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NAINI TAL

FOR over twenty years John Kotelawala worked towards the goal of his country's independence. During this time he was in constant and intimate touch with every phase of the old colonialism. He saw its evils and also its merits. Before becoming Prime Minister he was Minister of Communications and Works, and Senior Vice-President of the United National Party in the government of his friend and colleague, D. S. Senanayake, first Prime Minister of Ceylon.

On February 4, 1948, Ceylon achieved Dominion status. Already she was the first Asian country to be granted full adult suffrage.

As Prime Minister, Sir John has been a good deal in the public eye. In world politics he hit the headlines with his idea for arranging the meeting between South-East Asian Prime Ministers. This resulted in the Colombo Conference. Equally arresting was his forthright statement at the Bandung Conference, where he drew attention to the fact that the satellite countries such as Hungary, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia, were just as much colonies as any of the colonial territories in Africa or Asia. To the English housewife he is the man who took their side in the fight against rising tea prices.

Sir John has always been an uncompromising opponent of communism. "If the devil wanted to fight communism, I would be on his side," he declared in one of his speeches. He has always maintained that the vacuum left in Asia by the withdrawal of western colonialism must be filled by democratic Asian nationalism, and not by communist expansion. He is also a great believer in informal meetings between the heads of governments, and he has been indefatigable in putting this belief into practice. Few can have made more personal contacts within so short a space of time.

Sir John has been described as being as rugged as the graphite that gave him his wealth; a man of action, with supreme belief in himself; notable for his courage, his ruthless tongue, and his lively sense of humour. He completed his education at Cambridge University, and even as a young man had seen more of Western culture than most of his countrymen. In addition to his political interests, he is an all-round sportsman.

The purpose of this book is serious, but the many intriguing and entertaining moments of a strenuous public life have not been forgotten.

An Asian Prime Minister's Story

PORTRAIT OF THE AUTHOR

Sir John Kotelawala C.H. K.B.E.

AN ASIAN PRIME MINISTER'S STORY

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To the memory
of my Mother
to whom I owe so much

Note

The net proceeds to the author from the sale of this book will be utilized for the realization during his lifetime of one of his cherished objects—viz., the creation of a Trust Fund to finance the maintenance of a Home for Orphans to be run on the lines of the famous Dr Barnardo's Home for Children. The Home will be established in his present residence at Kandawala, Kotelawalapura, and the entire plantation, farm, and housing estate which form part of this property will be gifted to the Trust for the maintenance of the Home.

Preface

My chief aim in writing this book is to explain and justify the strong stand I took at the Bandung Conference of Asian and African leaders against colonialism in any form. I feel that I am in a peculiarly favourable position for judging what foreign domination, at its worst and at its best, means for subject peoples.

During the greater part of twenty-five years of public life in Ceylon I was in constant and intimate touch with every phase of the old colonialism. I knew all its evils. I could also correctly assess and frankly admit its benefits, when it was not utterly undemocratic or completely indifferent to the people's welfare.

I was in the thick of my country's peaceful struggle to release itself altogether from the gradually relaxing grip of imperialism, and its plea to be given an opportunity to prove its fitness for complete self-government.

It was in Ceylon that Asians were first granted adult suffrage. My active participation in bitterly fought elections showed me exactly how they exercised this right, and to what extent they were tempted to abuse it. I could see how election candidates came up against various factors irrelevant to the issues involved, or to their personal merits. I came to know how much tact, patience, knowledge of human nature, and sympathetic understanding of the limitations of the illiterate masses were needed to educate them in the practice of democracy.

The preservation of peace, freedom, and democracy is a major problem confronting world statesmen to-day. To me freedom does not mean merely the end of foreign domina-

tion. It means the freedom of the mind and the spirit. I believe that the first defence against the forces that would destroy this freedom must be an economic defence. Our primary task in Asia is to improve the living-conditions of our people, many millions of whom live on the margin of hunger.

Now that events have conspired to elevate me to the leadership of my country, and helped me to bring Ceylon and the rest of Asia into the centre of the international picture, I feel the world would like to know more about the significance of this small country's political development. I am particularly anxious to make it perfectly clear that the colonialism from which we have progressively escaped was in no sense worse than the new colonialism which has emerged in the form of aggressive and subversive Communist expansion.

The old colonialism had at least the redeeming virtue of a democratic basis. The new colonialism is nakedly totalitarian in intention and effect. It extinguishes every spark of democratic freedom, and restricts many of the fundamental rights of man. I see no reason why this new colonialism should not be uncompromisingly and fearlessly condemned.

The approach of the twenty-fifth anniversary of my entry into active politics in Ceylon has tempted me to widen the scope of this book by making it an experiment in frank speaking. Many intriguing episodes and the lighter-side interludes of a strenuous public life seem to me too good to be left unrecorded. I hope they will at least entice the reader into a deeper understanding of the serious purpose of this book.

I aim at being fair as well as frank in this record of my memories. It is not my intention to embarrass friends or hurt foes. If my candour has been restrained by kindness, it is because I believe in gaining the goodwill of all. I have forgotten nothing, but I can forgive everything. And I hope I have learned a lot.

J.L.K.

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IN THE TEXT

I

Early Days

One of my earliest memories is of a small boy whose widowed mother could not afford to buy him a pair of shoes to send him to one of the leading schools in Colombo. Surprisingly enough, that boy was myself. Today I am regarded as a very rich man; and the popular impression is that my wealth made it easy for me from the very start to make smooth progress on the road that ended with the Premiership. But I was not born rich; and my family's circumstances in my boyhood handicapped me badly.

The school chosen for me was the Royal College. My mother used to give me ten cents every morning to pay my tram fare. I saved this by going to the junction now known as Lipton's Circus and waiting for the carriage that carried a lawyer to the courts at Hultsdorp. Jumping on to a perch at the back of the seat, unnoticed, I waited for the first warning cry from a street urchin or some other passer-by that I was stealing a ride. I could then expect the lash of the driver's whip. It was time to protect my face by covering it with my books. I wonder if the lawyer, who later became the Supreme Court Judge, Sir Stewart Schneider, ever dreamt that a future Prime Minister was up to pranks behind him.

But I was happy at the Royal College, where the other boys found in me a high-spirited companion easily led into fights, and good at games, even if I was nowhere near the top of my class in studies. No teacher saw a brilliant career before me.

I had to leave school in 1915, before I could captain the cricket eleven, as I hoped to, because I was chosen as the

most suitable person for smuggling food and comforts into the prison where leaders of the temperance movement, including F. R. and D. S. Senanayake, were detained during the 1915 riots, when the Government panicked and saw a rebel in every prominent social worker.

Strokes of good fortune and the astute use of opportunities had changed my family's fortunes by now. My mother, to whom I owe so much, always gave sound advice to those who sought it. She feared that increasing wealth might tempt us to lead idle, extravagant lives, and that future generations of Kotelawalas would be impoverished.

When the large sum of three million rupees was offered by a foreign investor for our plumbago mines she said that so valuable an asset should be retained by the family, and could be developed with much greater profit if we did not yield to the temptation of selling it at that price. She was certainly right.

My father had gone to Australia in his youth, but he found there was no opening for him there, and returned to join the Ceylon Police Force. He rose to the post of Inspector for the Island. I was only a boy of eleven when his life came to a tragic end, by his own hand, when he was convinced that cruel circumstances and implacable foes were conspiring to convict him of having instigated the murder of a kinsman. The fact that he was a popular hero was amply demonstrated at his funeral.

One characteristic of my father was his unrestrained impulsiveness. He had the habit of acting first and thinking afterwards. When I am accused of doing the same I think it must be because I am my father's son.

An indelible impression I have of John Kotelawala the First, as some people may call my father to-day, is of his astounding conduct at a wedding. He was with my mother, my grandmother, and me at the bride's house, awaiting the arrival of the bridegroom's party. The bride was one of my aunts. I was then a boy of six, and stood at his knee, eagerly looking forward to the festivities to come.

The bridegroom arrived in the uniform of an officer of the Ceylon Light Infantry. He belonged to one of the most

influential Sinhalese[1] families of the time, and in his entourage were men who mattered.

As soon as the party reached the threshold of the house my father, for a reason unknown to anyone present, rose from his seat, thrust me aside, went up to the bridegroom, and gave him a thundering slap. The amazed officer's helmet fell off, and his other military accoutrements were seriously disturbed. What a reception from the family with whom his fortunes were going to be wedded!

My grandmother thrust herself between her turbulent son-in-law and the humiliated bridegroom, whom she did her best to pacify. Peace was restored, and the wedding took place. But the foundation was then laid for a bitter family feud that went on right up to the time of my father's tragic death and continued later, even in public life. That was a way we had among our people in those days, when a petty private quarrel could lead to a persistent vendetta.

My father was a man of great physical strength. He once accepted the challenge of a visiting strong man and wrestler from India named Mabul Khan, and beat him soundly. In those days if any Ceylonese had a giant's strength and knew how to use it he was called a "Mabul Khan." For a Ceylonese to get the better of such a champion was an occasion for national rejoicing. John Kotelawala actually did it. He became a proud people's idol.

What must have been the first strike in Ceylon was one started by carters in Colombo. A regulation was introduced by which these drivers of bullock carts were forbidden to sit on the pole of the cart and compelled to walk by the side of their bulls. When they were seated they could not get their carts out of the way quickly enough to please the lordly Sahibs who thought the roads belonged only to them in those colonial days.

The men went on strike as a protest, and appealed to my father for sympathy. He gave it to them readily, and undertook to feed them all and their bulls while the strike lasted.

[1] In Ceylon there are two main races, originating in early times. They are the Sinhalese and the Tamils. They and the members of other races native to Ceylon are now generally referred to as "the Ceylonese" to denote a political entity.

I have a vivid picture in my mind of the garden of our home being crowded with carters, their families, and their bulls. How different from the strikes of to-day, when workers out on strike often have to fend for themselves, while their leaders go to dances and have a good time generally. In the end a compromise was reached. The strike was settled, and my father became a hero of the working classes.

My father was one of the earliest temperance workers in Ceylon, and he regarded this as part of the nation-building activities in which he and a few other patriots were engaged. 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.

My father was one of those who struck the first open blows against colonialism in the days when white men in Ceylon thought they were lords of creation before whom the natives should cringe. And the blows came from hard fists with a terrific punch behind them, and the full force of patriotic pride.

Without a father to guide me in my formative years, I looked to my mother alone for help and advice in every difficulty. Her strength of character and sagacity were great influences in shaping my career. She could understand everything, and forgive much. It is from her that I have learned lessons in tolerance, and the importance of tackling every difficult situation with courage and determination. Hers was an indomitable spirit. Her exemplary life as a Christian and ardent social worker taught me a sense of values, and inspired me with a profound respect for religious principles, regardless of the creeds we embraced. A Buddhist by birth, my mother sought the solace of another faith in the early days of her widowhood, and became a more devout Christian than some of the friends who helped to convert her. But she did not forget her obligations to the religion of her family, and Buddhist institutions received some of the benefits of her benevolence.

The man who had most to do with moulding my character

THE AUTHOR (ON WHITE PONY) PLAYING POLO FOR A CEYLONESE TEAM AGAINST A BRITISH ONE

RELAXING ON THE BEACH AT MOUNT LAVINIA

THE AUTHOR AS A STATE COUNCILLOR IN 1936,
WEARING TRADITIONAL KANDYAN DRESS

and influencing me for good in my youth was F. R. Senanayake, who had married my mother's sister, and managed our family's estates. He became one of Ceylon's most respected patriots in his day. His memory is still honoured every year in Ceylon.

I remember an incident which illustrates his high principles and keen sense of fairness. His brother D. S. and I had been discussing a case in which the superintendent of one of our estates was to stand his trial for selling tea produced on the estate and misappropriating the proceeds. A little later I was passing F. R. Senanayake's house, when I was surprised to see the accused superintendent leaving it. I immediately visited F. R. myself, and asked him why he had entertained the man who had cheated us. His reply surprised me. He said he had given the man enough money to retain one of the best lawyers of the time to defend him. He thought it only fair to do that for him. The superintendent was convicted, and given a year's imprisonment. When he came out of gaol F. R. insisted on re-employing him, because he felt the man had paid the full penalty for his crime.

D. S. Senanayake was paid a salary of 400 rupees (Rs. 400) a month and myself Rs.100, for looking after the estates of my mother and my aunt—his brother's wife, Mrs F. R. Senanayake. The future Prime Minister Senanayake's first entry into active politics was in 1924, when he was elected uncontested as Member for Negombo in the Legislative Council. A rugged character, more a plain plumbago miner than an astute politician, he found it quite a problem to make his first speech in Council. The subject was rubber-restriction. His brother F. R. wrote the speech for him, and I was present at the rehearsal. When I went to Council to hear him deliver it, I'm sure that my heart beat faster than his. In those days the President of the Council was Governor Manning, a stern old soldier, who strictly enforced the rule that no speeches should be read.

D. S. Senanayake had memorized most of his speech, although he did not quite understand what it all meant. Anyway, he kept the typescript in front of him for the purpose of glancing at it when his memory failed him. We had worked

an American joke into the speech And when he came to this point the breakdown I dreaded occurred. One of the sheets of typescript had fallen to the floor, and all D. S. could say was: "This reminds me of the American joke—er—joke——" He could get no further, and flopped back into his seat.

When he came out of the Council Chamber he told me he would never again try to memorize a speech. He would either read it out or make one of his own. Later in his career he became one of our ablest parliamentary debaters, in spite of his too frequent use of such explanatory phrases as "The thing is this," and "Actually, as a matter of fact."

F. R. Senanayake and others interested in me thought that I should be compensated for the interruption of my school career by being given an opportunity of acquiring some 'polish' and experience abroad. They suggested a trip to Australia; but I was not interested. I much preferred to go to Europe. This was a hazardous adventure in war-time, with German submarines sinking so many ships. I needed a companion, and found one in a school-mate who had shone at cricket, and who was now in his brother's firm of brokers.

We managed to get passages on a French ship, and felt like two orphans of the storm on board, until some one who could speak English befriended us. He was a British business-man from Singapore, and soon began to take a fatherly interest in the two boys from Ceylon. We were British subjects, and he felt it was his duty to protect and help us.

As we were nearing Marseilles we ran into danger. A submarine attack was feared, and we stood on the deck wearing our life-belts, expecting the ship to be torpedoed at any moment, and hoping we should be rescued. It was my first taste of war. I am no coward; but I was young, and the thought of losing my life so early without doing anything worth while depressed me. We pursued our zigzag course to Marseilles, and the passengers got off the ship in a frantic hurry. Here we were up against another difficulty. We found it was almost impossible to travel through France by train and get across to England when the Germans were so near Paris.

Our friend from Singapore took us to the British Consul, and did his best to see us through. Ultimately we reached Paris, where we stayed until we finally got across the Channel to London, where our friend chose a temperance hotel as the best resort for the two youngsters from the East on their first trip to the great city.

Within a few days we experienced our first air-raid. A Zeppelin flew over London, and an attacking British plane dived straight at it and soon shot it down with machine-gun fire. So this was war, brought right to our door-step, and we were thrilled to be in the thick of it. The pilot of the British plane, Leefe Robinson, was awarded the V.C. for gallantry. This remained in my mind ever afterwards, and I resolved that I would one day fight for my country as Robinson did for his.

One of the Ceylonese who helped and advised me in London was E. W. Perera, a great patriot and fighter, who was there to make representation to the Secretary of State for the Colonies against the grave injustices done to his people during a dark period of terror and martial law in Ceylon that followed the riots of 1915. He was a confirmed bachelor, but he tried to be a father to the Ceylonese students in London. One thing he cautioned us against was the danger of having our pockets picked in Tube stations. He was once telling us that we should always be careful when we wore such things as tie-pins to see that they were firmly fastened and could not be easily snatched by thieves. As he was doing so he looked for his own tie-pin, and found that it had been stolen. He insisted on speaking to us only in Sinhalese, though his vocabulary in his own language seemed to be sadly limited when it came to describing the things he saw in London.

From London I went to Christ's College, Cambridge, to take a course in agriculture. My keen interest in sport, and the fact that I had enough money to spend freely, made me very popular at the University.

I spent five years in Europe, and returned with no violent prejudices against foreigners, but with a renewed zest for living well and working hard.

It was on one of my visits to France that an incident

occurred which led me to make up my mind to take to politics, and fight against the colour-bar, among other evils. I was in the company of a Frenchwoman, who asked me for a cigarette. I handed her my gold cigarette-case, but it happened to be empty. Then a burly American came up to us and thrust his own cigarette-case towards the lady, asking Madame to help herself. She politely refused. He persisted in his offer, and remarked, "Black man's cigarette not good; white man's cigarette very good."

I asked him what he meant by that, and told him that this was not his country or mine; we were on neutral ground, and I would show him that a black man's blow was very good indeed. I then gave him a sock on the jaw and sent him sprawling.

An excited crowd of French people rushed towards us, and there was a good deal of confusion. Everybody's sympathy seemed to be with me, since I could speak French and the American spoke only English. Eventually we were taken before a police commissioner, and I explained that I hit the man because he insulted me. We were both advised that if we wanted to fight we should do so in our own countries, and not in France.

My introduction to Army life began through my passion for riding horses. As a boy of fifteen I used to take a horse from our stables at a very early hour in the morning, without anybody's knowledge, and ride it bare-back round Victoria Park to my heart's content. One day I met D. C. Senanayake, eldest brother of the great D. S., also out riding at dawn, as a cure for his insomnia. The information inevitably reached my mother, and there were no more stolen rides for me.

But my reputation as a skilful and intrepid young horseman spread, and when a mounted section of the Town Guard was formed one of its officers suggested that my services should be enlisted to break horses in for members of that unit. I was too young to be a Town Guard, but I was delighted to help them in this way.

After the experience of the 1915 riots I had a strong desire to be a soldier myself, and to see a Ceylon Army come into being some day, capable of defending our own country. I

felt my ambition was nearer realization when I became a lieutenant in the Ceylon Light Infantry in 1922.

Sport and military training did as much for me as for any other man in developing the team spirit and discipline, the ability to face triumph and disaster with equanimity, which are so useful in fitting one for public life. I wish all our politicians could be men who excelled at games in their youth, even if they had no experience of Army life. I was good at cricket and football at school, and later took to tennis, and developed a passion for polo. It was the thrill of playing the game well and the enjoyment of vigorous exercise that attracted me most. I also found that it helped me to tackle any job in hand with greater zest and concentration.

I must also record my association with the Sinhalese Sports Club, one of the leading clubs started to foster cricket, which belongs to the category of good things that colonialism introduced into our country. At club cricket we learned not only to play the game but to overcome sectional prejudice of caste and creed. Also, on the field, and afterwards when we were hosts or guests, we met representatives of the old colonialism as equals, and in that rôle they were indeed jolly good fellows.

There was one rather unfortunate feature in club life, owing its origin to the racially exclusive clubs established by the British residents in Ceylon. Other communities—Sinhalese, Tamils, Malays, Burghers (descendants of Dutch settlers)—set up their own cricket clubs. Colonialism, that brought us cricket, had also introduced this vicious communalism in sport.

One of my ambitions was to be a gentleman rider at the race meetings in Colombo. On one occasion I was riding one of my own horses in a race when two jockeys (both white men) deliberately interfered with my mount, and even threw me out of the saddle. When the race was over I went up to one of them and gave him a stinging blow across his face. Thereupon the secretary of the club (an Englishman) caught me by the throat and thrust me out of the room, threatening to warn me off the course.

When my mother heard about it she insisted on my giving

up racing as far as owning and riding horses were concerned. In later years I became a steward of the Ceylon Turf Club, but never owned horses.

My twenty-three years of Army life, and my experience in Ceylon's War Council, gave me the opportunity to meet big men who had done great deeds, and whose example inspired me with courage and confidence when I had to tackle any problem or difficulty. I also learned that in the Army twelve o'clock meant five to twelve and not half-past twelve. Unpunctuality is a notorious weakness of the Ceylonese, and I have always sought to correct it. It was once said of me in America that, for an Easterner, I was uncommonly punctual.

I was a captain in the Ceylon Light Infantry when I entered politics, and retired from the regiment as Colonel.

It may interest my good friend the Prime Minister of India to know that in my youth an admirer described me as a nationalist of the deepest dye, whom his friends and acquaintances called "Jawaharlal Nehru." A journalist wrote in 1931: "We are sure he will live up to that high expectation and before long become Ceylon's Nehru."

I had no such ambition then, and was more interested in being described at the same time as a "pukka" sportsman, an expert in boxing and a good hand at tennis; also as a rich young man who was in favour of income tax when contemporary men of substance were against it.

My first contacts with colonialism at its worst were when, as an agriculturist, land-owner, and business-man, I came up against the attitude of by no means effortless superiority adopted by the British planters towards Ceylonese of every class. They thought our country belonged to them, and was theirs alone to exploit, while the richer natives should be kept in their place and enjoy none of the privileges exclusively reserved for the ruling race.

Social status, sportsmanship, a university education, and physical prowess counted for nothing if you were a son of the soil. The fact that your family prospered was merely due to the tolerance of a kindly Government whose main job it was to civilize the natives and make use of them as coolies or clerks.

I am not saying that all the British officials, planters, and merchants adopted this arrogant attitude towards the people of the country. There were shining exceptions. But colonialism seemed to infect most of them with a tropical disease, of which the most familiar symptom was an ill-concealed contempt for brown, black, and yellow men as such. The ancient civilization of Ceylon meant nothing to them, unless they were scholars interested in history.

The laws of the land had to be framed primarily for the benefit of British interests. Good roads, hospitals, and schools were a necessity only in the estate areas, and were apparently a luxury to which villagers and peasants were not entitled. First-class railway carriages were not meant for third-class natives even if they were Kandyan chiefs or Tamil knights.

No doubt the British planters, with the aid of Indian labour and of a Government that looked after the interests of foreign investors very well, had done a lot for the development of industries that increased the country's revenue. But was that a good reason for neglecting the basic needs of the permanent population, for resenting the claims and thwarting the aspirations of Ceylonese, and for insulting and humiliating them in their own country?

The cruder eruptions of colonialism used to enrage me in my impetuous youth. I was always a fighter, who believed in hitting hard and well above the belt. It was therefore not surprising that I came to be involved in many escapades in which I invariably felt that my might was right, and that the other fellow's wrong thinking was his weakness. I would stand no nonsense or impudence from anyone. This, I think, was the reaction to colonialism among all young men of my time with any spirit and with resources to back them; but many of them were more cautious and prudent than I could ever be. It was my belief that I was thrice armed if I got my blow in first.

Two incidents that illustrate the slave mentality that colonialism breeds and the tendency in rural Ceylon to regard British officials as demigods linger vividly in my memory.

On one occasion I was present, as M.P. for the district, at a conference at which a Government Agent was explaining in a lordly way how he administered his province. Among those present were some Ratemahatmayas,[1] who were called upon to elaborate some of the points made by the Big White Chief. What astounded and infuriated me in the demeanour of these men was that every time they mentioned the G.A. in their well-rehearsed recitals they rose respectfully a few inches from their seats, as though they were naming a divine being. I stood it as long as I could, and then I interrupted by asking the G.A. why they did this. Had he given them the impression that he was a god?

He replied that it was the usual custom in his province. "If that is so," I exclaimed indignantly, "let the custom be stopped. I find it disgusting."

The second incident was at a luncheon party when an Acting Governor was the chief guest at a Ratemahatmaya's house. I was surprised to find Village Tribunal Presidents in their best clothes acting as waiters. So unaccustomed were they to this task that one of them nearly poured soup on the back of my neck. This arrangement was supposed to be a tribute to a distinguished representative of the ruling race, in whose august presence ordinary servants had to fade out of the picture. I was more amused than enraged by this aspect of subservience to colonialism.

But I was never blind to the fact that there was something good in this form of colonialism, in spite of all the evils it engendered and the fundamentally wrong bias it gave to the country's economy.

Its advantage was that the colonizing Power was essentially democratic. There was a sincere intention to grant the people some measure of self-government. Although this was done in painfully slow stages, it gradually gave us a voice in the administration of our own affairs. We were free to criticize the Government and all its works as strongly as we liked. Public opinion could thus be educated on important

[1] A Ratemahatmaya was a Government official in charge of an area. They were originally Kandyan Chiefs, and have now been replaced by Divisional Revenue Officers

issues, and the constant agitation for political reforms could become an irresistible clamour. Given national unity and wise leadership, we could make the best use of the democratic way of escape from the disabilities of the old colonialism. Can this be said of what I condemned at Bandung as the new colonialism? The answer is obvious. Totalitarian tyranny would be infinitely worse than the most ruthless imperialism known in the past.

2

My First Election

It was with the grant of the first substantial measure of self-government and manhood suffrage, under what is known as the Donoughmore Scheme in 1931, that I came into the political picture.

When I sought election to the Kurunegala seat in the first State Council of Ceylon in 1931 it was said in my favour that I was a young man eager to serve the country, and possessed of the various qualifications essential in a representative of the people. I was described as one who had a great and tolerant sympathy for all creeds and communities. It amuses me to-day to recall that I was also described as "one who would unhesitatingly sacrifice his salary for the benefit of the country." I could well afford to do so. The voters were told that I had built a school for nearly six hundred children, and had also helped to build a free school for spinning and weaving. I had not only maintained a tradition of disinterested service, but also sown the seeds of Swaraj[1] in Ceylon.

I had vast permanent interests in the district for which I sought election, and the interests of a larger number of people there, both in the planting and plumbago-mining areas, were linked with my own. One of my supporters described me as a young man of high ideals who had always fought a clean and straight fight throughout his career.

I promised to devote all my time towards obtaining an early revision of the Donoughmore Constitution, and the removal of its worst features, in order to make it an effective instrument of responsible government.

[1] Independence.

I reminded the people of the advice given by Mr Nehru when he visited Kurunegala, that the salvation of a country did not depend upon the dialectical skill with which legal arguments were maintained, but upon the solution of its economic problem.

My opponents had started a campaign of calumny and vilification against me in the form of widely distributed anonymous leaflets. In one of these leaflets it was said that I was a man who could not manage my own home. This was a reference to my brief and unhappy married life. It was also suggested that I had wasted my fortune and substance before I was thirty years old, and that I had spent the best part of my life in the dancing halls of Paris. This blunt advice was given to the voters: "Don't imagine that the State Council will suffer for want of fools." There were many other equally discouraging 'Don'ts' in this leaflet.

I must admit that it was one of my own supporters who first conceived the idea of issuing a series of 'Don'ts' to the electors. In one of these leaflets my opponent was described as a Rip van Winkle, a parish-pump politician, and a rustic proctor.

The most virulent personal abuse, within the law of libel, was indulged in on both sides. This is not surprising, considering that democracy in Ceylon was then in its infancy, and there were no clear-cut party issues on which elections could be fought, while the voters were, for the most part, ignorant and illiterate.

Caste prejudice was an element that nobody conducting an election campaign could ignore. At one extreme were those who regarded themselves as the cream of Sinhalese aristocracy, and at the other were what were known as the depressed classes, acutely conscious of their disabilities. It was a candidate's business to woo both, and many other gradations in the caste system in between. He had to exercise the greatest tact, and refrain from doing or saying anything that would outrage traditional customs. He had to pander to popular prejudices while pretending not to do so. It was an admirable training in diplomacy at a pretty low level.

One amusing incident is vivid in my memory. A Kandyan chieftain of the old feudalist school was discussing the election with me and some of my supporters. He was extremely pompous, and wherever and whenever he carried on a conversation he had with him a very youthful retainer who crouched beside him, and whose business it was to endorse everything his master said with an abjectly humble affirmative.

By way of contrast, I had with me at the same time an influential representative of a caste considered to be fairly low down in the scale. It was very important to keep the two apart. But, by an unfortunate accident, they found themselves sitting at the same table to enjoy my hospitality.

The haughty Kandyan asked the so-called low-caste man from where he came. Instead of saying he came from Colombo, where he lived and worked at that time, he named his ancestral village, Talampitiya, where the caste to which most of the inhabitants belonged was only too well known.

My Kandyan supporter was infuriated. What? Had he actually eaten the same food, at the same table, as a man so degradingly low in the social scale? It was positively disgusting, and he felt I, as host, had insulted him grossly. He stood up in a rage, rushed out to the garden, made terrible noises, and actually forced himself to vomit the food that had defiled him. It was a frightening predicament for me, who during that election time was wooing both sections; the one represented by the angry Chief, the other by the man whose presence had upset the vomiting guest. I hurried first to the garden and explained that if the old chief and those who thought like him wanted a representative to hold the scales evenly I was the man to be returned to the State Council. Back into the house I went and made the same plea to my other disgusted guest. Both sections supported me at the election!

On another occasion the support of a large body of voters of a certain caste was sought, and it was thought expedient to bring to the field of battle one of their own people who had made good in Colombo, where he was a prosperous and

much esteemed business-man. He was made to wear a tail-coat and look like a guest at a royal garden-party.

A big procession had been arranged. But the preliminaries took a long time, and the great man was hot, bothered, and bored to the point of exhaustion. He was made the star turn in the electioneering pageantry that followed. Some one had a brain-wave and instructed the crowd to hail him with shouts of "Apey Raja," meaning "Our King." The old boy felt very regal, and was naturally elated.

The man who had earlier appeared thoroughly exhausted rose up in all his splendour in the car in which he and I were being taken and addressed the mammoth crowd of his people. "You," he said, using in Sinhalese a term that the kings of old are reported to have used when they addressed menials, "must support this boy. I have carried him in my arms when he was a child!"

I was neither a boy then nor had I ever heard of being carried by the old gentleman when I was a child. But the man who was "Apey Raja" to that particular crowd had given his command, and many votes were won that day for me.

Two other election episodes I remember now with amusement caused me a good deal of embarrassment at that time. On one occasion my chief supporter made a strong speech condemning the evils of colonialism and the hardships it imposed on the people of the country. I was so moved by his words, and my own feelings against colonialism were so strong, that I found myself actually shedding tears. To my horror my supporter interrupted his speech to slap me on the back and say, "That's the thing to do: weep a little more." I promptly dried my eyes.

The second incident was carefully rehearsed with the object of making me fly into a passion and do something reckless that would spoil my chances of getting elected. A Boy Scout leader arranged to stage a Sinhalese play, and I was invited to give the performance my patronage. Supporters of both election candidates were in the audience.

As soon as the play started I could see that it presented a crude caricature of myself as a military officer of the rank of

captain, who was entering politics for the first time. The scene was the Orient Club in Colombo, where rich young men and their elders met to drink, gamble, and gossip. The captain in the play was depicted as an extravagant man about town, wasting his substance and completely devoid of intelligence. This hero cut a ridiculous figure, and the whole purpose of the play was obviously to make me lose my temper, assault the organizers, and leave the hall in a fury.

But this did not happen. I was astute enough to sit through it all and pretend to enjoy the show as much as anybody else. At the end of the performance I garlanded the actor who played the part of the captain, and gave him a handsome present as well. The result was that many who had come to jeer remained to cheer, and were won over to my side.

I mention all this because, apart from entertaining the reader, it seems to me absurd to pretend that the voters of Ceylon, when they were first given adult suffrage, were as politically educated as any electorate in Europe or elsewhere.

The result of the election was that I (an independent candidate) got 17,159 votes and my opponent, a local lawyer sponsored by the Ceylon National Congress party, polled 8114 votes. My majority was thus the substantial one of 9054. I had every reason to feel satisfied that I had made a good start in the field of politics.

3

In Council

The ceremonial opening of the State Council was an impressive affair. Every effort was made to create the atmosphere associated with the State opening of Parliament in London. The most picturesque spectacle in the pageantry was provided by the Kandyan members, whom I joined, heavily draped in many yards of white cloth, and wearing a four-cornered hat surmounted by a gold ornament, a short white jacket, and slippers turned up at the toes.

A lobby correspondent, describing the scene, wrote, "Mr Kotelawala doubtless feels that if there must be a national dress, it should at least be something with history behind it and plenty of fine linen all round." As a matter of fact, I have never been particularly attracted by this or any other form of national dress.

The Donoughmore Constitution, which we had undertaken to work and to get revised at the earliest opportunity, was a unique experiment. There was no exact parallel for it in any other part of the British Commonwealth. Its essential feature was that the representatives of the people of the country were, for the first time, given executive as well as legislative responsibilities. It was claimed for it that it transferred essential power to the hands of Ceylonese, whose majority in the Council would no longer be in the position of a permanent Opposition incapable of turning the Government out. And it gave every adult in Ceylon the right to vote without any restriction.

My contributions to the many acrimonious debates in the Council were frequent and vigorous. A lobby correspondent

wrote of me, "The Member for Kurunegala, when he does speak, performs a war dance by his table. At other times he enjoys himself cracking jokes with his neighbours and even appears to find pins in his seat which send him wandering about the chamber."

As a practical agriculturist, I was elected to the Executive Committee of Agriculture and Lands, of which D. S. Senanayake was Chairman and Minister. The executive system was a poor substitute for responsible Cabinet government, but it gave us an opportunity for gaining valuable experience in the administration of the country's affairs.

The State Council was accused of many misdemeanours, and I often had to defend it against particularly vehement attacks by the Chairman of the District Planters' Association in my own electorate. He was one of those who felt that we in Ceylon existed for the sake of the British Empire. I conceded that this might be a point of view; but, I asked, did the British Empire exist for Ceylon? There were certain countries in the Empire that did not permit other members of the same Empire to join them in colonizing or in populating lands that now lay fallow. For this reason we in Ceylon had first and foremost to think of ourselves before we took the charitable view that other members of the Empire in general had any right to this country.

At a meeting of the Kurunegala planters I remarked that the European community had begun to feel that they were not wanted in Ceylon. I emphatically denied that it was my intention or that of the State Council to treat them as such. But Europeans or anybody who lived in Ceylon should place the prosperity of the country as a whole before their own interests.

There was no question of race hatred. What was resented by the Council was exploitation by individuals who, armed with cheap capital from England or from the local banks, competed unfairly with those who lacked similar facilities. I admitted that many of the Europeans in that district had made Ceylon their home, and had equal rights with the Ceylonese. On the other hand, there were those who had come to Ceylon from other countries, and who did not care

what happened to Ceylon so long as they could take as much as they could out of it.

Now that Ceylon is independent, and my own views are mellowed by age and experience, I must admit that some of us went too far in condemning the old colonialism as nothing more than ruthless exploitation of subject peoples for the enrichment of the nationals of a foreign Power. It was rather over-stating our case to say that foreign capitalism drained many millions of rupees out of Ceylon every year, for which there was no return at all, while intolerable hardships were imposed on an impoverished and landless peasantry. Foreign capital and enterprise helped to build industries that up to to-day provide Ceylon with her chief sources of revenue.

British rule conferred many benefits on the people, and taught us to appreciate the democratic way of life and to fight for our freedom on constitutional lines. But as long as colonialism had us in its grip we were not free to make the best use of our material resources. There was too much concentration on the products that brought big profits to foreign investors, while the production of food for the people of the country, and the promotion of their social welfare, was not given the priority it demanded. The result was to condemn the masses to standards of living so low as to bring many of them down to starvation level.

One of the first effects of a larger measure of self-government was the attempt to formulate a more liberal land policy to serve all interests, and not only the owners of large estates. The chief aim was to bring into existence what a former Governor of Ceylon, Sir Hugh Clifford, visualized as a prosperous, self-supporting, and self-respecting multitude of peasant proprietors. At the time I entered Council this idea began to be translated into reality under D. S. Senanayake's energetic direction.

Educated young men from urban areas rather than peasants were attracted by the colonization schemes which were an important part of the new land policy. I found one of them full of enthusiasm and energy, and his holding was by far the best in the scheme he had joined. I also observed

a plot of land held by a colonist who was at one time a salesman in a shop. I was encouraged to believe that more young men from the towns would go back to the land, and find an ample reward for their pains. Here was another way of escape from the economic consequences of colonial bondage.

