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**DOCUMENTS OF THE  
CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS  
AND  
NATIONALIST POLITICS  
IN CEYLON  
1929-1950  
Vol. IV**

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**EDITED BY  
MICHAEL ROBERTS**

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Published by the  
DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES, 7, REID AVENUE,  
COLOMBO 7, SRI LANKA

















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## A NOTE ON THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE DOCUMENTS

### The Sources

If the documents printed in these volumes are likened to a tree, the trunk was derived from a body of manuscript material and pamphlets which were originally in the hands of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and which were subsequently presented to the Department of National Archives—where they can be referred to under call number, Lot 60. Most of this material pertained to the period after 1929 though the Minute Book for the period 1919—1923 was also available.<sup>1</sup> The branches of this tree have been derived from the following sources : the Gilbert Perera, MSS ;<sup>2</sup> the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS ;<sup>3</sup> the J.R. Jayewardene MSS ;<sup>4</sup> the E. J. Samariwickrame MSS ;<sup>5</sup> one or two items supplied by Messrs. J. A. I. Corray and H. A. Koattegoda ;<sup>6</sup> newspapers; and photostats from the records of the Colonial Office during the 1930's, largely derived from a collection at the Archives and from another collection in the hands of Professor K. M. de Silva. In printing the documents, it was deemed advisable to avoid cluttering up the text with a reference to the source of each manuscript. Such references have been relegated to footnotes.

1. The minutes have not been printed in S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike's edition, *The Handbook of the Ceylon National Congress, 1919—1928*, (Colombo : H. W. Cave & Co., 1928). A few extracts appear here and there, but extensive coverage is not given to this useful source. Accordingly, the opportunity has been utilised to reproduce whatever minutes are available for the period before 1929. Unfortunately, the minute book for the period April 1923-July 1928 has not yet been located.

2. Two ledger books and several pamphlets, manuscripts and cyclostyled documents were discovered by the editor in the possession of Mr. Gilbert Perera, an active member of the Ceylon National Congress in the 1940's. This material has been very generously donated to the Department of National Archives. The call number is lot 25.21.

3. Two volumes of newspaper cuttings, several bound volumes with copies of his correspondence (the "Letter Books") and other manuscript material (including material that did not pertain to Congress affairs) which had been preserved by Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne were kindly lent to the author by Mr. Tissa Wijeyeratne. Some of these documents have also been donated to the Archives. The "Letter Books" remain in the hands of the Wijeyeratne family at their *walauwa* in Kegalla. The former will be referred to as C.N.A., Lot 25.20. The latter will be designated as the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS without reference to a call number.

4. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene has retained in his hand the correspondence with the Indian National Congress and other Indian nationalist leaders (which have been printed here within Section IX), his correspondence with Messrs. A. M. Brodie, P. Kandiah and the Ceylon Indian Congress, and other assorted documents. These will be referred to as the J. R. Jayewardene MSS. However, some of these documents have been subsequently donated to the Archives and can be found in lot 60.

5. These manuscripts are presently in the hands of Mr. E. J. Samerawickrame's son, (Justice) G. T. Samerawickrame, of Gregorys Road, Colombo 7. They were kindly loaned to the author and to the Archives. Microfilms are now available in the Archives. The manuscripts are few : some letters received in 1933 (see item 87 : App. 2) and 1927, two undated memoranda on the Donoughmore scheme of reforms (see items 74 and 75) and one or two other items.



Though the minutes of the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress were, for the most part, excluded from Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's edition of *The Handbook of the Ceylon National Congress 1919—1928*, it would appear that the entirety of the manuscript material available at that stage (the minutes excepted) was printed in indiscriminate fashion. No weeding appears to have been done. From the research students point of view, however, it is just as well that no deletions were made. Weeding and selection of historical documents (and extracts therefrom) on any subject demand a thorough knowledge of the subject by those who undertake the task. The Historiography on Sri Lanka, however, has not reached a stage in which it can be claimed that we have a definitive understanding of the interplay of forces and events in the period extending from the 1920's to the 1940's. Indeed, some of the documents which will help us to reach such an understanding have only been made available to the general public in recent years ; and other documents still remain under cover, so to speak.

Such conditions were held applicable to the contents of the present work as well. In the circumstances, the decision was taken to print virtually all the material in the main body of Ceylon National Congress documents (C.N.A., Lot 60). The weeding has been minimal. Indeed, the tendency has been expansive. Certain newspaper references pertaining to Congress activities or to constitutional affairs, and certain Colonial Office records on constitutional matters have also been included. These latter were *not specially selected* after a comprehensive survey of the newspapers and the records of the Colonial Office. The newspaper references are selections from chance findings and brief reconnaissances on the one hand, and from books of newspaper cuttings from the J. R. Jayewardene MSS and the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS on the other. The selections from the records of the Colonial Office are based purely on the limited body of materials photocopied by Professor K. M. de Silva and by the Director of the Department of National Archives. Time did not permit a more comprehensive survey prior to the selection of such supplementary documents. Indeed, such a survey could confidently be predicted to produce a body of material which would have extended the present work into several more volumes. In the circumstances, a question arose at an early stage in the preparation of these volumes as to whether this supplementary body of material—partial and hit-or-miss in origin—should be included at all. The decision to include them was taken on three grounds : firstly, they afford both the research student and the interested layman with a glimpse of the vast body of literature pertaining to the politics of early twentieth century Ceylon ; secondly, in the field of constitutional affairs they indicate that there were many other forces and interests (besides the Congress) which were at work in the period under review ; and thirdly, they illustrate other contemporary reactions to the activities of the Ceylon National Congress which serve as a corrective to the often partisan and rose-tinted views of the Congressmen. In short, this supplementary body of documents, however partial, provides one with a peek at a political world that was wider than the Ceylon National Congress and shows up the shortcomings of the Congress documents as a foundation for the history of the Ceylon National Congress itself.



## The Arrangement

The documents have been arranged under eleven broad divisions or "Sections". These divisions were differentiated either with reference to their source, or to their content, or to a combination of the two. Sections II and III are solely based on the source of origin and relate respectively to the minutes of the Executive and Working Committees from 1919—1949 and the reports on the various sessions of the Ceylon National Congress in the period 1929—1950;<sup>7</sup> the subjects they pertain to are varied and they take up a considerable amount of the space in these volumes. Sections V (Policies and Programmes, 1935—1948) and VI (Annual Reports 1939—1945) are less extensive but share many of the characteristics of II and III; and each section stems (for the most part) from one type of document.

Section IV reproduces the constitutional structure of the Ceylon National Congress at various points of time. Like the other Sections described above, this Section originates from a particular procedural form adopted by the Congress, but unlike them pertains to one specific subject. Section I provides lists of office bearers, members of committees and members of the Congress; while arising from procedural techniques, like IV its content is subject-specific. To many laymen the inclusion of such a section might come as a surprise. My own research experience, however, revealed that the lists of delegates who attended certain sessions in the early 1920's, which have been included in *the Handbook of the Ceylon National Congress*, are of historical value and are among the most useful pages in that volume. It is anticipated that Section I will prove of like value to writers and historians in the future.

Section VII to X are derived from a variety of sources and are subject-specific. They are distinguished purely according to the content of the documents. VII deals with constitutional affairs, occupies considerable space and can be confidently held out as one of the sections that will attract the attention of readers. Section VIII pertains to the interaction between Congress and other political groups, including the Ceylon Indian Congress and the Ceylon Communist Party, during the 1940's and also contains some particularly interesting documents. Section IX also pertains to the 1940's and is largely the product of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's pen; it is illustrative of the Indian influences and contacts which inspired Ceylonese nationalism and the Ceylonese nationalist movement from the early twentieth century. Section X is devoted to the role of the Congress in certain affairs of local government.

And finally there is a residuary Section XI with various miscellaneous items.

In listing items and numbering sub-sections no particular model has been followed. The scheme of itemisation has been hewn out by rough and ready experience. Each of the principal items within the eleven sections has been numbered in a continuous series. Thus, reference can be made to each such item without a reference to the major section. Each of these items is divided up and staked out as A B, C et cetera; and these divisions might contain further subdivisions staked out in turn as (1) (2) (3). Neither of these two levels of subdivision is listed in a continuous series. Thus to take random examples by way of illustration the identification code for the documents described below will be as indicted on the right.

