace, hurriedly formed the Employers Federation to collaborate with the Trade Unions...Hayley addressed the business community in the tones of a Hebrew prophet and... an Agreement was signed to prevent lightning strikes." Gunawardena also claimed that Goonesinha's conciliatory attitude towards the Employers' Federation was proof that very few leaders of the working class could escape the temptations of capitalist society. Goonesinha, he said, having risen to power "on the shoulders of the workers, [was] looking round for an official position in the framework of Imperialism, and the Labour Government of England makes the temptations doubly attractive."[11]

In order to counteract the influence of the British Labour Party, the Ceylon unions were urged to maintain contacts abroad only with "genuine working-class organizations" and with the "revolutionary trade union movement" in India; warnings were presented against the I.L.O., the Socialist Second International and trade union bureaucrats "of the English and American type."

The views of the Ceylonese Socialist students in London presented a new departure in ideology for the Ceylon political and labour movement. While these students remained abroad, their agitational activities were confined to student organizations and foreign nationalist or Communist groups. The impact of these ideas was felt in Ceylon in the early 'thirties, when all the active members of the student group returned home. On their return they emphasized the need for a new political party; this was formed in 1935 but until then the young Socialists joined the radical Youth League movement which had already taken root in the country.

11. *Ibid.*

The Youth League Movement in Ceylon

Among the nationalist youth who had studied in Ceylon during the 'twenties, there was great dissatisfaction with the existing political organisations, and the need for a new approach to political, social and economic issues was keenly felt. The Ceylon National Congress was regarded as a conservative organisation, dominated by the "old guard" leaders, who were against mass political action or any extension of the franchise. Some of the radicals—K. Natesa Aiyar, George Caldera, James T. Rutnam, Susan de Silva and Valentine Perera—had joined Goonesinha's Labour Party hoping that this body would provide a vigorous and progressive alternative to the Congress, but most of them dropped out after conflicts with Goonesinha.

Attempts were made in the 'twenties to form a radical political party when S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike returned from Oxford. His views on economics and politics and his defiance of the older politicians, made him for a time the hope of the young Ceylonese. In 1926, the Progressive Nationalist Party, formed with Bandaranaike as its President, attracted many young nationalists and students. The aim of the party was full self-government for Ceylon and the fostering of a "spirit of nationalism" in order to widen the scope of political agitation which "had hitherto been the monopoly of a few."[12] This attempt to unite the existing radical forces failed and Bandaranaike continued his political career in the Ceylon National Congress. The existing dissatisfaction with Goonesinha's one-man leadership of the trade union movement resulted in efforts to break his control over organized labour and, in 1927, Bandaranaike contested and defeated Goonesinha at a Colombo Municipal Council election.

There was a heightened interest in politics after the arrival of the Donoughmore Commissioners in 1927, when issues such as the degree of self-government for Ceylon and the extension of the franchise were hotly debated. The politically conscious youth, who had no faith in the Ceylon National Congress or the Ceylon Labour Party, began to group themselves into Youth Leagues in various parts of the country in order to protest against the new constitution. The first youth League (led by Handy Perinpanayagam and C. Balasingham) was formed in Jaffna and active Youth Leagues sprang up in Colombo. In 1931, the Youth Leagues came together to form a Youth Congress which had Aelian Pereira, a lawyer, as its president and Valentine Perera and George Caldera (also lawyers) as secretaries.

Anti-Imperialism

The political outlook of the Youth Leagues can be divided into two phases: the purely nationalist, anti-imperialist phase when the Leagues

12. *Ceylon Independent*, 6 September 1926.

concentrated on agitating for political independence, and the second phase, when the Socialist students who returned to Ceylon during the depression years, gave the Youth Leagues a Socialist orientation and directed them to an interest in economic issues.

An important source of inspiration of the Youth League movement came from the militant section of the Indian National movement. In India, by the late 1920's, the Socialists had formed a group within the Indian National Congress, and in 1931, two Left-wing members of Congress, Jawaharlal Nehru and Kamaladevi Chattopadyaya, who were visiting Ceylon, addressed a meeting of the Youth Congress.