I supported the proposal for the introduction of income-tax for the first time in Ceylon in 1932. In one of my speeches in Council I caused cries of "Shame" by saying that the previous legislature had rejected this proposal at the last moment "because pressure was brought to bear by the wolves and jackals of the Pettah and the Fort," by which I meant big business interests, mainly foreign, who were determined that this new levy should not be imposed on them. I thought that an income-tax would be just and fair, and that it was only right that the rich should bear a greater burden of taxation. But I made it clear that I favoured the introduction of this tax only on condition that the agricultural industries were safeguarded, and not doubly taxed.

Discussing some of Ceylon's political problems at the beginning of 1932, I said that the policy of an alien Government would always be to run the "estate of Lanka"[1] chiefly in the interests of its proprietors. Our salvation could be secured by ourselves alone. But we were still far from being masters in our own house. That stage could not be reached except through suffering, and I honestly thought that we had not suffered enough. Our land must be so developed as to make it yield our bare necessities. We had to rear a class of sturdy farmers who would form the backbone of the country. The public services had to be Ceylonized, not in the niggardly fashion in which it was then being done. We should get from outside only such experts as were necessary in purely technical posts.

At that time there were thousands of Indians employed by the Ceylon Government, and scores of Europeans. In the Railway department alone there were as many as fifty-four European officers.

As a result of our Ceylonization policy, I am glad to say, as head of the State to-day, that there are now only two

[1] Lanka is an earlier name of Ceylon.

European officials in the Administration as members of the Ceylon Civil Service. The others who are here have been employed on contracts for fixed periods. And there are no Indian workmen to speak of employed by our Government.

But I did not favour a nationalism that ignored the real economics of a situation created by centuries of colonial rule.

On one occasion I told the Kurunegala planters that if they wanted to develop the country they should not look at it from the point of view of the European or Sinhalese community but from the point of view of the Ceylonese. If they looked at it from the point of view of a particular community the advancement of the country would be stopped.

It has been my firm belief right through my public career that, once our freedom from colonialism was achieved, national unity and intense patriotism would be needed to preserve that freedom and derive from it all the benefits it could confer upon us. I definitely was not swayed by anti-British prejudice at that time, or by any feeling of antagonism against foreigners in Ceylon as such. But I wanted them all to realize that the country and its permanent population must always come first.

I first acted as Minister at the age of thirty-five. My election to act for D. S. Senanayake while he was away from the country for several months was not without incident. One of the members of the Executive Committee of Agriculture and Lands, when it met to choose an acting Chairman, proposed that A. Fellowes-Gordon should be elected for no other reason than that it was "only fair" that a European should become a member of the Board of Ministers for a short time. Fellowes-Gordon had the distinction of being elected to the State Council when it was thought that a candidate of that community would have no chance at all at the polls.

This popular planter modestly declined the honour of being an Acting Minister and proposed my name instead, saying that I had the advantage of youth.

Thereupon his proposer and seconder walked out of the meeting in a huff and went straight to the newspaper offices, where one of them made a statement protesting against the

"family-bandyism" which made D. S. Senanayake coach his nephew (meaning me) for the acting appointment.

I was unanimously elected by the rest of the committee. And I must say I tackled my ministerial duties with zest.

The incident at my election as Acting Minister was regarded as an illustration of the defects of the Executive Committee system. This feature of the Donoughmore Constitution had been condemned as likely to lead the people "into the wilderness of unorganised political opinion, petty intrigue and inefficient administration."

One thing I was determined to do was to show that the charge of inefficient administration should never be brought against any department when I functioned as Minister in control of it.

When I first appeared as Acting Minister of Agriculture in the State Council, it was thought that I was chewing gum all the time because of my short replies. My baptism of fire began when I introduced a supplementary vote asking for Rs60,000 to provide channels and roads under the Minneriya Development Scheme. Vigorous criticism came from many of the members who opposed the vote, including the present leader of the Opposition, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, who predicted that the Minneriya Scheme was doomed to be a colossal failure. Anyway, I got the vote through and scored my first bull, as a lobbyist put it.

After the tea interval the same day it was noted that I looked quite a seasoned warrior when I introduced the Tea Control Bill which had attracted many big business-men to the public galleries. I was given credit for marshalling my facts quite competently and clearly and showing myself far more versed in estate affairs than many a British tea planter.

The Minneriya Scheme was launched with appropriate ceremony when the first batch of colonists, three hundred peasants and a hundred middle-class settlers, arrived on the scene. Buddhist monks and music conducted them to the camp, and it fell to my lot, as Acting Minister of Agriculture, to declare the scheme open by felling a tree which required fifty-four blows of my axe before it came down on the land that had to be cleared.

This was the beginning of the first stage in a mass attack on what is known as the "Dry Zone" in Ceylon. Nearly two-thirds of the island had been abandoned to the jungle and wild beasts for centuries. In the time of the ancient Sinhalese kings this area was densely populated and prosperous. The engineering skill of our ancestors succeeded in converting barren, arid tracts into vast acres of paddy. The vagaries of monsoon rains were overcome by the building of giant lakes or tanks, which were fed through a network of irrigation channels from the abundant water that fell on the central hills. These tanks in return fed a multitude of smaller tanks, which each formed the nucleus of a village. When D. S. Senanayake was once travelling through the Minneriya district in connexion with the extension of the railway to Batticaloa he happened to get off the train and wander down a jungle path. He found himself standing on the bund, or dyke, of the Minneriya tank. The idea then came to him that what our ancient kings had done the modern rulers of Ceylon could do equally well. Thus began the restoration of large tanks, and the reclaiming of the land from the jungle for peasant colonists.

Minneriya marked the breakaway from the colonial economy and the beginning of a new era in land-development. It was a costly experiment. The lesson it taught us was that any area in the Dry Zone which had to be developed should first be made habitable, rid of malaria, and provided with housing and all the amenities that would attract enterprising settlers of the peasant as well as of the middle class.

One thing we must not forget is that the decline of Ceylon's ancient civilization was due to the ravages of war and foreign invasion. Successive hordes of invaders from South India breached the bunds of the tanks and choked their channels in order to starve the victims of their aggression and bring them to their knees. As the famous historian Arnold Toynbee puts it, "A war-worn people had not the heart to go on repairing damage that had been inflicted so many times over and was virtually certain to be inflicted so many times again."

Warfare brought immense havoc, and malaria did the rest

in impoverishing vast areas of a land that ultimately became the prey of competing colonial Powers.

A sum of as much as 92 million rupees was the initial expenditure on the Minneriya Scheme. It was an enterprise which at its inception was watched by the whole country with hope, and with not a little anxiety. It was the first definite step towards making Ceylon self-dependent in the matter of her rice supplies. The scheme was primarily devoted to paddy cultivation on land essentially suitable for rice. We did not imagine then that after over twenty years Ceylon would still find herself dependent to a large extent on rice from abroad to feed her rapidly growing population. I was proud to inaugurate a scheme that evoked so much patriotic sentiment, and promised so much for our country's prosperity.

As soon as the permanent Minister had left the island I received what I described in Council as "a bullying letter" from the Chief Secretary, written as though it were addressed to a subordinate clerk. The letter asked me whether I had the authority of the Financial Secretary or the Governor for the proposal to retrench five temporary irrigation engineers. I was determined not to allow myself to be bullied and wrote back to the Chief Secretary asking him whether he could cite his authority to write as he had done to the Acting Minister of Agriculture and Lands. The Chief Secretary replied that he had no authority, but that the letter was written in order to smooth the working of the Constitution.

There were frequent tussles between the Board of Ministers and what we called the Governor's Government. It was clear that the old colonialism was taking a long time to die. What was fundamentally wrong with the Donoughmore Scheme was that it gave the Ministers responsibility without corresponding power in matters of paramount importance.

One thing at least we were able to do, and that was to make the country's agricultural policy serve the purpose of promoting not only the welfare of the major planting industries but also, and chiefly, the industries of the village population, such as paddy and allied food products. To begin with, the Board of Agriculture was reconstituted to provide

for adequate representation of the interests of the villager. It would no longer look after only tea, rubber, and coconut, which had research institutes of their own.

Shortly after I had ceased to act as a Minister I addressed a meeting of the Uva Planters' Association and a group of the European Association of Ceylon on the political situation. I admitted that adult suffrage was bound to result in the return to the State Council in the first ten years of a queer collection of people with no settled ideas on constitutional reforms or on social and economic developments; but I claimed that, on the whole, the members had not failed to reflect public opinion.

I appealed to the British planters whom I addressed to change their angle of vision entirely if they wished to take an interest in the land they lived in. They should consider no question except from the point of view of Ceylon as a whole. While the Ceylonese had no desire to force admission to the exclusive European social circles, they could not tolerate a position of inferiority. It was no secret, I said, that the rest of the far-flung British Empire did not open wide their doors to us as they did to the white races. It was, therefore, our first duty to provide for the sons of the soil in every scheme calculated to promote development. The stern logic of facts demanded that all communities should march hand in hand towards the realization of that status of complete political freedom which was every country's undoubted birthright.

I did some plain speaking when I addressed that audience of British planters twenty-two years ago. I said:

"Assisted by an accommodating bureaucracy, and credit facilities in the shape of easy money both from London and local banks, you were able to do all the pioneering work in opening up lands in major products in the most salubrious and fertile parts of this country, while the children of the soil were content to follow you as carpenters or building and cart contractors whose one mission was to study your needs and comforts. In the councils of the country, your will prevailed exclusively for more years than I care to remember."

British justice is generally known for its fairness, but I

reminded them that in the past judicial officers would sometimes award sentences to suit the views of estate superintendents. A provincial judge before whom a serious charge of assault had been brought against an estate superintendent by his subordinate—a Ceylonese—referred the matter to the same superintendent for report, without issuing process.

This was something more than the planters expected from me, and was a sign to them of changing times. On the whole they took it in the right spirit, and one of the most distinguished of them, Sir Thomas Villiers, paid me a high tribute.

One of the things I said at that meeting may sound strange in the context of Ceylon's independence to-day. I declared that only a fool or a fanatic would say that Ceylon could exist without the help of the British Empire. But I still maintain that, even after the liquidation of that empire, a small country like ours will need powerful friends. And these friends must be nations whose way of life and ideals are akin to our own.

When I was acting as Minister of Agriculture and Lands a commentator remarked that those who deplored the temporary absence of Senanayake's strong personality from the State Council should realize that the mantle of Elijah had fallen on Elisha. Can I flatter myself by saying that those words were prophetic in a wider sense than the writer intended?

There were some things which a colonial Government could thrust down the throats of the people to whom a large measure of self-government was supposed to have been given under the Donoughmore Scheme. For instance, in spite of the State Council's strong opposition, the country was forced by the exercise of the Governor's special powers to accept a quota system by which the imports of Japanese textiles were curtailed for the benefit of the Lancashire cotton industry.

This system was denounced as a measure that placed a cruel burden on the shoulders of the poorer people of Ceylon, who found it a problem to clothe themselves and their families. To them cheap Japanese textiles were a boon.

The leader of the House at the time was Sir Baron Jayatillaka, a man who could never be described as an extremist. He submitted that the imposition of the quota system on the country was opposed not only to the spirit but also to the very letter of the Constitution. It was unconstitutional, and therefore it was illegal. By this means it was possible for Britain to reduce Ceylon again to the position of a Crown Colony, pure and simple, where the will of the people might be entirely ignored and their interests be subordinated to imperial interests.

During a malaria epidemic of unprecedented severity in 1935 I moved in Council that, in view of the grave hardships caused to the people of Ceylon through this disaster, and the failure of food crops due to a continued drought, the Secretary of State for the Colonies should be asked by the Governor to suspend the operation of the quota system against Japanese textiles for a period of one year.

At that time about three-fourths of Ceylon's population lived in abject poverty, and acute distress was caused among them by the malaria epidemic. But it was argued that any suspension of the quota system would mean an interference with trade. It was also implied that there was no use in asking for the withdrawal of the quotas when people had no money to buy any clothes at all!

My motion was passed with a slight amendment; but unkind critics, both within and outside the House, described it as "another comic stunt."

The Secretary of State did not agree to the withdrawal of the quota system, because, he said, it was part of the broad Imperial policy, which, he was convinced, was in the best interests of all parts of the Empire. Here was the old colonialism at its worst.

As a major in the Ceylon Light Infantry I was specially interested in the future of Ceylon's Defence Force, which became a subject of lively discussion in 1935. When it was first organized this volunteer Force was not meant to be entrusted with the defence of Ceylon against foreign invasion. Its commandant was usually an old retired soldier. I believe the intention was to use the Defence Force only in

case of internal disturbances. This was well demonstrated during the riots of 1915, when units consisting of white men were issued with ammunition, while their coloured brothers were called upon to employ their fists or their legs, as the occasion demanded.

At the time of the discussion the Ceylon Defence Force was commanded by a Regular soldier on the active list. It was then considered that a force of 2600 men was sufficient, with the collaboration of the British Navy and forces in India that could be summoned at short notice, to defend our country.

I thought it most essential to create public opinion in order to enable the best type of men to join the Defence Force. I argued that, if we did not spend enough money on the training of men and the provision of equipment for a volunteer force of our own, we would have to entrust the task of defending the country to two battalions of Regulars from abroad. "What is there more despicable," I asked, "than to expect outsiders to sacrifice their lives to defend our country?"

There was another important question that worried me twenty years ago. I said that if, by some misfortune, the British Empire was destroyed in another world war, I could hardly visualize the fate of Ceylon if her people remained in an undisciplined state.

I felt that not only had we to make the people of Ceylon politically minded with a view to obtaining self-government, but it was also just as important to make them military-minded, with a view to instilling a sense of discipline into them and making them prepared for any sacrifice they would be called upon to make. It was only then, I felt, that our rulers would treat us with respect. I declared that we could not rest satisfied until we had in Ceylon at least 300,000 of our own men, trained in modern warfare and capable of defending our own shores.

4

A Young Minister

In 1936 I was one of the seven members elected unopposed to the second State Council. I was also chosen to be one of the seven Ministers. The only two objections of certain critics to my appointment as Minister of Communications and Works seemed to be that I was young and that I was a kinsman of D. S. Senanayake. As a matter of fact, I was thirty-nine years old at the time.

Five out of nine members of the Executive Committee concerned voted for me. Two supported another candidate and two declined to vote. There was much speculation as to how I happened to become a Minister. Nobody cared to remember my success as Acting Minister of Agriculture in the earlier Council.

The new Board of Ministers had no members who belonged to the minority communities. This result was deliberately brought about with the intention of having a homogeneous Ministry who would present a united front on the question of constitutional reform. The point of view of the majority community was that the minorities would play their proper part in the Government only by trusting and co-operating with the majority instead of suspecting its motives and standing aloof. But the minorities felt that even the checks and safeguards which the Constitution provided for their benefit could be easily circumvented.

Answering some of my critics, I had occasion to remark, "It seems to be a serious crime to be a Buddhist or to have relatives doing well in public life." I was convinced that I could make a success of my ministerial job in spite of these two disabilities, and the impetuosity of a man of thirty-nine.

Nor did I think it a serious disqualification that I was related to two of the other Ministers.

Among my earlier duties as Minister was that of recommending a name to the Governor for nomination to the Electricity Board. Curiously enough, this made me very popular at any function I attended at that time. And I received importunate letters beginning, "My dear Lionel," from former colleagues in Council and club-mates, while women flocked round me assuring me that so-and so was the best person for the job.

I never suspected that I had a double. But one day an impostor actually impersonated me. Posing as the Minister of Communications and Works, this man took the victim of his deception into the State Council through a private corridor from the Secretariat, promising to get him a job for which it would be necessary to obtain a sum of Rs150. Making himself comfortable in a seat in the members' lobby, the impostor borrowed the other man's fountain-pen, and while scribbling some notes, said he would provide Rs75 if the balance could be found and brought to him at his Ratmalana residence. Forgetting even to ask for his pen back, the job-seeker left the bogus Minister.

A few days later I had a visitor at my bungalow at Ratmalana, who told me that he had brought Rs75 to be given to the Minister of Communications and Works. Upon my disclosing my identity, my visitor collapsed in a faint. I soon revived him, and heard his story.

I was told that while the bogus Minister walked through the Secretariat building the peons at various offices stood up and paid obeisance. The State Council peons did likewise.

One thing that made me feel uncomfortable, as I said, at the time, was that the Secretary to my Ministry was a British official. Perhaps the reason was that there were so many British staff officers in the departments under my control. I informed the Chief Secretary that I wished to have a Ceylonese Secretary. He referred the matter to the Governor, who sent for me and questioned me about my objections to my very efficient British Secretary. I argued that, if His Excellency himself would agree to have a Ceylonese Secre-

tary, I would not object to having a British one. The result was that a Ceylonese was selected to succeed my Secretary, and soon began to distinguish himself in that office. His record was so good during the rest of his career as a public servant that I made him a member of my Cabinet when I became Prime Minister. He is Sir Kanthiah Vaithianathan.

One of the biggest jobs I handled was the resumption of the Hydro-Electrical Scheme, which had been launched with great enthusiasm in 1924. This had been acclaimed as the country's greatest asset; but a strange fate had dogged the project. When nearly Rs4,000,000 had been spent on it the work was stopped, and the question arose what next to do about it. Was the Government to regard the money as a bad investment, and let immense water-power resources go to waste? A London firm offered to take the work in hand and complete the scheme. But we had too many experts of our own; and it was also argued that this valuable national asset should not be handed over to private enterprise.

There was a confusing mass of literature on the project, and I set myself the task of grasping its essential details. The Hydro-Electric Scheme was expected to open a new era of development in every field of commerce and industry in Ceylon. But, as a result of many delays and interruptions, the dawn of this new era had been postponed indefinitely. In the absence of coal or oil, the only source of power we could find in our country was her rivers. It was felt that if we relied for all time upon foreign sources of power, even if they might be cheaper, it would be damaging to the people's permanent interests.

I considered myself lucky in being called upon so early in my public life to introduce schemes of great national importance. In my speech in the State Council on the Hydro-Electric project, I said:

"We are now in an industrial age. In the days of old, when everything depended on agriculture, Parakrama Bahu insisted that every drop of water should go through an irrigation channel before it reached the sea.

"To-day we have to insist that every water-course should

be made to go through a turbine and produce electrical energy.

"We have for the last thirty years discussed and re-discussed this scheme. We must not remain a day longer with folded arms when so many thousands of tons of water go unharnessed to the sea.

"I am firmly convinced that this scheme will not only revolutionize our industries, but will also bring happiness to our people."

Unfortunately, much bungling and confusion, apart from Ceylon's involvement in a world war, have hindered the realization of this dream.

Even in my fortieth year, political commentators had a habit of regarding me as being still a stripling, and were surprised that I was able to grapple with complicated subjects like an experienced veteran. They always gave me full marks for energy and enthusiasm, and for making the most of the opportunities I got for defending myself against the charge of ineptitude.

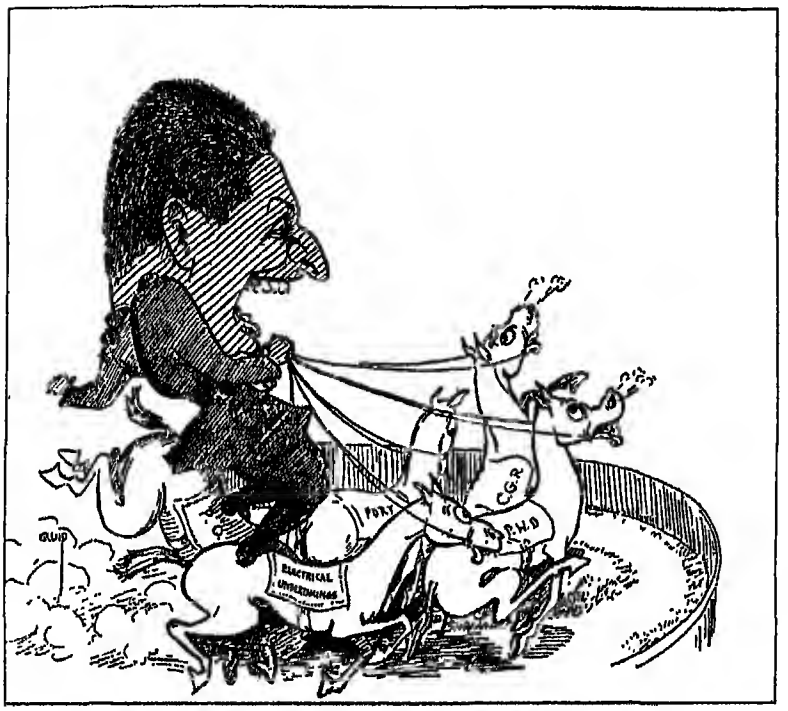
Late in 1937 I went to England on leave for health reasons. When I was garlanded at the jetty as a farewell gesture I asked the Leader of the State Council whether this meant that the people did not want me to come back. He assured me that they expected me to return to the island as fresh as a flower in full bloom.

Shortly before my departure I got into hot water by saying that if railway station-masters did not give up their 'Hamuduruvo' mentality—an attitude of superiority—I would bring their uniforms down from trousers to the humbler cloth. This was not the first or last occasion on which I happened to be castigated for saying the wrong thing at the right time, or for not thinking of all the implications of a statement that might hit the headlines.

There is a story behind this which has not been told before. D. S. Senanayake and I were out on circuit in the north of the island on a tour of inspection. He suggested that I should send my car back to Colombo in a railway truck and travel with him in his car. I went to the nearest station and looked into the station-master's office through a window. I

found that official taking things easy, and reading a newspaper with his feet on the desk. He cast a glance in my direction and asked me rudely in Sinhalese what I wanted.

I had hardly begun to answer in the same language when



KOTELAWALA MAJOR 'LEO'
STEERS THE RAILWAY, PORT AND P. O.
AND - AS THOUGH THEY WERN'T ENOUGH !
PUBLIC WORKS AND ELECTRIC STUFF.

SO METTLESOME A TEAM OF FIVE,
REQUIRES A DEAL OF SKILL TO DRIVE,
AND THOUGH HIS METHODS LACK FINESSE,
HE KEEPS HIS BALANCE MORE OR LESS !

A CEYLONESE NEWSPAPER SATIRIZES THE AUTHOR'S MULTITUDINOUS OFFICES

he wanted to know what I meant by disturbing him when he was reading the paper. He asked me to clear out and to return later.

Here was a chance to have some fun at the arrogant station-master's expense. I told Senanayake about it, and we decided that I should keep up the pretence of being an

ordinary third-class passenger. I went back to the station and renewed my request for a form in which to make my application for getting a car to Colombo by train.

The station-master thrust a form at me, and got quite annoyed when I also asked him for a pencil. He observed me closely while I was filling in the form, and noticed that I was writing in English. When I signed as J. L. Kotelawala, and he knew that I was the Minister of Communications and Works, the man began to tremble. "I am sorry, sir," he said as humbly as he could, "but I am suffering from malaria, and I did not know what I was saying when I spoke to you first. Please pardon me. I did not mean to be rude."

I then gave him the works. I asked him whether he thought that merely because he wore trousers he could treat members of the public who wore cloths like dirt. (He had not seen through the window that I was wearing shorts, and he perhaps assumed that I belonged to the untrousered lower orders.) As regards his malaria, I warned him that he would get his real shivering fit when I dealt with him in Colombo.

I really let myself go and used the strongest language to teach the station-master a lesson. But his wife and other relatives soon came to the station and began to weep, begging of me not to dismiss him, for they would then starve. I spared him for their sake.

A London Sunday paper referred to my "threat" in these terms: "Trousers have gone to the heads of Ceylon station-masters. As a result, they might lose their—trousers."

I would not have done anything so absurd as attempting to be a dress dictator. But I hoped that station-masters would begin to pay more attention to the needs of the railway's chief clients, the third-class passengers, as a result of my attack on their mentality.

On my return to Ceylon after my holiday in February 1938 I assured the station-masters that I would not take their trousers off as long as they did their jobs well. They had no reason to be upset. My point was that the cloth-wearing patrons of the railway should not be despised by

officials who considered themselves superior because they themselves wore trousers.

Incidentally, three out of the seven Ministers at that time did not wear trousers on public occasions.

One of the historic occasions on which I was prominently in the picture was the opening of the Ratmalana Aerodrome and the inauguration of the air-mail service between Colombo and London in 1938. I lived just opposite the site chosen for the aerodrome, and I took a keen interest in the development of civil aviation and the training of Ceylon pilots. (I was one of the first Ceylonese to obtain a pilot's "A" Licence.) The Governor, Sir Andrew Caldecott, in his speech on that great day said that the enlargement of the aerodrome was no day-dream of mine. It was a hard-headed assessment of probability.

The air-mail service made it possible to send a letter from Colombo to London and get a reply within ten days. From the business-man's point of view the advantages were tremendous. And, generally speaking, Ceylon was brought nearer to Europe.

In May 1938 I expressed myself as follows on Ceylon's political aims:

"So long as the attitude of the British Government does not become reactionary, it can be said without fear of contradiction that the ardent wish of the people of Ceylon is to foster the interests of the Empire and maintain the Imperial connexion. But at the same time, Ceylon seeks to obtain tangible proof of the assurance that she is considered to be an important part of the Empire, and this can be done only by the grant to her of equality of status. It is the birthright of every nation to govern itself, and the seven years of the present Constitution have proved beyond any doubt the political genius of the people and their ability to manage their own affairs. The country has passed through the trade depression with the minimum injury to her staple industries."

In pressing Ceylon's claim to full Dominion status I stressed the fact that her political progress had not been marred by any unconstitutional movements or crises, unlike her neighbour India.

Ceylon's gift to the Empire should not merely be her ancient traditions, characteristic of the East, but new intelligence and ability. Her desire was to establish contact with the other partners of the Commonwealth at a higher level than the mere purchase of manufactured goods and the supply of raw materials and cheap labour.

The test of the modernization of the cultural and political organization of Ceylon was the achievement of such contacts with other Dominions at that level.

Described as a bluff soldier at that time, I like to fix dates for getting things done, or at least for taking definite steps towards a big achievement.

I declared that after October 1, 1938, I would take the building of the Ceylon University in hand. The State Council had sanctioned expenditure from the Loan Fund in regard to the proposed University, for which a site had at last been selected at Peradeniya. The claims of Colombo as a rival to Kandy for this site had been rejected; and in Kandy itself there had been much controversy over the relative merits of Dumbara and New Peradeniya. After many years the University project had now attained the plane of action. And once more I was lucky to be able to launch a scheme which had great possibilities for promoting national development.

One man to whom we owe the establishment of a residential university away from the distractions of Colombo is D. R. Wijewardene, who is best known in Ceylon and abroad as the founder of national newspapers which played an important part in winning Ceylon freedom. The success of his enterprise was achieved at the price of sacrificing the social life and pleasures normally enjoyed by rich men in our country. He was a great influence and formative force behind the scenes of our national life.

The University scheme gave us an opportunity to get together. Wijewardene impressed me with the importance of getting on with the job immediately, and doing it well. It was through his efforts that we obtained the services of the distinguished architect, Professor (later Sir Patrick) Abercrombie, who town-planned Greater London, to

advise us on the layout of the site and the planning of the buildings in keeping with the pattern of Ceylon's ancient architecture.

It may be said that our University has been planned on too extravagant a scale, and we are not getting a good return for the money invested in it. But high hopes were raised when the State Council passed a vote which made it possible for the work of actually building the University to begin within a week or two, after twenty-five years of discussion. I was congratulated on the diplomacy and resourcefulness with which I prevented the revival of long debates on dead issues.

I usually got my votes passed by the State Council rather hurriedly, and without taxing the patience of the members or being compelled to give them long explanations. On one occasion I introduced a scheme for automatic telephone rates. There was some opposition, but all the proposed amendments fizzled out, and my scheme was adopted.

After the adjournment I made no secret of the Governor's misgivings as to the Council approving the scheme. "Kotelawala," said Sir Andrew Caldecott, "you will never get this through. I tried it in Malaya, and was not successful."

"Leave it to me, sir," I replied. "I know how to get it through."

I had no special recipe for whatever I set out to achieve. I only insisted on a full stint of work from all around me, and I tried to instil into them a sense of loyalty to the Government and the country. I liked doing a job of work well myself, and I tried to infuse the same spirit into every official with whom I had to deal.

The difficulty all the Ministers had in working the Donoughmore Constitution was that it provided for the protection of the public service by means of special powers vested in the Governor and three Officers of State. There was no proper appreciation of the fact that it was the interests of the public which should be the Government's paramount concern. We felt sure that once the Officers of State were removed, and the public servants themselves

began to realize that they might have to subordinate their own personal advantages to the need for harnessing every available resource for improving the living conditions of the people, there would be a contented and loyal public service, giving of its best in serving the country.

5

Crisis

An earlier Governor of Ceylon in the Donoughmore days is said to have described the country's new Constitution as one "conceived in a delirium and born in a state of coma." This particular proconsul had been in Ceylon in a different capacity during the dark period of the 1915 riots, and his appointment as Governor had been far from popular with the Ministers. They could not, however, have agreed more with his description of the Donoughmore Constitution.

The first real crisis arose in February 1940, when the seven Ministers resigned as a protest against Governor Caldecott's interpretation of the Constitution, which they regarded as a total negation of its democratic basis.

The Home Minister had issued instructions to the Inspector-General of Police in pursuance of a resolution passed by the State Council, but that official refused to obey the instructions, which were to the effect that the police should not oppose any application for the postponement of certain cases then before the court in connexion with a shooting episode on an up-country estate. The State Council had resolved that a commission should be appointed to investigate the incident, and wished to have the prosecution suspended pending this inquiry. The Governor upheld the conduct of the Inspector-General, and questioned the constitutional propriety of the procedure adopted by the Minister of Home Affairs.

The first Minister to resign was D. S. Senanayake. I followed him. The other five decided that they had no alternative but to do likewise.

The State Council obviously could not function without a Board of Ministers. Most of the members did not desire a dissolution of the Council and an appeal to the country. Even if there was a general election, the new Board of Ministers would be confronted with precisely the same situation as their predecessors. They would find themselves powerless against the devices by which the State Council's decisions could be flouted with the Governor's approval.

It was a political crisis of the first magnitude; and it arose out of the Council's unanimous wish to have certain proceedings suspended without any intention of interfering with or influencing the course of justice. The Agent of the Indian Government in Ceylon, and representatives of the planting interests, agreed with the Council's decision. But the Inspector-General of Police would not have it; and the Governor had found extraordinary reasons for supporting that official's action, and precipitated this crisis.

At an informal conference of the State Councillors it was decided that the Executive Committees should meet and re-elect the Ministers who had resigned as Chairmen. But they would refuse to function as Ministers.

The Mooloya episode, as it came to be known (that being the name of the estate on which the shooting incident occurred), threatened to end in a deadlock which might have meant the suspension of the Constitution and the administration of the country's affairs by the Governor's Government alone. When the State Council met to debate a motion to the effect that it should not participate in working the Constitution it received a surprise packet in the form of a conciliatory message from the Governor.

This was an abnormal session of the House, as the ex-Ministers sat in the back benches and the front benches were empty.

The Governor's message offered a basis of negotiation on the outstanding issues. He seemed to admit that he had made a mistake, and he now indicated a way of settling the differences between himself and the Ministers. It was soon realized that the sterile path of non-co-operation would only mean that the people of the country would temporarily lose

their hard-won rights, and that the wiser course was to accept the Governor's offer.

In the end an honourable settlement was reached, and the seven Ministers who had resigned accepted office again.

One thing I remember about this crisis was that when D. S. Senanayake resigned some of the other Ministers were not so sure that they should follow his example. But I was determined that we should. I was present at the stormy scene between the Governor and Senanayake, during which His Excellency accused the Minister of lying. The Governor had been advised by a European-owned paper to "govern or get out." He decided to get tough. He banged the table in a fury, and made the ash-trays fly.

It was not surprising that Senanayake made up his mind immediately to 'go into the wilderness,' whether his colleagues followed him or not.

The Ministers had certainly scored a point when the Governor agreed not to interfere with the issuing of instructions to heads of departments until a Select Committee had reported on the class of decisions and instructions of Executive Committees that needed reference to the State Council and to the Governor.

We became aware, after the crisis over the Mooloya affair, of Sir Baron Jayatillaka's advanced age and temperamental unfitness for strong leadership. A vote of censure against him in the State Council was defeated; but less than half the House voted against it. Many members abstained from voting, and their attitude seemed to be summed up in the words: "We don't want you any more, but it pains us to ask you to go." Sir Baron was in many ways an estimable man, a sincere patriot, and distinguished scholar; but he made a poor Leader of the State Council in times of stress.

Ultimately he went to New Delhi as Ceylon's representative in India, and this gave D. S. Senanayake an opportunity of showing his mettle as a dynamic leader.

There is an interesting story behind Sir Baron Jayatillaka's appointment, which took place soon after Ceylon had been placed on a war-footing, with Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton arriving to take charge as Commander-in-Chief. The Ad-

miral told me, after a game of tennis one day, that he thought it very necessary to have a distinguished and competent person to represent Ceylon in India because the island was so largely dependent on that country for food-supplies and much else that helped our war effort. Could I suggest anyone who could fill this post?

I thought of Arunachalam Mahadeva as a most suitable choice. He was a member of an illustrious family who had taken to politics early in life, and had the manner of a suave and polished diplomat, who would command respect in India. Mahadeva was not unwilling, but said he must first consult his wife. After doing so, he said he thought it would be better to send Sir Baron Jayatillaka to India, and that he himself might become Home Minister in his place. I conveyed this suggestion to the Commander-in-Chief.

D. S. Senanayake and Sir Baron had stood together in public life for many years and had always been good friends, although at this stage Sir Baron began to suspect that Senanayake was waiting impatiently to step into his shoes as Leader of the State Council. For this reason Senanayake would not, on any account, have suggested that Sir Baron should be got out of the way in this manner. So I took good care not to tell him anything about Mahadeva's proposal.

It was arranged for Admiral Layton at a meeting of the War Council to raise the question of the vital importance of having a Ceylon Representative in India at that time. He made it clear that the appointment should be made at the highest level, and that the person selected should be for preference a man of much culture and distinction, who would command the utmost respect. I took the cue and said that this was a time when no sacrifice was too great for us to make if we wished to save the country, and that I was sure that a great leader like Sir Baron Jayatillaka would agree to go to New Delhi on this great mission.

Sir Baron was taken completely by surprise, and wanted time to consider the matter. He finally yielded to pressure and agreed to go. Mahadeva succeeded him as Home Minister, not without difficulty and political wire-pulling, and D. S. Senanayake became Leader of the House.

One of my adventures shortly after this political crisis was to be adrift in an open boat for eighteen hours with D. S. Senanayake and four others when we were inquiring into the grievances of some fisher-folk. We had only a meagre ration of rice and dry fish belonging to the eight boatmen. We were an unlucky thirteen, all told; and we expected to be carried farther and farther away from Ceylon without any chance of rescue. When we did reach the shore, after being at sea all night and a good part of the next day, we were utterly exhausted and frantic with thirst.

I sometimes wonder what the course of Ceylon's politics would have been if we had not lived to tell the tale.

6

The Second World War

When the Second World War broke out in Europe in 1939 Ceylon was dragged into it on Britain's side as a matter of course because she was still not a self-governing unit of the Empire. We had no say in the matter. It was not for us to decide to be neutral if we so desired.

The war was far away enough not to alarm us. Our chief anxiety was that our food supplies might be affected. It was only when Japan entered the war over two years later that we became alive to the realities of the situation.

The Japanese successes in Malaya and Burma brought the enemy very near us. The fact that this was an Asian enemy, with no ill-will against the people of Ceylon, made no difference to us. Japan had allied herself with two Powers in Europe whose victory would have threatened democracy as we knew it. The new menace we had to face in Asia was aggressive Japanese imperialism; and this at a time when we were seeking our freedom from British domination. Many Ceylonese felt that they would prefer the devil they knew to the devil they did not know.