---

7. As most readers will be aware, the bulk of the *Handbook CNC* is taken up with reports on the two conferences of December 1917 and December 1918 and on the various sessions of the Ceylon National Congress in the 1920's.



Description	Reference in this book of Documents
*Enrolment of Branch Associations .. ..	10
*Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting of 26 October 1929	17 : B
*Draft Report on the Thirteenth Annual Sessions 18—19 December 1931 .. ..	23 : B
*Letter to the Editor Ceylon Daily News from E.W. Perera, 20 December 1931 .. ..	23 : C(1)
*H. R. Cowell's Memorandum on Another Interview with D. S. Senanayake, 26 June 1933 .. ..	81 : B
*Minute by Sir Malcolm Macdonald, 14 July 1938 ..	102 : C(2)
*Letter from G. G. Ponnambalam to Malcolm Macdonald, 2 December 1938 .. ..	114 : G(1)
*The Ceylon Communist Party's Resolutions and Memoranda, and the Ceylon National Congress, October-November 1944 ..	124 : B
*Letter from P. Kandiah to J. R. Jayewardene, 9 October 1942 ..	135 : A

In the instance of items 106, 141, 164, 167, 169, 175, 176, 178-182 and 188-190, however, the sub-sections are either so numerous or so brief and inconsequential that the normal alphabetical numbering has been dispensed with and numerals resorted to, thus :

*Letter to the Editor of the Times from Dr. Drummond Shiels, 17 August 1938 .. ..	106 : 4
*The President, C.N.C. to Jawaharlal Nehru, 22 May 1946 ..	141 : 41

Under both schemes by which items have been distinguished and identified it would be possible to locate the items in these volumes without reference to the pagination. Page-references, of course, would be an additional aid and particularly valuable in the instance of lengthy items such as the minutes of the Executive Committee for a particular year, or the reports on certain Congress sessions.

### A Note on Punctuation

Whether typed or handwritten many of the documents were marred by appalling standards of punctuation, either being inundated with unnecessary punctuation marks or being devoid of any punctuation. Particularly in the former case, certain liberties have been indulged in : where it could readily be ascertained that no distortions of meaning would occur, unnecessary marks were deleted or a new mark judiciously included so as to bring out the meaning more lucidly. To make improvements in this fashion consistently, however, was a difficult task.

### A Note on the Use of Capital Letters

According to the fashion of the times, the initial letter in many words was capitalised. To cite examples, such words and phrases as

Dominion Status	Island	General Elections
Press	Annual Sessions	Budget
Democracy	Income Tax	the Reform Memorandum
	the Party System,	

often began with capital letters. But there was little consistency in the manner in which this habit was indulged in. Even within the same manuscript, inconsistencies prevailed. There is a modicum of significance in the words chosen for such treatment, though regular adherence to the practice by all parties and the large number of words favoured in this manner perhaps reduce the significance which one might attach to this practice. In the case of certain words a decision



was made to simplify matters and not render the first letter in capitals ; for the most part, however, the capitals were allowed to stand. The following were among the terms most frequently altered in this way :

the parliamentary system	the annual sessions
the system of government	the special sessions
the present government	the state
the party system	the bar
the (Donoughmore) scheme	civil servants
the presidential address	public servants
the office (of the Congress)	the press
a sub-committee	the office bearers

However, this was a task in which it was very difficult to prevent oversights in typing. Again, since no consistency prevailed in the documents it is likely that some words which were not provided with a first letter in a particular document may have been inadvertently spelt with a capital letter because it was subject to such treatment on most occasions. In short, too great a reliance should not be paid to the accuracy of reproduction in this respect.

#### A Note on the Spelling of Proper Names.

Here again the manuscripts, typescripts and pamphlets adhere to no consistent form. The problem arises from the failure to follow consistent principles in the Anglicised rendering of names which have the same spelling in the vernaculars, a failure which remains prevalent today. Thus, the name "Goonesingha" is also written as "Goonesinghe." One finds a "Peiris", "Pieris", "Peris" and "Peries". The names Gunawardena, Jayatilaka, Wickremasinghe, Gunasekera, Jayawardena, Jayasinghe, Jayasuriya, Kotelawala, Weerasuriya and Siriwardena are among the many names subject to a variety of spellings. Even in the instance of well-known individuals, such as E. J. Samerawickrame and D.B. Jayatilaka, contemporaries did not follow a consistent form of Anglicised spelling. To prevent confusion and facilitate indexing, it was decided at an early stage in the preparation of these documents to follow a consistent pattern as far as humanly possible. A "Guideline of regularized spellings" was compiled. The guideline was not based on principles of transliteration. The spelling for each name was drawn up on the foundation of any one of the following items of evidence, all of which in varying degrees may be presumed to have had the sanction of the individual concerned :

- (1) the signatures used by the individual himself ;
- (2) the manner in which pamphlets or articles under an individual's name were printed ;
- (3) the manner in which their sons spell their names today—as indicated in the Telephone Directory ;
- (4) Contemporary spellings adopted in Ferguson's *Ceylon Directory*.

In the case of lesser-known individuals the spelling of whose names could not be ascertained in this fashion, the guideline simply relied on the spelling denoted in the first instance on which the name appeared in the manuscripts.

Thus, whatever the actual spelling used in a manuscript, the names were altered in terms of the guideline. The guideline did not purport to present the correct spelling even in terms of the usage favoured by the families concerned. It merely served as a means of achieving a consistency which would render identification easier. It will be understood, of course, that this meticulous task could not be undertaken without errors creeping in.





**IX**

**INDIAN INFLUENCES AND  
CONTACTS, 1940-1947**



ix

INDIAN CIVILIZATION AND  
CONTACTS

**141. CORRESPONDENCE WITH INDIAN NATIONALIST LEADERS AND ORGANISATIONS, 1940-1947<sup>1</sup>**

**141 : 1. J. R. Jayewardene to the Hony. Secretary, Indian National Congress, 18 January 1940<sup>2</sup>**

Dear Sir,

I have been requested by the Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to ask you whether you could kindly let us know whether you have defined a communal political organisation as mentioned in article 5 (c) of your constitution for 1938.

We in the Ceylon Congress are debarring communal political organisations and your advice will be greatly appreciated.

It is also possible for the Ceylon Congress whose political goal is dominion status to affiliate with the Indian National Congress.

As a few members of the Ceylon Congress wish to attend your sessions could you please let me know how that can be done.

Yours truly,

Joint Hony. Secretary,

Ceylon National Congress.

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1. From the J. R. Jayewardene MSS.

2. This copy is typed on notepaper bearing Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's letterhead.



141 : 2. J. B. Kripalani, General Secretary, Indian National Congress to the Joint Secretary, Ceylon National Congress, 27 January 1940

Office-Bearers for 1939-40

President :

Rajendra Prasad.

Treasurer :

Jamnalal Bajaj.

General Secretary :

J. B. Kripalani.

Ref. G-34/3072.

All-India Congress Committee,  
Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad,  
January 27, 1940.

The Joint Secretary,  
Ceylon National Congress,  
Braemar,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

Thanks for your letter of 18th January. The Congress have named only two organisations as communal organisations, the Muslim League and the Hindu Mahasabha. Apart from this no other organisation has been so named by the Congress.

So far as Ceylon is concerned I am afraid I can give no advice in the matter, not knowing the activities of the communal organisations functioning there.

Apart from the question of the goal of your organisation we have no system of affiliating any organisations to the Congress. We have our own subordinate organisations but no affiliated organisations.

Members wishing to attend the annual session of the Congress from Ceylon can attend it as guests. If they want any special facilities we may be informed, and we may make special arrangements for their seating at the session.

With our greetings,  
Yours faithfully,  
J. B. Kiripalani,  
General Secretary.

**141 : 3. Dr. Balkrishna Keskar to the President, Ceylon National Congress, 20 February 1940**

Office-Bearers for 1939

President :

Rajendra Prasad.

Treasurer :

Jamnalal Bajaj.

General Secretary :

J. B. Kripalani.

All-India Congress Committee,  
Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad,  
February 20, 1940.  
Foreign Dept. Fef. F. D. 12/116.