In the earlier phase, the activities of the Youth Leagues were dominated by political questions connected with the Donoughmore Constitution. In May 1931, a resolution was moved by Stanley de Zoysa that the youth of Ceylon had completely lost faith in British rule which was "fraught with incalculable detriment to the social, economic, political and cultural life of the people" and that an intensive campaign should be launched for the immediate attainment of swaraj. At the Youth Congress in December 1931, Valentine Perera called for "downright unadulterated independence" and stated that no halfway measures would be acceptable. The Youth Leagues denounced the Donoughmore Constitution on various occasions as "a setback in the political history of Ceylon" and "a flagrant invasion of our cherished rights.... calculated to wound our national self-respect."[13]

The Youth Leagues also launched several boycott campaigns. Influenced by the methods of the Indian National movement, some Youth Leagues called for a boycott of the general elections held in June 1931 as a protest against the new constitution. On election day, Youth League members demonstrated with placards near polling stations, urging people not to vote. The boycott was only successful in Jaffna, mainly because the Tamil population had their own special grievances against the constitution. There was also a campaign by the Youth Leagues to boycott foreign goods, especially rice, liquor, cloth and tobacco, and Ceylonese were urged to join the swadeshi movement launched by the Youth Leagues to encourage local products. The Colombo South Youth League opened a swadeshi co-operative store which only sold local products. Terence de Zylva, one of the most active members of the Youth movement, declared that as Ceylon was "held in bondage by military force and repression," the only weapon the Ceylonese could use was the boycott of foreign goods and the fostering of national industries. Another boycott sponsored by the Youth Leagues was that against the King's birthday celebrations, on the ground that such occasions fostered a "lamentable form of slave mentality" and were bound to be regarded as a "willing acquiesence to be governed and controlled by Great Britain."[14]

13. *The Morning Leader*, 18 May and 29 Dec. 1931.
14. *The Searchlight*, 13 February 1932; and *The Morning Leader*, 26 May 1931.

The Youth Leagues were also critical of the country's education system, which Terence De Zylva (the founder of Kolonnawa Vidyalaya) claimed was "in the hands of Empire builders who had used it as a political weapon." At the Youth Congress sessions in 1931, C. C. Sabaratnam proposed and de Zylva seconded a resolution that the existing system of education was injurious to Ceylon's "political, cultural and economic well being" and urged that a national system of education in swabasha be implemented.[15]

It can thus be seen how, in the absence of a broad nationalist movement led by the bourgeoisie, Youth League radicals stood in the forefront of the nationalist movement during this period.

Economic Issues and Socialism

In addressing the Youth Congress in 1931, Nehru had emphasised the inadequacy of nationalism alone without an understanding of the working of capitalism. At that time the left-wing in the Indian National Congress believed that political independence would be of little value without radical social changes; Nehru advised the Youth League members to consider how national freedom would affect the masses in the country and urged them to try and understand the nature of imperialism and capitalism. "How will you free the men, women and children of Ceylon? Freedom is worth striving for, but you must see how it affects the bottom dog in your country." At the same meeting, Kamaladevi Chattopadyaya spoke of Gandhi's campaign of civil disobedience in 1930, and said that it was "not only imperialist violence that Gandhi was up against, but also the violence of the capitalists who exploited the poor."[16]

As a result of the trade depression and the prevailing high rates of unemployment, economic problems were frequently highlighted by the Youth League movement. For example in January 1932, Terrence de Zylva declared that the aim of Ceylon youth should include "freedom from .... the vulgar pride of wealth .... and monopoly of the necessaries of life by self-seeking capitalists," and he called upon the youth to liberate the country" from alien domination and economic exploitation."[17] In May 1932, the monthly journal *Young Ceylon*, published by the Youth League movement, declared that its aims were complete independence, economic stability and national solvency. In 1932, the Colombo South Youth League issued a pamphlet entitled *The Present Economic Crisis* which aimed at showing that political and economic freedom were "inextricably bound up with each other." This pamphlet referred to British economic interests in the country as "a constant drain of the country's wealth" and it