The first sign that a grave emergency faced Ceylon was the appointment of Admiral Sir Geoffrey Layton as Commander-in-Chief of Ceylon. But the Governor and the Board of Ministers continued to function.

Admiral Layton was a blunt, domineering type of man who frequently used nautical language of the strongest flavour on the slightest provocation.

When he attempted to act as though the Board of Ministers could be ignored in the matter of taking important decisions D. S. Senanayake was roused to protest strongly and

to say that the Ministers might as well resign and leave everything to the Commander-in-Chief. A stormy scene nearly developed; but after some discussion Senanayake and the Admiral emerged from the conference the best of friends.

When he discovered that I too was a bit of a 'tough guy' after his own heart we got on very well together.

My first meeting with Admiral Layton was not an encounter either of us could recall with pleasure. He walked into my office, unannounced, and asked me sharply, "Are you the Minister of Communications and Works?"

I was indeed. But what business had this stranger to burst in on me like this and adopt so overbearing a manner? I nearly turned him out with equal abruptness.

He evidently knew he had made the wrong approach. The Governor summoned a conference at Queen's House a day or two later for the purpose of discussing the mess in which the Admiral found the Colombo harbour, on which so much depended now that Singapore had been lost. Oliver Goonetilleke, then Civil Defence Commissioner and now Governor General, sat beside me.

When I was introduced to Layton all he said was, "Young man, I think we have met before." He had taken my measure.

Among those present was the Chairman of the Port Commission and the head of a big firm which engaged labour for unloading ships. They both had their excuses for the sorry state of things in the harbour. Their grievance was that there was too much interference by politicians and the Ministry with their job of getting essential work done with the least possible delay. The labourers were discontented, and kept asking for higher wages. For the past fifty years they had been quite satisfied with their lot.

At this stage the Admiral exploded. "What!" he exclaimed. "You expect them to be satisfied with the wages they got fifty years ago?"

And then, in picturesque language which I can hardly reproduce, the outspoken old sailor informed these diehard colonial Englishmen that his grandmother used certain sanitary arrangements half a century ago; but he used something more modern to-day. And when one of them protested that

he had testimonials to his good work from other admirals and high-ups, Layton bluntly asked him to use them for familiar toilet purposes.

When Sir Geoffrey Layton became Commander-in-Chief Sir Andrew Caldecott felt that he, as Governor, had been superseded, and the best thing he could do would be to resign and return to England. But D. S. Senanayake persuaded him not to do so. The Ministers wanted him to stay. The Constitution could not function without a Governor; and there was a place both for him and the Board of Ministers in the new emergency set-up. The Ministers would see that everything was done to defend and save Ceylon, and all directions from the Commander-in-Chief should come to them through the Governor.

Caldecott was wise to yield to this persuasion. He had good reason to be satisfied with the war-effort of the Ministers, and when it was all over he could endorse Admiral Layton's forthright recommendation to Downing Street that Ceylon had amply proved her fitness for self-government. The Admiral told us that his dispatch had been written in his "best French," meaning that he had used the language characteristic of one who went straight to the point and hammered it home hard.

Ceylon's War Council was reconstituted when it was found that the inclusion of politicians on an all-party basis led to confusion and fruitless talk. In its new form it consisted of the Commander-in-Chief, the Governor, all the Ministers, the Service Chiefs, and the Civil Defence Commissioner, Oliver Goonetilleke, whose genius for handling men and finding a way out of every difficult situation was much in evidence in those critical days.

Since I controlled all departments that employed large labour forces, and was responsible for the Port, aerodromes, and transport, a heavy burden of responsibility was borne by me in keeping things at the highest pitch of preparedness and efficiency. I could even flatter myself that, without my energetic application to the task in hand, nothing that had to be done urgently could be carried out to the exacting Commander-in-Chief's satisfaction.

One of the things for which I may claim credit is the construction of a fighter air-strip in the heart of the city on the Colombo racecourse. The Japanese did not know of its existence, and it was the fighters which took off from here that beat the raiders on that memorable Easter Sunday of April 1942 when Ceylon gave the Allies the best war news for many weeks.

As things happened I was not in Colombo when the raid occurred. A telephone message from my mother at Nuwara Eliya, expressing a wish to see me on my birthday, was misinterpreted and delivered to me during an important conference on the eve of the event in a distorted form. I was told that my mother was seriously ill, and that I had to go to her bedside at any cost. I went on the understanding that duty might call me back to Colombo the same day.

I found my mother quite well, and surprised to learn that I had heard of her being ill. But my birthday was not to be a happy one. A telephone message told me that Ratmalana had been bombed, and my own house there had been damaged. Two men on my estate had been killed, and the rest had fled for safety. I could not blame them; but I also found that there had been a little looting in the confusion, and some of my belongings had disappeared.

I hated to think that I had not been in the front line of the 'Battle of Colombo'; but I hurried back to assess the damage and prevent panic if I could. As my car approached Colombo I met crowds of people fleeing from the capital. It was a depressing spectacle. But I could not say I was downhearted.

We now had to face the fact that the Japanese might invade Ceylon at any moment, as they seemed to have command of the sea, and our defences would crumble before their superior forces. One or two Ministers thought that our safest course, if the British were forced to abandon Ceylon, was not to offer any resistance to the enemy. But the majority of us thought otherwise. We would not co-operate with the invader, even if it meant much suffering before Ceylon was reoccupied by the Power from whom we expected to receive our freedom. We had no faith in Japan's ability to hold her

conquests, or to liberate all Asian countries from colonial bondage.

One of my contributions to Ceylon's war-effort of which I am particularly proud is the formation of the Essential Services Labour Corps, a band of trained and disciplined workers, well looked-after and dependable in any emergency. I was sure these men would not flee, as hundreds of other labourers, mainly Indian, did when they felt their lives were in danger. I proved that the E.S.L.C. men were equal to their tasks when they helped in fuelling a hospital ship whose services were desperately needed in rescuing the crews of two British cruisers sunk off our shores.

Here let me record a curious development. A medal was struck as a reward for conspicuously good service in the E.S.L.C., and there was a likeness of myself as its founder on one side of it. Some enemies of mine started a wicked story. They said this was evidence that the E.S.L.C. was the nucleus of Kotelawala's private army, which would ultimately join the Japanese and fight the British.

Strangely enough, Admiral Layton took this fantastic theory seriously and called upon me for a written explanation. I refused to give him anything of the kind. I told him that if he suspected me of treachery I would resign, and he could carry on the war-effort without me.

He was ultimately advised to forget the episode and continue to rely on my co-operation. How could he doubt it? The ever-resourceful Oliver Goonetilleke suggested that he should play his usual weekly game of tennis with me and behave as though nothing had happened. He did, and we were good friends again.

There are many stories I can relate about him, but I wonder how they will appear in print. Here are just two of them. I once accompanied him to the Colombo Town Hall, where there was a variety entertainment in support of the war-effort. The first scene we saw was a comic sketch in which two drunken sailors began abusing each other. One of them asked the other, "Who do you think you are?" He replied, "Nelson," and went on to say that he meant Admiral Nelson of Trafalgar Square. Whereupon the other said

he was Admiral Layton, Commander-in-Chief of Ceylon. "Oh!" said the other. "A cushy job—stick to it."

Layton was not amused. In fact, he was so annoyed that he ordered a member of his staff to find out the Service number of the comedian, and threatened to have his blood for breakfast the next morning. When I reminded him that it was only a joke he told me that a joke was a very serious thing in war-time. He then got up and walked out of the hall, and I followed him, wondering why he could not laugh at himself even when there was a war on.

Another Layton story is about his experience at the Mental Home near Colombo, which had been damaged by Japanese bombs. He visited the inmates there, and when he revealed his identity to one of them who asked him who he was, the lunatic remarked, "Oh! You think you are Admiral Layton? So did I until last week. You will soon realize you are not."

This time the Admiral was amused.

When Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten was about to bring his S.E.A.C. headquarters to Ceylon he was doubtful whether he could recruit efficient cooks and other servants to run a large and highly organized establishment. He wanted to engage British Servicemen for this purpose; but the authorities in England frowned on this proposal. The problem, like many others, was solved by leaving it to me to deliver the goods. I had to live up to my reputation.

With willing helpers, including women, working hard, I soon had the required number of servants perfectly trained and taught, among other things, all the intricacies of American cooking, apart from how to use modern kitchen equipment which they had never handled before.

The people of Colombo were praised for standing up magnificently to the first Japanese air-raid. The civilian casualties were very few. R.A.F. fighters defeated the enemy, who withdrew after they had sustained severe losses. If the Japanese had any plan for invading Ceylon at that time they seemed to have abandoned it.

One disappointing feature of our baptism of fire was the panicky exodus from Colombo of large numbers of people

including labourers whose services were essential in the harbour area. In a broadcast talk I appealed to every true son of Ceylon to remain at his post, irrespective of any danger or difficulty, and continue his normal occupation with greater zeal than during peace-time. Any attempt at running away for reasons of personal safety was not only cowardly but suicidal. Starvation would overtake us sooner than the enemy.

When the War ended I said, in a speech in the State Council, that I was sorry for Japan, who had given us silks at 75 cents a yard and shoes at 75 cents a pair. Japan had also taught the world what patriotism and valour were, but she had got what she deserved after trying to bite off more than she could chew. Anyway, I hoped that Japan would get a better peace than that which Ceylon had got about 130 years earlier.

I gave the Council a catalogue of the achievements of the Board of Ministers, kept together by their leader, D. S. Senanayake, during the emergency, out of which the country had emerged almost unscathed. I claimed that the Ministers had been able to save Ceylon from the disasters that befell other countries in Asia.

The only people in Ceylon who actively opposed our war-effort were the Trotskyist Sama Samajists, whose leaders had been imprisoned for their own safety. These men had broken gaol when a Japanese invasion was threatened, and had escaped to India. On their return their followers and some others welcomed them as heroes. This, I said, was something I could not understand.

7

Towards Freedom

The strenuous and persistent efforts of D. S. Senanayake led to a declaration by the British Government in May 1943 on proposals for the reform of the Ceylon Constitution. This was a great triumph for the new Leader of the State Council, as such a gesture was not what one might have expected from Whitehall at a time when there could be no distractions from Britain's war-effort.

This declaration was regarded as an indication of a noteworthy change in colonial policy as far as the non-European races of the Commonwealth were concerned. It amounted to a rather cautious undertaking that the post-war consideration of reforms would be directed towards a grant of responsible government to Ceylon.

The Board of Ministers accepted the declaration as marking a definite advance towards freedom. We admitted it did not promise everything for which we had asked. We did not like some of the limitations placed on this first step towards full responsible government, but we were given the opportunity of drafting a Constitution of our own, instead of having one thrust upon us by a Commission from overseas. And we lost no time in drafting such a Constitution in accordance with our interpretation of the Imperial Government's promises. We felt, however, that Ceylon should not be satisfied with anything less than Dominion status.

When a difference of opinion arose between the Ministers and the Secretary of State for the Colonies regarding a suitable Commission or Conference mentioned in the declaration of 1943 we withdrew our draft Constitution and introduced a fresh draft in which we proposed the removal of the safeguards and restrictions stipulated in the Whitehall

declarations. These limitations provided for the "reservation" of such matters as defence, foreign relations, trade, shipping, and currency, and the rights and property of non-resident British subjects in Ceylon. What was promised was responsible government "in all matters of internal civil administration."

Sir Ivor Jennings, the great authority on Constitutional questions, has expressed the view that the terms of reference of the Soulbury Commission, appointed in 1944, were undoubtedly a breach of an undertaking given by the British Government in May 1943. "What is worse," says Sir Ivor,

> was the manner in which this breach was brought about. It left a very nasty taste in one's mouth. When it was all over, Colonel Oliver Stanley, Secretary of State for the Colonies, remarked with typical English understatement that this affair had been badly handled.

When Lord Soulbury and the other Commissioners came out to Ceylon in December 1944 the Ministers decided not to co-operate with them. Officially we held aloof. We did not defend them or our draft Constitution, and we did not attack anybody else.

But unofficially a good deal of political manœuvring went on. To quote Sir Ivor Jennings again:

> It may not have been obvious to the Commission that all the early Ceylonese invitations started from Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, but the Commission played up. It must have been obvious that the crowds that collected in every town and village even before the Commission arrived were the result of organization; what may not have been obvious was that the Air Raid Precautions Service had been mobilised. [Sir Oliver was then Civil Defence Commissioner.]

Lord Soulbury's tact and D. S. Senanayake's good sense helped to bridge the gap between the United Kingdom Government and the Ceylonese Ministers.

D. S. Senanayake was invited to London in July 1945. When he saw the Soulbury Report he realized that it proposed a big advance on the Donoughmore Constitution. He now sought to improve on the Soulbury Report and to press

for complete self-government. In the end Senanayake accepted the decision to postpone the major issue of Dominion status; but he renewed his demand for this seventeen months later and was supported by the Governor of Ceylon, Sir Henry Moore, who later became our first Governor-General.

The Soulbury Constitution brought Ceylon to the threshold of Dominion status. It reproduced in large measure the British model, and sought to frame a Government for an Eastern people on the pattern of Western democracy. The Commission recognized Ceylon's special qualification for adopting the British type of Constitution and adapting it to her peculiar needs and problems. What Ceylon deserved was also what the politically conscious majority of her people desired.

It was the Soulbury Commission's conviction that the Constitution it recommended was the best means of developing self-government in Ceylon on healthy and progressive lines, and the British Government gave us a categorical assurance that Ceylon would receive the status of a self-governing Dominion "in a comparatively short space of time." Thus the path was cleared for a final escape from the grip of colonialism and the achievement of complete independence.

When the State Council decided to accept this constitutional scheme for Ceylon fifty-one out of fifty-four members present on that historic occasion voted for it.

After the verdict the Leader of the House, D. S. Senanayake, declared emotionally, "I shall never forget the responsibility placed on me by reason of your confidence in me. Lanka is truly on the march, on the last lap, towards the goal of freedom."

Two Indian members were among the minority of three who voted against acceptance of the scheme.

How was this indication of national unity achieved? It was 'all done by kindness'—friendliness, goodwill, co-operation, mutual trust, and sincerity. For engendering this spirit the country could not be too grateful to D. S. Senanayake and his inspiring leadership.

Ceylon now had a supreme opportunity of showing other subject peoples and victims of colonialism how to win their freedom by peaceful and constitutional methods.

A noteworthy feature of the debate was that three Tamil Congress members voted for the acceptance of the Soulbury Constitution in spite of all their leader, G. G. Ponnambalam, had said against any scheme that would not give 'fifty-fifty' representation to the minorities and the majority community. The Soulbury Commission had rejected his proposals, as they would have perpetuated the vicious principle of communalism in Ceylon politics.

The Tamil Congress leader was away from Ceylon at the time; but his wife was present in the State Council gallery to frown on what looked like a betrayal of the 'fifty-fifty' cause by three Tamil Councillors.

I remember a celebration of Senanayake's triumph, almost immediately after the Council adjourned, at the residence of D. R. Wijewardene, then a sick man, but affable and happy to see us toasting Ceylon's march to freedom in champagne, of which even the strict teetotaller Sir Oliver Goonetilleke was tempted to take a sip apprehensively, while "D. R." himself had to abstain.

When D. S. Senanayake went to England on the invitation of the Secretary of State it became necessary to elect an Acting Leader of the State Council. There was much canvassing and many manœuvres to push me into that office or to keep me out at any cost. In the end three of us had to draw lots for it. We did it three times. We all drew blanks twice. In the third round a future Leader of the Opposition, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, drew the right scrap of paper. This must have given him the idea that he was destined to be D. S. Senanayake's successor. But Destiny had other plans for him. The Old Man lived too long. Bandaranaike gave up hopes of succeeding him, and crossed the floor of the House.

An apocryphal story related about Bandaranaike at the time was that when he was at Oxford young Anthony Eden once saw him pass by and remarked to other undergraduates, "There goes the future Prime Minister of Ceylon." Strangely

enough, no such prophetic remark was made about me when I was at Cambridge. But one of my Cambridge contemporaries was C. C. Desai, who was destined to play so important a part with me in giving birth to the idea of a Conference of Asian Prime Ministers, of whom fate had made me one.

Now that we were going to have a Parliament based on the British model, it was necessary to form political parties to contest a General Election. The members of the existing Government decided to form what was called the United National Party. I was asked to organize the first meeting of the party. We had three hundred signatories to request that such a party should be formed. I took the chair, and immediately called upon D. S. Senanayake to preside.

From its very inception this party, which is still the only party in Ceylon capable of forming a stable democratic government, and which has been in power for over seven years, was ridiculed by its critics as being neither united nor entirely national in character. It was nicknamed the "Until New Parliament" party, and at a later stage was accused of nepotism and called the "Uncle-Nephew Party"—the nephew being myself. The belief persisted among our political enemies that my only claim to distinction was the fact that D. S. Senanayake's brother had married my aunt.

Anyway, what was described as my galvanic energy was put to good use in organizing and strengthening the United National Party, and in keeping the personal rivalries it engendered under control. I became chairman of the party's Propaganda Committee. It was my business to find the funds for election expenses and to conduct the campaign, which I did with vigour and zest. The party's greatest asset was its leader, and it was at this time that I called D. S. Senanayake the Father of the Nation. It is as such that he will always be remembered and loved by his people.

The aims of the U.N.P. were well defined by its leader, D. S. Senanayake, when he said that what we desired was a free hand and a united Ceylonese nation that would hold its head high in the world and ensure for every citizen freedom from want and the fullest opportunity for self-development.

We wished to have proud and independent peasants who would not be drilled into labourers toiling in gangs under supervising overseers at the direction of bureaucrats, in accordance with the plans of Marxist theorists. We had our own tradition of co-operation and mutual help. We had in our land followers of the four greatest religions of the world living together in harmony and respecting each other's faith. We had preserved for the world the doctrines of the Buddha in their pristine purity. Buddhism had taught us the brotherhood of man and tolerance of all. As a party we believed in and stood by the individual's fundamental right to freedom of worship. We would not have an exotic ideology corrupt our body politic and disrupt its members. We had to keep our national character unsullied by contaminating foreign influences.

In the several racial elements that went to form our united nation we had distinguishable characteristics that were a source of pride to the races concerned. The energy and thrift of the Tamils; the sound business ability of the Moors; the thirst for adventure and the cheerfulness under all conditions of the descendants of Europeans who found a home in Ceylon; and the capacity for feeling and inspiring friendliness which was so marked in the Sinhalese—all these had to be interwoven into the texture of the character of the new Ceylonese nation we planned to build, which would resolutely move together to the goal of independence.

It will be seen that the ideals we set before us were as strongly opposed to the new menace of Communist totalitarianism as they were to the colonial bondage from which we were about to achieve complete liberation.

In October 1946 there were widespread strikes, fomented by Marxist politicians. Most of the strikers were daily-paid workers in the departments under my Ministry. Processions through the streets threatened to lead to mob violence at any moment. The strikers seemed to be out for my blood. They once mistook the Mayor of Colombo (R. A. de Mel at that time) for me, stopped his car, and assaulted him when he got out of it.

When I heard of this incident I decided to go to the hos-

pital to see the Mayor, who had been taken there with rather serious injuries. My Secretary advised me not to venture out of my office, as the angry crowds might set upon me in a murderous rage. He embraced me in his anxiety to prevent my going out. I told him that if he really loved me he should come with me. But he had a wife and children, and decided not to accompany me. I then showed him that I was quite capable of taking care of myself. I took a revolver out of my pocket and fired a shot at the lamp in the porch just outside my office. The lamp was shattered, and I immediately gained a reputation of a crack shot, apart from being absolutely fearless. When I drove through the streets to the hospital my car did not come up against any strikers.

There were many gloomy forebodings at that time. Some people lived in constant dread of street battles and indiscriminate shooting. It was felt that things had come to a sorry pass when Colombo's leading citizens were at the mercy of furious mobs, when armed men with steel helmets were seen at strategic points, when trains might be wrecked at any moment, and all the lights threatened to go out in the city of Colombo. Alarmists imagined that a revolution was about to break out just when Ceylon was on the eve of achieving her freedom by peaceful means.

In June 1947 Government clerks went on strike for the first time in Ceylon. Here again Marxist leaders took a prominent part in what appeared to be an attempt to paralyse the Administration. But after some show of violence, the clerks began to return to work when they found that they had lost the sympathy of the public as a result of accepting irresponsible leadership under the influence of revolutionary politicians.

The Essential Service Labour Corps, which I had organized during the War, efficiently performed the work of the strikers in the harbour, and showed on occasions that they could meet thuggery with two blows to one. In fact, they were becoming such an effective force that it was feared I would use them for supporting a Fascist régime. And so the corps was eventually disbanded. Not that I ever aspired to be a Fascist.

Although the United National Party did not have an absolute majority in the House of Representatives, its leader was the obvious choice for the Premiership. The country was indeed fortunate to have a man of D. S. Senanayake's stature and statesmanship, with his dynamic energy and unrivalled experience of public affairs, as its first Prime Minister. He chose his Cabinet wisely and as well as he could in difficult circumstances. My portfolio, as was to be expected, was Transport and Works, as I had been Minister of Communications and Works, as it was then called in the State Council for over ten years.

The hard core of the new Cabinet of fourteen was represented by five members of the old Board of Ministers. Two of the newcomers were Tamils who stood for the policy of co-operation with the majority community.

The life of the Soulbury Constitution, which now began to function, was very brief because it was soon to be superseded by a Constitution that granted us full Dominion status. We realized the difficulty of making the British type of parliamentary democracy work in an Asian country. As Lord Soulbury reminded us, it was a very difficult form of government to conduct, for it demanded from all concerned high qualities of patience, forbearance, moderation, and, above all, tolerance and willingness to compromise.

Tolerance was the basic principle of the policy we had to pursue, and we recognized the fact that we had to protect and not to oppress the minorities whose views differed from those of the majority.

8

Independence

February 4, 1948, is an unforgettable date in our island story. On this day foreign rule in Ceylon came to an end, after more than four centuries. It was a day of national rejoicing and also a day of dedication. Thousands flocked to temples, mosques, and churches to render thanks for the great gift of freedom. On this day was born the new and independent Dominion of Ceylon.

The State opening of the Parliament of Ceylon was performed by the Duke of Gloucester. In the Speech from the Throne, conveyed to both Houses by His Royal Highness, the King said, "After a period of nearly a century and a half, during which the status of Ceylon was that of a colony in my Empire, she now takes her place as a free and independent member of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

It was a matter for profound satisfaction that Ceylon had been able to achieve her freedom by constitutional and peaceful methods in collaboration with the Government of the United Kingdom.

We were all aware at that time that, having won freedom, it was our task to preserve it, and to make the best use of it in developing the country's resources and promoting our people's welfare.

In that memorable year I led a Ceylon goodwill mission to Burma, conveying sacred Buddhist relics for exposition in Rangoon.

This was a result of the Burmese Foreign Minister, U Tin Tut's, visit to Ceylon during our independence celebrations, when he was my guest and we became good friends. He told me that he had been greatly impressed by the effect on

the people of Ceylon of the exhibition of the sacred relics of two of the Buddha's disciples. He thought the pacifying influence of a similar exhibition in Burma would put an end to revolutionary activities in that country.

It was not without difficulty that I arranged for the mission. Ceylon's Government would not bear the cost of it, and we had to start a fund for a pilgrimage to Burma. When we arrived there with the relics we were rather alarmed to find the airport heavily guarded, and soldiers with fixed bayonets surrounding the plane for our protection. For a moment I thought that there was the danger of bandits descending upon us and seizing the sacred relics. But I was assured that this was a routine precaution in those troubled times.

In Rangoon we found an atmosphere of high tension and apprehension. A general strike had disorganized transport and the life of the city generally. Arrangements for our reception were likely to be wrecked if we ourselves did not help to pacify the hostile crowds by taking the relics in solemn procession through the streets. This I was determined to do at any cost.

Our first problem was to get enough petrol for the vehicles to be used in the procession. As long as a car that conveyed us carried the Ceylon flag there was no danger of any interference by the strikers. We got all the petrol we wanted not only for ourselves but for some of the Burmese Ministers and officials as well. My Private Secretary appointed himself Petrol Controller for the occasion, and enforced a system of strict rationing.

There was a mammoth demonstration by the strikers and other enemies of the Government at the time, and it required some courage for us to carry out our arrangements for the procession. But I put my faith in the appeal which the sacred relics we carried would have to Buddhist people even if they were on the verge of violent revolt.

The procession moved on with impressively amplified chanting of "Pirith" by a few monks, and the other accompaniments of solemn pageantry. As soon as we approached the turbulent crowds they forgot all their hatred of the

Government, and piously bowed in obeisance to the sacred relics.

Burmese statesmen will, I think, never forget the debt they owe me for the part the Ceylon mission played in restoring peace and order in Rangoon at a time when they feared a national calamity. I like to think that I succeeded in quelling a revolution by peaceful means.

On my way to Burma I was disappointed with the treatment our mission received at the Calcutta airport. Things were quite different, I remembered, when the British ruled India. I then had no complaint to make against lack of efficiency and courtesy. When I called on the Governor of Bengal, the veteran Rajagopalachari, whom American funsters sometimes call "Rugger-playing Charlie," I asked him the reason for this decline from pre-independent standards. It was an embarrassing question for him to answer. He got over it by saying that, if India's officials were efficient in the time of the British, it was through fear; and if they were inefficient now, it was through affection.

Beaten by him on this ground, I tried to get my own back, and asked him another question. If he relied so much on the affection of his people, and if he believed in non-violence, why had he to be heavily guarded by armed soldiers riding in jeeps in front of and behind his car? He chuckled, and replied that in India, as in other countries, there were lunatics against whom Governors and others had to be protected.

When I found he was not of much assistance in getting the state of affairs remedied at the airport I asked my Secretary, speaking in Sinhalese, to phone to the airport and say that His Excellency wanted the mission from Ceylon to receive every attention and courtesy. The result was that when we got back to the airport we found a marked difference in the attitude of the officials, who were all extremely respectful and polite.

My next meeting with Rajaji was at New Delhi, when he was Governor-General of India. He asked me whether I was a vegetarian, and I told him I was a good Buddhist—that is, I ate what I was given. A ministerial colleague of mine was asked a similar question, and he said he was a Hindu.

His reward was that he had to share Rajaji's austerity meal, while I had everything that I wanted to eat.

My third contact with Rajaji was not too happy. It was by correspondence shortly after the Bandung Conference. He had made the rather rude remark that I was like a jackdaw pretending that it had the plumage of a peacock. When I was asked whether I had anything to say to this I remarked that Rajaji seemed to be in his dotage, but when I was as old as he I would perhaps be worse.

A few days later I got a long letter from him apologizing for his unwarranted criticism of me, and saying that he deserved a more severe castigation than I had given him.

In a broadcast message to the Burmese people I said:

"We see all around us the sights and sounds of war which all humanity profoundly prayed would never again darken our lives. The world's newspapers have resumed the war of nerves. The world's radio once more blares the trumpet blasts of war. This is all very unnerving to two countries like ours which have only just regained their independence. We have known enough soul-destroying terror and bondage to teach us never to want to impose such bondage on any other people. We want peace with all our hearts, not only for ourselves but for the common man throughout the world, regardless of colour, race, or creed.

"It is therefore our special privilege as Buddhist nations to organize for peace while other nations more materialistic than ours prepare for war. Burma and Ceylon can give the lead that the world requires. . . . There is no time to wait, for events are hurrying to catch up with destiny."

I ventured to suggest during my visit to Rangoon that free Ceylon, free Burma, free India, and Thailand should get together with a view to formulating a joint policy of peace. We were young nations, in the modern sense of nationality, and it was vital that we should have peace both externally and internally in order to preserve our new freedom and raise our living standards.

I was criticized at the time for having proposed an Asian

Peace Bloc, which was supposed to be inconsistent with Ceylon's membership of the British Commonwealth and her hopes of becoming a member of U.N.O.

Some weeks later when I was in London I said in a B.B.C. talk: "I look forward to the years when the people of Asian countries will have a hearing in the Councils of the World State. I look forward to the time when we shall be able to lead and guide the world on the paths of tolerance, of peace, and of brotherly love, which our religions and our philosophies have taught us to tread. That will be when the world will have given up deference to the laws of the jungle, and when humanity has come to learn that the common man only needs the simple things of life, food, shelter, clothing, and education. And all these things without the fear of war or disease or dictatorship."

In the same talk I said that, though Ceylon's Parliament would be run on the lines of Westminster, I did not think that we should continue to be mere imitators of the British way of life. We must make our own contribution to world thought.

I had visited Burma, India, and Pakistan on my way to London, and everywhere I found a spirit of exultation springing from national freedom. It seemed to me as if new qualities of human energy had been released, and creative impulses stirred, among nearly 600,000,000 people in this part of the world. I felt that whatever policies these free Asian countries might adopt, either with regard to domestic politics or with regard to their views on world affairs, they were bound to have repercussions in Europe and America.

At the same time I was struck by the reactions of the former colonial rulers to the new order in Asia. They had shed their assumption of racial superiority and adjusted themselves to changed conditions with the magnanimity and spirit of goodwill which I admire so much among British characteristics. They did not sulk. They even reminded us of our independence when we were apt to forget it. And they showed more respect for our National Anthem, I noticed, than some of our own people.

One result of Ceylon's peaceful transition from colonial

status to independence was that complete political freedom brought very little change in the methods of the Government and the habits of the people. We were not yet fully aware of the magnitude of what we had achieved. Many public servants still did not realize that they were now serving their own people.

Politicians who had found it easy enough to make violent speeches attacking our foreign rulers now saw that it was much more difficult to make constructive speeches on subjects affecting the welfare of the people. They were now on trial, and had to give evidence of their capacity for patriotic service and their sincerity.

In the years before freedom the nation had to find its leaders from among a privileged minority who had the advantages of an English education. We were now at the beginning of a new era in which we would have to draw our strength in an increasing measure from the fresh sources of power that would be released with the phenomenal spread of education and literacy throughout the land, and the ultimate use of the national languages for official purposes. Our people had to give up the habit of recalling with delight the British Governors and high officials they had met and dined with, or the princes with whom they had shaken hands.

Ceylon's independence enabled her to make her voice heard in international affairs. She could also enter into trade relations with any country she liked. For instance, she insisted on her right to sell rubber in Red China, and could not be influenced by the U.S.A. to put an end to her pact with a Communist country.

In July 1951 S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, Minister of Health and Local Government, "conquered himself," as he put it, and resigned from the Cabinet because he felt that the Government was not making the best use of the opportunities that freedom had given to Ceylon. I succeeded him as Leader of the House of Representatives.

9

The Lost Leader

The death of D. S. Senanayake after a riding accident early in 1952 was a national calamity. What everybody wondered was how the country could recover from this staggering blow. People of all communities and classes had come to regard him as an irreplaceable leader with unique qualities of greatness and goodness. No politician was better loved by his friends or more respected by his enemies. Not all the machinations of the Marxists could prevent the masses from revering him as a patriot worthy to be compared with the greatest of their country's ancient kings.

Who would succeed him as Prime Minister? Logically, and in the normal course, the Governor-General would send for the Deputy Leader of the Party in power, who was also the most experienced member of the Cabinet, the Leader of the House of Representatives, and one who had been in constant touch with D. S. Senanayake right through his public career, and could claim to know that leader's mind better than any other Minister. In other words, I could be forgiven for regarding myself as the obvious choice.

Imagine my amazement when I was told that the Old Man had actually named his son Dudley Senanayake as his successor, and not me. I could only say that this was untrue. It was incredible that I should be let down by the leader I trusted so much, and who had never given me the slightest hint that he did not think much of my capacity for leadership.

I was told later that when the Governor-General, Lord Soulbury, once visited D. S. Senanayake in hospital, where he had gone for a check-up, he happened to ask him whom

he would name as his successor. And he is said to have replied that it would be his son, Dudley, who had succeeded him as Minister of Agriculture and Lands. It was also suggested that he was probably thinking of what might happen ten to fifteen years from then, when Dudley would be more mature, and I might have realized other ambitions.

Now, when I am able to look upon the events of that period with more objectivity, I am inclined to think that D. S. Senanayake never made any such recommendations; but that what he had been alleged to say was fitted into the framework of a conspiracy to keep me out of office. If my surmise is correct, it was a masterpiece of strategy, based on the truism that dead men tell no tales.

Anyway, Lord Soulbury, who was in England on leave, had asked the Acting Governor-General, Sir Alan Rose, not to appoint a new Prime Minister in his absence. He had felt it was his duty to do so himself.

On March 24, 1952, I wrote the following letter to Sir Alan Rose, the Officer Administering the Government, enclosing a letter addressed to Lord Soulbury:

MY DEAR ALAN,

The document in a separate cover is intended to be handed over to H.E. Lord Soulbury on his arrival on Wednesday, and I shall be glad if you will be good enough to see that this is done immediately he arrives. In fairness to you, in view of certain references I have been compelled to make, I am annexing a copy of this communication for your information. It is the only copy that has left my office, and I trust that Lord Soulbury would not object to this action of mine.

I feel sad to think that I should give you such a headache over this, but you will appreciate that I have given the closest thought to the present situation, and the country's good has been uppermost in my mind. I cannot be a party to any move which I consciously feel will hand the country over to the ranks of the Leftists whom I have opposed, both by precept and example, throughout my entire political career. It is not that I am hankering after office, but I feel that I owe a duty to myself as much as to the country, to make Lord Soulbury aware of the situation with the utmost despatch.

Even if it means that this is my 'swan-song' in politics, it

is appropriate that the advice and guidance of one who has helped to direct the country's affairs for so many years would be given due heed before anything is done which is likely to set in motion the forces of destruction which everyone alike on our side of the House would wish to be resisted stoutly to the bitter end.

Yours sincerely,

J. L. KOTELAWALA

This was my letter to Lord Soulbury:

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

Ceylon has become aware, through a communiqué issued by the Officer Administering the Government that you had expressed a desire, before your departure on leave, to return to the Island in the event of the Office of the Prime Minister falling vacant in your absence.

The communiqué that was finally issued did not contain a statement which was fortunately deleted at my instance, as all the Ministers who were present when the communiqué was considered at Queen's House last morning agreed that its inclusion would cause grave misgivings in the public mind by reason of the very nature of the statement itself.

I refer to a statement you are said to have made to Sir Alan before your departure, that the Prime Minister had privately indicated to you whom you should send for in order to form a Government should his office fall vacant. You must be aware of a statement which the late Prime Minister made in reference to Mr Bandaranaike's crossing the floor, when he clearly pointed out that the question of his successor is not a matter for him to determine.

We all know that Mr Senanayake meant what he said on that occasion, and, knowing him as I do through close association with him and a full knowledge of his political acts and intentions, I must confess that I fear Sir Alan must have misunderstood what you told him, because I for one cannot reconcile such an act with his own recent public statement to which I referred above. Giving currency to such a statement, as you will see, is likely to discredit Mr Senanayake whom the whole country regards as a great national figure.

The question of who should be commissioned to form a Government in the event of the office of the Prime Minister

falling vacant is so much a matter of convention that the Leader of the Party in power is customarily summoned to do so immediately the Office falls vacant. If you should now contemplate to act on any other basis, it is my painful duty to have to point out that such an act would constitute a serious breach of convention, besides setting up an utterly unacceptable constitutional precedent, that the Governor-General can make or break an established political Party by exercising his discretion in any method other than the conventional practice referred to.

The late Mr Senanayake was summoned to form a Government by your predecessor as the head of the largest single Party of the House of Representatives. In the tragic circumstances in which he has been taken away from us, it is my duty to point out that, as Leader of the House of Representatives appointed by him, in which capacity I have presided at meetings of the Cabinet in his absence, as the one to whom he delegated the functions of his Ministry during his recent absence abroad, as the Senior Vice-President of the United National Party which he led, as the Chairman of the U.N.P. "Protect the Country Fund," and as the one who officiated as the Chairman of the U.N.P. Youth League at his personal instance, I claim that there should have been no delay whatever in my being summoned to form a Government.