The President,  
Ceylon National Congress,  
Borella Flats,  
Borella Junction,  
Colombo.

Dear Friend,

We are in receipt of your letter of the 5th instant.

The 53rd annual session of the Indian National Congress will be held on the 19th, 20th and 21st March at Ramgarh in the Province of Bihar.



In view of the critical situation existing in India and in world as a whole, and the clear stand taken by the Congress on the issues at stake, there is no doubt that this session is going to be a momentous one.

We extend a cordial invitation to you to attend this session or send us a fraternal message on your behalf.

Yours sincerely,  
Balkrishna Keskar,  
Secretary.

**141 : 4. G. C. S. Corea to the Secretary, All-India Congress Committee, 2 March 1940**

2nd March 1940.

The Secretary,  
All-India Congress Committee,  
Swaraj Bhawan,  
Allahabad.

Reference F. D. 12/11

Dear Sir,

Your invitation to the President of the Ceylon National Congress to attend the 53rd annual sessions of your congress on the 19th March was accepted with pleasure by the Ceylon National Congress Committee.

As you may be aware we in Ceylon are passing through a constitutional crisis which has necessitated the resignation of the Ministers and non-co-operation in the working of the present constitution.

I find it therefore impossible to come myself but will certainly send a delegation of two members.

Please let me know where our delegation is to come and whom they are to approach.

We in Lanka wish you immediate success in your struggle for freedom.

May your success help Lanka and other subject countries to attain freedom.

Yours sincerely,  
G. C. S. Corea.

**141 : 5. The Joint Hony. Secretaries, Ceylon National Congress to the Indian Agent, Kandy, 11 March 1940**

11th March 1940.

The Indian Agent,  
Kandy,

Dear Sir,

The following four gentlemen, viz. Messrs. J. R. Jayewardene, P. D. S. Jayasekera, J. Amaratunga and C. P. G. Abeyewardena are leaving on Friday for the Indian National Congress sessions to be held at Ramgarh, as representatives of the Ceylon National Congress.

Please be good enough to send the necessary certificates showing that each of the above are Ceylonese.

All four certificates might be posted to my address.

Yours faithfully,  
Unsigned.

**141 : 6. The Joint Hony. Secretaries, Ceylon National Congress to the Secretary, Indian National Congress, 21 June 1940**

21st June 1940.

The Secretary,  
Indian National Congress,  
"Swaraj Bhawan,"  
Allahabad.

Dear Sir,

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress held last week, we were requested to write and thank the Indian National Congress for the



kindness and courtesy extended to the delegates of the Ceylon National Congress who attended the sessions held at Ramgarh this year.

Yours truly,  
Jt. Hony. Secretary,  
Ceylon National Congress.

**141:7. Dr. B. Keskar to J. R. Jayewardene, 18 May 1940**

Office-Bearers for 1940

President :

Abdul Kalam Azad.

Treasurer :

Jamnalal Bajaj.

General Secretary :

J. B. Kripalani.

Foreign Department  
Ref. F. D. 4/?  
All-India Congress Committee,  
Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad,  
May 18, 1940.

My dear Jayewardene,

Many thanks for your kind letter of the 25th April. I was out of Allahabad for about 10 days, hence the delay in reply. Even then, the letter had come rather late as it was opened by censor.

I read with interest the cuttings sent by you. We have also received the Handbook of the Ceylon National Congress. The work that you are doing is really so necessary. I wish heartily that we could do more work for 'rapprochement' between India and Ceylon. In any case, we are grateful to you for what you are doing. Please continue it. I need not assure you that most of us understand the Ceylonese viewpoint and, if you analyse, the difference is not so great as it

appears. And I think this understanding has been solely the result of personal contact. Let us hope the personal contacts will increase everyday. I do hope that we will be able to send a delegation to Ceylon one of these days.

I am still making the project of making a visit to Ceylon but I do not know when I can do it. When is your Congress going to have its annual session ?

Yunus has gone to Peshawar. I will send your cutting to him.

I am sorry that the dust has rather spoilt your trip. The fact is that the best months for travelling here are December and January.

I hope to hear from you frequently. My compliments to Mr. Amaratunga.

With the best wishes,  
Yours very sincerely,  
B. Keskar.

141 : 8. **J. R. Jayewardene to Jawaharlal Nehru, 20 July 1940**<sup>1</sup>

Braemar,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo,  
20th July 1940.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,  
" Ananda Bhawan, "  
Allahabad.

Dear Mr. Nehru,

I should really have written to you some months ago, but various reasons have hindered my doing so. I hope you received the handbook of the Ceylon National Congress

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1. The letters despatched by Mr. Jayewardene are available as typed carbon copies, generally unsigned.



and the other pamphlets I sent you. I enclose a few copies of photographs taken by Mr. Amaratunga during the Ramgarh Sessions.

We often think of our visit to India and wish we can come again.

Events are moving with such rapidity in the world today, that a slave India and Ceylon may be free tomorrow, without a struggle. The possibility of India passing into the hands of an armed invador is remote. The jealousy of the great powers alone will prevent this.

What of Ceylon? If nothing else happens, is it possible that she may be bartered away by a peace treaty? This is a question that is troubling many of us in Ceylon. Some of us,—the number is increasing,—think that our future lies with India, and we are endeavouring to arrange for the sending of a representative deputation from Ceylon to meet the Indian leaders.

Would it be possible for the Indian Congress to meet a deputation from the Ceylon National Congress some time this year? Federation or closer union between a free India and a free Ceylon would certainly be a subject we wish discussed.

Do you think it would be possible to arrange such a conference? The best time for our men would be in September.

We would like to meet you, the President of the Congress, Mr. Gandhi and any others that you wish us to meet. If such a conference could be arranged please let me know when and where it can take place?

With my best wishes for India's struggle for freedom.

Yours truly,

**141 : 9. Jawaharlal Nehru to J. R. Jayewardene, 1 August  
1940**

*Air Mail*

Sakina Mansion,  
Carmichael Road,  
Bombay,  
August 1, 1940.

J. R. Jayewardene Esqr.,  
Braemar,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo (Ceylon).

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

Your letter of the 20th July unfortunately missed me in Allahabad and had to follow me to Poona, where I received it only two or three days ago. The handbook and pamphlets that you sent me reached me and I was grateful for them. I read them with interest. The photographs have not reached me yet, but they might be awaiting my return in Allahabad.

I entirely agree with you that the pace of events in the world is very rapid and is likely to lead to big consequences in India and Ceylon. Indeed for the last two or three months we have given the most earnest attention to not only the present situation but the possible developments in the near future. This has led us to a consideration of certain basic matters which did not arise merely in our struggle for freedom. To some extent there has been a reorientation of our policy, though this does not affect the present. This has resulted in Gandhiji dissociating himself, to some extent, with certain policies of the Congress. This does not mean of course that there is any separation between the Indian National Congress and Gandhiji. But it does mean that he is not prepared to take the responsibility for the decisions of the Indian National Congress and to that extent he wants a free hand.



What the immediate future will bring, no one can say. But it is clear that the present position cannot continue. Personally I am quite convinced that whatever the result of the war may be, the British Empire cannot survive it, nor can such spread-out empire exist in the future. It is too much to hope that a real world Federation of free nations will emerge out of this terrible conflict. But one must presume that the day of small nations is past and only large federations or compact empire states will survive. India is a big enough country, with sufficient potential resources in men, material and ability, to stand by itself even in such a world. But it will take some years to arrive at that stage, and in any event I see no reason why India should not join a larger federation if that is conducive to her own good as well as the advancement of the world. I do not see India remaining part of a fundamentally British Federation, though it is conceivable that we might be members of a Federation which includes Britain as well as non-British countries. In the event of defeat of Britain in the War, it is exceedingly unlikely that any British Federation will emerge. What might then happen is some Federation with its centre in America.

Personally I should like India to be closely associated in a future order with China, Burma and Ceylon: as well as other countries which fit in. Our relations with China have become very close during the last year or two, and I am sure that the leaders of China look upon this possibility with favour.

Ceylon is too small a political and economic unit to stand by itself in the future world. I quite agree with you that there might be danger ahead for Ceylon under these circumstances. It will, therefore, be highly desirable to discuss the future relations of India and Ceylon, so that our minds may be clear and we would know what we are aiming at. Your proposal, therefore, is a welcome one.