15. *The Morning Leader*, 24 December 1931.
16. *The Morning Leader*, 18 May 1931.
17. "Our Duty" by Terence de Zylva, *The Searchlight*, 27 January 1932.

condemned the system of *Imperial Preference* as "disastrous to the economic stability of the island."[18] The Youth Leagues called for a more equitable distribution of wealth, to be obtained through "the re-organization of tariffs, taxation and finance." It is significant that, in 1932, Socialism was not one of the slogans that was openly used, and the equal distribution of wealth was advocated through financial reform and not by means of a revolutionary change in the social order. But it must be noted that a few of the Youth League members in Ceylon (notably Terence de Zylva and Susan de Silva) had already shown interest in Socialist ideas.

However, by the latter half of 1932 and in 1933, there were significant changes in the politics of the Youth Leagues, when the Socialist students, who had studied abroad, returned to Ceylon and became leaders of the Youth League movement. For the first time in Ceylon, Communism and the experiences of the U.S.S.R. received favourable comment. In September 1932, Colvin R. de Silva, who had joined the Colombo South Youth League, wrote an article in *Young Ceylon* proclaiming Communism as the new ideology to be followed. In the same issue Robin Rutnam, a Youth League member who had studied in Canada, argued that the need for economic planning was "the most significant lesson the outside world [was] learning from the great social experiment in Russia," and he forecast that the youth of Ceylon had a great opportunity to create "a new social order."[19] The pages of the *Young Ceylon*, from the latter half of 1932 onwards, contained several references to Marx and Lenin. For example, the reviewer of a book by Lenin wrote: "No speeches delivered in recent times can have a greater interest than the speeches of the greatest moral force in the proletarian revolution, Lenin;" and a review of "Socialism and War" stated that the book provided "a glimpse into the alert, resourceful and clear mind of Lenin."[20]

In the years preceding the formation of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, the Youth League movement made its influence felt principally in four ways: first, the Youth Leagues, under new Socialist leadership, made the anti-Poppy Day campaign a platform for anti-imperialist propaganda against the British; second, during the malaria epidemic of 1934-35, the Socialists played an active part in the relief of distress; third, in 1933, they led a strike at a textile mill in Colombo and gained valuable experience in trade union agitation; and fourth, from 1931 to 1936, through their first representative in the State Council, the young Socialists entered the field of parliamentary politics.

18. Quoted in *Young Ceylon*, June 1932.
19. *Young Ceylon*, September 1932, "The Need for a Planned National Life" by Robin Rutnam.
20. *Young Ceylon*, September & October 1932.

The Suriya Mal Movement

One of the issues that brought the Youth Leagues to the forefront of nationalist political activity was the anti-Poppy Day campaign, which had its beginnings among a group of radical students in 1926, was carried on by the Ceylon Ex-Servicemen's Association and the Youth Leagues in 1931, and was given a distinct and militant anti-British appeal when the Colombo Central Youth League took over the movement in 1933.

Armistice day (Poppy Day) on November 11th (commemorating the end of the first World War) used to be observed in the 'twenties with a great deal of fervour by government officials and the British residents in Ceylon. On that day, funds were collected for ex-servicemen by the sale of poppies and there was a reaffirming of faith in the Empire by means of military parades, church services and banquets held with great pomp and ceremony. The jingoistic annual Poppy Day displays caused resentment among some of the young Ceylonese nationalists who were highly critical of Ceylon's contribution to the Poppy Fund which was one of the largest in the Empire.

In 1926, James Rutnam, complained in a letter to the press that though Ceylon was a poor country, vast sums of money, disproportionate to her revenue, were being sent out of the country in the form of Poppy Day collections and that only an insignificant portion of that money was employed for aid to Ceylonese ex-servicemen. A group of young Ceylonese (Harry Gunawardena, D. N. W. de Silva, Valentine Perera, C. Ponnambalam and James Rutnam) who called themselves "The Cosmopolitan Crew," organized a public meeting and demonstration to protest against Poppy Day in 1926. These young men were nationalists, some of whom had been associated with A. E. Goonesinha's labour activities, and were to become active members of the Youth Leagues.