That this obvious step was not taken would appear to be due to some oral suggestion, which you had personally made before your departure on leave to the Officer Administering the Government, in the course of which you appear to have informed him about certain indications which the late Prime Minister had given you about the question of his successor. The result is that a great campaign of political mischief has been set afoot during the past few days which is likely to have grave repercussions not merely on the U.N.P., but on the entire country for which the blame will have to be placed in the appropriate quarters.

I am,

Your Excellency's Obedient Servant,

J. L. KOTELAWALA

Leader of the House of Representatives
and Senior Vice-President of the U.N.P.

Sir Alan acknowledged receipt of my letter on the same day and said that he would hand over the enclosure to Lord Soulbury as soon as he met him on his return to Ceylon.

Lord Soulbury never answered my letter.

By the time he returned to Ceylon a campaign had been set in motion in favour of Dudley Senanayake as the most acceptable successor to his father.

Meanwhile there had been a good deal of manœuvring and intrigue among my ministerial colleagues and others, and tremendous pressure had been brought to bear on Dudley to overcome his reluctance to accept the Premiership, which he clearly saw should be offered to me in the first instance as he knew full well the part I played to bring his father to the position he held. Until the dawn of the day of Lord Soulbury's return Dudley firmly said, "No." But those who wanted him so badly (or who wanted me to be deprived of the Premiership at any cost) persisted in breaking down his resistance. He was made to understand that he was letting the country down. It was even suggested that it would be said of him that the Father of the Nation had no worthy son. He yielded at last.

And I got a message that what the most astute of my colleagues had predicted had come to pass: Dudley was willing.

I suspected that I had been the victim of a base conspiracy and of stabs in the back even from some of those I considered my best friends. What angered me most was that they were not straightforward enough to tell me frankly that they did not want me. They chose to pretend that they wanted me as Premier and worked secretly against me. At least, that was what I felt at the time.

I had lost all faith in some of my colleagues, and was so sick of everything that I decided to give up public life altogether and drive myself into the wilderness. I would even leave my country, and not return to it for many years.

The next morning my mother came to see me, and begged of me not to leave the country. The same afternoon, at a carefully chosen auspicious hour fixed by an astrologer, Dudley Senanayake arrived at my home at Kandawala to persuade me to join the Cabinet.

I could not help feeling that there must have been a certain amount of panic among the party stalwarts when they contemplated the prospect of having to do without the

U.N.P. Fund of over a million rupees, on which only I could draw as Propaganda Chief and Treasurer. They could not run the risk of my not handing over the money to them in time to fight an election.

On sober reflection I realized the sanest and most patriotic thing I could do was to accept office and continue to be Minister of Transport and Works. It would have been an insult to the memory of our dead leader if I forgot all he had taught me, and did not place my country before personal considerations in this crisis in my life.

As a good soldier, I should not run away. As a good sportsman, I should continue to play for my side even if I could not be captain. I made a public appeal to the nation in the following words:

"I have been associated with the late Prime Minister for over twenty-two years in the task of building a free nation, and should be the last man to wish the freedom we have gained to be overcome by the destructive forces which threaten to overrun our land.

"I congratulate the new Prime Minister on his appointment. Every right-thinking man will wish him well in the tasks that lie ahead of him. . . . I call upon all my countrymen to rally round the new Prime Minister with the same measure of support they gave his father.

"My own support will always be available to serve the cause of democracy in my motherland."

The Press welcomed what they called my "stirring call to the nation," and praised me highly for deciding to cooperate with the new Premier.

The new Prime Minister decided to have a General Election almost immediately in order to get the country's mandate for his party's policy. I threw myself energetically into the electioneering campaign by his side. Our efforts resulted in the U.N.P. obtaining an absolute majority in the House.

The chief issue on which we fought this election was that we stood for democracy against the threat of totalitarianism. We did our best to convince the voters that, if we were defeated, the political freedom we had won would be destroyed, and the country would be exposed to a much more

tyrannical domination than the old colonialism at its worst. The Marxist parties would assume power, and might destroy our religious and national traditions.

The country's verdict was hailed as a triumph of democracy and an assurance that Ceylon would remain free, and be able to make the most of that freedom.

10

Threat of Dismissal

This brings me to a document known as "'The Premier Stakes." Its authorship is now only of academic interest. But, since developments arising out of it led to my being asked to resign if I wished to avoid being dismissed, I cannot ignore it altogether.

I can best describe it as a cleverly composed collection of various impressions, often distorted but substantially correct, of my feelings and sentiments, expressed and repressed, at a time when nearly everybody's hand seemed to be against me. It reflects and highlights my mood of deep resentment, disappointment, and bitterness. If I had caused this document to be published I could not very well remain in Dudley Senanayake's Cabinet. But the new Premier ignored it for several weeks, while the contents of the document fathered on me were freely discussed at every level.

Finally, Premier Dudley was prevailed upon to send me this message by cable while I was in New York on my way to represent Ceylon at an Ottawa Conference:

> The publication of 'The Premier Stakes, 1952' has created a situation which makes it impossible for me to retain you as a member of my Cabinet. I shall therefore be glad if you will hand in your resignation to me by top-secret telegram by our Embassy in Washington.
>
> I have decided that this matter should not be delayed beyond Monday, September 15. I regret the circumstances that have compelled me to take this decision.

The message was delivered to me with the utmost formality by an official of the Ceylon Embassy in America, who was very correctly dressed for the occasion. He took it out

of an inner pocket of his coat, and insisted on handing it to me personally. He said that his instructions were that I should read it myself, and not get it read out to me.

When I had digested the contents of the cabled message I asked the spruce diplomat if it had been received in code.

"Yes, sir," he said. And it had been duly decoded.

Would he send a reply in plain English, signed Kotelawala? He certainly would.

The reply I dictated made our uneasy diplomat shrink from its emphatic and rudely specific terms. The Prime Minister was to be asked to thrust the message he sent me into the place where I thought it belonged.

Needless to say, no reply was sent to Ceylon in these terms through the prescribed channel of our Embassy in Washington.

Two days before this bombshell burst my Secretary Nadesan took the opportunity of contacting a friend of his, Mr E. O. Cocke, Vice-President of Trans-World Airline, who lived in New York. Cocke was out when he phoned, but rang back to Nadesan the next day and said that R. S. Damon, the President of T.W.A., would be honoured to have my company at lunch with his full Board of Directors and top executives the next day. We accepted the invitation, and Nadesan and I got ready to leave the seventh floor of the Waldorf-Astoria, where we were staying, for the sixteenth floor, where a very elaborate luncheon was arranged.

T.W.A.'s top men, not only from America but from all over the world, had come there for an important managerial conference at the time, and they were all there. We had a pleasant luncheon, cracked jokes, and Damon's parting remark to me was, "Sir John, if there is anything in the world I can do for you, do not hesitate to ask me." We said our good-byes, as we were due to leave for Montreal the next day, *en route* to Ottawa, to attend a conference of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, of which I was the Vice-President. The other Ceylon delegates had already gone to Ottawa.

We had just got back to our apartment, and hardly taken

off our coats, when the official from the Ceylon Embassy at Washington arrived with his top-secret message.

I flew into a rage, and asked Nadesan to go back to Ceylon by himself, reminding him that he was a Government officer and must do his duty. As for those at home who had planned to drive me out of public life, they could go to hell together as far as I was concerned.

Nadesan, however, argued with me convincingly, and showed a loyalty to me that warmed my heart. He would not desert me, and he made me feel that the best thing to do would be to act on his advice. But before taking a decision I telephoned my erstwhile colleague Sir Claude Corea, our Ambassador, who was in Mexico City at the time. Claude's advice to me was the same as Nadesan's. He told me in Sinhalese, "Whatever happens, do not give in."

I then asked Nadesan to ring up Damon and ask him to keep his promise of doing anything in the world that I wanted done. Of course, I knew passages were difficult to get at that particular time, for some reason or other, both from London to New York and from New York to London or Paris. My brother Justin was overdue by a week in New York because he could not get a passage.

Damon was astounded, and did not understand what it was all about, because I had told him only a few minutes ago that we were leaving for Ottawa the next day. Nadesan said that we had an urgent telegram which necessitated my return to Ceylon at once, and that we preferred to go through Paris. This was another brainwave of his, in order to avoid the publicity in London, where we were sure to be mobbed for statements, photographed, and made to feel awkward. On the passenger list our names were given as Mr John and Mr Para.

A Ceylon newspaper's representative in New York was downstairs at the Waldorf when the Prime Minister's message was delivered to me. He rang through to my room saying that he had this information, and wanted to know whether I had a statement to make. I told him that I had no information to give him, and that as far as I was concerned I was leaving the next day for Ottawa.

Damon was true to his word. He off-loaded two passengers from the T.W.A. plane to Paris the next day, and put us on board. We reached Paris without any of the pomp and show that marked our arrival there on the way out. There was no one to lay the red carpet for us, no protocol officers to meet us, no champagne in the V.I.P. room. Instead we were carrying bits and pieces of baggage and waiting for the overnight plane to take us to Ceylon. The only comfort of that trip was a palatial hotel suite at the Hotel George V in Paris which T.W.A. provided pending the departure for Ceylon of their aircraft, which was late by several hours. While we waited I thought I might deposit a fairly large sum of money I had with me in a bank there, in case I decided to go to France if I had to leave my country. I contacted a lady friend of mine in Paris who took me to a bank; but as soon as it was known that I was a Cabinet Minister they refused to open an account for me without consulting the Ceylon Government.

On the way back we touched down at numerous points, and, more or less half-way between Paris and Colombo, we stopped at Saudi Arabia, where apparently every transit passenger needed a visa for which money had to be paid. The only reason why transit visas were required appeared to be that it was a form of revenue to the country. We had no visas, and when the Saudi Arabian authorities raised Cain about it we said that we had not landed in the country, and we were going to remain on board the aircraft. This we were permitted to do, and although they thought they were inflicting a punishment on us, we were much happier within the aircraft, where the temperature was several degrees lower than it was outside.

Our next stop was Bombay, in the early hours of the morning. Here at the airport, which was very familiar to me, I saw two newspaper reporters, friendly old faces of my numerous visits before, looking for some one. When they espied me they mobbed me like a long-lost friend. Also at the airport was our Commercial Secretary at Bombay, who had been asked to watch every plane that passed through to see whether I was on it. I was asked by the Press whether I

had any comments on the question of my dismissal. My reply to them was that I was returning home of my own volition for talks with the Prime Minister. They showed me Bombay's morning papers, which carried the headline, "Kotelawala Has Disappeared."

The heat of the desert lands through which we passed was such that we felt quite dirty, and took the opportunity of an early-morning bath at the Bombay airport. Each of us wrapped a towel round his waist and went for a shower-bath. After we had changed I called my friend, Sir Arunachalam Mahadeva, in Colombo from Bombay. I did not feel like disturbing him at that hour because I knew he was used to going to bed late and rising late, but Mahadeva, still half asleep, answered the telephone. He said he was anxious to meet me on my arrival, and that I had many supporters who were trying hard to avert a serious situation.

We boarded Air India's Dakota aircraft in the early hours of the morning, and stopped at Trichinopoly for lunch. Some of my friends in Ceylon had chartered an Air Academy aircraft, and sent a message to me in Trichinopoly asking me to return home in that aircraft. They also sent me various other bits of advice, promising me their assistance if I wanted to "do a Neguib" and start a revolution! I said that I was prepared for the worst, and if this was the treatment that was to be meted out to me it did not matter by what plane I travelled. And I was not planning any coup.

I travelled on the scheduled service from Trichinopoly. On the last stage of my homeward flight I was so tired that I fell asleep in the plane and had a vivid dream in which D. S. Senanayake came to me and said that I was about to get into serious trouble, but I should be all right if I took the pill he offered me. I took the pill, and I woke up.

I was greeted in Colombo like a hero by my friends and members of the public who had up to then shown no real interest in me and my politics, but they feared that my dismissal would mean a real loss to the country. They rallied in their hundreds and thousands, and showed me, in unmistakable terms, what their feelings were.

Some of the enthusiasts of the U.N.P. Youth League

attempted to stage a big demonstration in my favour at the airport. Their intentions were good, and I appreciated their loyalty. But I said to myself, "I can deal with my enemies; God save me from my friends." I lost no time in stepping into my mother's car. I stopped for a few minutes at my home at Kandawala, where some one gave me a message from a friend that there was a hundred-per-cent. chance of a settlement between the Prime Minister and myself, but I was advised to be cautious.

When I did meet Dudley Senanayake I was fully prepared for a reconciliation, and there was a tearful scene with much weeping on both sides. It was agreed that everything should be forgiven and forgotten. My explanation, which the Prime Minister accepted, was that I had nothing to do with the publication of "The Premier Stakes," and I also denied the truth of the statements attributed to me in that document.

I soon learned all about what had been plotted and planned before Dudley Senanayake was persuaded to take action against me.

It is not uncommon in our country for personal rancour, resentment, and jealousy to over-ride patriotic motives, and to cloud men's judgment on important issues. Even those who professed to be my best friends and supporters were not incapable of taking part in secret parleys and intrigues with my known enemies and with others who were determined to drive me out, regardless of the consequent danger to the Government's stability and the country's interests.

But everybody was happy when the episode ended without my explosive exit from public life.

11

Dark Interlude

August 12, 1953, was a dark day in the brief history of independent Ceylon. A *hartal*, or general stoppage of work, had been organized for that day by revolutionary leaders as a protest against the Government's decision to increase the price of rationed rice.

A fortnight before the *hartal* the Prime Minister gave an assurance in Parliament that his Government would not fail to see that law and order were maintained, and that the people of the country would be able to go about their normal business peacefully in spite of the threatened strikes. He said that hooligans would not get the better of the right-thinking and honourable citizens of the country.

The Government, however, had not prepared to meet the emergency of a complete failure of public transport on August 12. There were many outbreaks of violence, and much damage to property. Rumours spread panic. As Minister of Transport I was unjustly blamed for not ensuring the proper functioning of rail and road services to serve people who were anxious to co-operate with the authorities and go about their business as usual. Drastic action had to be taken to prevent further violence, and a state of emergency was declared. A curfew was imposed and rigorously enforced. Some people thought the Government's counter-measures were too severe. Several lives were lost, and the total damage caused by the *hartal* was assessed at approximately Rs3,000,000.

This crisis marked the beginning of the end of Dudley Senanayake's Premiership. He evidently found it beyond his powers of endurance to stay any longer at the helm of

affairs. It was rumoured that there was bitter rivalry between two members of the Cabinet who might each expect to succeed him. Needless to say, it was broadly hinted that I was one of them. There was actually no such rivalry.

If the crisis had proved anything it was the need for strong leadership by a man who would command the confidence of his party as well as that of the country. Events had by now driven the Prime Minister to the verge of a serious breakdown. It was feared by those close to him that his health would not stand the strain of a conflict between the country's interests and the inclinations of his friends. Pressure was being brought to bear on him, urging him not to resign. Two Senators sobbed aloud when they made a fervent appeal to him at an impressive Buddhist ceremony to continue in office at any cost.

Towards the end of September he made up his mind. He announced that he would not resign. His decision was received with great relief. But he was a sick man, and he needed a holiday. He took it, but it did him no good.

On his return to Colombo, after a brief rest, he tendered his resignation to the Governor-General.

The Governor-General, Lord Soulbury, must have been more embarrassed than anybody else by the turn of events.

While he waited for Dudley Senanayake's decision I was certain that he was still determined not to send for me if he could help it. A prominent European business-man called on me with a message from the Governor-General to the effect that I must apologize to him for all that I was supposed to have said or written disparagingly about him if I was to be Prime Minister. My answer was that I was not one of those who would do anything for the sake of becoming Prime Minister. And I would in no circumstances apologize to Lord Soulbury.

It must have been clear to Lord Soulbury that everybody interested in preserving the stability of the Government wanted me to be the next Prime Minister. But his prejudice against me was too strong to be easily overcome. He attempted to arrange for a friendly meeting between the

two of us through a third party. But I would have none of it. He would have to approach me direct.

Lord Soulbury was ultimately compelled to act in accordance with a constitutional convention. He entrusted the formation of a Government to me, as a senior member of the Cabinet, who was Leader of the House of Representatives and had the full support of the party with the largest following in the House.

When he met me on the steps of Queen's House he shook hands with me warmly and said, "Let bygones be bygones." We have been good friends since.

And so, on October 12, 1953, I became Prime Minister of Ceylon.

My appointment was warmly welcomed by the country. My friends and critics wrote things about me in the Press which gave me a new impression of my character and increased my self-esteem.

I was described as being as rugged as the graphite that gave me my enormous wealth; a man of action with a supreme belief in myself; notable for my courage, my ruthless tongue, and my lively sense of humour.

One writer peered into the future and asked a pertinent question: "Will Asia's playboy politician ever become tame, mature, important, and dull enough to be a Premier true to type? Who knows? The spoilt child might at last become the leader of a great nation."

I hope I am fulfilling this prophecy. But never let it be said of me that I am dull.

12

Prime Minister

When I formed my Cabinet I was severely criticized for bringing back the old gang, with a slight reshuffle of the pack, retaining one or two discredited jokers. It was suggested that I had yielded to appeals for mercy from some of my old colleagues, and that I did not have the heart to deprive them of their portfolios. As I said at the time, I intended to fill the rôle of an executioner and ended as a humanitarian. But within a week I asked two members of the Cabinet to resign. There had been a public outcry against their reappointment, and I felt I had to yield to the popular demand.

I chose J. R. Jayewardene to succeed me as Leader of the House of Representatives. He had conducted himself so well, and shown so much loyalty and capacity for teamwork, that I feel my faith in him has not been misplaced. We both played cricket for the same school.

One of my first acts as Prime Minister was to cancel all the telegrams and messages which had been sent to London casting doubts upon the advisability of the Queen's visit to Ceylon. I declared at the time that the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh could be assured of a grand and sincere welcome from the people.

Ceylon should not be judged by what had happened during the *hartal* on August 12. Our people are by nature pacific, gentle, and friendly. They can only be incited to violence by rabble-rousers. Some of them join the Marxist parties merely because they think that is the only way they can express disapproval of the Government's policy.

I was certain that our people would turn out in their

thousands to acclaim the Queen and accord her a joyous welcome, worthy of Ceylon's reputation for hospitality. Events proved that I was right.

I sent Her Majesty a message expressing my own loyalty, and the affection and respect of the people of Ceylon for their Queen. I said the people looked forward with great enthusiasm to the royal visit in April 1954.

Marxist elements tried their best to prevent the visit. One of their leaders came to me shortly before the event and asked for an assurance that those who demonstrated against the visit with black flags and in other ways would not be taken to police stations. I told him I had given instructions that they should be taken, not to police stations, but to hospital. In fact, there were not hostile demonstrations of any kind. The Marxist leaders realized that the people would not tolerate anything so disgraceful, and so opposed to the traditional hospitality of the Ceylonese.

In my first broadcast to the nation as Prime Minister I appealed to the national consciousness of every citizen of Ceylon, which, I said, could only be developed if one did not think in terms of community and creed. I made it quite clear that I would have no truck with those who believed in revolutionary methods in politics, and that it would be one of my foremost duties to stamp out Communism in Ceylon. I warned those who stirred up violence that such violence would be resisted with all the power at my command. Ceylon had only recently obtained political freedom, and that freedom gave every one of us the opportunity of returning to power the Government we chose by the use of the franchise.

Flattering references were made to me when I became Prime Minister in the Indian Press, and I was told by my friend C. C. Desai, the High Commissioner for India in Ceylon, that when I went to India I might expect a right royal reception. For one thing, I was expected to succeed where others had failed in bringing about a settlement on outstanding Indo-Ceylon issues. And I was determined to do so. I saw that Ceylon had everything to gain by a policy of good neighbourliness towards India. I believed that the

Indian Government had no desire to intervene in Ceylon's purely domestic affairs.

One of the first targets I chose for energetic attack on the home front was the scandalous prevalence of bribery and corruption in the public service. There had been much talk of anti-bribery legislation for several years. Now, I felt, was the time for action. Not only public servants but Ministers, as well as other politicians, were brought within the scope of the Anti-bribery Bill.

Just a month after I became Prime Minister the London Press reported that Lord Soulbury, the Governor-General, was "very much peeved" at the Ceylon Government's decision to do away with the Union Jack and the British National Anthem, and that he had asked me what reasons had led to this decision. I was supposed to have written a rude and tactless letter to Lord Soulbury telling him that one of the things the people of Ceylon were unable to understand was why in this free island there should be a foreign Governor-General. I had to issue a denial that I had ever made such a statement. An unscrupulous twist had been given to a surmise of what I had actually written in a friendly letter to Lord Soulbury.

What the British Press seemed to have forgotten was that Lord Soulbury had come to Ceylon as Governor-General at our own request. He was not foisted on us by the British Government. As an author of the reforms report on which the Constitution bringing us independence was based, he had shown a sympathetic understanding of Ceylon's problems. He was invited to extend his stay in the island because he filled the rôle of a Governor-General steeped in the best British democratic traditions with considerable skill and distinction. It was my own personal opinion that Ceylon should have a British Governor-General as long as possible. Perhaps I should have said as long as it was not practicable to have a Ceylonese. Within six months from then I recommended to the Queen when she was in Ceylon that a Ceylonese, Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, should succeed Lord Soulbury. I could think of no one better qualified for that high office.

On October 30, 1953, I received an invitation from the Indian Prime Minister, Mr Nehru, to New Delhi for the resumption of discussions on Indo-Ceylon problems. It was later arranged that we should meet in the middle of January 1954.

On December 23, 1953, it was made known that I had taken the initiative in calling for an early meeting of the Prime Ministers of India, Burma, Pakistan, Indonesia, and Ceylon. It was my belief that periodical meetings of the leaders of these countries would help in promoting world peace, and would give the people of South-East Asia more influence in international affairs. The five Governments concerned could also help each other in their development programmes.

The Prime Minister of India whole-heartedly approved of my proposal. The other Prime Ministers to whom I had written on the subject also welcomed the idea.

My suggestion had nothing whatever to do with the developments arising out of the arrangements then being made by Pakistan to receive military aid from the U.S.A. In fact, it had taken shape before those developments arose. I had been thinking of such a conference for a long time. It was only designed to increase friendly relations among neighbours to their common advantage.

It was considered a good augury for the future of South-East Asia that, at a time when feeling had run high between India and Pakistan, I was able to persuade the leaders of both countries to sit at a conference table to discuss issues affecting the interests of the whole region.

When I was in New Delhi for the talks with Nehru I was invited to address the Indian Council of World Affairs at a meeting where the intellectual élite of India had done me the honour of assembling to hear my views on matters that concerned us all.

I said in the course of my address:

"The idea of an Asian Prime Ministers' Conference was born out of Asia's present plight and Asia's needs. The tradition of centuries of close co-operation, cultural, religious, racial, and trade connexions pointed to this as the obvious

THE AUTHOR IN THE UNIFORM OF A COLONEL OF THE CLYDE LIGHT INFANTRY

THE AUTHOR GREETED BY HIS MOTHER AT THE AIRPORT
ON HIS RETURN FROM ABROAD

goal of South-East Asian statesmanship. The voice of 600,000,000 people is the voice of a quarter of the globe. The hand of colonialism no longer exists to gag them or bludgeon them into action which is not to their liking.

"South-East Asia is not bankrupt of men, material, resources, or leadership. Her people are quite competent to decide freely for themselves what they will or what they will not have. The need for friendly relations with countries outside this region cannot be over-emphasized—but those relations in the context of the freedom of South-East Asia must be in keeping with the dignity that is attached to the fraternity of free nations.

"To those who wish to help us from outside the region there will always be a welcome, but it must be a welcome by some one who is master of his own house."

I was convinced that our conference would be a demonstration of our Asian conscience and our awareness of new perils that threatened to engulf us after our escape from the old colonialism. If some good materialized from the meeting of Asian Prime Ministers, as I knew it must, that would be the satisfaction I should derive from the realization of my idea.

13

Indo-Ceylon Problem

To some observers outside Asia it must seem strange that India and Ceylon should ever quarrel on any issue. The two countries are so closely linked geographically, historically, and culturally that they are sometimes regarded by people who have never visited either of them as being identical. It often happens even to-day that Ceylonese travelling abroad are assumed to be Indians. It is not always easy to explain that Ceylon is in many ways as different from India as England is from the European continent.

What is known as the Indo-Ceylon problem first became acute in March 1939, when I suggested that all daily-paid non-Ceylonese workers in Government departments should be repatriated to the country of their birth with a gratuity and their fares paid; and that stringent regulations should be enforced to prevent their return to Ceylon for employment here.

Indians in Ceylon described this scheme as "monstrous." My only object was to give Ceylonese workers an opportunity of doing what non-Ceylonese were then doing, and to help to solve the problem of unemployment in Ceylon. At that time there were about six thousand non-Ceylonese daily-paid workers in Government departments.

Some months later Nehru, who was then fighting against the British Raj in India, came to Ceylon to discuss with the Board of Ministers the Government order for the retirement of non-Ceylonese daily-paid workers. He had been sent by the All-India Congress Working Committee for this purpose. During the talks we had with him I justified the action which I had initiated, and rebutted the charge that

this was a movement of unfair discrimination against Indians in Ceylon.

I told him that the problem of unemployment among Ceylonese was becoming so serious that it was even feared that the Government might soon have to pay doles unless other methods of relieving the situation could be found. I impressed on him that the men who were being sent away had been told that, in view of the increasing financial stringency, retrenchment of daily-paid jobs within the next year or two was inevitable, and that the policy of discontinuing non-Ceylonese before Ceylonese would have then to be adopted.

Meeting the general charges of anti-Indian feeling brought against the people of Ceylon on public platforms and in the Indian Press, I referred to Indian money-lenders who duped illiterate debtors; to Indian shops in Colombo with 100-per-cent. Indian staffs; and to professional politicians from India who attempted to engineer strikes among ignorant Indians. I also mentioned that Indian members of the State Council often voted against Ceylonese interests, violating the fundamental principles of the Indian National Congress.

Much misunderstanding in India and mischievous misrepresentation by Indians in Ceylon aggravated the Indo-Ceylon problem, and fruitless discussions continued for many years with increasing bitterness on both sides.

Towards the end of 1940 I described this question as a matter of life and death for the Ceylonese. I said that if Indians swamped us it would destroy our identity as nationals of Ceylon. All we wanted was to have the same rights that other countries enjoyed—namely, to decide who the citizens of our country should be. We had the misfortune of seeing most of our lands taken over by foreign capitalists for the sake of making money at our expense. Without our consent they imported Indian labourers.

My contention was that it was impossible to make 900,000 Indians citizens of Ceylon without the risk of reducing our own people to beggary and losing our identity as Ceylonese.

It was at this time that I accused the Leader of the State Council, Sir Baron Jayatillaka, of being inclined to follow

the policy of appeasement as far as the Indians in Ceylon were concerned. On the other hand, the British official who was the head of the Treasury in Ceylon at the time, H. J. Huxham, supported my proposal to repatriate the Indian workmen in our Government departments. I suggested that the attitudes of Sir Baron and Huxham contrasted sharply. While Huxham seemed to be wearing Anthony Eden's hat, Sir Baron was carrying Neville Chamberlain's umbrella. (We had not forgotten Munich.) This annoyed Sir Baron a lot. But the Board of Ministers approved of my proposals. The Indians had to go.

It took fourteen years for anything like a satisfactory agreement to be reached between India and Ceylon on outstanding issues. When I became Prime Minister I was determined to succeed where my predecessors had failed. The result was what came to be known as the Nehru-Kotelawala Pact. This was not a final settlement, but marked the beginning of a definite advance towards that end. Unfortunately, the Pact was not implemented satisfactorily. When it seemed to be completely derailed I arranged for another meeting with Nehru. This time I included in the Ceylon delegation the former Prime Minister, Dudley Senanayake, who was one of the most outspoken critics of the Pact, and the Leader of the Opposition, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. When we reached Bombay early in October 1954 I said that I had come to settle the Indo-Ceylon problem once and for all, and clear the air for all time.

After considerable discussion, during which a deadlock was threatened more than once, we arrived at a compromise which satisfied both parties. The Nehru-Kotelawala Pact was put back on the track again. But we did not solve the fundamental problem of 'stateless' persons who would not qualify for Ceylon citizenship. Nehru refused to accept the principle of such persons being recognized as Indian nationals.

Anyway, we had taken the matter a step further towards a final solution. We now knew exactly where we stood. And we had cleared the ground for future action. The position would be reviewed two years hence.

As the future of Indians in Ceylon seems to me a matter that should interest all countries in Asia and elsewhere with difficult problems of citizenship to solve, I think it is necessary that all the relevant facts and developments should be put on record dispassionately for the guidance of world opinion.

The Indo-Ceylon problem is largely a legacy of the old colonialism. It started with the opening of plantations or estates in the territory of the former Kandyan Kings by British capitalists some 125 years ago. The local population, which was Sinhalese by race and language and Buddhist by religion, occupied and owned the paddy lands in the valleys of this territory, while it used the hills, which were covered with jungle or *patna*,[1] for the pasturing of cattle, the collection of firewood and timber, and the cultivation of *chenas*.[1] The British treated these unoccupied hills as Crown lands, and disposed of them at nominal rates to capitalists who were prepared to cultivate coffee and—after the failure of coffee—tea and rubber.

Labour was imported from South India and housed on the estates. It was imported by foreign capitalists, with the assistance of the foreign Government then in power. It was accorded special privileges, some of them by statute, and Indian labourers were given facilities of travelling up and down between Ceylon and their homes in India. In course of time the Sinhalese population in the Kandyan villages multiplied without having room for expansion, for it was penned into its narrow valleys by the estates.

Thus one finds to-day in the valleys, cultivating their ancestral lands, the Kandyans, who observe their ancient traditions, while on the hill-sides between those valleys is a migrant population of South Indian wage-earners, who observe the social traditions of South India. These two sections of the population do not mix, for they are different in religion, language, social tradition, and occupation. In most countries a migrant population can be absorbed into the indigenous population in one generation. In Ceylon it is still 'Indian' after three generations.

[1] *Patna* is thick grass land on the mountain tops. *Chena* is land that is periodically cultivated.

The term 'migrant' is, however, used in three senses. In the first place, the population has been imported within the last hundred years. In the second place, a large part of that population is still domiciled in South India. Many of the families in Ceylon maintain contact with their relatives in India and visit their ancestral villages every year. Even families which have been long resident in Ceylon maintain contact with India, so that, for instance, the young men marry wives from within the appropriate social groups in India. In the third place, the population is migrant in that it is not attached to the soil but moves about from estate to estate as employment offers. For this reason even the identification of an Indian migrant is often a matter of considerable difficulty.

Within the same province, the same district, and even the same village area there are thus two distinct communities, unable to speak each other's language, having no social or economic relations with each other, and having in fact nothing in common save geographical propinquity. This is the picture so far as the Indian population resident on the estates is concerned. This population constitutes by far the largest proportion of the Indian population in Ceylon, but outside the estate areas, and more especially in the towns, there is a not inconsiderable section of Indians who are just as migrant as the others, and whose presence is of not less significance to economic conditions where Ceylon's own nationals are concerned.

Coming now to the political developments, under the Donoughmore Constitution of 1931 about half the adults among the Indian population of Ceylon had votes as "British subjects." In order that discussions over the franchise might not delay the attainment of independence, the first elections under the Constitution of 1946 were held on the 1931 franchise, but power was given to the new Parliament to regulate the matter.

The elections showed how close were the communal ties among the Indians. Where they had a majority they elected a member of their communal organization, and thereby virtually disfranchised the Kandyans in seven constituencies. Where they were not in a majority they obeyed the instruc-

tions of their communal organization to vote for a particular Ceylonese candidate.

It is believed that in thirteen or fourteen constituencies they secured by these means the election of a candidate who had only minority support among the Ceylonese voters. Thus a communal organization exclusively representing Indians affected the result in one-fifth of all the constituencies of Ceylon then in existence, and communal segregation of Kandyans and Indians had led to a very difficult and serious problem in the Kandyan provinces.

When the Indian problem was under discussion between 1928 and 1947 it was thought of almost entirely as a problem of the franchise, since all the Ceylonese and nearly all the Indians were "British subjects"; indeed, the definition of "British subjects" was made wider in Ceylon in order to include the subjects of Indian States who were not "British subjects" in undivided India.

In 1941 an agreement was reached between delegations representing the Government of India and Ceylon, but that agreement was not ratified by the Government of India.

In 1948 the new Government of Ceylon made further concessions to the new Government of India, but still an agreement could not be reached, although there was the fullest consultation between the two Governments. The legislation enacted in 1948 and 1949—*viz.*, The Citizenship Act No. 18, of 1948, and the Indian and Pakistan Residents (Citizenship) Act No. 3, of 1949—represented the utmost concession that the Government of Ceylon was willing to make. That concession went far beyond the views of many supporters of the Government, especially in the Kandyan provinces.

The long-drawn-out "Indian question" was thought to be settled at last by the enactment of the Indian and Pakistani Residents (Citizenship) Act, No. 3, of 1949, as a result of the talks and consultations which D. S. Senanayake had with the Prime Minister of India. The subject that had been under discussion was that of citizenship in Ceylon for Indian residents, and the new Act prescribed the conditions that must be satisfied before an Indian (or Pakistani) resident could be

registered as a Ceylon citizen. Indian residents would thus be divided into those who acquired Ceylon citizenship and those who did not.

This was clearly the most reasonable settlement that could have been expected of the host country, and in respect of those who did not acquire Ceylon citizenship D. S. Senanayake went on to say they would "still continue to be allowed to remain in the island as Indian citizens, and to pursue their lawful avocations without interference." This statement of Senanayake's is also related to the introductory statement that the Prime Minister of India had made at the beginning of his talks with Senanayake that, "so far as India was concerned, if all Indians in Ceylon wished to retain their Indian nationality, they were welcome to do so."

It is not out of place to mention here that Indian residents constitute one-eighth of the total population of Ceylon—a proportion of much significance, both politically and economically.

But there was apparently no desire on the part of India to leave well alone. The Indian Government seemed to want to account for the last Indian in Ceylon on an arithmetical basis, and in April 1953 they returned to the charge again. This time they took up the question of the balance of Indian residents that would be left after registration of Indians as Ceylon citizens, and they were ably represented by the astute High Commissioner in Ceylon, C. C. Desai. And, as usual, behind Desai was the Ceylon Democratic Congress, which had only recently changed its name from Ceylon Indian Congress. It was an amusing irony, from the Ceylon point of view, that the two leading lights of this body, the President and his coadjutor, had since become Ceylon citizens but were the most ardent protagonists of the Indian cause.

The renewed negotiations between the two Governments took place in Ceylon between Desai and Dudley Senanayake and were continued in London in June 1953, between Nehru and Senanayake, both of whom had gone there for the Queen's coronation. The following points constituted the basis of the discussions between the two Prime Ministers:

(*a*) Four hundred thousand Indians now resident in Ceylon were expected to be registered as Ceylon citizens. This figure was not a guaranteed figure but an estimate, the actual figure depending on the results of the impartial administration of the Citizenship Act;

(*b*) The number of citizens registered under the Act plus the number of persons granted Permanent Residence Permits should be 650,000. This was not to be a minimum figure but a maximum;

(*c*) Persons granted Permanent Residence Permits would have their future status determined at the end of ten years, during which period if any of them desired to go back to India and take up citizenship of that country the Government of India was not to object to their proposal;

(*d*) The balance of Indian residents in Ceylon, approximately 300,000 or more, were to be accepted as Indian citizens by the Government of India, and to be compulsorily repatriated, the operation being phased over a definite period of years;

(*e*) All these steps were to be a part of a single scheme of settlement of the Indo-Ceylon problem. There was to be no question of settling any one point without at the same time coming to an arrangement with regard to the others.