I have today discussed this matter with our Congress President, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad, and he told me to



convey to you that he welcomed the idea very much and he and his colleagues would gladly meet a deputation from the Ceylon National Congress to discuss this matter. It is a little difficult to fix any definite date for this at present. It would not be desirable to delay such a discussion too much. At the same time the present situation is so complex and many new developments are so likely to take place within the next few weeks, that the future is uncertain. Still, provisionally, some time in the latter half of September or early in October might be suitable.

If Gandhiji's presence is necessary, and we think that his presence is certainly desirable, we shall have to meet at Wardha.

If you let me know the dates that suit you we shall keep them in mind.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru.

**141 : 10. Copy of Letter : J. R. Jayewardene to Jawaharlal Nehru, August 1940**

Braemar,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo,  
15th August, 1940.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,  
'Ananda Bhawan,'  
Allahabad,  
India.

Dear Pandit Nehru,

The members of the Ceylon Congress to whom I have shown your letter, welcome its contents and are grateful to you for your interest in Ceylon.

We have discussed various dates and find that the first week in November is most convenient for our visit. I am sorry that this date is a few weeks later than the dates you



suggested. Certain private family matters and meetings of the State Council, which is now discussing the Budget, make the first week in November most suitable for our visit.

Our deputation will consist of Mr. G. C. S. Corea, the President of the Congress, Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture, and a few others. We would wish to meet Gandhiji also, if it is possible to arrange such a meeting.

As soon as I hear from you, I shall see that an official letter is sent by the President of the Ceylon Congress to the President of the Indian Congress confirming these arrangements.

Our discussions should not, I think, be restricted to any particular issues, but should, as you suggest, cover the future relations between India and Ceylon.

Much as I wish to find out, and discuss with you, the exact position of the Communist Party in the Indian Congress, and also Gandhiji's separation from the Congress and his intention to form a different organisation as reported in our papers, I think I should not intrude on your busy hours, but reserve that for discussion during our visit to India.

With best wishes,

Yours truly,

141 : 11. Jawaharlal Nehru to J. R. Jayewardene, 24 August 1940

Wardha,  
August 24, 1940.

J. R. Jayewardene Esqr.,  
Braemar,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo.

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

Thank you for your letter of the 15th August which I have shown to our President, Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad. We shall be glad to meet the deputation from the Ceylon



National Congress whenever it comes here. I agree with you entirely that our discussions should not be restricted to any particular issues but should cover future relations with India and Ceylon.

If you have been following developments in India, you will no doubt notice that the situation here is undergoing a complete change and the crisis that I hinted at in my last letter has arrived. This makes it very difficult for us to say definitely when and where we can meet you. It may be that long before November we shall not be in a position to meet you, or rather, that we shall be incapacitated from doing so. But apart from this uncertainty about the future we shall look forward to meeting you early in November. Gandhiji will be pleased to meet your deputation.

The developing world situation makes it incumbent on all of us to look ahead and to think of the future. Whatever this future may be, it is certain that it will be very different from the past and the present.

About the exact position of the Communist Party in the Indian Congress not much can be said. The Communist Party is not a legal party in India. For many years the Government of India has banned it. Nevertheless many individual communists exist and proclaim their faith in communism. They describe themselves openly as communists. There are a fair number of others who, though not official communists, are near communists. Between the Communist and Socialist Party here there has been almost continuous conflict. For sometime the Communists were members of the Congress Socialist Party but later many of them left it. Since the war began many of the well known Communists have been arrested under the Defence of India Act and interned.

So far as the Congress is concerned, it has no rule banning any organisation or individual except one preventing members of communal organisations with objectives



opposed to that of the Congress. All other persons can join the Congress if they accept its objective and methods. Of course they are supposed to remain within the general discipline of the Congress. If Communists wish to join the Congress, they are perfectly at liberty to do so and, indeed, many have joined it in the past. Some of these have been important office bearers in different provinces or districts. There has often been some trouble in local committees with Communist members and strictly speaking they have not always kept within Congress discipline. But no disciplinary action has been taken against them except in very rare instances. This was partly due to the fact that they are often good and earnest workers and partly because the British government here is persecuting them so much.

It is not easy to write briefly about the recent differences of opinion between Gandhiji and the Working Committee. These differences are largely based on the theory and application of non-violence. They have been exaggerated somewhat in the press and it is quite likely that they will not affect materially any action that the Congress might take. There is no question of Gandhiji doing anything hostile to the Congress or of forming a different organisation. All that he intended doing at one time was to invite those who fully believed in non-violence, even for a future State, to get into touch with him so that he might take some action through them. Such action would of course not have been against the Congress in any way. It is quite possible, and indeed probable, that by the time you come here all these problems will be of the past.

Yours sincerely,

Jawaharlal Nehru.

141 : 12. **The President, Ceylon National Congress to the  
President, Indian National Congress, 17 September  
1940**

17th September, 1940.

The President,  
The Indian National Congress,  
Swaraj Bhawan,  
Allahabad.

Dear Friend,

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru has written to us, that you as President of the Indian National Congress and other leading members of the Congress welcome the idea of meeting a deputation from the Ceylon National Congress to discuss all present and future relations between India and Ceylon.

Our deputation will consist of myself as President of the Ceylon Congress, Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, and a few others. We hope to be in India during the first week of November and shall make arrangements to be free to meet you during the second week of November, probably 9th and 10th November, or 9th or 10th. As we are anxious to meet Gandhiji also, I take it the meeting will be arranged at Wardha.

With best wishes,

Yours truly,

President,

Ceylon National Congress.



**141 : 13. J. R. Jayewardene to Jawaharlal Nehru, 17  
October 1940**

17th October, 1940.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,  
" Ananda Bhawan, "  
Allahabad,  
India.

Dear Mr. Nehru,

I delayed writing to you as we were expecting a reply from President Azad to our letter dated the 17th September 1940, a copy of which I am enclosing.

I do not know whether he has received the letter. We are making all arrangements to meet the Indian Congress on the days mentioned in that letter.

Please let me know when you intend to hold the meeting. I have just read in the papers that Gandhiji has started the Civil Disobedience Campaign instructing Mr. Vinoba to make an anti-war speech. I will not detain you longer but please accept my very sincere wishes for the success of India's struggle. It is our struggle too that you are waging.

Yours sincerely,

**141 : 14. J. R. Jayewardene to Dr. Balakrishna Keskar, 19  
September 1940**

Braemar,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo,  
19th September, 1940.

Dr. Balakrishna Keskar,  
Secretary, Foreign Department,  
Swaraj Bhawan,  
Allahabad (India).

Dear Dr. Keskar,

Your official letter on the Congress Foreign News Letter was received by us early in September. We have been

receiving Nos. 6, 7, 8 and 9 of the News Letter regularly up to the 18th July, 1940, since then we have not received a copy. The News Letter is very interesting and contains useful summaries of Congress news. The newspapers here contain only garbled versions of Indian affairs.

As you may be knowing we have been in touch with Pandit Nehru, and a Ceylon National Congress deputation will be meeting the Indian Congress leaders early in November. I myself will be coming up to India with this deputation and if possible I hope to be able to meet you. Events both in India and Europe seem to be moving very fast and no one can predict in what condition the world will be when we come to India in November. The lead given by the Indian Congress on co-operation with this war is an inspiration to many of us. I feel that relations between India and Ceylon have improved very much in the last few months and the visit of our leaders should remove any further misunderstanding that exists.

As I said before a visit by you to Ceylon will always be welcomed by us.

With best wishes,

Yours truly,

J. R. J.

**141 : 15. Dr. Balakrishna Keskar to J. R. Jayewardene, 5 October 1940<sup>1</sup>**

Allahabad,  
5th October 1940.

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

Many thanks for your kind letter. With regard to the Newsletter, we send it regularly to all addresses. There can be no doubt that the censor is responsible for the non-receipt of the numbers that you have not got.

1. This letter had been opened by the censor.



I had come to know through Mr. Nehru about the coming visit of your deputation, and yesterday I saw in the papers the names of the personnel. If the situation does not change for the worse, I look forward to meeting you again.