In 1931, a more positive step against the Poppy Day collection was taken when the Ceylon Ex-Servicemen's Association whose president, Aelian Pereira, was also the president of the Youth Congress and an ex-serviceman himself, launched a rival fund called after a local flower, 'Suriya Mal', in order to collect money for Ceylonese ex-soldiers and for local charities. Pereira said that there were many Ceylonese servicemen who were disabled, destitute and in urgent need of help; "there is an idea" he wrote, "that it is dirty and mean to sell the *suriya* flower on armistice day;" but he explained that this particular day was chosen as it had special significance to all servicemen.[21] The Youth Leagues took up the Suriya Mal campaign with great enthusiasm and transformed the occasion into a demonstration of anti-British feeling.

21. *Times of Ceylon*, 10 November 1932.

The sale of the rival flower on Poppy Day, 1931, created a great interest in Colombo and other towns. There were brisk sales, especially in the working-class areas of Colombo where there were more *suriya* flowers than poppies, and it was reported that pedestrians in Colombo "showed preference for the Suriya Mal, but most cars had poppies." The leading Christian schools of Colombo refused to let the *suriya mal* sellers enter their premises, and some British business firms warned their employees against wearing a *suriya* flower to work.[22]

The Ceylon Ex-Servicemen's Association which had sponsored the Suriya Mal campaign was alarmed by the political character of the campaign and by the opposition that it aroused, and in 1932, the Association decided to discontinue the movement. This was the opportunity for the Socialists, and in 1933, the Colombo Central Youth League took over the Suriya Mal campaign and elected a Committee for this purpose whose president was Doreen Wickremasinghe, the principal of Ananda Balika Vidyalaya.[23] This committee included many of the Socialists who had returned to Ceylon from abroad and also the most radical members of the Youth Leagues. The movement also attracted many other nationalists including S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, who was in charge of the Suriya Mal funds, and Wilmot Perera, at whose school (Sri Palee in Horana) the Suriya Mal annual meetings were held. It should also be mentioned that several young persons were drawn into political activity through participation in the Suriya Mal movement. The money collected was used for the education of a child of a "depressed" community and for the publication of literature. The Ananda Balika principal's house became the headquarters of the movement and each year hundreds of yellow *suriya* flowers were made and sold by the school's enthusiastic staff, among them Helen de Alwis, Eva de Mel, Violet Gamage, Lilian Bandaranaike and Winifred Silva.

The Suriya Mal movement, which had originated as a campaign for ex-servicemen, dropped any reference to disabled Ceylonese soldiers and openly took on a political and anti-British character. This led to a great deal of anger and resentment on the part of the authorities and the British residents in Ceylon. The new *suriya mal* organisers were accused of a "lack of decent sensibility," and the campaign was called a "crude political move....utterly in bad taste."[24]

22. *The Ceylon Independent*, 11 November 1931, and *The Morning Leader*, 10 November 1931.
23. Doreen Wickremasinghe, née Young, was born in Cheshire and came from a family which had connections with the British Labour Party. She was a student at the London School of Economics from 1926 to 1929, and was the secretary of the Students Union. On graduating she worked as Krishna Menon's Secretary at the India League. In 1930 she came to Ceylon and taught in a Buddhist school.
24. Editorial in *Ceylon Independent*, 11 November 1933.