The discussions between Nehru and Dudley Senanayake ended in failure. Nehru found himself unable to agree to any form of compulsory repatriation of Indian residents, and he also desired that the total number of citizens registered under the Indian and Pakistani Residents (Citizenship) Act, plus the number of persons granted Permanent Residence Permits, should be increased to 700,000 (out of a total of some 980,000 Indian nationals resident in Ceylon). It was therefore agreed between the two Prime Ministers that for the time being matters might be left where they were.

When my turn to try my hand at the Indo-Ceylon question came I was between two fires. There was Desai on the one hand thinking of the problem in numerical terms, and on the other the leaders of the Kandyans, fearful for the rights of their people, and jealously watchful lest they be reduced by one jot or tittle. Desai had got it firmly into his

head that 400,000 out of the 980,000 Indian nationals resident in Ceylon could and should be made Ceylon citizens. Nothing would convince him that this was only the maximum figure of an estimate, and that the figure could as well be 100,000 as 400,000, and that even that estimate no longer held good, because it had dropped out of the framework within which it had been originally made.

Nearly every Indian had applied for citizenship, whether he had the qualifications or not, and whether he was interested in being a Ceylon citizen or not, and the vast majority of the applicants had entered their applications at the last moment, and mainly at the behest of the Ceylon Indian Congress, which had originally boycotted the operation of the Citizenship Act. It was therefore evident that many of the applications must fail, but right through the discussions between the two Governments the figure of 400,000 kept colouring Desai's vision.

The curious part of all this arithmetical bargaining was that no freedom of choice was being left to the individual Indian himself by his Government as to what he would like to be. Ceylon had given him the opportunity of deciding whether he would like to apply to be a Ceylon citizen, but India apparently wanted him willy-nilly to stay back in Ceylon.

Shortly before my departure for India a Kandyan interested in this subject brought to everybody's attention the interesting fact that there was provision in the new Constitution of India for Indians resident abroad to register themselves as Indian citizens with their consular representative in the country where they happened to be. This had a very material bearing from our point of view on the problem that was awaiting solution. What had Desai to say about it? At first he expressed the opinion that the facilities offered by the Indian law had become time-expired, but later he agreed that time could not affect a right conferred on the individual by his country's Constitution.

A strong ray of hope now began to shine on the bleak scene of our discussions, and we felt we could at last, when we went to Delhi, propose something which would be equally acceptable to India as to Ceylon. The trouble with

the Indo-Ceylon question had always been that the disease was on Ceylon's chest, so to speak, and India need do nothing to help the patient. The Indians were with us, and could be securely left with us by India's merely refusing to allow them re-entry to their homeland.

Our thoughts were now more or less clear. There was first the problem of illicit immigration, of Indians stealing into the country from across the narrow Palk Strait. The problem had been latterly assuming serious proportions, but we knew we were assured of India's help in dealing with it.

Citizenship was a different matter. Nehru had in 1947 declared that "if all Indians in Ceylon wished to retain their Indian nationality, they were free to do so," and D. S. Senanayake had said soon after that Indians who did not choose Ceylon citizenship, or were not admitted to it, would still be allowed to remain in employment in the island as Indian citizens.

The picture had changed since, and India had enacted her Constitution, which contained special provisions dealing with the status, *vis-à-vis* their country, of Indians residing abroad. It was now clear that there were going to be three classes of Indians in Ceylon—those who would become Ceylon citizens, those who might be admitted as Indian citizens, and a nondescript class whom India would call "stateless" but whose "statelessness" Ceylon would not admit or accept responsibility for.

The first task, in the light of the new developments, was clearly to arrive at some scheme which would enable the first two classes to be sorted out from the third. And it was to be hoped that India would assist in seeing that as few as possible of her nationals became "stateless," especially considering that the provisions she had introduced in her Constitution were—as a natural consequence of bringing about uniformity, no doubt—contrary to the declarations made earlier.

I was accompanied on my journey to India by two of my Ministers, M. D. Banda, Minister of Education (also in his rôle as a Kandyan Sinhalese), and E. B. Wikramanayake, Minister of Justice. Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, Finance

Minister (he is now Governor-General), joined me in Delhi, travelling from Sydney, where he had been attending the Commonwealth financial talks. I was glad to avail myself of his widely known skill as a negotiator and diplomat. I also took with me, in addition to my official advisers, two unofficial advisers, Senator Sir Ukwatte Jayasundere, Q.C. and D. B. Ellepola, another Kandyan and a man of much experience of Kandyan affairs.

We went first to Karachi, where I had been invited to 'drop in on our way' by Mohammed Ali. We had a magnificent reception there, and we enjoyed ourselves for two days in Pakistan without inhibition and without a qualm. We had no problem to settle with Pakistan. We arrived in Delhi on January 15, and were warmly received at the airport by the Indian Prime Minister and the diplomatic and official élite of Delhi. We had five days to stay, and three days of discussions at the Indian capital, and the hospitality we were treated to was a thing to be remembered. The weather was crisp and cold, and New Delhi sparkled like a jewel in the January air. We stayed as the guests of the President of India at Rashtrapati Bhawan, its splendours undiminished from old viceregal days, although perhaps less formality haunted its marbled corridors.

The discussions proved heavy going, but I had private talks with Nehru, with whom I rode out of a morning. Desai too was anxious to avert a breakdown, and although breaking-point was reached, both sides finally agreed upon the following proposals:

Illicit Immigration

1. Both Governments are determined to suppress illicit immigration traffic between the two countries and will take all possible steps, in close co-operation with each other, towards that end. Periodical meetings between high Police authorities on either side of the Palk Strait may be held, and information relating to illicit immigration exchanged.

2. The Government of Ceylon propose to undertake the preparation of a register of all adult residents who are not already on the electoral register, and will maintain such registers up to date. When this registration is completed, any person not

so registered will, if his mother tongue is an Indian language, be presumed to be an illicit immigrant from India and liable to deportation and the Indian High Commissioner will extend all facilities for implementation of such deportation.

3. The Government of Ceylon may proceed with the Immigrants and Emigrants Amendment Bill which throws on the accused the onus of proof that he is not an illicit immigrant; but before any person is prosecuted in accordance with this provision, the Government of Ceylon will give an opportunity to the Indian High Commissioner to satisfy himself that a prima facie case exists for such prosecution, the final decision being that of the Government of Ceylon.

Citizenship

4. The registration of citizens under the Indians and Pakistani (Citizenship) Act will be expedited and every endeavour will be made to complete the disposal of pending applications within two years.

5. All persons registered under this Act may be placed by the Government of Ceylon on a separate electoral register, particularly in view of the fact that the bulk of the citizens do not speak the language of the area in which they reside. This arrangement will last for a period of only ten years. The Government of Ceylon agree that in certain constituencies where the number of registered citizen voters is not likely to exceed 250, they shall be put on the national register.

6. Citizens whose names are placed in the separate electoral register will be entitled to elect a certain number of members to the House of Representatives, the number being determined after consultation with the Prime Minister of India. The Government of Ceylon expect to complete their action in this respect before the present Parliament is dissolved in 1957.

7. In regard to those persons who are not so registered, it would be open to them to register themselves as Indian citizens, if they so choose, at the office of the Indian High Commissioner in accordance with the provisions of Article 8 of the Constitution of India. It is noted that Ceylon proposes to offer special inducements to encourage such registration and that these inducements will be announced from time to time. The Government of India will offer administrative and similar facilities to all persons of Indian origin to register themselves as Indian citizens under the Constitution of India, if they so choose, and will also give publicity to the availability of such facilities.

8. Both Prime Ministers are desirous of continuing the present practice of close consultation between the two Governments in matters affecting their mutual interests.

The ink of ratification on the joint proposals was scarcely dry when trouble started again. It had always been difficult to drive suspicion out of Desai's mind, and, although scarcely an Indian was being registered on his side as an Indian citizen, he once again began to complain that we were wilfully chary of registering Indians as Ceylon citizens. He also suddenly took the stand that an Indian who had applied for Ceylon citizenship could not change his mind and apply for Indian citizenship, and this of course meant that very nearly the whole of the Indian population was thrown on our hands. He also took certain steps which savoured of *force majeure*. He desisted from issuing travel papers for India to Indians, unless they were either definitely Indian citizens or definitely Ceylon citizens, and, last of all, he began to raise fanciful objections when we were about to amend the Constitution to make the special provision agreed upon for the representation of Indians who had been given citizenship under the Indian and Pakistani Residents (Citizenship) Act.

Desai overplayed his hand. Great feeling was aroused in the country, and also in Parliament, over the *impasse* that was created, and another visit had to be arranged to Delhi, the object of which was to clear up with the Indian Government the differences that had arisen in Colombo between their High Commissioner and the Ceylon Government.

The visit took place in October 1954. The team that went with me on this occasion was a fully representative one, so that whatever decisions were agreed to at Delhi would, from a parliamentary point of view, be decisions assented to by all parties and interests. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, Leader of the Opposition, who had also participated in Indo-Ceylon discussions in the Donoughmore days, went with me, and the team included Dudley Senanayake, during whose days as Prime Minister much of the later negotiations between the two Governments had taken place.

The outcome of the October talks was published in a joint statement dated October 10, 1954. This statement spotlighted the new and fundamental difference that had arisen between the two Governments, but left it unsettled. Ceylon recognized no 'stateless' Indians, and India would now recognize as her own only Indians who held Indian passports and Indians who had obtained Indian nationality under the terms of her Constitution.

It was, however, agreed that the two processes of citizenship registration would be speeded up, so that the position might be reviewed at the end of two years. Ceylon said she would encourage registration as Indian citizens by permitting persons so registered to remain undisturbed in their employment until the age of fifty-five, and she reiterated that she had in mind a scheme of financial inducements too. India once again undertook to give every opportunity and every facility to Indians to register themselves as Indian citizens.

We came back from Delhi as wise as before, but sadder. It is difficult to play a game when the advantage of the wicket is with the other side. Soon after my return from Delhi Desai left Ceylon on transfer to Karachi. But fresh difficulties have arisen over the Indo-Ceylon question. They need not be recounted here, as they have not become history, and are in course of being tackled.

When what came to be known as the Nehru-Kotelawala Pact was signed in January 1954 at New Delhi it was welcomed as a great stride towards a fair and honourable settlement of Indo-Ceylon issues. Both sides had made concessions, and each party had gained thereby. We felt that it was an agreement based on justice, both to the permanent population of Ceylon and to settlers of Indian origin.

I was congratulated on what was considered my greatest achievement since I became Prime Minister. But I had to warn myself against over-optimism, and my caution was justified by subsequent difficulties in the implementing of the Pact to the satisfaction of both Governments. Anyway, I still believe that Nehru and I laid the foundation for a final and friendly settlement.

14

Queen of Ceylon

When Queen Elizabeth II and the Duke of Edinburgh arrived in Ceylon on April 10, 1954, they were given a rapturous welcome. There has always been a genuine affection for royalty among the people of my country, and their loyalty to the British Throne for nearly one hundred and fifty years could never be questioned. The Sovereign who now came to them was not a symbol of foreign rule. She came as Queen of Ceylon and all her other realms and territories. She was not in any sense a representative of the United Kingdom. She was our chosen Queen. We had kings and queens in our history long before England did. D. S. Senanayake once told a Commonwealth Conference that he represented the oldest monarchy in the Commonwealth. It is my own belief and hope that Ceylon will always remain within this Commonwealth, and that it would prefer to recognize its head as a Queen or King rather than become a republic.

But what was most attractive about Her Majesty to the millions who thronged to see her during the memorably happy days she spent in Ceylon was that she was a charming young woman who took a keen and kindly interest in all the people of her realm, regardless of their race or colour.

Ceylon was the only Asian Dominion that the Queen visited on her tour. In her broadcast to the nation on the day she arrived in Colombo she made special mention of the fact that it was in this city, in the heart of South-East Asia, that the Colombo Plan was born. This had taken place four years earlier, when a conference of Commonwealth Foreign Ministers met in Colombo, presided over by D. S. Sena-

THE AUTHOR RIDING WITH NEHRU IN NEW DELHI

THE QUEEN LEAVING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES IN COLOMBO

The author is taking Her Majesty down to her car

Photo Associated Newspapers of Ceylon, Ltd

nayake, and evolved a plan for raising the living standards of Asian peoples as the best bulwark against the menace of Communism.

It is my own firm conviction that the expansion of Communist imperialism in Asia is a much greater threat to us, and a much more real danger, than a possible resurgence of Western colonialism.

The most spectacular and colourful event of the Royal visit was the State opening of Ceylon's Parliament by the Queen. On this occasion a new parliamentary precedent was created. The Queen, who wore her Coronation robe, enduring the oppressive heat, remained in the House to hear the formal Addresses of Thanks. Thus, it was said, the courtesy of the East prevailed over Western protocol.

When the Queen had delivered the Speech from the Throne I bowed before her and asked, "Is it convenient for Your Majesty to receive Addresses of Thanks from the two Houses?"

"Mr Prime Minister, it is convenient," said the Queen.

The more impressive of the two addresses on that occasion was the speech made by the Leader of the House of Representatives, J. R. Jayawardene. He recalled the time when kings and queens ruled over our land in an uninterrupted succession, until the last of our dynasty was compelled by the people to surrender his sovereignty to Her Majesty's ancestor, a King of England. The people of Ceylon had thus given Her Majesty a royal heritage which had lasted until to-day, through 2500 years.

After stressing Ceylon's adherence to the democratic ideals of the British Commonwealth, Jayawardene said, "The people of Asia are on the march. We have contributed to their past achievements and I trust we can continue to inspire their future hopes."

History repeated itself when, like Vijaya Bahu, the first of our Polonnaruwa kings, Queen Elizabeth II journeyed to that ancient capital of Ceylon from Colombo. The difference was that she travelled in a modern train entirely built and equipped in Ceylon. It was certainly a train fit for a queen. All along the railway route, thousands of people, most of

them simple village men, women, and children, hung out their decorations, wore their best attire, and lined up to catch a fleeting glimpse of their queen.

The Royal visitors were fascinated by the monumental ruins of Polonnaruwa, Ceylon's eleventh-century capital.

A few days later the royal city of Kandy accorded a royal reception to the Queen and the Duke. The occasion was historic, for it was the first time that the people of this ancient capital saw their legally constituted sovereign in person after the dethronement of the last Kandyan king.

The regal splendour of over a century ago was revived at Kandy in honour of the Queen. Never in the history of the famous Perahera,[1] dating back to 1775, was it organized on such a magnificently colourful scale. There were 125 elephants in the procession, more than a thousand drummers, and numerous Kandyan Chiefs in all the grandeur of their traditional trappings. It was indeed a night to remember.

The Queen celebrated her twenty-eighth birthday in Ceylon. She began by reviewing troops in drenching rain when thousands assembled and joined in singing *Happy Birthday to You.* This day was also of great significance to me personally. Her Majesty made me a member of her Most Honourable Privy Council.

Earlier in 1954, while Ceylon was preparing for the Queen's visit, we faced many difficult problems. The seventh year of our freedom dawned with dwindling incomes, falling produce prices, and steadily shrinking avenues of Government employment. This situation, exploited by political extremists, led to threats of strikes, while I appealed for hard work, greater economy, and patriotic endeavour as the three pillars on which we had to build our hopes and plans for the future.

One of the tasks that confronted Ceylon and other newly emancipated Asian countries was to go forward from political to economic freedom and to liberate our people from the heritage of poverty and want which colonialism had imposed on them. For this purpose we needed foreign aid, although

[1] A Perahera is a procession, usually accompanied by dancers and elephants, on special or festive occasions or in connexion with religious rites.

we had got rid of foreign rulers. Addressing the tenth session of E.C.A.F.E.,[1] at which delegates from many countries met at Kandy, I made it clear that we would welcome foreign capital so long as there were no political strings attached. Repatriation of all profits, dividends, and even the original capital would be freely permitted. There would be no discrimination against foreign capital, and there would be tax concessions for foreign investors, who would be given residence permits to bring their own managers and operators to control and run their business. Measures would be devised for possible partnership of foreign and local capital.

I stressed the fact that my country had been under colonial domination, one of the characteristics of which was that the export of raw materials and the import of manufactured goods was thought to be good for Ceylon. That pattern of economy had now to be changed.

It was about this time that I was being urged to permit a goodwill mission from Red China to visit Ceylon. But I was firmly opposed to it. It was my view that visiting Communists were apt to disseminate more harm than goodwill. Ceylon's relations with Red China should be restricted to trade alone.

An interesting interlude occurred in February 1954, when Lord Soulbury was suddenly summoned to the bedside of his wife, who had been knocked down by a bus in London, and whose condition was reported to be very serious. When the Governor-General had been away from Ceylon on previous occasions the Chief Justice, Sir Alan Rose, had acted for him. On this occasion the situation was different, as Sir Alan himself was away on leave. To me it seemed that the obvious thing to do was to appoint the Acting Chief Justice, C. Nagalingam, to act for Lord Soulbury. The Constitution provides that the person performing the functions of the Chief Justice should be appointed to act if there is no other person in the island "capable of discharging the administration."

In this instance two other names were suggested to me for appointment, and curiously enough the persons named were

[1] The Economic Council for Asia and the Far East.

both Europeans. I vehemently opposed the proposal, and insisted on the Acting Chief Justice, a Ceylonese, going temporarily to Queen's House as Acting Governor-General.

The episode seemed to savour of a survival of the old colonial mentality.

Meanwhile the stage was being set for the historic conference of Asian Prime Ministers in Colombo, and there were flattering references to me in an American paper which described Ceylon's Prime Minister as "a rising star in Asian politics."

The Queen's visit did a lot to strengthen Ceylon's ties with the Commonwealth, and deepen our devotion to the ideals she symbolized.

We were now eager to see our small country play a big part in preserving the ideals of democracy and friendly co-operation in Asia, and in saving the world from the disaster to which conflicting power-blocs were driving it. Now, I felt, my hour had come.

15

The Voice of Asia

I hope that some one will one day write a book on the origin of ideas. It would then be seen how ideas, like human beings, sometimes have the most unlikely origins. For instance, I have often been asked how I came to think of a meeting of South-East Asian Prime Ministers and the coming together of the group of Asian countries now known as the five Colombo Powers.

It has been said that it all began with my thinking aloud one day at a social function. "Let's have an Asian Conference," I am supposed to have said, as though the idea had suddenly come to me at that very moment, and every one round me thought it was an excellent idea.

The truth is that this idea had been taking shape in my mind for about seven years, and was first given expression by me in a broadcast talk in Rangoon in 1948. But I must say here that it was my friend C. C. Desai who was responsible for fixing the right time for me to invite the Asian Premiers to get together. This timing of the conference was, I think, the "stroke of genius" for which I have been given full credit.

Not long after I became Prime Minister there was the annual dinner of the United Nations Association of Ceylon, and, looking round the gathering, Desai observed to me, by way of casual comment, that it would not be a bad thing if heads of Governments too could similarly meet in annual reunion.

It was a very congenial idea to me, because I had been a lifelong believer in the efficacy of talking things over informally and as friends round a table, and I thought I would

try to get my colleagues of the countries nearer home together for an informal discussion of matters of common interest.

Thus was the idea of the Colombo Conference born; and Colombo was followed by Bogor, and Bogor by Bandung. What a chain-reaction, and what a climax!

My original proposal was to confine the meeting to Burma, Ceylon, India, and Pakistan. These four countries of ours were close neighbours, and we had many things in common, not excluding that suzerainty by the British which had ended only a few years earlier. It was pointed out to me, however, that Indonesia too belonged to the same cultural area, and that she too had shaken off the shackles of colonialism at about the same time as ourselves (although her masters were different from ours). I was glad to send an invitation to Indonesia. On hearing of what I was proposing several other countries inquired why they were not being invited, but I had to explain to them that we were confining ourselves to a neighbours' group, and that the special purpose of the meeting would be lost if we went farther afield.

It was not our intention to be 'Pan-Asian,' but I took note of the fact that other Asian countries showed an interest in my proposal, and that there was a general feeling that it was time that the united voice of Asia was heard in the councils of a world whose destinies had hitherto tended to be controlled almost entirely from another direction of the compass.

My invitation was readily accepted by the four Prime Ministers to whom it went, and they warmly welcomed the idea I had put to them. I had said that there was to be no agenda set out in advance, and that the discussions were to be perfectly friendly and informal. This suggestion appeared to make a special appeal, although one Prime Minister found it a little difficult to believe (not unaccountably) that there could be a conference without knowing in advance what the conference was going to discuss. The agenda was, of course, to be agreed upon on the first day we met.

International developments made the conference of greater importance than I imagined it to be at the moment

of conception. The war in Indo-China had reached a stage at which it was imperative it be stopped unless the Powers involved were prepared to run the risk of precipitating a third world war. When the Asian Prime Ministers met in Colombo the Geneva Conference was discussing the possibilities of a settlement in Indo-China and other Far Eastern problems. The deliberations and decisions of five leaders in Asia had a great influence in making final the settlement reached in Geneva.

Representatives of nine nations met at the Geneva Conference. France and the United States wished to have the Indo-China problem discussed as early as possible. But the British succeeded in having the subject put off. The British Government was awaiting the outcome of our Conference in Colombo.

Five nations, with populations totalling more than 500,000,000 people, were to make it clear that the only scheme to ensure peace in Asia would be one formulated or approved by the leaders of Free Asian countries. What was wrong about S.E.A.T.O.[1] was that the opinion of Free Asia had not been sought in regard to the troubles in Viet Nam and Korea. The Colombo Conference was going to demonstrate to the world that the people of Asia knew what was good for them. Our future lay in the direction of peaceful development of our immense resources of men, land, and material, and not in the dissipation of our strength and our slender financial resources in a catastrophe that might engulf us and extinguish our hard-won freedom.

If we could not build up a fund of goodwill necessary for the satisfactory conclusion of our parleys there was no hope for us. I was positively certain that something would come out of our talks.

Ours was a tremendous responsibility. If we failed Asia's security and freedom would be considered of no consequence in the global strategy of two power-blocs.

As I said in my opening address at the conference, "Time is running short, and with the pressures that are developing all around us, we shall have to do something as a matter of

[1] The South-East Asia Treaty Organisation.

urgency if we are not to be submerged in a world conflict that seems dangerously near."

I was determined that we should get down to the job at once, and not allow the conference to become a platform for familiar platitudes or propaganda. The most heartening development was that the Big Four sitting in judgment in Geneva on the future of Indo-China had invited the Asian Premiers assembled in Colombo to set up a South-East Asian body to administer the transition Government in that war-torn country if both the Western Powers and Red China answered the call for an immediate cease-fire. Geneva wanted a full report on the Asian viewpoint. Our lack of any direct political and commercial interest in Indo-China made us the most acceptable choice for the proposed supervision. I was congratulated on having placed this idea before world opinion.

The South-East Asian Prime Ministers' Conference began in Colombo on April 28, 1954, and ended in Kandy early in the morning of May 2. It was a historic occasion for Ceylon, and Colombo went gay for the visitors, who were received with acclamation and whom every one united to make happy and comfortable during their short stay with us. The visitors too made themselves immensely popular. I had known Nehru of India, Mohammed Ali of Pakistan, and Nu of Burma before, but this was the first time I was meeting Ali Sastroamidjojo of Indonesia. I took to him instantly. It was interesting to observe the personalities of my distinguished colleagues. Each carried his individual quality and his individual charm—Nehru, earnest, disinterested, fiery; Mohammed Ali, debonair, forceful, practical; Nu, serene, dispassionate, brief, but very much to the point; Ali Sastroamidjojo, courteous, understanding, dedicated.

It was wisely agreed at the very start that individual problems of the countries, or questions that did not concern all the countries in common, should not find a place on the agenda. Thus the Kashmir dispute was not taken up for discussion, any more than the question between Ceylon and India of Indians resident in Ceylon. In the result the principal subjects that were discussed were of a broad and univer-

sal character: the situation in Indo-China, the hydrogen bomb, colonialism and racialism, international Communism, and economic co-operation in South-East Asia.

The selection was an apt one, because the attention of the world had become increasingly focused on the Conference, and representatives of the world's Press were also present.

This was a time, it will be remembered, when there was considerable anxiety regarding the peace of the world. France had collapsed in Indo-China with the fall of Dien Bien Phu, the Communists were advancing, the Americans were keyed up, and in Geneva those who had assembled to bring about a settlement were facing frustration. It was therefore felt by us that the subject demanding the first attention of the Conference was the situation in Indo-China.

This is how the views of the five Prime Ministers regarding this matter found expression in their final communiqué:

> The Prime Ministers reviewed the situation in respect of Indo-China, where a long and tragic war threatens the establishment of the freedom and independence of the peoples of Indo-China, as well as the security and peace of Asia and of the world as a whole. They welcomed the earnest attempts being made at Geneva to find a solution to the problem of Indo-China by negotiation, and hoped that the deliberations of the Geneva Conference would bring about a speedy termination of the conflict and the restoration of peace in Indo-China. They considered that the solution of the problem of Indo-China required that a cease-fire agreement should be reached without delay. The Prime Ministers felt that the solution of the problem required direct negotiations between the parties principally concerned—namely, France, the three Associated States, and the Vietminh, as well as other parties invited by agreement. The success of such direct negotiations would be greatly helped by agreement on the part of all the countries concerned, particularly China, United Kingdom, U.S.A., and U.S.S.R., on the steps necessary to prevent a recurrence or resumption of hostilities. The Prime Ministers contemplated that this negotiating group would report to the Geneva Conference for a final decision. They proposed that France should declare at the Geneva Conference that she is irrevocably committed to the complete independence of Indo-China. In order

that the good offices and machinery of the United Nations might be utilized for the furtherance of the purposes of the Geneva Conference and the implementing of its decisions on Indo-China, the Prime Ministers were of the opinion that the Conference should keep the United Nations informed of the progress of its deliberations on Indo-China.

We took care to express ourselves as clearly and as fully as possible in our declaration. We were anxious to avoid anything which might hinder the negotiations in Geneva, where much recalcitrance was being experienced from certain quarters, but to do everything we could to assist the negotiators. We telegraphed our declaration to Anthony Eden, and we were gratified to learn afterwards that it had had a very salutary effect on the negotiations, and, in fact, had tipped the balance in bringing about the settlement in Indo-China. It would indeed have been an advantage for those in Geneva to receive the independent views of five representative and responsible nations of Asia regarding a matter which concerned the peace of Asia even more than of the world.

Another matter, affecting not only the peace of the world but the entire future destiny of humanity, which the Conference discussed was the question of atomic war. It is a matter of interest that nine months later the question formed an item on the agenda of the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference that took place in London. Our joint declaration in Colombo said:

The Prime Ministers viewed with grave concern the developments in regard to the hydrogen bomb and other weapons of mass destruction. They welcomed the efforts of the United Nations Disarmament Commission to bring about the elimination and prohibition of such weapons and hoped that the Commission would be able to reach an agreed solution to this problem urgently. The Prime Ministers were of opinion that, pending such agreement, no further explosions of hydrogen bombs should take place and that the United Nations and the Powers principally concerned should take steps to publish authoritative information regarding the destructive capabilities and the known and probable disastrous effects of these

weapons. They believed that such publication, by arousing the conscience of the world, would help in the search for an agreed solution of the grave problem that threatens humanity.

It was only natural that the subject of colonialism should be discussed by five nations that had only recently regained their independence. We regretted that colonialism still existed in various parts of the world and we expressed the view that the continuance of such a state of affairs was a violation of fundamental human rights and a threat to the peace of the world. Colonialism was to be a subject again at Bandung, where it was discussed at greater length and to greater effect.

Among other matters the Prime Ministers considered proposals for economic co-operation and mutual aid, and they affirmed their adherence to the principles of respecting the sovereignty of each country and not intervening in the domestic affairs of the others. These were all to the good, but a subject I was very much interested in personally was that of international Communism. I am an avowed and inveterate opponent of Communism, but I have said that if the people of my country, of their own free will and accord and by the exercise of democratic means, chose Communism as the best form of society for them, I could not object. Communism that seeks to make its way in from outside unasked is another matter. It is insidious, subversive, traitorous, imperialistic. It has to be closely watched, and it has to be kept out at all costs in the national interest. I was therefore particularly anxious to secure a declaration on international Communism, but, although every one was agreed as to the sentiment, there was difficulty about the formulation, because it was felt by some that Communism was not the only external influence that deserved to be kept out.

I yet remember vividly the scene of our discussion. For the consideration of our final communiqué we had gone up from the heat of Colombo to the cooler atmosphere of Kandy. We were spending the day at the Governor-General's Kandy residence, the King's Pavilion, with its beautiful lawns and its spacious rooms. The hours were wearing on, but the suave persistence of Ceylon's Finance Minister, Sir

Oliver Goonetilleke, who had taken charge of the form of words, was not to be denied.

At one stage I noticed U Nu leave the room and return in a short while with a towel round his head. I thought the gesture apt and eloquent, although Nu blandly explained that he was merely protecting himself from the effects of the electric fan.

Tempers were short and nerves frayed. We were tired men striving to define the area of agreement among us, and iron out our differences. It was a difficult task.

At another stage one of the Premiers lost control of himself, banged the table, and shouted at another, "You are nothing better than an American stooge!" To which the other retorted with equal heat, "And you are nothing better than a Russian stooge!"

It was at this moment, fraught with tension, that I lost my own temper, as Chairman, and exploded. I shouted to them to stop bickering and behave themselves. I asked them to remember that we were Prime Ministers. The two statesmen I rebuked came to their senses at once, and both apologized to me. Amity was soon restored between the two, and I record this incident merely to show that, after all, even Prime Ministers are only human.

It was now nearing midnight, and unostentatiously and without a word I retired to bed. This novel act of chairmanship must have dealt the finishing blow to the debate, for half an hour later I was fetched back to be told that agreement had been reached, and that all that was now necessary was for me to preside over the valedictory speeches.

The declaration on Communism and international Communism said:

> The subject of Communism in its national and international aspects was generally discussed and the Prime Ministers made known to each other their respective views on and attitudes towards Communist ideologies. The Prime Ministers affirmed their faith in democracy and democratic institutions and, being resolved to preserve in their respective countries the freedoms inherent in the democratic system, declared their unshakable determination to resist interference in the affairs of their

countries by external Communist, anti-Communist or other agencies. They were convinced that such interference threatened the sovereignty, security, and political independence of their respective States and the right of each country to develop and progress in accordance with the conceptions and desires of its own people.

The Colombo Conference was an undoubted success, especially from the Prime Ministers' own point of view. They came to know one another and one another's minds better than before, and became firm friends, which was the main thing, and through them their countries were drawn still closer together. Next, by their meeting together they drew the attention of Asia to the necessity of her playing her part in international affairs, and to the possibilities of united action in that direction.

The outside world watched the happenings in Colombo with interest. Their verdict was that a new voice had arisen which had to be heeded, although some sections of the Press wondered if there was much that mattered in the mild utterances of the Joint Communiqué. What the Press overlooked was the weight of opinion behind the utterances, however mild they might be in their wording (as they must inevitably be, when responsible people like Prime Ministers give expression to their views).

Pessimists who predicted that a conference without a set agenda would achieve nothing were confounded. They were forgetting my determination to make it a success.

When Sir Oliver Goonetilleke was asked what good would come of a conference without an agenda his reply was: "Anything is possible. You are reckoning without our Prime Minister. He is so completely innocent of diplomatic guile that the conference will produce much more than we now think. Usually when a diplomat asks another diplomat a question, he knows the answer himself. He merely wants to know whether the other man has the same answer. But when our Prime Minister asks a question, it is because he wants an answer."

This is largely true, and accounts for much of the success of the Asian Conference. Credit must also be given to Sir

Oliver, whose masterly diplomacy and genius for reconciling divergent viewpoints prevented a deadlock, and helped us to frame resolutions acceptable to us all.

One result of the Asian Conference, according to the *Manchester Guardian*, was to increase my prestige as one of the statesmen of Free Asia specializing in international relations. The paper observed that if the Colombo Group was able to become a power diplomatically I might have a new part to play. My acts were regarded as the more striking because hitherto Ceylonese Ministers had not been specially interested in foreign affairs. It was felt that a country with such an ancient tradition as Ceylon ought, though small, to be as vigorous a diplomatic force as I was now trying to make it.

At Geneva my name was proposed by France as Chairman for the Indo-China peace talks. But Russia objected.

16

Suspicion and Sensation

A few days after the Colombo Conference I was severely criticized for having allowed American Globemasters, carrying French troops to Indo-China, to make use of a Ceylon airport. It was argued that this was in conflict with the attitude of the Asian Premiers in regard to the situation in Indo-China.

My answer was that it would have been unreasonable at that moment, before a cease-fire had been declared in Indo-China, to deter one outside party from giving aid to the belligerents without any guarantee that the other party would not do the same. To do that would have been to increase the advantage of one side as against the other. And I saw no purpose in being neutral for the benefit of the wrong party.

It was on this occasion that I declared in the House of Representatives that, if even the devil wanted to fight Communism, I would be on his side. At the same time I was alive to the danger of Ceylon's becoming the catspaw of a Western Power which wished to promote its own interests, regardless of Asian opinion. I was reminded that, if Ceylon chose to co-operate with the devil in fighting Communism, it should not be on the devil's terms but on our own.

Hardly had the excitement over the Globemaster incident died down before I was called upon to contradict in the most emphatic terms a newspaper story that members of my Cabinet were engaged in secret talks with the American Ambassador in Colombo on a Washington suggestion that Ceylon should terminate her rubber-rice pact with China and in exchange receive U.S. aid. I described this report as

"a damn lie." But the newspaper persisted in maintaining that its story was substantially true and in attempting to destroy my political prestige and personal reputation. There seemed to be a mischievous insinuation in its campaign that there was some connexion between these alleged "secret meetings" and President Eisenhower's invitation to me to visit the United States.

I sent for the editor of the paper in question and asked him how he had come to publish what was an absolute falsehood. He still maintained that he had positive proof of the truth of the report that I and two other Ministers had discussed the question of American aid with the American Ambassador.

I found out later that the newspaper had surreptitiously secured a friendly letter to me from Philip Crowe, the American Ambassador, informing me that he would not be able to visit me on the coming Sunday morning as he was going out of Colombo for the week-end; but he hoped to meet me on another occasion. During the same week-end it so happened that I too had gone to an out-station, and so had another Minister, while yet another important member of the Cabinet had isolated himself for the purpose of completing an important job of work without interruption.

A newspaper reporter had evidently jumped to the conclusion that there was some mystery about our week-end disappearance, and that, in view of the Ambassador's letter to me, it must have something to do with an offer of American aid, and with secret talks on the subject of 'torpedoing' our pact with China. It was on this flimsy foundation that the newspaper's fabrication had been built.

The Asian Prime Ministers had made it clear that they would not be influenced by American opinion of the status of Red China in the context of her relations with their countries. I was the last man who would think of "selling Ceylon for dollars."

Anyway, no offer of U.S. aid had been made to me, nor any proposal that we should terminate our trade agreement with Red China in order to qualify for such assistance. The renewal of the China pact had to be considered in due

course on its own merits. The only consideration was whether we still needed all the rice that China undertook to supply us at reasonable prices, and whether China would continue to pay the price we expected for our rubber.

July 1954 was another eventful month in the first year of my Premiership. A sensation was caused when I recommended the suspension from office of the Governor of the Central Bank of Ceylon pending investigation of his conduct by a Commission.

At the same time a campaign of mud-slinging and malicious rumour was started by enemies of the Government against Sir Oliver Goonetilleke, the Governor-General designate. I made it known at the time that, while I was always prepared to bring to book any person against whom a *prima facie* case had been made out, I would not be guided by reports which were only intended to malign and discredit persons in high places on the vaguest charges. I said Sir Oliver's appointment would not be stayed pending the investigation of the conduct of the Governor of the Central Bank.