One thing more. Before meeting your deputation we are desirous of knowing the facts about its problems thoroughly well. We are already gathering some material here, but I am not sure to get all facts and figures here. I shall therefore be obliged if you will have the kindness to send at once official and non-official material (printed of course) about the economic and social life of your country, statistics of imports-exports, industries, agriculture, labour, etc. You can send on anything which is easily available. I hope you will excuse me for this trouble. As it will help in furthering the co-operation of our two countries, you won't, I am sure, mind it.

You will send on the literature only if you get this letter sufficiently in advance. I got your letter after 16 days!

With best wishes,

Yours Sincerely,

B. Keskar.

*P.S.*—Did you get my letter in which I had enclosed my article commenting on your report of the Ramgarh visit?

**141 : 16. J. R. Jayewardene to Dr. Balakrishna Keskar, 23  
October 1940**

23rd October, 1940.

Dr. Balakrishna Keskar,  
"Swaraj Bhawan,"  
Allahabad,  
India.

Dear Mr. Keskar,

I received your letter dated the 5th October, on the 17th October. I am sending you—

(1) Report of Economic Survey of certain villages.



- (2) Report on Repatriation Scheme.
- (3) Policy and Programme of Ceylon National Congress.
- (4) Memorandum drafted by me to Congress Working Committee.

I am sorry, I cannot get any more material at present. From these pamphlets you will be able to gather, firstly, the terrible poverty prevailing in our villages, the landlessness and the sickness among our people, and secondly, the unemployment in our towns. You will notice from my Memorandum that non-Ceylonese, mostly Indians, monopolise the trade in Colombo.

There is also a valuable report published in 1938, by Sir Edward Jackson, on Immigration into Ceylon. I have tried to secure a copy of this, but I have not been able to do so.

I personally am not so interested in the relationship between a slave India and a slave Ceylon. I feel we should concentrate more on a common method of struggle and discuss relationships between a free India and a free Ceylon.

Your article commenting on our impressions of the Ramgarh sessions, did not reach here. I should very much like to read it. Could you procure another copy and keep it until I meet you?

Please let me know where you intend to arrange for our meeting.

With best wishes,

Yours truly,

**141 : 17. Telegrams Pertaining to Delegation's Projected Visit to India, October-November 1940**

1. From G. C. S. Corea in Bombay—J. R. Jayewardene, Colombo, telegram received at Maradana P. O., 19 October 1940 : "Await letter before starting Corea."



2. From George E. de Silva in Madras—J. R. Jayewardene in Colombo, telegram received at Maradana P. O., 25 October 1940 : “Congress delegation not necessary Consulted Stephens George de Silva.”
3. Copy of Telegram : J. R. Jayewardene in Colombo—G. C. S. Corea, Maiden Hotel, New Delhi, undated : “Your telegram letter not received Telegrams from associated press India published here state Indian Congress President arriving Allahabad November twelvth [sic] to meet Ceylon Congress Letters from India confirm they expect us Have you made other arrangements with Nehru otherwise our deputation should keep appointment Reply urgent. Jayewardene.”
4. From George E. de Silva in Wardha—J. R. Jayewardene in Colombo telegram received at Colombo P. O., 30 October 1940 : “Send immediately Mahatmaji Congress Constitution George.”
5. From G. C. S. Corea in Delhi to J. R. Jayewardene in Colombo, received at Maradana P. O., 30 October 1940 : “Come Allahabad events November Corea.”
6. Chief Telegraph Master, Ceylon Post Office—J. R. Jayewardene, 31 October 1940 : “Sir, With reference to Telegram from Delhi delivered from Maradana P. O., on the 30th instant I have the honour to advise as follows:—Please read the 3rd Text as “Eleventh.” The error, due to a mutilation beyond this administration, is regretted.”
7. From G. C. S. Corea and D. S. Senanayake in Delhi—J. R. Jayewardene in Colombo, telegram received at Maradana P. O., 1 November 1940 : “Postpone delegation visit in present circumstances Corea Senanayake.”
8. Copy : From J. R. Jayewardene—Dr. B. Keskar. in Allahabad 1 November 1940 : “Regret Nehru arrest Ceylon delegates arriving Allahabad 11th meet President Azad Please reply confirming. Jayewardene.”



9. From Dharamyashdev, Allahabad—J. R. Jayewardene in Colombo, telegram received at Colombo P. O., November 1940: "Your telegram shall wire eighth November Dharamyashdev."
10. Copy : From J. R. Jayewardene—President Azad in Wardha, 4 November 1940: "Re Ceylon delegation stop Since Nehru unable come and urgent matters engaging your attention stop Suggest postponement Jayewardene Secretary Ceylon Congress."
11. Copy : From J. R. Jayewardene—Dharamyash Dev, Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad: "Your telegram since Nehru unable come and your important present work wired President Azad Wardha suggesting postponement Ceylon delegation Jayewardene."
12. From Abdul Kalam Azad in Wardha—J. R. Jayewardene in Colombo, telegram received at Maradana P. O., 7 November 1940: "Owing changed circumstances sorry meeting not possible Abdul Kalam Azad."

141 : 18. **J. R. Jayewardene to the Secretary, Madras Branch of the Indian National Congress, 9 October 1940**

9th October, 1940.

The Secretary,  
Indian National Congress,  
Madras Branch.

Dear Sir,

I shall be much obliged if you could let me know how it is possible to make sugar from coconut—toddy or jaggery.

I have been advised by certain people to inquire from you.

Yours truly,

JRJ/TJP.



141:19. J. R. Jayewardene to E. W. Aryanayakam, 9  
October 1940

9th October, 1940.

Dear Mr. Aryanayakam,

You may remember my meeting you at the Ramgarh Sessions when I came to India as a delegate of the Ceylon Congress. We visited the Basic School at Allahabad and were greatly interested in the making of paper. I wonder whether you could let me know the names of any books which explain the process of making paper by hand.

We of the Ceylon Congress wish to start this as a cottage industry.

Yours truly,

JRJ/TJP.

141:20. E. W. Aryanayakam to J. R. Jayewardene, 16  
October 1940<sup>1</sup>

The Hindustani Talimi Sangh

Dr. Zakir Husain  
(President)

E. W. Aryanayakam  
(Secretary)

Ref. No. 571/201.

Shree J. R. Jayewardene,  
Braemar,  
66, Ward Place, Colombo.

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

I am glad to get your letter. Today I read the news of the good-will mission coming from Ceylon to India in November and was glad to see that you are one of the members of the delegation. According to your programme

1. This letter had been opened by the censor. Filed with this letter was a printed catalogue of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh publications.

you are to visit Mahatmaji and so you are sure to come to Sevagram where I stay in the same ashram with Mahatmaji I shall be looking forward to seeing you all.

I am glad that you visited the Basic School at Allahabad and found the work interesting. The All-India Village Industries Association has published a book on paper making. I am requesting them to send you a copy. It costs only Rs. 0-8-0 and Rs. 0-2-0 postage. The book will be sent per V. P. P.

I am sending under separate cover a copy of the publications of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh on basic education which may interest you. I hope that you will be able to create some interest in basic education in Ceylon and get at least a few experimental schools started.

Yours truly,

E. W. Aryanayakam.

**141 : 21. K. Kamaraj, President Tamil Nadu Congress  
Committee to J. R. Jayewardene, 24 October 1940**

Mount Road,  
Madras,  
24.10.1940.

Sri Jayewardene,  
Braemar,  
66, Ward Place, Colombo.

Dear Sir,

I have your letter of the 9th instant. I could not write to you earlier since I had been on tour in the districts. The Industrial Department of the Madras Government was good enough to demonstrate in our previous exhibition, how



sugar is made from coconut toddy. So you will please address the Director of the Industries Department for details.

Yours sincerely,

K. Kamaraj,  
President.

141:22. The Joint Hony. Secretaries, Ceylon National Congress to the General Secretary, Indian National Congress, 1 February 1941<sup>1</sup>

1st February, 1941.

The General Secretary,  
Indian National Congress,  
Swaraj Bhawan,  
Allahabad.