Several new political slogans were introduced into the Suriya Mal campaign by the Youth Leagues. In 1933, Leslie Goonewardena wrote, "We have yet to be shown that Britain fought for us during the war or that she has disinterestedly done anything for us in peace....the purchase of the Poppy in Ceylon is only too often an expression of blind admiration for the mighty British Empire." Terence de Zylva declared that the movement was "definitely anti-war" and that they should prevent money going out of the country "to help the British Empire to wage wars for the purpose of partitioning the world." For the first time the concept of socialism was used in the campaign when de Zylva ended an article on "Suriya or Poppy" which he wrote in 1932 with an appeal to "Unite in this battle to establish a Socialist, Democratic Ceylon."[25]

Trade Union Activity

In the years before the founding of the L.S.S.P., the Youth Leaguers gained experience of trade union agitation by taking over the leadership of a strike at the Wellawatte Spinning and Weaving Mills in 1933. This was a turning point in the working-class history of Ceylon because the Labour Union led by A. E. Goonesinha, which had abandoned its radical policy after the onset of the depression, was effectively challenged in the trade union field by the militant elements of the Youth Leagues.

The Indian-owned Wellawatte Spinning and Weaving Mills, established in 1890, was the largest textile mill in Ceylon, employing 1,400 skilled and semi-skilled workers. In 1923, 1926 and 1929, there had been strikes at the mills under Goonesinha's leadership. In February, 1933, as a result of the economic depression and the increased competition of Japanese textiles in the market, the management announced a reduction in wages. This led to a strike of the entire labour force, instigated, according to the management, by "veteran ringleaders" among the workers. The strikers sent a petition to the Minister of Labour and appealed to Goonesinha to intervene on their behalf. To the surprise of the workers, Goonesinha advised them to return to work on the grounds that striking without giving the required notice was a breach of the collective agreement between the union and the Employers Federation, and also because the Labour Union membership of the majority of the strikers had lapsed.

The strikers then appealed for support to a lawyer, H. Sri Nissanka (a Youth League member) who lived opposite the Mills; he advised them to put their case to Colvin R. de Silva, who had recently returned from Britain. De Silva and other members of the Colombo South League took up the question, and on February 23rd, at a mass meeting of the workers, the Wellawatte Workers' Union was formed with de Silva as president and

25. See *Young Ceylon*, October 1933 for Leslie Goonewardena's article; and *The Searchlight*, 18 October 1933 for the article by Terence de Zylva.

two active Youth League members, Vernon Gunasekera and J. W. Senanayake, as secretaries. Philip Gunawardena, N. M. Perera, S. A. Wickremasinghe, Robert Gunawardena, Susan de Silva and several militant workers, including Appuhamy, Kuttan and Ramiah, helped in organizing the strikers, spoke at mass meetings, collected funds and distributed relief.

During the strike, which lasted two months, A. E. Goonesinha's aim was to prevent recognition of the new union by either employers or government. The manager of the mills refused to open negotiations with the newly formed Wellawatte Workers' Union, and said that he was prepared to accept only Goonesinha as the accredited representative of the workers. Goonesinha denounced the Youth League as a political organization which was misleading the workers for the "sinister purpose" of disrupting organized labour. In tolerating the "scandalous interference" of the Youth League in the strike, Goonesinha said that the Controller of Labour was "encouraging anarchism." The new union leaders, according to Goonesinha, had "imbibed fantastic ideas from Russia and America" and were seeking to introduce "aggressive methods into the life of the labourers in Ceylon."[26]

The strike at the Mills was aggravated by the introduction of communal issues into the dispute. Because of the composition of the workers at these mills—around two/third's Malayali and one/third Sinhalese—Goonesinha was able to stir up anti-Malayali feeling at a time when communal tensions were strong in Colombo due to the extensive unemployment during the depression. The secretary of the new union condemned "the mischievous, irresponsible activities of Mr. Goonesinha who through a campaign of vilification, insult and abuse of a highly inflammatory character, is striving to raise interracial animosity in this dispute." The attempt by Goonesinha to introduce Sinhalese blacklegs into the mills increased the tension. Harbour workers were sent in lorries to the mills by Goonesinha, who claimed that the purpose was to afford protection to the strikers who were willing to go back to work. The police stated that Goonesinha, "by deliberately importing rowdies," had provoked clashes between Malayalis and Sinhalese, and had brought about a "most serious state of affairs."[27]

In view of the increase of communal tension, the Minister of Labour informed the Governor that "the disturbances which [had] already arisen and the risks of racial clashes [were] too substantial to be set aside."[28] The government therefore decided to intervene and appointed a commission for the settlement of the dispute under the Industrial Disputes Ordinance of 1931.