A weakness of my countrymen is to make the gravest allegations against a man who has risen to the top, but if these allegations are proved, and the man is to be punished, their sympathy gets the better of their sense of justice, and they try to save him from the consequences of his misdemeanour. In the instance of the Governor of the Central Bank, when the Commission had reported against him three leading Colombo lawyers, all Queen's Counsel, came to see me on his behalf. They said they were paid no fees for doing so. They were acting *pro bono publico*, and had come to appeal to me in the interests of the country and the good name of the public service, not to publish the Commission's report, and to allow the condemned Governor of the Central Bank to resign from office instead of dismissing him.

I told one of them that I would pay him a fee if he advised me as to whether I should accept their advice. He had no answer to that. I then said that I had resolved to be my own lawyer, and that I did not have a fool for a client. It would certainly have been the height of folly for me to suppress that report.

A few days later—it was Budget Day in the House of Representatives—one of the members of my Cabinet, my cousin R. G. Senanayake, Minister of Commerce and Trade, resigned. Among the reasons he gave for his resignation was the fact that he was not in sympathy with my contemplated visit to the U.S.A., which, he suspected, was an attempt on my part to negotiate for a pact which would be in direct opposition to the policy of Ceylon's neutrality in foreign affairs, and to the recent declarations at the Conference of Asian Prime Ministers. He also disapproved of the appointment of Sir Oliver Goonetilleke as Governor-General, as he felt that it was not one which would "inspire confidence in the Government."

It was on this occasion that I said, "The good God gave me my friends, but the devil gave me my relations." It is an irony of fate that at critical stages of my public career some of my relations, instead of rallying round me, have caused me the most embarrassment and trouble. But experience has taught me that no purpose is served by harbouring any feeling of bitterness on this account.

I had to make it clear that my visit to the U.S.A. would be purely a goodwill mission. I had said it before, and I repeated it now, that there was no pact in contemplation between Ceylon and America, and that whatever discussions I had with President Eisenhower would be the subject of a full and frank report to my Cabinet colleagues and the country on my return to Ceylon. My experiences in meeting notabilities in other countries had been wide enough, I said, to reassure anyone that I would not behave like an infant when I went to the White House.

Lord Soulbury left Ceylon in this memorable July, expressing his great love for the country and his satisfaction that his successor was his oldest Ceylonese friend, who, he was sure, would maintain the importance, dignity, and prestige of his position as representative of the Queen and perform the duties of his high office with distinction.

On July 17 Sir Oliver went to Queen's House, and we had our first Ceylonese Governor-General, symbolizing our complete freedom from imperial ties.

Meanwhile the influence of what came to be known as the Colombo Powers was making itself felt in international affairs. The Supervisory Commission appointed in connexion with the armistice in Indo-China included India, and Nehru felt it was a little embarrassing that only his country among those represented at our conference should have been chosen for this purpose. But I saw no objection to the composition of the Commission that had been agreed upon by the Geneva Powers. The main thing was that a cease-fire had been arranged, and the voice of Asia had been heard and heeded.

The Geneva agreement bore a close affinity to the peace proposals the Asian Prime Ministers had devised in Ceylon. Nehru was justified in his belief that, in a world in which two strong power-blocs were struggling for superiority, the moral weight of united Asian opinion alone could tip the scales in favour of peace. This was also my own firm conviction. I had always maintained—and continue to do so now—that the vacuum left in Asia by the withdrawal of Western colonialism must be filled by democratic Asian nationalism, and not by Communist expansion.

I returned from India in October on the first anniversary of my assumption of office as Prime Minister. Looking back on that year of achievement, I could at least take pride in having increased Ceylon's prestige abroad by convening the Colombo Conference of Asian Premiers. I had thus given shape and direction to the new Asia that had emerged from centuries of colonialism. And one result of this conference was that its influence was felt in Geneva to a sufficient extent to end the war in Indo-China and ease international tension.

17

A Girdle round the World

Early in 1954 a message came through to me from President Eisenhower inviting me to pay a visit to the United States. I was glad to accept the invitation, and the visit was eventually arranged for December that year. The invitation was made public in due course, and when that happened I received invitations from several other countries too. In the end I found I had undertaken a trip round the world, and the countries that formed my itinerary were Italy, France, England, Canada, the United States, Honolulu, Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaya. The journey took me fifty days to do.

It was a goodwill mission pure and simple that I undertook, but some tried to find hidden and dark purposes in my visit to America. One newspaper had no doubt at all that I was taking some secret pact with me to sign with America, and the Opposition in Parliament was definite that I was going in quest of American aid for Ceylon. All this was somewhat annoying, because Ceylon had not received a cent of American aid so far, and it was certainly not my intention to bargain for any.

I am one of those people—I do not know if they are rare—who firmly believe in the value of goodwill and personal contact in international relations, and I have often said that if the leaders of nations would get together round a table and talk things over in a friendly and informal way there would be much more peace in the world than we see to-day. I had always been a believer in getting together for a talk, and I had been able to test my theory with success when I convened the first Conference of the Colombo Powers in the previous April.

Anyway, the public were solidly with me in my plans, and I was given a rousing send-off when I took to the air on November 10. When I came back my reception was even more enthusiastic, because people saw that the fears of the few had been unjustified, and that I had, in all that I did and said abroad, not only sustained but enhanced the country's name and prestige.

Two days in Rome were not enough for me to savour the delights of the Eternal City, but they were just enough for me to make my acquaintance with Prime Minister Scelba and his Ministers. It was my regret that I was unable to meet President Einaudi, who was then lying seriously ill at his country residence, but he bestowed upon me by proxy the highest decoration of Italian chivalry, the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Italy. I visited the Ente Maremma Colonization Scheme, and was glad to see that our own Gal Oya Scheme did not suffer by comparison. We have happy trade relations with Italy, and a well-known firm of engineers from Milan has a contract with our Laksapana Hydro-Electric Scheme.

I was reminded that I was the first State visitor from Ceylon to Rome since a princely mission from Taprobane, as Ceylon was known to the ancient Greeks, was received by the Emperor Claudius more than nineteen hundred years ago. In modern times ties between Ceylon and Italy, not only commercial but also cultural, have increased and strengthened. A good many Ceylonese profess a religion that has its centre in Rome. The art and architecture of Italy have had their influence in Ceylon, and even part of our legal system goes back to Justinian.

I made these observations at a banquet given in my honour by the Italian Government at the lovely Renaissance Villa Madama. The Italian Prime Minister toasted the happiness and prosperity of Ceylon. He said that the foreign policy of his Government was to enlarge the circle of Italy's friendships, especially with countries like Ceylon, which sought to serve the cause of peace. They had followed with deep interest the progress made by Ceylon, and her increasing influence in international affairs.

Replying to the toast, I said:

"Your Excellency recalled that it is recorded in Pliny the Elder that diplomatic envoys from Ceylon were in Rome two thousand years ago. To-day there is an envoy from Ceylon seated at this board, and perhaps our envoy of two thousand years ago was similarly privileged to be seated at a banquet given by the Emperor Claudius. He no doubt reclined on a couch, as did the Roman patricians of those days, and drank Falernian wine and ate peacocks' tongues. Perhaps the peacocks came from Ceylon, although we would not like it said against us that the elephants of Hannibal of Carthage who invaded Italy came from Ceylon!"

It was remarked in Rome and elsewhere that I was the first person to introduce the element of humour and the human touch into State banquets, where an atmosphere of stiff formality normally prevails.

After the banquet the Mayor of Rome presented me with a silver statue of a wolf feeding Romulus and Remus, the legendary founders of the Eternal City.

Monsieur Mendès-France, the then Prime Minister of France, had to leave Paris for America within an hour or two of my arrival at Orly airport, and I was unable to meet him, but I stayed at his official residence, the Hotel Matignon, during the five days I was the guest of the French Government. I was very much at home in Paris. I had known France well as a student, and I recalled with amusement my early resourcefulness in learning the French language. The scene was entirely familiar, but as a distinguished State guest I was all the time under escort. There were, as in Italy, a horde of motor-cycle police ahead of me wherever I went, and the din they made left no one in doubt as to what was coming. I made a humorous remark to that effect to the chief of Protocol, and he kindly agreed that I might come and go unheralded when the strictly official part of my stay was over.

I had, however, a plain-clothes detective as my constant 'shadow,' and one day I could not resist playing a prank on him. I went out for a stroll one foggy evening, and while he was keeping a discreet distance from me I suddenly boarded a passing bus and watched the effect on him. He chased the

speeding vehicle in such evident alarm that I had not the heart to proceed farther, and we both went back home in a taxi to the warmth of the fire and a glass of cognac.

No Government will relax its security measures for the safety of its guests, and that is indeed as it should be. In Japan one of my Secretaries had thought he had for once eluded Security, and had had a good time all on his own one evening. He was blandly told by Security the following morning that they had known where he had been, and they had obtained telephone reports every fifteen minutes on his activities and that they had extended to his night errantry benign protection from afar! Another Secretary had better luck in eluding Security, but saw stars when he ran into some of our party at a night club.

I received the most gracious hospitality from France. The President of the Republic was taken ill during my stay and could not personally bestow on me the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour which I received, but I met Madame Coty at the luncheon that followed at the Palais de L'Elysée. There were many receptions and exchanges of calls, and I much enjoyed a visit to the military establishments at Fontainebleau.

I also met many old friends, Count and Countess de Waldener, the Schneiders, the Billiards, and the Vilmorins. Vilmorin offered to come to Ceylon at his own expense and advise us regarding improvements for increasing the yield of rice, and he did us this very kind service a few months later. Much of the development work of the Colombo Harbour is in the hands of French industry, as also are the extensions to the water-supply system of Colombo and its suburbs.

From France I was to have gone on a one-day visit to Bonn, but a most fearful fog descended over Paris just before I was to leave, and all flights were cancelled. I had to wire my apologies to the Federal German Government, and took train the following morning for London, where I was being expected that evening.

This was my first visit to Britain after I became Prime Minister, but it was a family visit. Ceylon is a member of

the British Commonwealth, and there was a slight, though significant, difference between my visit to Britain and my visits to other countries. I did not have to be received with formality, but I was welcomed with the utmost friendliness and cordiality.

I visited the Buddhist Vihara in London, which I described as a symbol of Ceylon's great desire to make a spiritual contribution to the national life of the British people, to whom we owed so much in the political, social, and economic fields. I said, "To us the gift of truth excels all other gifts, and we believe that truth is embodied in the doctrine of the Buddha."

I was granted an audience by the Queen, who had paid a visit to Ceylon with her husband only six months earlier. Her Majesty was full of recollections of my country, and I for my part assured her that the people of Ceylon would not forget the charm, the graciousness, and the simple dignity of her presence in their midst.

I also came for the first time face to face with Winston Churchill. There was something in the old giant that evoked instant admiration. But he was not word-perfect. In giving my toast at luncheon he forgot himself and referred to the Empire, but with a smile at me quickly corrected himself to "Commonwealth." I was glad I was able to be in London when he attained his eightieth birthday, and it was a privilege for me to witness the tribute paid to him by the representatives of a grateful nation at the Queen's opening of Parliament. Truly, no other leader in history can ever have deserved so well of his people.

I renewed old friendships and contacts. I met our former Governor-General, Viscount Soulbury, and I spent a weekend with Viscount Swinton, the Commonwealth Relations Secretary. There were parties to attend, interviews to give, and associations to address.

I spoke before the Ceylon Association (of British planting and commercial interests in Ceylon), and I tried to impress on them the necessity of co-operating with Ceylon in conducting the economy of our country in a manner that consulted her well-being from the point of view of her own people.

I had to remind them that in the days of colonialism, when we were not in charge of our own affairs, the Government had turned a sturdy peasantry, of which we were proud, into a landless and poverty-stricken class. Land, the most valuable asset in our country's economy, was owned by foreign capitalists who employed foreign labour.

At the same time I repeated what I had already said at an E.C.A.F.E. Conference in Ceylon and reassured them that my Government had no intention of doing anything which might jeopardize the position of foreign capital in Ceylon.

I concluded by saying that political stability and general contentment were essential for the success of foreign investments in Ceylon. "In other words, if the forces of Communism prevailed, or anti-democratic parties obtained power, we would lose only politically, but you would lose your investments. Communism can be overcome only if management understands labour, is appreciative of their work, and treats human beings with the respect, kindness, and dignity to which they are entitled."

I was also to have addressed the Ceylon Students' Association in London, but an hour before the meeting was due I was suddenly laid low by the depredations within my inside of an oyster that had apparently escaped quarantine when it presented itself for my consumption at lunch. I was in bed for a couple of days, and had to extend my stay in England correspondingly, and curtail the programme for my visit to the United States. Engagements made for me in New York had to be cancelled at the last moment. Before I left London I was photographed for Madame Tussaud's, that Hall of Fame where fame is made the common denominator for famous and infamous alike. I dared not ask in which niche I was going to be placed!

The weather had been miserable from the time I arrived in London—rain, squalls, and the cold that gets into your bones without justifying itself by a drop in temperature. But it improved in the few hours before I left, and I had a comfortable flight across the Atlantic.

I was met at Idlewild airport on the morning of December 1 by our Ambassador in Washington, R. S. S. Gunewardene,

and I was glad also to see the American Ambassador in Ceylon, Philip Crowe, who had come home specially to help me in my sojourn in his country. I had just twenty-four hours in New York. Once again I was not quite sure whether the skyscrapers pointed to eternity or to the vanity of human wishes, but I had a most enjoyable time, concluding with a dinner given by the Mayor of New York.

Earlier it had been arranged, I was told, that I was to have a ticker-tape reception when I received the freedom of the city, but all that had gone by the board when my arrival had been delayed by the London oyster. The Mayor presented the freedom of New York to me in a scroll at the dinner. I also had lunch with the Overseas Press Club, and I had my first opportunity of speaking to the American public, both on this occasion and at the Mayoral reception.

I was called upon to do a considerable amount of public speaking on my visit to the American continent. My speeches have been published under the title *Between Two Worlds*, so it would not be necessary for me to repeat myself at length in this book. But it might be useful to recount the main themes of my speaking. I wished in the first place to explain Ceylon to America, and in the next I wished to explain Asia to America. There had been much misunderstanding in the States regarding Ceylon's trade pact with China, and I made it my special endeavour to explain the position to the American public.

When Ceylon concluded her rice-rubber deal with China there was no question of her wanting to assist an "enemy" named by the United Nations, even though Ceylon herself had not been admitted to that body. The deal was one of sheer economic necessity, and the alternative to it would have been just plain starvation for Ceylon.

Ceylon depended largely on rubber for her income, and the world market in natural rubber had dropped, one of the chief causes being the regulations that America had introduced for the safeguarding of her synthetic industry. On the other hand, Ceylon had to get her rice from outside, and rice supplies in the world were short, and there was an international black market in rice.

Caught between the devil and the deep, Ceylon asked America to buy her rubber at a reasonable price, but the request was not met. She then asked America for a supply of rice on a Government-to-Government basis, but she was directed to the open market. It was a matter of life and death for Ceylon, and she turned to China in her predicament. China was able to give her rice, and wanted her rubber, and the bargain the two countries were able to strike was to the mutual advantage of both.

Battle Act or no Battle Act, and whatever the consequences were in relation to America, the deal had to be made if Ceylon was to live, and the ironical side of the situation was that if Ceylon had been able to sell her rubber to Russia, as others had done, enabling Russia to supply her confederates in turn, nothing untoward would apparently have happened to Ceylon, and her copybook would have been in order.

These were the facts of the China-Ceylon Trade Pact, and I made it my business in some of my speeches to explain them to my American audiences. I had explained them earlier to Vice-President Nixon when he visited Ceylon in the previous year, and I was glad to see that America was now appreciating the picture in its correct perspective.

In a broader context I tried to explain Asia to America. First, that Asia should be left to Asians themselves to manage. I was not stating a Monroe Doctrine for Asia, but I wanted to point out that most Asian countries, free at last after centuries of foreign domination, naturally tended to be sensitive to outside intervention in their affairs, however well meant it might be. I said that the initiative, even in asking for aid, should be left to Asians themselves. I was here particularly explaining why we had not found it possible to join S.E.A.T.O., and I said:

"The solution we propose in Asia is that Asian nations should resolve to live together in peace, and we must set up the machinery suitable for achieving that. This is machinery for peace and not for war. The important thing is to remove distrust and suspicion and fear amongst our nations. If there are ideological differences amongst us, we

must be prepared to concede that everybody's meat is not the same, the only safeguard necessary being to ensure that nobody tries to thrust his meat down somebody else's throat. You now know why we have not found it possible to agree with S.E.A.T.O., although we have said we maintain an open mind on the subject. What S.E.A.T.O. failed to take into account is the fact that the defence of Asia must first be an economic defence. The military aspect is secondary. The nations of Asia, if attacked, will defend themselves to the utmost and with all the means at their command, but they do not believe that the first need is a defensive pact against aggression. They may need aid against aggression too, and will decide on their own when to call in this aid, if they cannot defend themselves unaided, but the first aid they need of anybody is economic aid."

I also tried to explain Asia's and Ceylon's attitude towards Communism and towards democracy. The Buddhist countries were by tradition democratic and cherished liberty as much as the nations of the West, and, so far as I was concerned as an individual, my own uncompromising attitude to Communism was well known. But Communism was quite often not a mere matter of choice for a people: it was accepted as a matter of economic necessity where a better alternative was not forthcoming. I reminded my audiences:

"I must repeat what I have so often said, that Communism does not flourish on a full stomach. The cure for Communism is therefore obvious. We must set about, here and now, raising the living conditions of the people of the under-developed countries. I say here and now because I want to remind you of something which may have escaped your attention. China has improved her economic standards considerably in a few years of Communism, while her neighbours are yet lagging behind. If therefore the poorer countries of Asia are not assisted to their feet by the richer countries of the world, and assisted with the least possible delay, the spectacle and example of China would simply be disastrous. There would be many defections from the free world and democracy would have met its Waterloo in Asia. This is what you and I must specially remember, and that is

why economic development in Asia should be speeded up with almost supersonic speed."

The prophylactic, if not the cure, for Communism was better living conditions, and I drew attention to the most essential need of Asia—namely, economic aid—and to the manner and the spirit in which it should be given. Keeping military watch over Asia was not going to save the rest of the world from Communism. What was needed was material assistance to Asia to enable her to catch up with the rest of the world in living standards. I continued:

"This is the job that confronts us in Asia, namely that of the immediate improvement of living conditions, and it is a front-line job in the battle against Communism. We cannot do the job alone and we want everybody's help in doing it. We want economic help in plenty and this is the time to give it. I trust that America will take the cue and act accordingly, and I am happy to see from recent reports that America is coming round to our point of view, which we think to be the right one. And this aid, whoever gives it, must be given in the right spirit and manner. It should not be smothered with conditions and clauses, nor should it be given in the manner that gifts are distributed at Christmas time. It should be given as a contribution to a great co-operative effort which is to benefit the giver as much as the receiver; for, remember, by helping Asia to save herself from Communism you are saving yourselves and the world from Communism. And it might be as well to remember too that what we want is not just money. We want aid in skills, we want aid in the technological field, and we want people to come and help us to build up our industries. If America will give us this aid, as others are doing, she can safely leave to Asia the job of defending herself against Communism."

It was a crowded twenty-four hours in New York, and on the following morning I left for Ottawa in a transport plane placed at my disposal by my hosts there. This was not the first time I had visited Canada, but I was now going as the guest of the Canadian Government. We have special relations with Canada, not merely as a fellow-member of the Commonwealth, but as one of the most generous of our

friends. Ceylon has received substantial Colombo Plan aid from Canada, and she has always appreciated the comradely spirit in which it is given.

I was received at Uplands airport by my old friend, Louis St Laurent. The Prime Minister had visited Ceylon at the beginning of the year, and had earned our affection by the obvious simplicity and sincerity of his character. It was a pleasure to meet him again.

I spent a very happy four days in Canada. The arrangements made for the comfort of myself and my party were excellent, and in Ottawa all of us stayed at Government House as the guests of His Excellency the Governor-General the Right Hon. Vincent Massey. The weather was cold, but it was bracing, and there was so much steady sun on the snow and ice that the landscape had a pretty Christmas-card effect.

I travelled in Canada most of the time by air, but I had a very interesting drive from Toronto to Niagara Falls by car. The Falls were impressive, although they were not in their full force in the winter, but I was even more impressed by the Hydro-Electric scheme which I was shown. I was very hospitably entertained by the Hydro-Electric Commission. Its Chairman, Saunders, was a dynamic man, and very charming too, but little did I know that he was destined to die in a plane accident shortly after. And Fate had decreed that he should be the only passenger to die.

At Niagara Falls I addressed the Canadian Club, and my subject was "What the Commonwealth means to Us." In this free association of nations representing some 500 million people, three out of the nine members are Asian countries, one of them a Republic, and their own total population is nearly 400 million. I explained this remarkable phenomenon thus, where East met West so willingly (despite the poet's asseveration):

"It would be pertinent to ask how and why these Asian peoples, who were once subject races and who might have been expected to break away from their old masters at the first opportunity, did not do so, but voluntarily elected to remain in association with them. I think the answer to this

question would be that the spirit of adaptability shown by the Commonwealth has a special appeal to us in the East. The fact that we have been received into the Commonwealth family on equal terms, and with no reservations, convinces us, more than anything else, of the genuine opportunities the Commonwealth offers of international co-operation on a truly democratic basis. That, if I may say so, is the essence of our comradeship."

I said that although, from the point of view of sentiment, the Commonwealth might not mean the same thing to the Asian members as to the other Dominions, we regarded our association in it in a more practical way:

"I refer to the grave economic problems we in Asia are faced with. The poverty of the East is something that is often spoken about, but what it means to us in terms of human suffering is something that no words can measure. If freedom is to mean anything to those millions in our villages and towns who have hardly an adequate standard of life, it must take a concrete form, a form which would translate into material well-being and relieve the horrible distress which prevails among our people. It is in the possibility of a common sharing of the human and material resources of our Commonwealth that the greatest promise of future co-operation among our member States lies. The economic aid that we so gratefully receive from you under the Colombo Plan, for example, is in the nature of a gift within a family, and in this sense differs from aid we may receive from a country outside the Commonwealth. It does not consist of mere goods and services which Canada may export abroad, but wealth and goodwill that moves from one part of our great Commonwealth to another, in order to develop our 'common wealth' for the common good of all those who participate in it. In short, the Commonwealth offers an excellent opportunity of bridging the economic gap between East and West, in a spirit of friendly co-operation, rather than in an atmosphere of mutual obligation."

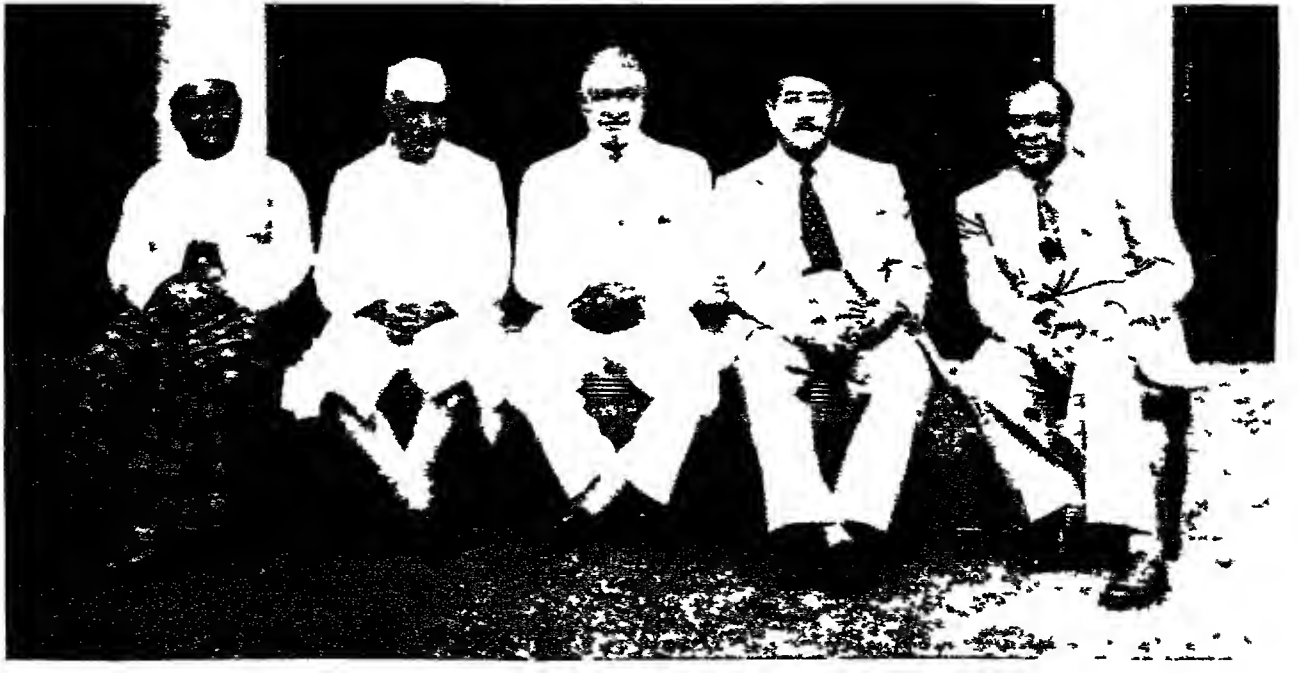
I shall never forget the wonderful display of chrysanthemums at the flower show in the City Hall of Montreal, and, trifling though it may be, the memory remains of the most

delicious hot-dog I ate in my life when our cars were refilling at a wayside garage on our drive back from Niagara Falls. I also paid an interesting visit to the establishments of the National Research Council in Ottawa, and made note of the fact that the best way for the State to foster such enterprises is to give them aid but not to intervene in their control.

The same Canadian plane took me back to the States, and I arrived in Washington on the morning of December 6. I was received by Vice-President Nixon with a cordiality that evoked happy memories of his stay with us in Ceylon a year ago. Both he and his charming wife were my guests on that visit, and they made themselves very popular wherever they went.

I called on President Eisenhower soon after my arrival, and stayed to a luncheon given by him in my honour at the White House. It was a meeting I had been looking forward to, and it was of course his invitation that had started me on my journey round the world: Washington was my destination, although it was no longer my terminus. I liked the President at once. He was easy and informal, and his ready smile was evidence of a frank and sincere nature. He greatly enjoyed the gift of a silver ink-stand of Sinhalese craftsmanship I had taken for him. He was delightful company, and we swapped stories. In whatever politics we talked we talked straight, and there was no beating about the bush. The general and the man had not been submerged in the politician, and that was refreshing.

I stayed with my party at Blair House during my three days in Washington, and I was never more comfortable or more at home. I had interesting talks with Foster Dulles and Harold Stassen, and I called on the Secretary for Commerce. I had no occasion to ask for aid on behalf of Ceylon, but the point I impressed on these individual representatives of the Government was that the recipe for Asia was more and still more economic aid. I tried once more to clear up any misconceptions they might have had that the China-Ceylon Trade Pact was an unfriendly act on the part of Ceylon. I elaborated my themes in an address I was invited to make to the National Press Club of Washington.



FIVE ASIAN PRIME MINISTERS IN COLOMBO WITH THE AUTHOR AS CENTRAL FIGURE
Left to right Nu (Burma), Nehru (India) the author (Ceylon) Sastroamidjojo (Indonesia) Mohammed Ali (Pakistan)

A GIFT FOR PRESIDENT EISENHOWER, WHO ENJOYS
A JOKE WITH THE AUTHOR

The social round was heavy in Washington, but the hospitality was warm-hearted. I brought away special memories of my visit to George Washington's home, Mount Vernon, and to the Arlington Cemetery, where I laid a wreath at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The ceremony at the latter was unforgettably impressive, and it was there that I heard our national anthem, *Namo Namo Matha* ("I salute thee, Mother"), played as it had never before been played, whether at home or abroad. They rendered the entire anthem, from beginning to end, not only flawlessly but inspiringly. In another country I was received with *Namo Namo Matha* played to ragtime.

My official visit to the United States ended with my stay in Washington, but I spent four more days in that country. I visited Akron on the invitation of the Rubber Manufacturers Association. They showed me round their factories, and they gave me a dinner which was by no means 'synthetic,' and I spoke to them regarding the prospects of natural rubber, and what these meant to the peoples of the East. In Chicago, during the two hours I was waiting to change planes, I was shown round the Museum of Art and the stockyards—a study in contrast, although no doubt a stockyard scene would make a good subject for the painter's brush.

The flight to Los Angeles was very bumpy for a good bit of the journey, but a fellow-passenger, also Hollywood-bound, was Miss America 1954, whose name, Merriwether, tried its best to give the lie to the storm. She was a pretty girl, and most charmingly ingenuous.

We had quite an Arabian Night in Hollywood, thanks to Paramount Pictures, Incorporated. At dinner there was the fabulous Cecil B. de Mille and several other film magnates. There was also a not inconsiderable galaxy of stars, including Danny Kaye (who made a characteristically funny speech), Walter Pidgeon, and William Holden, and, among the more heavenly bodies, Dorothy Lamour, Glynis Johns, and Angela Lansbury. In the morning we were taken to one of the studios, and we witnessed the making of a film, *The Court Jester*. We arrived just as the King's courtiers were

being laid out one by one, after drinking the poisoned wine. We entered the set ourselves, but I do not think we shall be seen on the screen with Danny Kaye and Angela Lansbury!

I had cocktails in San Francisco with Roger Lapham, late of the Foreign Operations Administration in China, and a friend of Philip Crowe. The World Affairs Council gave me a dinner, and I addressed them on "Asia and the World." The subject seemed appropriate before I left America by the Golden Gate. I tried to tell the intellectual élite of this beautiful city of the *Pacific Sun* (and of incredible switch-back gradients) the significance of resurgent Asia in the international context of to-day:

"To-day the scene on the Eastern horizon has changed considerably. Kipling's world in which East was East and West was West has been replaced by the One World of Wendell Willkie. A new world has arisen in which the East has almost overnight amalgamated and involved itself with the West in an essential and inextricable sort of way. The era of colonialism was one in which the East provided the raw materials and the necessary markets for the industrial development of the West. The West directed the East, and the East was, perforce, only a junior partner in the affairs of the West. The past decade, however, brought about important and momentous changes. Country after country in Asia cast aside the fetters of colonial domination and re-emerged into full and sovereign nationhood. Asia to-day can no longer be regarded as a passive partner in your affairs, but as an active co-operator. It is, therefore, most necessary that this vital change in the Asian scene should be properly appreciated and seen in correct perspective if there is to be any real understanding between the East and the West in the complex of our modern world."

There was a touch of the East as I stepped out in Honolulu. I was greeted with *leis*, and this custom of putting garlands round the visitor's neck would alone, I think, be support for the theory that the Pacific Islanders originally came from Indian shores. (The *Kon-Tiki* only proved that one could drift to Polynesia in a raft from the lands of the Incas, but the Incas had no garlands.) I had, of course, plenty of

practice in proffering my head for a *lei*. We do these things in Ceylon, sometimes on a massive scale. When I paid my first visit as Prime Minister to the northern part of the country some humorous fancy overtook the people there, and they began to compete among themselves in placing the garland of heaviest weight round my neck. Some one succeeded with thirty pounds, but I could not help wondering if beneath the flowers there was a millstone, of which I was expected to take the hint! Admiral Stump, of the Pacific Fleet, was kinder when he met me with his floral tribute.

Admiral Stump was a truly kind man, gentle of speech and of mien. He took me and my party to Pearl Harbour and explained to us all that had happened on that fateful day when the unexpected attack by Japan brought the United States into the War. I laid a wreath on the hulk of the *Arkansas*, in which the bodies of those that sank with the ship have been left entombed, as their fitting memorial. The Admiral and his wife gave us lunch, and on the following day he took us in a Navy plane to the island of Hawaii. The pineapple plantations on the way looked neat and pretty from the air, but the odd thought struck me that a parachutist might not find them very comfortable in an emergency landing. We went to the volcanoes in Hawaii, and with sulphur fumes steaming all round us we drank Martinis in a delightful hotel kept by an elderly Greek. There was a unique and most agreeable flavour to the gin, which they said was due to the sulphur in the water. We had also discovered that it was the Admiral's birthday, and we surprised him by producing a birthday cake for him to cut, to the strains of *Happy Birthday to You*, not so tunefully sung by the party.

My three-day visit to America's playground was of a private nature, for purposes of holiday relaxation, but the American Government maintained a friendly and hospitable interest in my stay. Governor King and his lady were a gracious couple, and they entertained us to an interesting display of Hawaiian dancing at dinner. The authentic hula-hula is somewhat different from the cabaret variety, and certainly has more meaning.

Of course, I could not escape invitations to speak, and I addressed the Pacific and Asian Affairs Council of Honolulu on the foreign policy of Ceylon. I was sorry to leave Honolulu. The climate, the vegetation, the friendliness and charm of the people (all races seem to meet with accord in Honolulu) make the place perfect. The brilliance of the flowers was wonderful (although we have all of them ourselves in Ceylon), and the Hawaiians know how to use their flowers and plants. I was told there were no snakes, despite the vegetation, and in the island of Hawaii you land amid tropical coconuts and bananas within sight of a snow-capped mountain.

We said "Aloha" to Hawaii, and were on our way to Japan. But some three hours after leaving Wake Island we had engine trouble, and turned back for repairs. We landed again in Wake Island after lightening our load of petrol, and we spent the brief period of our enforced stay in exploring the six square miles of its coral desolation, where the drinking-water is distilled from the sea, and even the first plant life had had to be introduced by the invading Japanese during the War. An interesting passenger on the plane was Doriya Shafik, the Egyptian feminist and leader of the Daughters of the Nile movement. She came to Ceylon not long after, and was warmly received by her counterparts in Ceylon, who are nicknamed the Purple Brigade.

We were expected in Tokyo in the morning, but it was well into the night when we arrived. There was a great gathering present. The Japanese are particular about protocol and ceremonial, but that is part of their etiquette, and detracts nothing from its charm. Prime Minister Hatoyama could not come, because he had been detained in the Diet, but we drove straight from the airport to dinner with him. Shigemitsu, the Foreign Minister, was present at the dinner, together with other Ministers and officials. Both had physical ailments, but the triumph of mind over body was remarkable. The dinner was a pleasant and vivacious affair. I found afterwards that I had been the unconscious influence for liveliness, because our Ambassador, Sir Susantha de Fonseka, told me that formal functions in Japan tended to

be *formal*, and he had remarked the informality of the evening with delighted surprise.

I had not been east before farther than Siam, and my six days in Japan were an experience and a revelation. It was cold, and there was ice, but there was sunshine within the scheduled hours, and the weather was bracing. I would, of course, have been glad had it been cherry-blossom time, but that made no difference to what I was able to observe of the country and its people. I was greatly impressed by Japan's recovery after the War. That had been entirely due to the discipline of her people and their willingness to work. These traits have been the whole secret of the success of the Japanese nation, and they may well be copied by others.

No pains were spared over my visit by my hosts. I met many people, ministers, officials, bankers, industrialists, and other business magnates, and the conversations I had with them were stimulating. I met the Governor of Kanagawa Prefecture and the other representatives in Japan of the joint venture in fishing which Japanese and Ceylonese capital is conducting in Ceylon waters (the object of which, apart from the financial profit expected, is to teach improved methods to Ceylonese fishermen). I was made an honorary citizen of Tokyo, and received the Key of the City. I have memories of Japan which will last: the drive to Hakone and the hot baths in the basement of the magnificent Fujiya Hotel, the train journey from Abtami, with Mount Fujiyama always ruling the horizon, the wonder of Japanese landscape gardening in the Katsura detached palace, the bronze Buddha in Nara Temple, Kabuki acting by Utaemon and Kanzaburo. Above all I shall remember the crowds and crowds of school-children, smiling and happy, waving the Ceylon and Nippon flags in their little hands and cheering "Banzai" to me.