Dear Friend,

The Working Committee of the Ceylon National Congress wishes that the following resolution unanimously accepted at the 21st sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held in December should be conveyed to you :

The resolution reads as follows :—

“ This Sessions expresses its sympathy with the people of India in their struggle for freedom, and expresses its disapproval of the punishments imposed on India's sons and daughters, who are participating in a movement of great moral significance to the whole world, based as it is on the principle of non-violence.”

Yours truly,

Jt. Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.

1. The Indian National Congress sent a postcard dated 14th February, 1941 acknowledging this letter with thanks.

141 : 23. J. R. Jayewardene to Mrs. R. S. Pandit, 6 May, 1941

6th May, 1941.

Dear Mrs. Pandit,

It is an year since we from Ceylon stayed as guests at Swaraj Bhawan, after the Ramgarh Sessions. Six months ago, I bought a small present to be sent from Ceylon to Swaraj Bhawan as a memento of our visit.

The crisis in India, the arrest of the Indian leaders and other causes prevented my sending it earlier. Having read in the papers of your release, I am availing myself of the opportunity to send it to the Swaraj Bhawan.

These mats are typically Ceylon products and are made by hand in a small village called Dumbara. They have been so made for hundreds of years by the villagers who hand down the art from father to son. I trust they will reach you safely and that they will serve to remind those at Swaraj Bhawan, and all those that visit it, of the affection that Ceylon has for India, in spite of all that now we talk of about Indo-Ceylon differences.

I have not written to Pandit Nehru for some time as I was not sure whether he would receive my letters. I have however, decided to send one to him through Swaraj Bhawan.

With my best wishes to all those we met during our stay.

I am,

Yours truly,

Mrs. R. S. Pandit,  
Swaraj Bhawan,  
Allahabad,  
India.



141 : 24. J. R. Jayewardene to Jawaharlal Nehru, 7 May 1941

7th May, 1941.

Dear Mr. Nehru,

I have not written to you since you were interned, because, I was not sure whether you would receive my letters. I wonder whether you will receive even this? I am however writing in the hope that the censor may pass it. I suppose any reference to politics would mean that the letter may not be passed. Therefore I have refrained from writing about things which are now playing such a large part in the lives of the people of India and Ceylon.

You may have read in the papers about the Indo-Ceylon differences. They exist. Yet, the wish of an increasing number here is that a free Ceylon should some day, and that very soon, march together with a free India.

Our Congress Party in Ceylon had much success in the Colombo municipal elections last December, and we were able to have our Congress Mayor.

The 21st sessions of our Congress Party was held in December and it was modelled on the lines of the Indian Congress with swadeshi exhibitions, open air mass meetings etc. Our visit to Ramgarh enabled us to introduce many of the features we saw there.

I have sent today to Swaraj Bhawan a small memento of our visit, a few hand-woven Ceylon mats.

Wishing you are in the best of health,

Unsigned.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,  
Swaraj Bhawan,  
Allahabad,  
India.

141 : 25. Jawaharlal Nehru to J. R. Jayewardene, 29 May 1941<sup>1</sup>

May 29, 1941.

From : Jawaharlal Nehru,  
District Jail,  
Dehru Dun.

To : J. R. Jayewardene Esqr.,  
Braemar, 66, Ward Place,  
Colombo.

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

Your letter of the 7th May has reached me and I was happy to hear from you again. As you realise, it is not possible for me at present to carry on an intelligent correspondence about things that matter and are in our minds. Events are marching fast all over the world and it surprises me that many people are thinking in the old way and cannot get out of the ruts. But the future, whatever it is going to be, is not going to wait or conform itself to their slow-moving minds.

In prison especially, when one is cut off from the present, the mind fixes itself more on the future. In the thoughts that fill my mind, Ceylon often recurs and the difficulties of the present day do not worry me much.

My good wishes to you and to the people of Lanka.

Sincerely Yours,

Jawaharlal Nehru.

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1. The envelope conveying this letter, unlike most of the other letters, had been opened by the censor.



141 : 26. The Hony. Secretaries, Ceylon National Congress  
to E. W. Aryanayakam, 7 July 1941

7th July, 1941.

Sri E. W. Aryanayakam,  
Secretary, All-Indian Education Board,  
Wardha, India.

Dear Sri Aryanayakam,

We have been thinking much about your talk to us, and we have been able to formulate some sort of scheme.

We wish, however, to obtain some more information from you before completing our plans. Could you therefore kindly tell us at what price you could sell us raw cotton, and how much we need send you for the immediate purchase of 10 spinning wheels ?

Could you also kindly send us copies (in English) of the constitutions of the All-India Spinners' Association and the All-India Village Industries Association ?

Many people are rather doubtful as to whether hand-spinning can compete with machine-spinning. You mentioned some facts at the Ananda College to us ; but I am sorry I was not able to note them down. I wonder whether you could give me that information.

With best wishes,

Yours truly,

Unsigned.

141 : 27. E. W. Aryanayakam to J. R. Jayewardene, 12 July 1941

The Hindustani Talimi Sangh

E. W. Aryanayakam  
Dr. Zakir Husain  
(President)  
Dr. Zakir Husain  
(Secretary)

P. O. Sevagram,  
Dist. Wardha, C. P.,  
12. 7. 41.

Ref. No. 1254/111.

Shree J. R. Jayewardene,  
Braemar,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo.

Dear Shree Jayewardene,

We arrived here on the 7th. We were hoping to reach here much earlier, but my indifferent health prolonged our stay in Jaffna. We enjoyed very much our short stay in Colombo. It was very good of you to have given us an opportunity of meeting your workers, and discussing plans for a constructive programme of work to be introduced in the villages through the Ceylon National Congress. We are glad to know that you have been thinking much about our talk and that you have been able to formulate some sort of a scheme.

As regards the supply of raw cotton, hand equipment for producing hand-spun and hand-woven cloth, we feel that the nearest place would be the A. I. S. A. centre in South India, at Tirupur. The Secretary, Shree S. Ramanathan, who was a Parliamentary Secretary to the Congress ministry in Madras, is in charge of the khaddar work in South India. I am writing to him to supply you with detailed information regarding prices and method of despatch.

I shall secure copies of the constitutions of the A. I. S. A. and the A. I. V. I. A., and forward them on to you, in a day or two.



The facts that I quoted at the Ananda College lecture were taken from the book "Economics of Khaddar" by R. D. Gregg, available from Navajiwani Karyalaya, Ahmedabad. I should like your members to study that book which will help them to answer questions regarding the economic aspect of hand-spinning and hand-weaving.

Mahatmaji is extremely busy these days. I gave him your greetings, which he was very glad to hear. We shall always be very happy to give you any help in organising constructive work which you have so enthusiastically taken up. We shall be glad to hear from you from time to time as to how the work is getting organised.

Yours sincerely,

E. W. Aryanayakam.

141 : 28. S. Ramanathan to J. R. Jayewardene, 18 July 1941

All-India Spinners' Association,  
Tamil Nad,  
Gandhinagar,  
Tirupur (S. I. RY),  
18th July 1941.

Sri J. R. Jayewardene,  
Braemar,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

Sri Aryanayakam, Secretary, the Hindustani Talimi Sangh, who was recently in Ceylon, has written to me, asking me to get into touch with you regarding the spread of the khadi movement in Ceylon. I understand that the workers of the Ceylon National Congress are interested in the programme of hand-spinning and hand-weaving and



they intend introducing it there as an experiment. I am enclosing herewith the railway parcel way bill and invoice for one charka and two pounds of cotton slivers. Kindly arrange to take prompt delivery of the articles.

I shall certainly be glad to furnish you with any information regarding the khadi movement in India. I don't know what facilities there are in Ceylon for starting the movement. If cotton is cultivated in Ceylon, the problem will be extremely simple although much depends upon the quality of the cotton. But if cotton has to be imported from India, the problem would be complicated, especially during the present war time when transport facilities are difficult to obtain. In my opinion the best way in which the Ceylon National Congress can co-operate with us in this endeavour is to promote the sale of khadi certified by the A. I. S. A. There is a demand for khadi among the Tamil speaking people there. There is little realisation of the great difference there is between certified and uncertified khadi. Only khadi certified by the A. I. S. A. is produced under conditions imposed by Mahatma Gandhi as to the payment of wages prescribed for the various workers engaged in the production of khadi. Uncertified khadi which is usually sold by the merchants in Colombo and elsewhere is a kind of piracy practised on the movement and has to be discouraged by the general public. There are three khadi shops certified by the A. I. S. A. in Ceylon. One is the Rajaji Khadi Bhandar, 72, Chettiar St., Colombo ; the other is Sri N. Ramasamy, 1099, Kattu Kalai, Kandy and the third is Sri V. Chelladurai, Gandhi Vastralayam, 172, Kangesanthurai Road, Periakadai, Jaffna. I would request you to extend your patronage to these three shops and co-operate with them in the prevention of the sale of uncertified khadi in Ceylon.