26. Ceylon Labour Department, File T. 15, letter of 15 March 1933; and *CDN*, 2 May 1933, and 22 March 1933, Letter to the Editor.
27. Ceylon Labour Department, File T. 6, Police Report, 21 March 1933.
28. Ceylon Labour Department, File T. 15, Letter of 23 March 1933.

This was the first occasion when the provisions of the Ordinance were used in the conciliation of a trade dispute. The commission in its report reprimanded the workers for striking without first trying to negotiate with the management, and Goonesinha's efforts to persuade the men to return to work were described as reasonable. The commission agreed that the management of the Wellawatte Mills needed financial relief and that "wages should make a contribution of some substance towards this relief," but they recommended a maximum reduction of wages by 12%, which would be covered by the fall in the cost of living during the depression. The demand for a reduction in the hours of work from 60 to 54 hours a week was turned down as impracticable, as mills in India were also working a 60 hour week. The commission also stated that the financial difficulties of the time made it impossible for them to recommend the other improved amenities that the workers demanded.[29]

The report was welcomed by Goonesinha and a meeting of the Ceylon Labour Union was organised to celebrate the occasion, at which Goonesinha gave an account of all the concessions he had obtained for the workers in the past years. In contrast, Colvin R. de Silva, the president of the Wellawatte Workers' Union, said that, unlike Goonesinha, the workers did not greet the report with a "hallelujah chorus" as it was neither "fair, just, nor reasonable." On the question of wages he said, "We cannot accept the principle that wages should invariably vary with the cost of living. This is based on the utterly unwarrantable assumption that the prevailing wage rates are just."[30]

The government was concerned at the appearance of a new militant trade union to challenge Goonesinha's Labour Union, which by this date had become acceptable to both the government and the employers. The Controller of Labour reported that the manager of the Mills was "in a very embarrassing position.... for we do not seem to be dealing with a trade union, but a political body."[31]

The Malaria Epidemic of 1934-35

In common with the Ceylonese labour leaders of previous decades, the young radicals of the 'thirties were also involved in relief activity among the masses which brought them into direct contact with the problems of poverty and disease. The malaria epidemic of 1934-35 came after two seasons of severe drought and failure of crops, and according to an official report "found ready victims among a population already debilitated by lack of food owing to the economic depression."[32] The official estimate was that in the area of Ceylon affected by the epidemic, with a

29. *Ibid.*, Report of the Commission, 23 April 1933.
30. *CDN*, 25 May 1933.
31. File T. 15, *op. cit.*, Letter of 14 March 1933.
32. *Sessional Paper* 5 *of* 1936, p. 25, Report of F. C. Gimson, Commissioner of Relief.

population of 3 million (out of the island's total of 5½ million), there were 1.5 million cases of malaria by April 1935, and over 100,000 deaths between September 1934 and December 1935.

The severity of the epidemic caused conditions of famine in some districts of Ceylon, and government and private organisations made attempts to organize relief of distress in the worst stricken areas. The government appointed a Commissioner for Relief, voted half a million rupees to deal with the epidemic, and opened a Malaria Relief Fund to which a lakh was subscribed. The money was used for distributing food, clothing and medicine, and organizing relief work. Volunteers from various organizations helped in collecting supplies and making house-to-house visits distributing medicine and food.

In the Kegalle district the Suriya Mal movement was very active in providing relief. A dispensary was opened and Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe, Colvin R. de Silva, Harry, Philip and Robert Gunawardena, N. M. Perera, Robin Rutnam, Dr. Mary Rutnam, Selina Pieris and some teachers of Ananda Balika, worked in the area for many months. The house of Boralugoda Ralahamy (Philip Gunawardena's father) was the centre for the *suriya mal* workers in that area. The Commissioner of Relief in his report stated that "intelligent and systematic voluntary workers were the most efficient" and made mention of "the admirable service" rendered by the *suriya mal* workers.[33]