The highlight of my stay was my reception by their Imperial Majesties, the Emperor and Empress of Japan. We were conducted in State procession to the Imperial Palace from our residence. Imperial carriages drawn by horses taking the place of the motor-cars. On arrival at the palace we were taken charge of by the Household protocol, but every step of the proceedings had its charm. I was received

by Their Majesties in a separate room and alone, and I was invested with the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun by His Majesty. After that we proceeded to another room, where the rest of my party and the Prime Minister and other Japanese dignitaries were assembled, and then we all sat down to luncheon. The atmosphere was respectfully subdued, but I found Their Majesties simple and gracious and most affable. Significant of the fact that Imperial courtesy can be superior to protocol was their action in going up to every one and shaking hands with them, although our Embassy had warned us by letter (probably *abundans cautela*) that the Emperor and Empress would not extend that greeting to anyone but myself.

I took my farewell of Japan with much regret, and I was greatly moved when the band unexpectedly played *Auld Lang Syne* as I boarded the plane. My last impression of this land of exquisite etiquette was of bowed heads being slowly raised as the plane left the ground. I also could not help remarking to myself how Asian I was feeling from the moment I arrived in Asia from America. I suppose this happens to all Asians. It must be a special sympathy, the feeling of a bond, but it certainly does not displace or affect the feelings that one has towards the rest of the world. It is a feeling of being at home wherever one goes in Asia. It is a curious feeling, considering that in Asia there is an even greater variety of race and religion, culture and complexion, than in the West. I can only trace it to some common memory, the memory of subjections and repressions of the past.

My plane had been delayed by storms before it reached Tokyo, and I was twenty-four hours behind schedule for the Philippines. I arrived in Manila as people were preparing for midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. The dinner with President Magsaysay—a dignified, impressive man—was therefore somewhat hurried, but I was able to admire the beauties of architecture and ornamentation that the Spaniards had left behind in the Malacañan Palace; some of the finest chandeliers I have seen were there. The Spanish influence was also to be seen in the dress of ladies, and added to their

attractions. An article of male attire that caught my fancy was the embroidered shirt, or *baron tagalos*. I was given a present of one, and it was amusing to note the reactions of people when I wore it to a party at home in Colombo.

The Philippines afforded an interesting study because they have only recently received their independence from America, in the same way as we have received ours from Britain; but America only held them in tutelage after the Spanish-American war until they were ready for the responsibilities of independence. These and other interesting matters connected with the Filipino economy formed the subject of conversation between me and Vice-President Carlos P. Garcia, who was my close and attentive companion during my three days in his country.

My Christmas gift to Manila was an address to the Overseas Club on Asia to-day. I concluded with these remarks:

"I have tried to put to you certain thoughts I have been having regarding the position of Asia in the world and the duties of Asian nations towards themselves and Asia. I trust I have made myself clear. Asia is the key to the future peace of the world. That is why so many others are interested in Asia besides Asians themselves. We too are interested in the peace of the world, and it is up to us to act. Asia must be united, Asian peoples must come closer together, Asian peoples must forget their differences and act for their common good, Asian peoples must realize their responsibility towards the world—that is my theme. Never in her whole history as a continent has Asia been united. That was very different from Europe, and the success of Europe and her dominance in the world scene were due to European people being always able to communicate with one another and share their knowledge together. That has never happened in Asia. The causes are several, and geography is one of them. But we no longer have cause for isolation in these modern days. We can come together and we must come together."

I also said:

"There is no reason at all why what we have been able to do amongst the five Colombo Powers should not happen amongst all the democratic countries of Asia. All that is

necessary is to come together and talk, and for that the basis is just friendship and goodwill. And we must be friends with all the freedom-loving countries of Asia. That is the only way we can achieve the unity of Asia. We must be prepared to forgive and forget, let bygones be bygones. We have done that in Ceylon. We have made our peace with our former masters and we have forgiven those who did us harm in the war. Your country is the link between two important parts of Asia. Your two hands are stretched in either direction and they must do the duty expected of them. The future of Asia calls for a linking of hands amongst all our countries."

There was a good deal of criticism of my remarks in the Manila papers on the following day. Some of them had run away with the idea that, despite all that the Philippines had had to endure at the hands of the invader, I had advised them to drop pursuing the subject of war reparations altogether with Japan. All I meant was that the interests of future peace and goodwill required that the discussions should be conducted with restraint and moderation, despite all the wrongs suffered, and I had been careful to explain this when questions relating to reparations were specifically asked of me on the conclusion of the address.

On Boxing Day Vice-President Garcia took us by plane to the hill resort of Baguio, where I received the key of the city. It was a delightful place, not unlike our Nuwara Eliya, and, travelling by road for part of the return journey, I could see how similar the landscape was to Ceylon. There is an extensive coconut industry in the Philippines, but Ceylon can give the Philippines the benefit of her knowledge in improving the industry further. In exchange for this Ceylon can get the knowledge of the Philippines in establishing the sugar industry of which she has recently been thinking.

I touched down in Singapore on my way from Manila to Djakarta, and also on my way back home to Colombo from Djakarta. The Commissioner-General, Malcolm Macdonald, is a very popular figure in South-East Asia, and I talked with him about Communism in Malaya, the enemy on the door-step for some of our countries.

I could afford only two days for Indonesia on my rush

round the world, even though she was now a member of the Colombo Powers club with Ceylon. The two days were also fully occupied in the Bogor Conference of the Colombo Powers, which forms the subject of another chapter. I need only record here the gracious courtesy and hospitality I received from the Indonesian Government, from President Soekarno, Vice-President Hatta, my friend Ali Sastroamidjojo, and every one else I met in Indonesia.

I had planned to return home for the New Year, and I arrived in Colombo, right on schedule, on the afternoon of December 31, 1954. There was a great welcome awaiting me, and it was good to be back with my people.

18

Visit to Europe

I had scarcely returned home from my world tour when I had to leave again, this time on a visit to Europe. The occasion was the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference in London, but I also took the opportunity to pay visits of goodwill to Eire, Holland, and Germany.

It is usual for the Prime Ministers of the Commonwealth to meet once a year in order to survey the world scene, exchange views, and discuss common matters. The last such meeting had taken place during Dudley Senanayake's Premiership, when he went to London for the Queen's Coronation in the middle of 1953. In September 1954 I received notice that another meeting was becoming overdue, and the Prime Ministers agreed to one being held in the following January. The meeting lasted from January 31 to February 8, but I spent a few days more in London.

On my way to Europe I called on the Prime Minister of Egypt. With the Asian-African Conference in the offing it was time I made his acquaintance, and Ceylon had also recently entered into a Trade Agreement with Egypt. I was impressed with Colonel Nasser. He was a little shy, but was clearly a serious man, determined to drive the evils of the Farouk regime out of his country. I also discussed with him certain difficulties that had arisen over our Trade Agreement, and he was sympathetic and helpful. In the antechamber where we waited until we were announced to the Prime Minister we saw the "Dancing Major," Saleh Salem, in earnest conversation with some one who appeared to be from the Sudan. He was evidently exercising his propaganda powers on the latter, whose face was a study in reactions to hypnotism.

In London I had an audience once again of Her Majesty the Queen, who gave a dinner to the Prime Ministers. There was also a dinner in the Guildhall by the Lord Mayor, and several other functions, but I took care to keep out of reach of oysters! Strangely enough, the weather, which had been dismal when I was in London in November, and worse still shortly before I arrived this time, behaved itself very well during my entire stay. It was cold, but the sun observed its hours and lighted up the afternoon gauntness of Hyde Park to cheerful effect from the Dorchester.

I was transported back over the years when I found myself inside No. 10 Downing Street. The place is not a mansion in any sense of the word, but it is much more than that —the very embodiment of history. It is the symbol of Imperial destiny, and of Britain's greatness. It has witnessed many an event of world note during the two centuries of its occupation by the Prime Ministers of Britain, although a considerate Providence spared Winston Churchill the occasion of presiding over the liquidation of the British Empire within its Cabinet Room. The Cabinet Room itself presents no unusual attractions to the stranger, but the sense of history quickens the student's pulse as he surveys walls on which the invisible murals of great happenings can be discerned by the eye of imagination.

There was something of the ironic in the presence of Nehru of India and Mohammed Ali of Pakistan and myself of Ceylon amid the company that assembled in the Cabinet Room. But it was not only Britain's gesture to inevitability but a token of the sanity with which she accepts the inevitable; the sanity of true greatness. Among the other Prime Ministers St Laurent, of Canada, was an old friend, and I had met Menzies of Australia, hearty, frank, and companionable. I had not met Holland, of New Zealand, before, nor Sir Godfrey Huggins (soon to become Viscount Malvern), of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Strijdom, of South Africa, had not been able to come, so soon after the elections, and after succeeding Daniel Malan, but he sent the Deputy Prime Minister, C. R. Swart. Swart could not wait until the Conference was over.

Some of my British colleagues were already known to me. If there were people who thought that at eighty Winston Churchill must have lost his powers I found them mistaken. He presided with ease and equanimity, over a cigar ever aglow, and his summing up of discussions was brilliant and penetrating. He had kept his command of phrase; speaking of thermo-nuclear war, he said, "It is an ironic fact that we have reached a stage where safety may well be the child of terror, and life the twin brother of annihilation." He had only become a trifle hard of hearing, and slower and more deliberate of speech.

I did not know that Viscount Swinton, Commonwealth Relations Secretary, was on the eve of retirement when I met him again. He was a good friend of Ceylon, and it was under the ultimate auspices of his Ministry that the Conference was taking place. I was meeting Anthony Eden for the first time. The laurels of Geneva, and of other achievement, yet sat fresh on the Foreign Secretary, and the diplomat in him could be seen in the exhaustive and very able review he made for us of world affairs. It seemed not only a foregone but a natural conclusion that he should be the next Prime Minister, but his own projected successor as Foreign Secretary was there—Harold Macmillan, who was then Defence Minister.

A constant visitor was Lennox-Boyd, of the Colonial Office, tall and smiling. "Rab" Butler, Chancellor of the Exchequer, came for the economic discussions. He was a graver figure, and he received the credit that was his due for his work in clearing the path of prosperity again for Britain. It was also seen that the other Commonwealth countries too had had a good period, and that the mutual efforts of all, through such means as the Colombo Plan, had made a very considerable contribution to their common welfare. Among the three Asian members the emphasis was on development, and here I pointed out, as I had in America, that more and more economic aid from others was necessary if Asia was to be successful in keeping the wolf of Communism from the door.

The Prime Ministers could not have met at a more anxious

time for the world. It looked like the eve of war, and some of us indeed wondered if we should be able to get back home before the clouds burst. It was a matter of touch and go in the Far East, where the triangular dispute between China, Formosa, and America over the 'off-shore' islands had come to a violent head, and all three parties had their fingers on the trigger. We discussed the situation in all its aspects, and Nehru's recent visit to China was of use here. It was apparent that the restraining hand of Britain had been doing a good deal to prevent precipitate action, and during the days of our discussions the same friendly restraint continued to be conveyed to the relevant quarters.

In the midst of the Conference I received a message from Ali Sastroamidjojo strongly urging that I take the initiative in getting the Colombo Powers to intervene in the dispute. I had already made the point at the Conference that Asian countries would like to handle their own affairs, and that China might be prepared to respect Asian opinion; but the United Nations negotiations were yet pending, and it was therefore felt that nothing should be done which might hamper their course.

It is also interesting that Russia made a proposal that the dispute be handled by a group of nations consisting of the Colombo Powers, the United States, the United Kingdom, Soviet Russia, and the Peking Government, the initiative in arranging the Conference being left to the United Kingdom, Soviet Russia, and India. It was considered that this suggestion would not find acceptance, because it did not include Nationalist China, and also because it ignored the United Nations.

On the morning of the final day we were yet discussing the Far East when something dramatic happened. An official brought a slip of paper and handed it to Winston Churchill. Churchill looked at it and quietly announced, "Information has been received that Malenkov has resigned." The news was unexpected, and we could scarcely believe our ears.

It looked as if a purge was on in Russia, and while the sensation was at its height Molotov made a speech which seemed to indicate that China could count on Russia in the

event of war, and proclaimed that Russia was superior to America in nuclear, and even thermo-nuclear, strength. We were all to leave London, however, with the feeling that the immediate danger had been removed, although the threat remained.

Pakistan informed the Conference of her decision to change her Dominion status and become a Republic, and expressed her desire to continue to remain within the Commonwealth as a member, following the precedent of India. The other Prime Ministers gladly assented to her wish. As the final communiqué of the Conference declared:

> The Commonwealth is a unique association. Its countries contain a fourth of the world's population, embracing people of many races and religions. Among its members are countries of importance in all quarters of the globe. Its strength and influence in the world today are derived from this and from a common outlook which, in spite of differences of geography, religion and race, evokes a broadly similar response to most international problems of the day. The Commonwealth countries do not pursue any selfish purpose. They seek no aggrandisement and will always oppose aggression. In concert with all who share their ideals, they are resolved to do their utmost to further the cause of peace throughout the world.

Just as I was leaving Colombo for London, almost at the airport, I received an invitation from John Costello, Prime Minister of Ireland, asking me to visit Ireland when I came to England for the Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference. I was glad to avail myself of the opportunity, and I left London for Dublin on the morning of February 9. I spent a happy twenty-four hours in that beautiful sea-girt city of Georgian aspect, and from the air, at the end of an exhilarating flight by turbo-jet, I could see how Ireland had earned the name of the Emerald Isle. I was speedily made at home by John Costello and his Ministers, and I was also glad to meet at the airport (a delightful place, where I had lunch the following day in an amazing February sun) the British Ambassador, Sir Walter Hankinson, who had been Britain's first High Commissioner to Ceylon a few years earlier. The Irish are a friendly and warm-hearted people,

qualities combined—as with us Ceylonese—with a sudden and fiery temper. I had lunch with President and Mrs Kelly —a most charming couple—and I was the guest at a State dinner given by the Prime Minister in the Foreign Office, a handsome mansion gifted by the Guinness family. I also went to see the famous Government stud, where the first foal of the 1952 Derby winner, Tulyar, had just been born, and I thought it only courtesy that I should invest in a ticket in the Irish Sweepstake!

Ireland was the unconscious occasion for the famous Tea Incident in which I figured during my visit to England. Tea prices had about this time become the subject of concern for the consumer, and at the airport in London, while I was waiting to board the plane for Dublin, it occurred to the Press to ask me—the representative of a well-known tea-producing country—why the prices should be so high. I commented that the prices were "damn' ridiculous," and the fun began. For the next few days I was the most talked-of man in Britain, the darling of the housewife and the ogre of the trade, and I was pursued even to the Continent by newspapers trying to obtain further elucidation from me. Even the Government appeared to be slightly nettled and uneasy! The Opposition began to allege that Mincing Lane was giving financial support to the Conservatives at the expense of the British housewife. And, as if to lend colour to the story, a reputable tea firm immediately reduced its prices by a good few pence.

I had stirred up a proper hornets' nest. But the point of the matter is that it is not the producer who fixes the prices for the consumer but the trade, at its own will and pleasure. It is in the 'blending' of tea, which takes place in London, that the profits are made, and the trade is able to permit itself elastic margins within this field. To the visitor from Ceylon the blended tea that is sold as Ceylon tea has often not much in it that is reminiscent of Ceylon. The import duty and the export duty have of course their own part too to play. In Ceylon, however, we have a sliding scale, and the export duty is fixed to follow the trend of the market. We also fix it so as to equalize, as much as possible, profits from tea for

the producer with profits from rubber and coconuts; otherwise the fixing of wages for the respective industries becomes an awkward matter. The export duty was not the real offender in the eight-shilling price the housewife was being called upon to pay for her tea in Britain.

My "Damn' ridiculous" coincided with the tea market tumbling down, amid the execrations of the trade and the jubilations of the consumer. But, clearly, the peak too had been reached, and it was a peak where the slightest breath would have brought the swaying structure down. Overbuying in a well-managed selling market had been the principal sin.

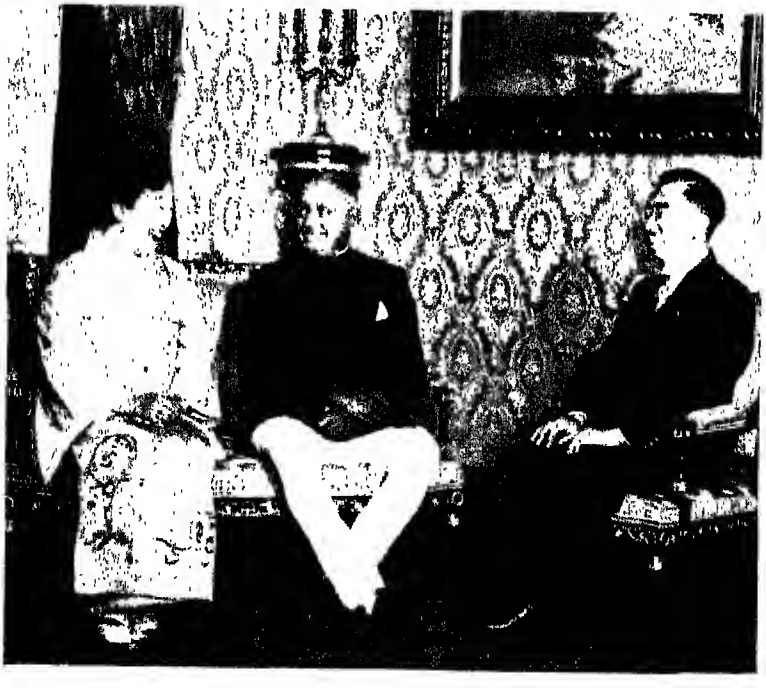
On my return home I had more music to face. But it was not long before the situation was tackled and matters adjusted to equilibrium for the producer, with a reduction of export duty and similar measures.

On November 12 I left London for Amsterdam. I had an invitation from the Dutch Government to pay them a visit, and I spent a couple of days in Holland. The weather was forbidding. It had started to snow in London, and I landed in Amsterdam with the help of radar. The landscape was one vast sheet of snow, and ice and sky combined with earth to abolish the horizon. It continued the same in Germany, where I went for another two days from Holland.

Holland is a country that has old associations with Ceylon. She was the second foreign Power to occupy our land. First came the Portuguese, early in the sixteenth century, questing *conquistadores* voyaging the Eastern seas with the same freebooting intent as their contemporaries were showing in the Spanish Main. In fact, it was a navigational error that brought Vasco da Gama to Ceylon. He treated for a trading station; but the Portuguese came back in force, and it was not long before, with gun and gunpowder—not hitherto known in that part of the East—they conquered the coast and brought under them a people whose culture and arts were older than theirs, and superior in some ways. They also brought a new religion with them, but they plundered and pillaged, and they converted by force, so that the memory of their stay does not remain pleasant in Ceylon.

THE AUTHOR WITH THE QUEEN AND HER OTHER COMMONWEALTH PRIME MINISTERS

SIR JOHN WAGS A FINGER AT CHOU EN-LAI (*right*)



THE AUTHOR WITH THE EMPEROR AND EMPRESS OF JAPAN

The Sinhalese continued to rule in the hills, but the coast now passed into the hands of the Dutch. They remained for nearly a hundred and thirty years. They were no more welcome than the Portuguese, but they concentrated their attentions more on the *Kolonialwaren* they supplied to Europe —the cinnamon and the spices, and also the pearls. They have left behind the imprint of their stay. Part of the system of law in Ceylon is "Roman Dutch"; Dutch words have passed into the language in appropriate guise; and Dutch descendants are a respected community within the nation. There is also a culinary heritage among us from the Dutch, which the Dutch had themselves acquired in Indonesia.

It was with much interest that I viewed the building in the town of Delft that had been a headquarters of the Dutch East Indies Company. It seemed fantastic to believe that from this small canal-side place Governors had been appointed, fleets and armies dispatched, and an empire ruled. Delft is full of old canals, and I was taken for a walk round the town—stamping away to keep myself from cold feet—and shown its fine historical museums. The Municipal Council of Delft gave me lunch in the old palace of the Stadtholder who gave his life for the independence of Holland.

I was sorry to say good-bye to the Dutch. Prime Minister Drees and his Government treated me with the utmost hospitality, and I was graciously accorded an audience by Queen Juliana.

My visit to Germany was made in place of the one I failed to make from Paris in November. Flying seemed out of the question again, and I left Holland by train for Düsseldorf, losing only half an hour of my schedule by the change of transport. I received a warm welcome at the station, among those present being the German Minister in Ceylon, Dr Georg Ahrens, who had come back home specially to assist his Government in making arrangements for my reception and stay.

I had lunch at Düsseldorf with the Minister-President of the Land of North Rhine—Westphalia—and thence we drove to Bonn. I stayed just outside Bonn, at the Redoute, the

Government Guest House, in Bad Godesberg. It was an enchanting place, with great crystal chandeliers upstanding from the floor, and Beethoven had often played in its reception rooms in the old days of its original ownership.

There was a dinner that night given in my honour by the Federal Chancellor, Dr Konrad Adenauer. I was greatly impressed by the Chancellor, of whom I had heard so much. He was a man of quiet repose, and his face carried the lines of infinite character. What he had done to redeem post-Nazi Germany from the ravages of war, and to get her admitted again to the comity of free European nations, aroused admiration, and one could only hope that his efforts would be crowned before long by the reunion of East Germany with West.

The Chancellor asked me if I had been in Germany before. I said I had, and that I had in fact played tennis for France against Germany in my student days. He seemed puzzled, and I explained. I happened to be in Paris, and had given my nationality as Sinhalese, and the next thing I knew was that I had been entered to play for France! They had taken me for a Senegalese, and I did not think it necessary to correct the error!

A similar amusing confusion took place when Sir Oliver Goonetilleke was appointed Financial Secretary of Ceylon shortly before we got our independence back. A Nigerian newspaper offered its congratulations to its neighbours across the border on the appointment of the first Senegalese to the post of Financial Secretary in far-off Ceylon!

I was also delighted to meet at the dinner Herr Freudenberg, now in his eighties, the head of Freudenberg and Company, which was so well known in Ceylon before the First World War and after that its name was yet a household word with us. He had nostalgic memories of my country.

I called on the President of the Federal Republic, Dr Heuss, who invested me with the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic. He entertained me to a luncheon, where I again met some of the German Ministers.

I was leaving Europe from Frankfurt, and we drove down there along the Rhine on the morning of February 16. Had

it been spring or summer I would have been able to enjoy the charm of the Rhine Valley once again, but some of the charm was yet there in the winter scene. At Main, on the way, I visited the Augsburg-Nüerenburg Machine Works, and had lunch with the Directors. Some one overheard one of my party express a longing for frankfurter and sauerkraut, and the dish was immediately produced for all of us, in addition to the other delightful things on the menu. We fell to with a will, and then it transpired that right through our stay our German hosts had given us chicken because they did not know what our food habits were, and, delicacy forbidding them to inquire, had thought it safest to entertain us on chicken in its variety and at its epicurean best.

Since the War there has been great interest again in Germany in business with Ceylon. I met many business leaders on my visits, and at Frankfurt I was given a reception by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

It was good to leave Europe with memories of my all too brief stay in Germany. I was back in Colombo on February 18.

19

Buddhism and World Peace

Having enhanced Ceylon's prestige as a diplomatic force, I was also determined to make my country's people and the ideals they pursued respected and admired throughout the world. What I had in mind was a spiritual awakening, and an opportunity for this arose with the inauguration of the Sambuddha Jayanti—the celebration of the 2500th anniversary of Parinibbhana, or the passing away of the Buddha. I expressed the hope that this celebration would inspire every Buddhist in Ceylon to become a better Buddhist. I also hoped that our Hindu, Christian, and Muslim brethren would be moved to usher in religious revivals of their own during this celebration. I emphasized the need for cordial co-operation among the various religious communities in Ceylon against the force of irreligion which threatened our very existence. It augured well for the future of our country that members of different faiths participated in the inauguration of Buddha Jayanti. If the aims of the Buddhist Council established on this occasion were fulfilled I had no doubt that Ceylon would qualify to be a "guide to suffering humanity in its quest for peace."

A small group of Buddhist monks, probably instigated by Communist elements, created a disgraceful scene on the solemn occasion of the inauguration of the Buddha Jayanti celebrations. Their conduct reminded me of what I had said a few years earlier about bogus monks brought into being by the Communists, who induced men with shaven heads to don yellow robes and visit the villages making inflammatory speeches against the Government and promising Utopian benefits under a new regime. Some of the ignorant and illi-

terate villagers were inclined to regard these men as heaven-sent messengers and prophets. They could not see through the Red ruse. I did not hesitate to denounce those deceivers in the strongest terms, and I even threatened to tear the robes off men who disgraced a great religion, and who were tools in the hands of the forces of irreligion.

Here, for the benefit of non-Buddhist readers particularly, I repeat what I wrote in a pamphlet distributed among the delegates to the Bandung Conference:

> The 2500th anniversary of the passing away of the Buddha falls on the Full Moon Day of May, 1956. The celebration which the Buddhists of the world are organizing to commemorate this occasions is known as the "Buddha Jayanti."
>
> The tradition preserved in the Buddhist countries specified that the teachings of the Buddha will last five thousand years and that the 2,500th year will be a significant turning point in the history of Buddhism. The tradition further records that at this time the doctrines of the Buddha will be known throughout the world and that it will witness an unprecedented spiritual re-awakening.
>
> The Buddha Jayanti is essentially a celebration in honour of the Buddha who is one of the greatest men in history, if not the greatest. The sacrifices he made for the sake of humanity, his career as a philosopher and religious teacher and his doctrines of universal love, non-violence and equanimity are all too well known to be recounted here. During his life-time and during the last 2,500 years many millions of people have looked up to his teachings for inspiration and guidance. Numerous generations of Asians had come under the benign influence of his doctrines. The art and architecture and the literature of practically all the countries in Asia have, at some time or other, been moulded by the principles of Buddhism. The monks, who are the followers of the Buddha, have been serving Asia throughout history as its cultural leaders. The contribution which Buddhism has made to the spiritual and cultural advancement of humanity is indeed notable. And the promise it holds for the future is still more significant. Therefore the Buddha Jayanti will be an occasion not only to evaluate the benefits rendered to humanity by the Buddha and his teachings, but also to speculate on how his lofty ideals can be utilised to bring peace and harmony to our troubled world.

The Buddha Jayanti is bound to bring about a change in the way of life of the Buddhists and of the Hindus who pay homage to the Buddha, either as the founder of their faith or as the incarnation of their great god Vishnu. A strong movement to ensure the spiritual regeneration of the Buddhists and the Hindus (who together form nearly one-half of the world's population) should be launched in connexion with the Buddha Jayanti. At the time of writing such a movement is being organized in Ceylon; and similar efforts, it is known, are being made in other Buddhist countries. A combined effort made by all Buddhist countries will no doubt give better and more lasting results. The spiritual unity of a formidable sector of the world's population will exert an enormous influence on the rest of mankind. The Buddha Jayanti will be an ideal occasion for the followers of the Buddha to announce to the world that the true object of life is to "do good, shun evil, and cleanse the inmost thought" (Dhammapada 183), and to draw the attention of the warring world to the lofty teachings of the Master who has taught humanity the way out of misery and suffering. The message of the Buddha can truly be the solution to all ills in the modern world.

It is known that the Buddhist countries are making arrangements to celebrate the Buddha Jayanti in a fitting manner. Some of them have already spent large sums of money on various activities. In Ceylon a Buddhist Council consisting of members of both the Sangha and the laity has been set up to make representations to the Government on all matters pertaining to the Buddha Jayanti, and to undertake all activities in connexion therewith. The Government of Ceylon has decided to co-operate with the Buddhist public, who form 65 per cent. of the population, by granting a large sum of money to the Buddhist Council. Besides organizing the movement to usher in a spiritual awakening in the island, the Council has commenced the translation of the Buddhist Canon (the Tripitaka) into Sinhalese, and the compilation of an encyclopædia on Buddhism in English and a general encyclopædia in Sinhalese. Arrangements are also being made to publish a number of souvenirs, brochures,

and books on the life and the teachings of the Buddha and the history of Buddhism.

The historic Temple of the Tooth in Kandy is being reconstructed with a view to restore it to its pristine glory. Besides putting up a number of memorial buildings, the Council will assist in the restoration of the Mahiyangana Stupe, which stands at a spot visited by the Buddha, and the construction of a Hall of Residence for Buddhist monks at the University of Ceylon in Peradeniya. A special library called the Buddha Jayanti Library, which will be a repository of valuable books on world religions, will also be established at the University. Financial assistance will be given to the Vidyalankara Pirivena of Kelaniya (a seat of Oriental learning) to hold a Sangayana as a part of its activities in connexion with the revision of the sacred scriptures. This Pirivena will also compile a Concordance of sacred texts.

In February 1957 the Council will hold an International Buddhist Conference in Colombo, and will organize an Exhibition of Buddhist Art, where all Buddhist countries will be represented. The Council is also considering a proposal to establish a seat of Buddhist learning of university standard where Buddhism and allied subjects will be taught, besides providing facilities to meditate. In Ceylon we are making further arrangements to celebrate the 2500th anniversary of the landing of Vijaya and the founding of the kingdom of Lanka, which coincides with the Buddha Jayanti.

In order to achieve the best results in these undertakings the co-operation of almost all the countries of the world is absolutely necessary. The compilation of the Buddhist Encyclopædia, which will be a complete and authoritative reference book on Buddhism and Buddhist civilization, requires the services of a large number of scholars and workers, not only to write the articles but also to select and prepare the illustrations. The International Buddhist Conference should provide an opportunity for the leading Buddhist scholars of the world to meet together and discuss their common problems. The exhibition of Buddhist art should represent the

development of Buddhist art in all countries of Asia; models and replicas of the archæological treasures of these countries should find a place in this exhibition. Besides, the Buddha Jayanti Library can be made complete only if books and manuscripts are available from the Buddhist countries. The Buddhist Council proposes to appeal to all nations for their assistance in executing these projects.

The Asian countries which are organizing various activities in connexion with the Buddha Jayanti must have felt the necessity for international co-operation. There is no doubt that if all of us pool our resources and make a unified effort to celebrate the Buddha Jayanti we would derive immense benefits. The Buddha Jayanti will be celebrated in a manner befitting the greatness of the personality in whose honour it is held. Besides, such an arrangement will contribute towards the strengthening of the bonds of friendship which exist among us. It will, moreover, be unique in so far as it is motivated, not by military or commercial considerations but by the keenness to celebrate the 2500th anniversary of the passing away of the Buddha, whose message we offer the world to-day as the corrective it sorely requires to save mankind from self-inflicted annihilation.

Let the Buddha Jayanti be an integral part of our scheme to ensure world peace. We, who had been subject to foreign domination, and have therefore remained poor and underdeveloped, have neither the means nor the strength to maintain peace by warfare. Even if we do have, the rich religious heritage to which we are heirs prevents us from adopting such a course of action, whose failure has been proved beyond any doubt. Our solution to war is the message of Universal Love which the Enlightened One has taught. "He should not commit any slight wrong," the Buddha stated,

> such that other wise men might censure; may all beings be happy and secure; may their hearts be wholesome. Let none deceive another nor despise any person whatsoever in any place. On anger or ill-will let him not wish any harm to another. Just as a mother would protect her only child at the risk of her own life, even so let him cultivate a boundless heart towards all

beings. Let his thoughts of boundless love pervade the whole world—above, below and across—without any obstruction, without any enmity.[1]

It is the doctrine of love which alone can save the world from the destruction wrought by nuclear weapons; this alone can bring harmony to the world, which is torn asunder by greed, hatred, and ignorance. To disseminate this doctrine in the world is our responsibility; and it is not an easy task.

My invitation to other countries to join Ceylon in the celebration of the Buddha Jayanti has already been accepted by many.

Some of the observations I made after my world tour, in a contribution to the Afro-Asian news magazine *Jana*, are repeated here for the purpose of explaining the Asian approach to the problem of ensuring world peace.

Paradoxically enough, while national leaders are talking of peace at international gatherings, or in their own legislatures, the coffers of various national economies are being drained into building up large-scale armaments and military establishments, reviving fleets, both in the sea and in the air, and in patronizing scientific research, which threatens the end of human civilization with a mere bomb. One cannot wish for peace, and yet sub-consciously let the undertone of fear and distrust prepare him for war. Everybody I met apparently wanted peace. They said it so often and so loud that I had no doubt about their good intentions in the matter. Every one, however, did not seem to appreciate that peace is not ensured by the show of strength, least of all of armed strength.

A show of strength is really an indication of cowardice. There is a moral fibre in a nation which arms and steel helmets, bullets and atom bombs, cannot help to sustain. Peace is a religion. Either we believe in it, set our minds on it, and work for it, or we don't. There is no half-way house in the matter.

In the past the philosophy of racial superiority caused men

[1] The *Metta Sutta*.

to go mad. In their madness they plunged entire nations and continents into the vortex of destruction. Nothing is as dangerous as religious or racial disharmony. Temples, churches, and mosques have, therefore, a great task before them. No religion should be considered better than another, because all religions alike set men's lives on the road of common good. Similarly, no race is entitled to think in terms of superiority.

This idea of racial superiority has done the world more evil than one can recount. It led to the witch-hunt of the Jews by Hitler. Before that it was responsible for centuries of colonial exploitation under the guise of carrying 'the white man's burden' in South America, Africa, and Asia. The ill-will then created has fortunately blown over with the emancipation of the countries of South America, and the recent acts of statesmanship that liberated Indonesia, Burma, India, Pakistan, and Ceylon almost simultaneously. That statesmanship has ensured respect for the Europeans in Asia. Of course, the memories of centuries of foreign domination in Asia cannot be forgotten so easily. There still lingers a sense of suspicion—or, rather, a feeling that anything that emanates from outside needs close scrutiny, even if it happens to be aid.

Wherever I went on my world tour I have been at pains to point out the need for peace, if resurgent Asia is to play her part in the affairs of the world. Colonialism has left us with many problems which war-scarred Europe never had: the problems of under-development, a neglected peasantry, poverty, and a denial of the good things of life, which have contributed to make men's stomachs rather than their minds drive them. Human beings in want need very little persuasion to become converts to Communism. Whatever may be the causes of unrest which keep men's thoughts hinged to the likelihood of war in other parts of the world, unrest in Asia is being caused by international Communism. The ways of the Communist movement in Asia are the ways of the adventurer. When nationalist movements—which particularly appeal to down-trodden people exploited by centuries of colonialism—have done their work Commun-

ism takes charge of the forces of nationalism, and directs them for its own sake.

If the countries that talk of peace in the councils of the world really mean peace, and want peace, let them realize that the danger to peace in the world in our time lies in the efforts the Communists are making to gain a stranglehold on Asia. Not because Asia wants Communism, but because those who are opposed to it, and are powerful to help, have not felt the pulse of Asia and administered to her disease. Asia cannot be won over from Communism and set on her feet economically by a Santa Claus attitude of free give-aways. If that should happen it would only further depress the morale of the people of Asia, because those who get something for nothing will never be encouraged to work. The raw material of Asia must be developed, and the prices for her products maintained at an economic level to permit of a decent standard of living for the workers.

If we are to end war we must forget war. That is why Ceylon, though a small country, was the first to waive any claim for reparations from Japan in the sincere hope that others would do likewise and thereby strengthen the hopes for peace, goodwill, and prosperity among Asian countries. Japan, as I found from my visit, is slowly rising again to take her place as one of the great industrial countries of the world. Asia should be proud of her. If any Asian country now thinks of squaring her old accounts with Japan, a settlement of these accounts can only be made at the cost of bleeding her white. An anæmic Japan can produce one of two results. Either she will hold hands with Communist China across the seas, and go Red herself, or her people will be smarting under the duress of reparations, which will produce ill-will and human hatred from which another world war can easily emanate. Not one of the leaders I met on my travels desired such an eventuality.