I shall be pleased to supply you with spinning implements and cotton slivers at the rates quoted in the invoice.

Yours sincerely,

S. Ramanathan,  
Secretary.

Enc.

R. P. W. B. & Invoice.

**141 : 29. Joint Hony. Secretaries, Ceylon National Congress  
to the General Secretary, Indian National  
Congress, 14 July 1941**

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Borella Junction,  
Colombo, 14th July 1941.

The General Secretary,  
Indian National Congress,  
"Swaraj Bhawan,"  
Allahabad.

Dear Friend,

At a meeting of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee the following resolution was passed :—

"As the most appropriate body at this moment to discuss the Indian Immigration question is the Indian National Congress steps should be taken by the Ceylon National Congress to arrange a conference with the representatives of the Indian National Congress."

Could it be possible for you to arrange a conference between a deputation of the Ceylon National Congress and a deputation of the Indian National Congress somewhere

at the end of September 1941. We would also wish to discuss other matters concerning the political and economic relations between our two countries.

Yours truly,

J. R. Jayewardene,  
Jt. Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.

**141 : 30. J. B. Kripalani to the Secretary, Ceylon National Congress, 28 July 1941**

All-India Congress Committee,  
Camp Sevagam,  
Via Wardha (C. P.),  
July 28, 1941.

Ref. G-8.

The Secretary,  
The Ceylon National Congress,  
Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Borella Junction,  
Colombo (Ceylon).

Dear Friend,

Thanks for your letter of 14th July 1941 containing the resolution of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee desiring a conference with a deputation of the Congress, somewhere in September next, to discuss the Immigration question and other matters concerning the political and economic relations between the two countries.

You know that today all these questions can be discussed with Gandhiji alone. Your letter therefore was placed before him. He will be pleased to meet a deputation of your Committee whenever it comes. But it will be desirable that you inform us of your intended visit about a fortnight



ahead. If any members of the Working Committee can be there at the time they will participate in the discussion, with pleasure.

Yours sincerely,

J. B. Kripalani,  
General Secretary.

**141 : 31. The Joint Hony. Secretaries, Ceylon National Congress to the General Secretary, Indian National Congress, 3 September 1941**

3rd September, 1941.

The General Secretary,  
Indian National Congress,  
Camp-Sevagan,  
Via Wardha (C. P.),  
India.

Dear Friend,

The Working Committee of the Ceylon National Congress cordially invites the Indian National Congress to send a representative to the 22nd annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress to be held at Dummaladeniya on the 27th, 28th, 29th and 30th December, 1941.

If you will let us know whether it is possible for you to send one of your members we shall make all arrangements about his stay in Ceylon.

Yours truly,  
Dudley S.,  
J. R. J.,  
Jt. Hony. Secretaries,  
Ceylon National Congress.

**141 : 32. S. Ramanathan to J. R. Jayewardene, 6 September 1941**

All-India Spinners' Association,  
Tamil Nad,  
Gandhinagar,  
Tirupur,  
6th September, 1941.

No. 2187.

Sri J. R. Jayewardene,  
Braemar,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

We have sent to you one box charka and slivers on 17.7.1941 as per our invoice of that date. Please let us know if you have received the articles.

Yours sincerely,

S. Ramanathan,  
Secretary.

**141 : 33. J. R. Jayewardene to the Secretary, All-India Spinners' Association, 15 September 1941**

15th September, 1941.

The Secretary,  
All-India Spinners' Association,  
Tamil Nad,  
Gandhipur, Tirupur (India).

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter No. 2187 dated the 6th September 1941, I have to state that we have received the goods you sent. We may need about 25 more charkas. Is it possible for you to send us that on payment of your charges? Is there no other charka model that you can send us? Please let me know.

Yours truly,



**141 : 34. S. Ramanathan to J. R. Jayewardene, 19 September 1941**

All-India Spinners' Association,  
Tamil Nad,  
Gandhinagar, Tirupur,  
19th September, 1941.

No. 2891.

Sri J. R. Jayewardene,  
66, Braemar,  
Ward Place,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

Reference your letter dated 15.9.1941.

We can supply Kisan charkas at Rs. 3 each. We shall be sending you two of ? model along with the 25 box charkas for which you have placed an order with us.

Yours sincerely,

S. Ramanathan,  
Secretary.

**141 : 35. The General Secretary, Indian National Congress to the Secretary, the Ceylon Indian Congress, Overseas Department, 25 September 1941**

All-India Congress Committee,  
Swaraj Bhawan, Allahabad,  
25th September, 1941.

Ref. G-8.

Dear Sir,

We have received your invitation asking the All-India Congress Committee to send a delegate to the session of the Congress to be held in December next. The Indian National Congress is at present engaged in a movement of

civil disobedience and most of its leaders and prominent workers are in jail. Even those who are released are expected to offer themselves for arrest. It is not possible to forecast today how we shall stand in December next. We regret that we are unable to send any representative.

Yours sincerely,

(Signature Indecipherable)

for General Secretary.

The Secretary,  
The Ceylon Indian Congress,  
Overseas Department,  
P. O. Box 134, 77½, Chatham Street,  
Colombo.

**141 : 36. Copy of Telegram : E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to the President, Indian National Congress, undated**

Ceylon National Congress sends fraternal greetings to you Pandit Nehru and others released from jail. Lanka supports you in your struggle for liberation  
Wijeyeratne President Ceylon National Congress.

**141 : 37. J. R. Jayewardene to Jawaharlal Nehru, 29 June 1945**

66, Ward Place,  
Colombo, 29.6.45.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,  
Swaraj Bhawan,  
Allahabad,  
India.

My Dear Pandit Nehru,

I wonder whether you remember our last meeting. It was on the day before the A. I. C. C. Meeting, in August 1942. A few of us, members of the Ceylon National Congress had come to Bombay, and you very kindly spared a few minutes of your time, discussing with us problems affecting our two countries, at Mr. Hutheesingh's residence.



With your help we were able to attend the first day's meeting. The next day the leaders were arrested, and on our way to the meeting place, we found the police dispersing the crowds, with violence. We visited your residence that same day, bade good-bye to Mrs. Hutheesingh, and left for Ceylon that very evening. On our way back, our train was stoned at one or two places, near Bombay, but without injury to anyone. Mr. Satyamurthi, who was travelling with us, was arrested near Madras. We reached Colombo a few days later.

Three years have gone by since then, years which have seen many changes and stirring events, but few have been so eagerly received here as the release of the Indian leaders. I hope you received our message of goodwill. I think the main reason for this is, that we in Lanka feel that our fight for freedom is being fought largely in India, and India's freedom is Lanka's freedom too.

The urge for freedom has grown immensely here, during these 3 years. Soon after our return, the Ceylon National Congress in December 1942 rejected dominion status and adopted freedom as its objective. Soon after this, I was nominated as the Congress candidate for the vacancy created by Sir D. B. Jayatilaka's appointment as representative in India, and fighting the election on the issue of "Independence" *vs.* "Reforms," against an elder politician, Mr. E. W. Perera, I was able to win by over 10,000 votes. The State Council, and all political parties too, now ask for freedom, and India's help will be a great asset to us. It is to acquaint you with the latest developments in Ceylon that I thought of writing these few lines.

I am sending you the following Sessional Papers which give an account of what has happened here; S. P. 13 of 1943; an ordinance to provide a new constitution for Lanka, and the agenda of the 25th Congress sessions.