The devastation caused by the malaria epidemic was blamed by the Youth League and the *suriya mal* activists on the apathy of the administration. The epidemic, which was referred to as one of Ceylon's "greatest national disasters," was held to be "the direct result of the callousness and indifference of the State." The Legislature was accused of a total neglect of the peasantry during the critical years of depression, drought and epidemic, and the Ceylon National Congress, was criticised for failing to put forward a policy "for the regeneration of the villages and the improvement of the peasantry." The leader of the State Council, D. B. Jayatilaka, who was reported to have said that the malaria epidemic was due to the *karma* of the people, came under fierce attack by the members of the Youth Leagues. He was accused of avoiding "the political implications of the malaria epidemic" and of using the taxpayers money to celebrate the Royal Jubilee in 1935, "while the country was being reduced to a graveyard."[34] Colvin R. de Silva alleged that while thousands were dying of hunger and malaria, "the so-called national leaders had been entertaining Royal Dukes, celebrating Royal jubilees, hunting for knight-

33. *Ibid;* The Report of the Assistant Government Agent, Kegalle also referred to "the most useful work of the Suriya Mal Society" in Kegalle and especially to one of its members, Robin Rutnam, who made excellent arrangements for the distribution of relief . . . and performed very useful service in a locality which was particularly badly stricken," quoted in *ibid.*, p. 17.

34. *Young Ceylon*, December 1934, article on "The Epidemic;" and "Malaria and Politics" by Vernon Gunasekera, *Young Ceylon*, June 1934.

hoods, relieving the rich of their responsibility by repealing estate duty, and lightening the taxes paid by foreign exploiters."[35] The Ceylon Labour Party was blamed for failing in its "special responsibility" of rousing public opinion "to a consciousness of the needs of the poor and working classes." The enthusiasm of the party, it was stated, had been exhausted by "the craze for political heroics" and it was "more concerned with exploiting the labourer than improving his condition."[36]

The Youth League journal *Young Ceylon* described the work of the Suriya Mal movement during the epidemic as a remarkable effort by educated young men and women who had given a new meaning to the idea of relief.[37] In a report made by the Suriya Mal Malaria Relief Committee, the political importance of the work was held to be more significant than the actual relief given. The report stated that "the medical and material aid we rendered was nothing compared to the moral value of the contact" between peasants and the *suriya mal* workers:

> Not until now did we really begin to understand and appreciate the full implications of a crude feudalism, and the nature and extent of the oppression, misery, want and moral degradation that could prevail within such a system... our sympathetic treatment of the villager as our equal was a revelation to him, accustomed as he was to be bossed, abused, and treated like a dog by his so-called social superiors.[38]

The Youth League members, who launched the attack on the Ceylon National Congress and the Ceylon Labour Party for their failure to tackle the urgent problems of economic and social reform, became more than ever aware of the need in the country for a political party with a radical, nationalist programme.

Agitation in the State Council

In the years preceding the formation of the L.S.S.P., the Youth Leaguers also had their first experience of parliamentary politics. Although a section of the movement had been against contesting the elections and boycotted the elections (especially in Jaffna), another group believed that the State Council would be a valuable forum for agitation and propaganda. S. A. Wickremasinghe, who had been active in the Suriya Mal campaign, malaria relief work and in the Wellawatte strike, was elected in the 1931 elections for Morawaka. From 1931 to 1936 Wickremasinghe kept up a vigorous attack in the State Council on the British colonial government and on the political and economic policies of the Ceylonese Board of Ministers, and used every occasion to highlight the problems facing the masses during these years of economic depression. He criticised the

35. *Ceylon Independent*, 23 December 1935.
36. *Young Ceylon*, December 1934.
37. *Young Ceylon*, September 1935.
38. *ibid.*

medical and social service facilities, advocated minimum wages, and made an important dissenting report on the Commission on child servants. He opposed wasteful expenditure on Royal visits and on the occasion of the King's Jubilee in 1935, moved an amendment to the message of loyalty which stated: "The condition of the masses has not improved one bit within the 25 years of your Majesty's reign... they are subjected to disabilities, harsh legislation and exploitation... and the fruits of this negligence and criminal indifference of Your Majesty's advisers has been garnered in the shape of poverty, disease and starvation."[39] During the malaria epidemic, Wickremasinghe constantly exposed the inadequacy of the relief services and claimed that the lesson of the epidemic was "the need for political emancipation."[40]