The war in Asia produced certain plans of aid the value of which some people do not seem to appreciate sufficiently. America, in her deep concern for saving Asia from lowering her living standards, has offered large-scale assistance in men, money, and materials, which various countries have

accepted as part of their programme of economic reconstruction. Ceylon alone of the countries in Asia which are friendly with America has received no such aid. Both in my country and elsewhere in Asia America's intentions have been suspected. That is a pity, because there is hardly another example in history of aid on the scale envisaged by America.

People talk of American aid with strings. America, to my mind, has no intention of dictating to Asia. She realizes, as much as any other country, that Asia consists of a number of independent nations which will brook no interference in their internal affairs, or in the conduct of their foreign policy.

American aid to Asia would not have been forthcoming but for the war with Japan. Is it fair that, while this aid continues to pour in, countries receiving such aid should try to squeeze Japan into paying reparations, which she could ill afford to do at the moment? If we mean peace why not treat Japan with the sympathy that will produce in the Japanese a feeling of gratitude towards the countries which she destroyed during the War? This would be the best foundation for building up a fund of goodwill among neighbours that would ensure peace in our continent.

After the Bogor Conference I was asked why we should have agreed to the participation of Communist China in the forthcoming Asian-African Conference. The answer is simple. Asia is one and indivisible. What divided us in the past were the geographical barriers of oceans and mountain ranges. While geography divided us foreigners took advantage and ruled us. In the context of modern civilization geographical barriers no longer hinder human movement between countries. At last our rulers have left us to ourselves and departed.

What, then, stands between us and our neighbours except ideological differences? Our attitude in Bogor as regards Communist China was that any independent country is entitled to select its own form of government. If China goes Communist, and the Communist regime is acceptable to the Chinese people, it is no concern of her neighbours so long as China respects their sovereignty. We are quite prepared to talk to China, if talking to her will do Asia any good. We

want tangible proof that China is prepared to keep her philosophy and form of government to herself, and conduct her international relations through the accredited channels of diplomacy—not through the subterranean methods which so often cause distrust of her in the freedom-loving countries of the world.

20

Bogor and Bandung

Bogor was the prelude to Bandung. If the Colombo Conference of the five Prime Ministers was my "brain-child" (as Nehru put it appreciatively) the Bandung Conference of Asian-African nations was the brain-child of Ali Sastroamidjojo. After Colombo the five Prime Ministers had been trying to meet again, on the eve of S.E.A.T.O. and in order to discuss S.E.A.T.O., but for various reasons a suitable opportunity could not be found, and the discussions had to be conducted by correspondence. Some time later the Prime Minister of Indonesia suggested a meeting in December, and invited us to meet in Indonesia. The meeting was arranged for the end of December to suit my convenience, as I was in any case due to visit Indonesia about that time on my way back home from my world tour.

A conclusion of the Colombo Conference that passed almost unnoticed at the time it was arrived at was to the effect that the Prime Ministers discussed the desirability of holding a conference of Asian-African nations, and favoured a proposal that the Prime Minister of Indonesia explore the possibility of such a conference. Sastroamidjojo had put forward the idea in his opening address itself to the Colombo Conference. He was very keen on it, but the others were not sure how it would work out, especially remembering the magnitude of the proposal, and suggested that he should first consult the countries that would be concerned and see if they would be prepared to participate. Many other implications too had to be considered: finance, accommodation, organization.

Nothing daunted, Sastroamidjojo went to work, and he

presently reported to the other four Prime Ministers that the response he had received was extremely satisfactory. He suggested our meeting to consider and complete plans.

It had been becoming hotter and hotter as I was progressing homeward from Tokyo, and it was in sweltering heat that I landed in Djakarta on the morning of December 28. I paid a hurried call on President Soekarno and Vice-President Hatta, and was whisked off by car, with my party, to Bogor, forty miles away. We were in time for a quick lunch before the conference began. My colleagues had already arrived, and had had time to revive in the less enervating, if not much cooler, air of Bogor, and in the lovely precincts of the President's Summer Palace (with its botanic gardens and its herds of deer), where we were housed, and where the conference was to take place. They greeted me warmly, and we all met with the joy of old and familiar friends coming together again.

The conference in Bogor lasted a day and a half. Our main business was a discussion of the possibilities of holding a conference of Asian and African nations, although we did review the world situation once again, and also discussed such things as economic co-operation and the like. We were much struck by the results of the soundings taken by the Prime Minister of Indonesia. Almost every one whom he had approached had been eager to come to the conference, and all that remained for us was to decide whom to invite. That was not difficult in one way, but it was difficult in another.

We decided that all countries in Asia and Africa which had independent Governments should be invited. But there were a few snags. Communist China had to be invited, because she was the *de facto* Government of the country, and because she had been recognized diplomatically by most countries, although not by the United Nations. By the same token Nationalist China could not be invited. We would have been glad to invite Israel, but if Israel had been invited none of the Arab States would have come. We did not think it necessary to invite the two Koreas in the existing state of affairs in their peninsula, but we decided to invite the Gold

Coast, which, although not fully independent, was very nearly so. In the end there were twenty-five countries to invite, and, together with the five sponsoring countries, Burma, Ceylon, India, Indonesia, and Pakistan, the list of prospective participants was thirty. The following was the complete list:

> Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia, Central African Federation, Ceylon, China, Egypt, Ethiopia, Gold Coast, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Viet Nam (North), Viet Nam (South), and Yemen.

The five Prime Ministers made clear the purposes for which the conference was to be called:

> (*a*) to promote goodwill and co-operation among the nations of Asia and Africa; to explore and advance their mutual as well as common interests; and to establish and further friendliness and neighbourly relations.
> (*b*) to consider the social, economic, and cultural problems and relations of the countries represented.
> (*c*) to consider problems of special interest to Asian and African peoples—*e.g.*, problems affecting national sovereignty and of racialism and colonialism.
> (*d*) to view the position of Asia and Africa and their peoples in the world of today and the contribution they can make to the promotion of world peace and co-operation.

The Bogor Communiqué was also particular to explain that any country could attend the Asian-African Conference without compromising its relations with any other country that attended:

> The Prime Ministers wished to point out that acceptance of the invitation by any one country would in no way involve or even imply any change in its view of the status of any other country. It implied only that the country invited was in general agreement with the purposes of the conference. They had also borne in mind the principle that the form of government and the way of life of any one country should in no way be subject

to interference by another. Any view expressed at the conference by one or more participating country would not be binding on or be regarded as accepted by any other, unless the latter so desired. The basic purpose of the conference is that the countries concerned should become better acquainted with one another's point of view. The Prime Ministers hoped that this clarification would enable all the invited countries to accept their invitation.

The Communiqué went on further to emphasize that it was not the intention of the conference to encourage separatism among nations, or to organize a regional bloc which was in *apartheid* from the rest of the world:

The Prime Ministers wished to state that in seeking to convene an Asian-African Conference, they were not actuated by any desire for exclusiveness in respect of the membership of the conference. They did not desire either that the participating countries should build themselves into a regional bloc.

The stage was now set for Bandung.

I feel certain that the newspapers must have been sorely tempted to speak of the Babel of Bandung. But there was no Babel in Bandung. All the races of the world were there—including American newsmen—but they were able to speak in one tongue. One felt grateful to the English for their language. Nor was there any confusion. The delegations alone amounted to over three hundred strong, and there were a vast number of newspaper correspondents, observers and others, from the four corners of the earth, crowding the streets, the hotels, the corridors of buildings.

The arrangements that had been made for the reception, accommodation, and care of this multitude were as perfect as could be. It was indeed a feat of organization, and reflected the greatest credit on the Indonesian Government, especially considering that there had been less than four months between Bogor and Bandung. True, the expenses were being shared among the five sponsoring Governments, who acted as hosts, and there was a Joint Secretariat formed among these five, but there was no doubt that the weight of organization was borne on Indonesian shoulders.

A more ideal meeting-place than Bandung cannot have been imagined for the conference. Half an hour by air from Djakarta, and three hours by road, it is situated on a small plateau amid hills. The climate is pleasant and cool, and panoramic views abound. It is beautifully laid out, with broad, shaded avenues, and is full of elegant bungalows (the Ceylon delegation had one all to itself), attractive public buildings, and smart shops. It used to be the summer resort of the Dutch 'mynheers' during the colonial days, and the Dutch touch was evident everywhere. It is quite a big town, with a population of some 700,000.

Twenty-nine out of the thirty expected nations assembled in Bandung. The only absentee was the Central African Federation, and they had found the time not convenient. The response to the invitations had been beyond belief, and showed what an appeal to the imagination the idea of a coming together of Asia and Africa had made. There was a profusion of colour; the Gold Coast delegates in their richly hued and multi-coloured 'togas' (it was interesting to observe that they wore shorts underneath); the Arabians, tall and distinguished in flowing black and white; the Burmans, gay in their *longyis* and silk kerchiefs; the Liberians in what looked like university academicals.

Every form of attire was there, and every form of mien. There were princes and commoners, and there was a former king. There were many colourful personages too, some, like the fabled Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and the Cypriot Archbishop Makarios of Enosis fame, not immediately connected with the conference (they had come as 'observers,' and to work behind the scenes for their respective causes). But through this variegated throng unmistakably ran the single purpose of the Asian-African Conference. It was a landmark in history.

There were many interesting personalities at Bandung I had not met before. All the countries, barring one or two, were represented at ministerial level, and mostly by their Prime Ministers. From Cambodia there was H.R.H. Prince Norodom Sihanouk, who had only just abdicated his throne in order to lead his country in its fight against internal Com-

munist forces. He was young, and had a rare charm. Nasser, of Egypt, I had met for the first time only three months before—a big, impressive figure. There was Jamili, of Iraq, permanent delegate of his country to the United Nations and twice Prime Minister previously—argumentative and tenacious.

The Prime Minister of Lebanon was aided by Charles Malik, Lebanese Permanent Representative on the United Nations—a man of learning, and an able debater. There was the colourful Carlos P. Romulo, of the Philippines—short, dapper, and a born orator. To Thailand we were indebted for the *rapporteur* of the conference, H.R.H. Prince Wan Waithayakon, Foreign Minister, a monument of patience, and a storehouse of United Nations experience, whom no one could fail to like and respect. The Turks, led by Deputy Prime Minister Fatin Rüstü Zorlu, were persistent speakers. The two Viet Nams sat side by side, and were a study in mutual hostility and recrimination.

By the irony of alphabetical fortune it was Ceylon's lot to be placed next to China. It must have intrigued the assembled world beyond measure to see me, of all persons, seated side by side with Chou En-lai, and to me too the situation was not without its humour. I had not met the Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China before, but I found him a pleasant and affable neighbour. The eyes of Bandung were, of course, on him, but if they expected sensation from his quarter they were disappointed. He was reasonable, and the suave diplomat and experienced negotiator—quite different to the idea one had of Chou En-lai as difficult and unreasonable. Whether he was trained, or had trained himself, to act a part for the nonce I do not know, but, except on the occasion of my onslaught on Communist colonialism, he maintained a very commendable equilibrium. He came to my house, and I had dinner with him at his. I told him of the doings of the Communists in Ceylon, and of their stolen visits to China, and he said that, so far as he was concerned, he would be prepared to keep them out of China if I asked him. He could speak English, but he preferred to speak Chinese and be interpreted.

The Asian-African Conference began on April 18 and ended on April 24, 1955. There were plenary sessions amid great pageantry and pomp for the opening and for the conclusion. The closed sessions took place in another handsome building, and they were punctuated by the meetings of subject committees and drafting groups. Most of the delegations had arrived by April 17, and that evening there was an informal tea-party at Sastroamidjojo's house to discuss procedure and agenda. Nehru took a principal hand here, and the meeting reluctantly agreed to the proposition that there should be no opening addresses, and that those who had brought written speeches should merely hand them in. The broad headings of the subjects for discussion at the conference were also agreed upon.

The following morning the conference was opened with great *éclat*. The spacious hall and the galleries and corridors overflowed, and diplomats glittered in their boxes. President Soekarno took one hour to deliver his inaugural speech, but it was a pleasure to listen to it; every word or gesture showed the artistry of his oratory. He concluded on an inspiring note:

"Let us not be bitter about the past, but let us keep our eyes firmly on the future. Let us remember that no blessing of God is so sweet as life and liberty. Let us remember that the stature of all mankind is diminished so long as nations or parts of nations are still unfree. Let us remember that the highest purpose of man is the liberation of man from his bonds of fear, his bonds of poverty—the liberation of man from the physical, spiritual and intellectual bonds which have for too long stunted the development of humanity's majority.

"And let us remember, sisters and brothers, that for the sake of all that we Asians and Africans must be united."

Ali Sastroamidjojo, as Prime Minister of the host country, was unanimously elected Chairman of the conference. He proceeded to announce that there would be no opening addresses, and to state what had been agreed upon at the previous evening's tea-party. There was instant protest. Mohammed Ali of Pakistan, who with a few others had

arrived only just in time for the opening, indignantly asked why a meeting had been held of which notice had not been given to all. He pointed out that in terms of the notified arrangement it was the conference that had to decide its own procedure and its agenda. Others followed, and it was resolved that opportunity should be provided for opening addresses.

The opening addresses of the representatives of the nations took nearly two days to finish. It was somewhat wearisome, but it did distinct good. The personalities of the speakers were introduced to the audience, and the viewpoints of the countries they represented came to be known to the conference in advance of its deliberations. The delegates took note of one another, and this was of great advantage, for it became clear from the beginning that no single individual or country or group was going to be allowed to dominate the scene. In consequence there was the utmost frankness at the discussions of the closed sessions, and differences were freely aired, but the conclusions showed a very genuine maximum of agreement.

India and Burma renounced their right to deliver addresses, and so did China. But as the addresses proceeded, and when some countries went out of their way to express their attitude to Communism, Chou En-lai rose and said that he reserved his right to deliver an address of his own. He did so towards the end, and he said that while for China Communism was the chosen way, she was fully prepared to respect the rights of others to their own forms of government. He had not come to impress the Communist view on the conference but to find common ground on which China could stand with the nations of Asia and Africa. These remarks in themselves were satisfactory, but what was more satisfactory still was that Chou should have been forced to make them.

In my own address I pointed out that in a world that was trying to keep peace by increasingly preparing for war the only solution was to slip gear into reverse and go back from war to peace by putting more stress on moral force. I said:

"If the danger is to be averted, it is clear that what is

wanted is a shift of emphasis, a change of heart, in the methods whereby the statesmen and leaders of to-day are trying to preserve what remains of world peace. The argument of physical force must yield to the argument of spiritual power. Hitherto the approach adopted to problems of international peace has been one based on considerations of relative military strength. The old heresy dies hard—that if you want peace you must prepare for war. As a result, nations have armed themselves to the teeth against neighbours and increased their armed might to a point where the least dispute can trigger a conflagration sufficient to involve the whole world. To-day, the nations are indeed prepared for war—and are further than ever from the prospect of peace. Their strength brings no security, their armaments no defence."

I observed that U.N.O. had not been entirely successful in its purpose, and said that what the nations of Asia and Africa demanded was that U.N.O. should be so reconstituted as to become a fully representative organ of the peoples of the world, in which all nations could meet on free and equal terms. As regards the contribution to peace that Asia and Africa could themselves make, I said:

"The Asian and African countries, if they stand together, can unquestionably make their voice heard in world affairs and serve as the mediators and the guardians of world peace. But the rest of the world will not listen to us unless we ourselves are united in goodwill and are free from mutual conflicts. We have to prove by example to other nations that our own international disputes can be settled without resort to force. This conference will be missing a great opportunity if, before we part, we do not pledge ourselves, solemnly and whole-heartedly, to abjure war as a means of settling differences, to resolve all disputes by peaceful negotiations, and to abstain from any form of interference in each other's internal affairs. What does this involve in practice? I think it requires, apart from mutual pledges I have indicated, that we should set up some adequate organization to which any disputes arising between any of us can be referred to for peaceful settlement. When we have removed whatever

sources of mistrust, suspicion, and fear that subsist between ourselves, then, and only then, can we stand before the rest of the world and speak to them, loud and bold, the message of peace, armed with the authority of moral force."

I closed my speech on the note on which I had begun:

"As I conclude, the subject of peace is very much in my thoughts and very near to my heart as a follower of one of the great religions to which Asia has given birth. The heritage of Buddhism is one of the most precious possessions of my country and it is a heritage which we share with several other countries represented at this conference. Indeed, whatever religion we profess, we cannot but be at one on the question of peace. For the great teachers of all religions are agreed that it is not through hatred and violence, but through compassion, peace, and goodwill, that mankind can find salvation. As a Buddhist, I should like to quote you the words in which the Enlightened One expressed this fundamental truth:

Not at any time are enmities appeased here through enmity, but they are appeased through non-enmity. This is the eternal law.

"In whatever terms we choose to formulate it, it is this message above all that we can offer to a world which appears to be bent on destroying itself through mutual enmities. Here is a wisdom which draws its power from the spiritual inheritance of our countries and which has never been more significant or more urgent than it is to-day for all mankind. If we can conduct our discussions here in its light and by its guidance, if we can maintain and consolidate the goodwill that has brought us here together to-day, if we can show it forth, in practice as in precept, as an example to all nations, and disseminate its spirit among them—then surely Bandung will be a name to reverberate in history and earn the gratitude and blessings of ages to come."

But my purpose is not to perform the reporter's task. The proceedings at Bandung have been published to the world, and the text of the final communiqué of the conference sets out clearly the conclusions reached by the twenty-nine countries in their deliberations. That these conclusions,

representing as they do the considered and united views of Asia and Africa, have made a notable contribution to peace and understanding there can be no doubt. And the very fact that Asia and Africa met and considered matters which others in the past had been wont to decide for them had a salutary effect on world opinion.

International tensions too were relieved by Bandung, both by the reasonableness of our declarations and by the opportunity made use of by Asia and Africa to give friendly counsel to Asian China, and I felt when I came back home that I was not taking an undue risk in prophesying that there would be no war. There was not at Bandung the recrimination and the ranting or the vagueness or wishy-washiness expected by some of the West. An earnest desire to co-operate for the good of the world was the one keynote. An outcome of Bandung was China's readier willingness to speak with America, and out of this willingness was granted the release of some of the American airmen she had held as prisoners so long.

I undertook the writing of this book because of the world interest aroused in certain things I said and did at Bandung. I must therefore pass on to matters that are more relevant to my central theme.

I am an uncompromising opponent of Communism. This I am not through some 'cussedness' in me, but because I am convinced that Communism is a wrong thing. At the same time I am willing to concede their Communism to the countries that believe in it, and, more than all else, I want peace in the world (although never peace at any price). I was therefore, while at Bandung, anxious to see if there was anything I could do to help in tackling the trouble in China which was offering the biggest threat to peace.

I did not get any opportunity at the conference table, because Formosa had been kept out of the discussions, and because China too refrained, wisely, from bringing the subject up. But I busied myself outside the conference. Chou agreed to a suggestion I made that the five Colombo Powers have a friendly chat with him at a private and informal meal. We met for lunch at Sastroamidjojo's house, and there were

also present Prince Wan Waithayakon, of Thailand, and Carlos Romulo, of the Philippines (whom we asked as representing, by their connexions, the other side). We had an open and sincere talk, and Chou said that he would be perfectly willing to sit down and have a friendly discussion of the Formosa situation with America, although he added that he could not give up the position that Formosa rightfully belonged to the People's Republic. This was a significant departure from his previous attitude, and we sent a message to the American Government through Mohammed Ali of Pakistan.

My own solution for Formosa was that she should be handed over to the Formosans themselves, and not allowed to pass under the dominion of either China. I had understood that, historically, Formosa had had an independence of her own, and that she no more belonged to China than Ceylon did to India, although the Sinhalese were racially of Indian stock. Chou En-lai would, of course, not agree, but I explained my point of view at a Press interview, where I said:

"I maintain that our sympathies should lie with the people of Formosa—an unhappy country whose movements for national independence have almost invariably met with defeat. Should we, merely because our own struggles for freedom have been more fortunate than those of the Formosans, refuse to recognize the genuineness of their aspiration to live their own life without subjection to any foreign authority? Why should we lend our support to the imposition on them of the rule of either the Government of the People's Republic of China or of the Chinese Nationalists? As Asian and African peoples, many of whom have been the victims of colonialism until recently, we should urge that Formosa must belong to the Formosans, and that these unfortunate people should, as speedily as possible, take their place with us as a free nation."

I also expressed myself on the subject of co-existence. I did not have the opportunity of doing so at the Conference itself, but I made my observations to the Press. I am all for co-existence, and, as I have so often said, it is, properly

conceived, the only alternative we have to destruction and death. But co-existence cannot be a one-sided affair, and what is the guarantee that the story of the camel in the Arab's tent will not be repeated when we agree to co-exist?

I pointed out that an essential preliminary to co-existence was the cessation of international Communism, and that the Communist countries should give up interference, overt or covert, in the countries of others. I particularly emphasized that the Cominform, that international symbol of subversion, should be dissolved before the free world could agree to co-existence. I put this to Chou En-lai too, and his reply was that the Cominform was a Russian organization, and had nothing to do with China. My rejoinder was that he should use his good offices with his ally in Moscow to have it disbanded.

I did not drop a bombshell in Bandung, as some people think. It was far from my intention to do anything like that, and I was only stating my genuine convictions when I made my now famous remarks to the Conference on the subject of colonialism. The subject had been under discussion for more than one day, and speaker after speaker attacked it, vehemently, from the angle of the 'classical' colonialism from which so many of their countries had suffered. They were also discussing it not so much in general terms as from the point of view of the briefs they were holding for individual territories that were yet under alien subjection—Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Aden, the West Irian.

It was now nearly five in the evening, and in the loud and confused eloquence I had not been able to catch the Chairman's eye or reach his ear. I very nearly gave up, but by one last effort I succeeded. In the course of my observations I said:

"There is another form of colonialism, however, about which many of us represented here are perhaps less clear in our minds and to which some of us would perhaps not agree to apply the term colonialism at all. Think, for example, of those satellite States under Communist domination in Central and Eastern Europe—of Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, Esthonia, and

Poland. Are not these colonies as much as any of the colonial territories in Africa or Asia? And if we are united in our opposition to colonialism, should it not be our duty openly to declare our opposition to Soviet colonialism as much as to Western imperialism?"

I finished amid silence. Then the silence broke. Chou En-lai got up in marked agitation and said that, as I had made references to Communist colonialism, he reserved the right to make a statement and that he would do so on the following morning. Nehru was even more agitated. He declared that I had strayed from the subject, and inquired if I wanted to be a disturber of the peace. He added that India and other countries had diplomatic relations with some of the "satellites" I had mentioned. So how could they not be properly independent?

That quickly brought others to their feet. Pakistan, Turkey, Iraq, and Lebanon were united in the view that I was right in what I had said, and in the midst of the excitement the Chairman adjourned the meeting till the morrow.

The atmosphere was electric as we marched out of the room. Chou asked me why I had said what I did, and whether it was my intention to break up the Conference. I inquired if it was *his* intention to do so, because if he had not entered his protest and shown such evident feeling the discussion would have merely ended with the speech I made. His good humour was restored, but Nehru came up to me and asked me in some heat, "Why did you do that, Sir John? Why did you not show me your speech before you made it?"

I have no doubt the remark was well meant, but the only obvious reply I could make was, "Why should I? Do you show me yours before you make them?"

I have no desire to record this incident, but I do so because it was reported in the world Press (with some embellishments too) immediately after it happened. Nehru and I are the best of friends. I have the highest regard for him, and especially for his disinterestedness in all that he says and does, and the incident must have been as quickly forgotten by him as it was by me.

I must have been the only topic of conversation in

Bandung that evening—fame (or notoriety—call it what you will) entirely unsolicited. I was mobbed and congratulated by all on what they said was the service I had rendered by my outspokenness. I do not know what mistaken delicacy it was that had prevented any others from taking the bull by the horns, or whether it was merely that they overlooked the subject, but it had fallen to my lot to voice the unspoken thoughts of all others.

On the following morning there was a great debate, and Chou En-lai made his statement, but I opened with a statement of my own in elucidation of what I had said on the previous evening. I explained:

"I do not know what part of my statement led to the doubts and misunderstanding that were created yesterday. I have a suspicion that it may have been my question about the countries in Eastern Europe. I wish to make it quite clear that I inquired about those countries solely in the context of a discussion of dependent territories, and not in any relation to political ideologies. I am only concerned with the question of the degree of independence of those countries. From all I have heard, it is my opinion that the countries of Eastern Europe are not independent in the sense that you and I and the other countries around this table are. Other people may have different views about these countries. I am quite prepared to listen to them. I am even prepared to change my views if I can be convinced to the contrary. But I am entitled to my opinion and, thank God, I am free to express it."

The subject was then referred to a drafting committee, and it took hours of discussion and compromise before China would agree to a declaration that the Conference condemned colonialism "in all its manifestations" as an evil to be speedily brought to an end.

On my return to Colombo, even before my achievements at Bandung could be assessed, I was informed at the airport that I would have to proceed immediately to the House of Representatives to meet charges brought against me by the Opposition in a "No Confidence" motion.

True to democratic tradition, the Opposition had a right

to introduce such a motion and get it debated. I knew I would be severely criticized; but I was fully prepared to tackle my critics. As I said, I had just returned from Bandung after having played a leading rôle in first-class debates where I faced twenty-eight Prime Ministers, and I was not worried about twenty-four members of our parliamentary Opposition.

This comment of a journal published outside Ceylon summed up the result of the debate very well:

> The Opposition parties took umbrage at Sir John Kotelawala's action in raising the question of Russian colonialism when the Asian-African Conference at Bandung was discussing an issue of colonialism in so far as it related to the two continents represented there. It is one thing to regard the Ceylonese Prime Minister's move as technically incorrect or irrelevant to the subject under discussion at Bandung, and quite another to characterize it as an unpatriotic act. . . .
>
> Perhaps the Opposition parties in Ceylon do not realize that the sum and substance of their charge against the Ceylonese Prime Minister boils down to an implicit admission that it is not loyalty to Ceylon but to distant Russia which is their criterion of Ceylonese patriotism. There are many in the world to whom loyalty to Soviet Russia or China is the hall-mark of patriotism. Not all the parties in Ceylon, however, would seem to be normally so motivated. . . .
>
> It was highly sportsmanlike on the part of Sir John Kotelawala to have welcomed the Opposition move to measure its strength with him and thus give him an opportunity to straighten out facts.

That the motion was ultimately defeated by nearly three times the votes the Opposition parties could muster was regarded as evidence of my firm grip on the political life of Ceylon.

I introduced this book by stating that its purpose was to furnish the background to what happened in Bandung. I feel therefore that I cannot end it more appropriately than by reproducing the speech that led to the events which occasioned this story:

"All of us here, I take it, are against colonialism. And

this certainly is a matter of congratulation. But let us be equally unanimous, and equally positive, in declaring to the world that we are unanimous in our opposition to all forms of colonialism and in our determination to take decisive and expeditious action to wipe out all forms of colonialism throughout the entire world.

"You may say that colonialism is a term generally understood, and capable of only one meaning. I cannot agree. Colonialism takes many forms. The first and most obvious form is Western colonialism, which kept large areas of Asia and Africa in subjection for generations and has not yet relaxed its hold in the remaining colonies of the European Powers in both continents. We all know this form of colonialism. We are all against it. We all know it all too well. In the world of to-day it is an anachronism. Wherever it threatens to appear it must be scotched. Wherever it exists already, its progressive extirpation must be speeded up by every method we can command.

"There is another form of colonialism, however, about which many of us represented here are perhaps less clear in our minds and to which some of us would perhaps not agree to apply the term colonialism at all. Think, for example, of those satellite States under Communist domination in Central and Eastern Europe—of Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Albania, Czechoslovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, Esthonia, and Poland. Are not these colonies as much as any of the colonial territories in Africa or Asia? And if we are united in our opposition to colonialism, should it not be our duty openly to declare our opposition to Soviet colonialism as much as to Western imperialism?

"Finally, if we are against both these forms of colonialism we must also make it clear that we are opposed to any form of colonial exploitation by any power in this region, now or in the future. Unless our own conscience be clear in this respect and our own hands clean, how can we expect the world at large to heed us when we pronounce against colonialist abuses elsewhere? Any such pronouncements from us cannot but sound hollow unless we are prepared to practise ourselves what we preach to others. Before we can

expect to be taken seriously, we must ourselves give solemn pledges and undertakings, which will make it clear to the world that we have no extra-territorial ambitions of our own.

"For I can imagine the colonial Powers whom we ask to relinquish their empires saying to us in reply, 'Why are you so concerned that we should give up our colonies? Is it by any chance because you hope to take possession of them yourselves and exploit them in your turn?' And, what is worse, I can imagine these same colonial Powers saying to their own colonies, 'Don't fall for the blandishments of these self-appointed and high-sounding champions of other people's freedom. Get rid of us, and you will have them to reckon with; and you will find to your cost that the devil you know is always to be preferred to the devil you don't.'

"Our only way to disarm criticism of this sort is to make our declaration against colonialism not merely a denunciation of colonialism on our own account. Specifically, I think it is our clear duty to emphasize, by our declared policies and in our actual conduct of external affairs, that we have no designs upon our neighbours and no intention or desire at any time to impose our own institutions and way of life upon peoples of a different language, or race, or religion. And we must give this undertaking here and now, so clearly and unequivocally that any breach of it by any one of us can be instantly and uncomprisingly branded as dishonourable and deserving of nothing but odium and contempt at the tribunal of world opinion.

"This necessary preliminary completed, I urge that we call on all the colonial Powers still possessing dependencies in this region to set a definite target for the granting of full independence to all their colonies. Such a declaration will have meaning only if the target is reasonably close. Though I am aware that ten years is a very brief period indeed in terms of human history and constitutional development, I say in all seriousness that, with exceptions in only very special circumstances, the general rule should be that every colony in the Afro-Asian region should be given its autonomy within the next decade.

"Of course, our insistence on this objective as a matter

of principle is not going to get us anywhere unless we see that the necessary machinery is provided to bring it about. It is vital to ensure that the peoples once liberated from colonialism do not relapse into the same state or backslide into other forms of servitude. They will be beset for many years to come, not only by the danger of aggression from without but by a tendency to feudalism, or a drift to totalitarianism within. They must therefore be given every encouragement and guidance in developing democratic institutions in accordance with their own national genius. Perhaps the most appropriate device for this purpose would be some form of international trusteeship under a reformed United Nations Organization, with an administrative set-up composed of representatives of countries with no past record of colonialism or future aspirations in that direction.

"The new independent States that come into being as the colonies are freed will need collective guarantees for defence for at least the first twenty-five years of their independent existence. They will need to be safeguarded from aggression from outside enemies and from subversion by enemies within the gates. They will need these safeguards both in their own interests and in order to reassure the Powers that formerly governed them, and who may well feel that their own security is threatened if the new-found freedom of their former dependencies is threatened by rival Powers.

"I am not so naïve as to suppose that the relinquishment of their colonies by the Western Powers can be effected without difficulty. Problems will arise, and adjustments will have to be made. Foreign settlers and investors will have to be adequately compensated for any concrete rights they may have to forgo when the transfer of power takes place. The free Powers of the new Asia are familiar with the problems of transition from their own experience; and from what we have learnt the essence of the matter would seem to be that the arrangements must be such that there is no ground for reasonable misgiving on the part of the foreign interests concerned. Nor should such misgivings be allowed to slow down the rate of progress towards sovereign independence for all the colonies in this region.

THE SEVEN STAGES OF JOHN

A CEYLONESE NEWSPAPER'S CONCEPTION OF SIR JOHN'S ROAD TO POWER

"Gentlemen, I began by saying that we could all agree that we are against colonialism. Let me end by suggesting that we should all agree to do something about it. I propose that we set up a committee from among the nations represented here to examine how best the ends I have suggested can be achieved, and what measures are necessary to achieve them.

"Those of us who have won our own independence in very recent years after generations of servitude cannot decently rest on our laurels. We have a solemn duty to our less fortunate neighbours, still subjugated to an outworn and discredited system. Who knows for how long some of them may be fated to languish in the shadow of colonialism unless we who are free take the initiative in pressing for their freedom? Let us resolve as I have suggested and act in accordance with our resolution, and maybe before long the rising sun of freedom, so long delayed and so eagerly desired by millions of our brothers in colonial bondage, will irradiate the whole of these vast continents. And when it does I shall be proud to think that we here in Bandung have had no small share in preparing the way for that historic liberation."

Epilogue

Hundreds of letters have come to me from all parts of the world, congratulating me on the speech I made at Bandung condemning Communist colonialism. Many of these are from countries in Central and Eastern Europe, where the victims of totalitarian tyranny have seen a bright ray of hope coming to them through the rents in the Iron Curtain. They have begun to believe that they can still win back the freedom they lost after the Second World War.

This freedom, as I understand it, is freedom of the mind and spirit; freedom of opinion and expression; freedom of worship; and freedom to choose a country's Government by the democratic method of free elections. The people who do not enjoy such freedom suffer an enslavement far more intolerable than domination by a foreign Power under the old colonial dispensation as we knew it in Asia.

I have been deeply touched by the personal appeals that have reached me from some of the victims of Communist tyranny. What can we do to make them free? We must first make sure that the truth about the democratic countries, undistorted by propaganda, constantly reaches them in convincing terms. Even more effective than the Voice of America will be the gentle and peacefully persuasive Voice of Asia, which has now been heard all over the world, and has been transmitted by India's Prime Minister personally to Moscow.

Nehru has found a change of heart and a conciliatory spirit in the Kremlin which do not spring from weakness within the Soviet Union. We may claim that this is one of the beneficial effects of Bandung. Another result I hope for

is the disbanding of the Cominform, which I suggested at Bandung, and which Nehru agreed to urge during his visit to Russia. This would clear the path to freedom from Communist domination in what I regard as Soviet 'colonies.'

As I write the arrangements are being completed for the Big Four Conference at the summit. They are getting together at last. I have always believed that the only hope for the world to-day lies in Heads of States sitting round a table in a friendly atmosphere and discussing all the major problems that confront them freely and frankly, with a determination to reach the largest possible measure of agreement. Such meetings have been fruitful in Colombo and Bandung.

It was the Colombo Conference of Asian Premiers that first expressed the grave concern of responsible statesmen regarding the hydrogen bomb and other weapons of mass destruction. We urged the publication of authorative information about the destructive and disastrous possibilities of these weapons. And now, as I write the concluding lines of this book, a number of distinguished scientists have uttered a grave warning that warfare with such weapons might put an end to the human race.

We in Asia who have used our new freedom to make our voice heard in the shaping of the world's destiny must not rest until we have widened the bounds of the freedom we enjoy.

It is my earnest hope that lovers of freedom throughout the world will resolve to use every source at the command of men of goodwill to secure the liberation by peaceful means of the victims of Communist imperialism and of colonialism in all its manifestations. I shall then feel that this book has fulfilled its purpose. I shall also look back on Bandung as the most rewarding experience of my life, and be always grateful for the opportunity it gave me of making my own contribution to the cause of peace, freedom, and human happiness.

Colombo, July 15th, 1955

Postscript

At the time of going to press I am happy to be able to record the election of Ceylon to the United Nations Organization by the unanimous vote of the General Assembly. This is realization in a large measure of the hopes and ambitions I have had for my country in the international sphere. It is the culmination of my efforts at the Colombo and Bandung Conferences to make the voice of small countries heard at international gatherings convened in the cause of peace.

I take pardonable pride in the fact that during my régime as Prime Minister Ceylon takes her place as a member of the United Nations. I must here also record my own thanks and the debt that our country owes to Mr R. S. S. Gunewardene, our Ambassador in the United States, and to Mr C. E. L. Wickremasinghe, my special Envoy, who was accredited as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, both of whom I sent as a Mission to the United Nations Assembly this year, and who did yeoman service in lobbying Ceylon's claims among the members of the United Nations. Even my political enemies publicly hailed Ceylon's entry into the U.N.O. That was proof of a notable achievement, and I am humbly grateful that this event came to pass during my tenure of office as Prime Minister.

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