In the State Council, Wickremasinghe also led the campaign of opposition to the Trade Union Act of 1935. The Ceylon Government had tried to pass repressive legislation to control trade unions in 1929; but this had been rejected by Lord Passfield (Sidney Webb), the Secretary of State for the Colonies in the 1929 Labour government, and only a non-controversial ordinance to govern trade disputes was passed in 1931. By 1935, however, when Ceylon was beginning to recover from the after effects of the depression and renewed labour activity was therefore a possibility, the first ordinance to regulate trade unions was adopted by the legislature.

The main provisions of the Trade Union Ordinance of 1935 were the compulsory registration of all trade unions, regulations that contributions by members with respect to the political fund of a trade union could not be deducted unless specifically made by each member, and provision that not more than half the officials of a trade union could be "outsiders," i.e. persons not employed in the industry. The Youth Leagues claimed that by this ordinance the government was trying to crush the trade union movement. In the State Council, as a member of the standing committee to discuss the ordinance, S. A. Wickremasinghe wrote a dissenting rider which stated:

> The Bill is designed to restrict the legitimate activities of workers to form trade unions, but does not provide any protection against victimisation by the employers... In a country where there is no legislation for insurance against unemployment, sickness, old age, maternity, accidents and any other form of social insurance, it is very unwise to introduce legislation to restrict the formation and activities of voluntary association.[41]

39. *CDN*, 8 May 1935.
40. *Hansard*, Debate of January 15, 1935, p. 34.
41. Labour Department, File T. 1., Part II.

The Formation of the L.S.S.P.

In the years before 1935, the Youth Leagues had agitated on several fronts. The nationalist agitation of the Youth Leagues and the Suriya Mal movement were an expression of hostility to British rule. The relief work done during the malaria campaign served to highlight the poverty of the rural masses and the feudal oppression that existed in the villages. During the severe economic depression, when A. E. Goonesinha had abandoned militant trade unionism, the Youth Leagues led the struggle for trade union rights and workers' demands. In addition they used the State Council as a platform from which all these political and economic problems could be publicised.

The need for a separate political party to carry on political and trade union agitation was felt, and in December 1935, the most active members of the Youth Leagues founded the Lanka Sama Samaja Party. The new party issued a manifesto which was intended to be a broad programme of twenty two "immediate demands for day to day agitation and struggle." The manifesto claimed that the aims of the party were the attainment of national independence, the abolition of social and economic inequality and oppression arising from differences of class, caste, race, creed or sex, and the socialization of the means of production, distribution and exchange. However, specific measures involving socialization were not included among the twenty two demands, which enumerated the legislative measures needed to ameliorate economic and social conditions. On behalf of urban workers, the manifesto called for minimum wages, unemployment insurance and relief, an eight-hour day, factory legislation, slum clearance, cheaper housing and the abolition of compulsory registration for trade unions. Relief for the peasantry was urged in the form of free pasture lands, seed paddy free of interest, and the abolition of irrigation rates and forest laws relating to the removal of brushwood. In the interests of the young, demands were made for free school books, free meals, free milk and the abolition of child labour. On economic questions the manifesto advocated higher income tax, estate duty, the abolition of Imperial preference on goods from countries in the Empire, the abolition of the quota on cheap goods from Japan and the abolition of indirect taxation which affected goods consumed by the poor. The manifesto also urged the use of the Sinhala and Tamil languages in the lower courts, police stations and government departments.[42]

This was a programme of minimum demands intended to popularise the new party among wide sections of the population. None of the demands called for revolutionary change as the party at its formation did not intend to establish itself as a Marxist party, although an inner group

42. *Young Ceylon*, February 1936.

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