On the 26th May 1943, the British Government declared that it would grant full responsible government to Ceylon,



in all matters of internal civil administration. This declaration is printed in S. P. 17 of 1943 together with the Ministers' interpretation of it. The Ministers drafted a constitution and sent it to the Secretary of State in February 1944. They were then informed that a commission would be sent out to Ceylon. The Ministers objected to the sending out of this commission, withdrew their draft and decided not to co-operate with the commission, vide S. P. 12 of 1944. The Ministers' Draft Constitution is in S. P. 14 of 1944.

The commission, an "all white one," held its sittings from December 1944 to April 1945, and was boycotted by all progressive political bodies, following the lead of the Ceylon National Congress.

While the Commission, which consisted of Lord Soulbury, Sir F. J. Rees and Mr. F. J. Burrows, was hearing evidence we introduced in the State Council an Ordinance to provide a new constitution for Lanka. This Ordinance contained the Ministers Draft Constitution, shorn of certain limitations, and provided a constitution of the recognised dominion type for a Free Lanka. The third reading of this Ordinance was passed in March 1945, with only 2 elected members, both members of the Tamil Congress, a new body created to give evidence before the Commission, voting against it. The Ordinance has now been reserved for His Majesty's assent.

I understand that the Soulbury Report is now ready, and the Leader of the State Council, Mr. D. S. Senanayake has been invited to England to discuss future constitutional problems with the British Government. I do not think that either the State Council, or the country will accept anything less than has already been promised to India and Burma, that is the status of a free and equal partner in the Commonwealth of Nations.

The latest resolution of the Indian Congress Working Committee, demanding freedom for the colonies, has heartened us, for even the moral support of a powerful neighbour gives strength to our cause.



You may remember in August 1942, I suggested that Ceylon too, should be included in the resolution to be placed before the A. I. C. C., as one of the countries for whose freedom the Indian Congress would strive. Specific reference of this nature to Ceylon is of great psychological value to us, in our work.

It is not possible to suggest, just now, any means whereby India can help us. We anxiously await the outcome of the Simla talks. I have only attempted to provide you with a summary of recent political event in Ceylon, so that, if you have the time and the desire, you may yourself consider what help you can render us. I am afraid, I have already taken too much of your time, but I cannot close, without extending to you and to any of your friends, you wish to bring, a cordial invitation to be my guests in Ceylon, if you can find the time for a short holiday. The best time would be January, a cool month, when moreover, we will be holding our 26th Congress sessions.

With my best wishes to you,

Yours very sincerely,

Unsigned.

141 : 38. Postcard : Indira Gandhi to J. R. Jayewardene, 13 October 1945

Anand Bhawan,  
Allahabad,  
October 13, 1945.

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

My father, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, has asked me to thank you for your telegram of good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

Indira Nehru Gandhi.



141 : 39. J. R. Jayewardene to Jawaharlal Nehru, 20  
October 1945

20th October, 1945.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,  
Swaraj Bhawan,  
Allahabad,  
India.

My Dear Pandit Nehru,

I wrote to you on the 29th June 1945, soon after your release from gaol. Since I have received no reply, I presume, the censor prevented the letter from reaching you. I am enclosing a copy of it. Instead of the Sessional Papers, mentioned in the 5th paragraph, I am sending you a copy of the Soulbury report, which contains the relevant Sessional Papers, and a few notes of mine on it. I particularly, draw your attention to Chapters 10 and 11. I do not think, that any Indian, who seeks freedom for India, can object to the recommendations, in para. 242 (i) and (ii). The Ceylon Indian Congress, however, while pleading for Ceylon's independence, in the same breath insists, that the British Government should include in the Constitution, articles relating to immigration, and the Indian franchise, in accordance with the demands of the Congress. Mr. Aney is now at Simla to press this point of view on the British Raj. I do hope, for the sake of friendly feelings, which you, as well as many others, in India and in Ceylon wish to promote between our two countries, he will not be successful.

I wish you will be able to accept our invitation to come to Ceylon in January.

With best wishes,

Yours very sincerely,

Unsigned.



**141 : 40. Jawaharlal Nehru to the Joint Honorary Secretaries, Ceylon National Congress, 12 May 1946**

Anand Bhawan  
Allahabad.

Camp : Simla,  
12 May 1946.

Joint Honorary Secretaries,  
Ceylon National Congress,  
Borella Flats, Colombo.

Dear friends,

Thank you for your letter of the 11th April. I am glad of your resolution welcoming the movement to organise an Asian conference. Probably the initiative in this will be taken by the Indian Council of World Affairs, 63/2, Daryaganj, Delhi. I suggest you keep in touch with them.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru.

**141 : 41. The President, Ceylon National Congress to Jawaharlal Nehru, 22 May 1946<sup>1</sup>**

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Colombo, 22nd May, 1946.

Dear Pandit Nehru,

Your statement to the press about Indians in Ceylon has surprised many of us. The Ceylon Government is contemplating no action in regard to the Indians here. An artificial agitation has, however, been raised by the Ceylon Indian Congress against the recommendations of the Soulbury Commission, which recommendations were accepted by the British Government, embodied in the White Paper of October 1945 and accepted by the Ceylon

1. Available as a typed carbon copy. However the original draft is also available and shows that the letter was formulated by Mr. Jayewardene.



State Council by 51 votes to 3. These proposals have now been enclosed in the Order-in Council promulgating a new Constitution for Ceylon.

I am sending you a copy of the Soulbury Report, and I wish to draw your attention particularly to paragraphs 202 to 223 and paragraphs 224 to 242. The first few paragraphs deal with the enfranchisement of the Indian immigrant labourers and show that the franchise rights possessed by those labourers under the Donoughmore Constitution and now preserved in the new constitution "did not seem to His Majesty's Government to involve any racial discrimination against Indians, whereas some of the Indians' protests amounted in effect to a claim to a position of privilege rather than of equality." (vide para. 209.)

The second group of paragraphs deals with immigration and the political status of Indians in Ceylon. The new Constitution accepts these proposals and gives Ceylon for the first time the right to determine the future composition of her population and the right to prohibit or restrict immigration into Ceylon without any overriding powers being vested in the British Government.

Surely you will agree that the powers granted to Ceylon under the new Constitution, a copy of which is sent with this letter, are consistent with her progress toward freedom, and that the request of the Ceylon Indian Congress to the British Government to include in the Constitution articles relating to franchise and immigration in accordance with its demands is a negation of that freedom? The Ceylon Indian Congress also talks of a general strike as a protest. As a protest against what? Against Ceylon's march to freedom; against vesting in the people of Ceylon the right to determine the composition of the country's population and the rights which its citizens should be entitled to. Surely you will not accept for India any restriction on the freedom that Britain will soon give her? Then why should Ceylon not enjoy a freedom as full and as unqualified as yours?



As Mr. Senanayake has informed you, the relations between India and Ceylon, and any question relating to Indians in Ceylon which are not already settled, will be the subject of negotiations between a free India and a free Ceylon; until then your influence should be used to prevent misguided actions by these Indians in Ceylon who are adopting tactics so correctly criticised by you in your latest book as follows: "Some Indian businessmen in Ceylon are demanding exactly the same kind of protection in which they rightly resent having been given to British interests in India. Self-interest not only blinds one to justice and fairplay but also to the simplest applications of logic and reason." (The Discovery of India, p. 43.)

We want you to judge our actions by logic and reason, but that too requires a knowledge of the facts, and I am always prepared to send you the fullest information.

With my best wishes to you,

I remain,  
Yours sincerely,  
Unsigned.  
President.

**141 : 42. Postcard : Nirmal Kumar Bose to J. R. Jayewardene, 14 January 1947**

Kazirkhil,  
Ramganj P. S.,  
Noakhali Dt.,  
January 14, 1947.

Dear Sri Jayewardene,

Thanks very much for your letter of the 4th instant enclosing a copy of the "Dhammapada" for Mahatma Gandhi. I shall keep the copy on his table for his use.

Yours sincerely,  
Nirmal Kumar Bose.



**141 : 43. Jawaharlal Nehru to the President, Ceylon National Congress, 27 February 1947**

*By Air Mail*

17, York Road,  
New Delhi,  
27th February, 1947.

Dear Friend,

I have just received your letter of the 20th February informing me that the Ceylon National Congress will celebrate "Independence Day" on March 2nd. May I send you, and through you to the people of Ceylon, our greetings on this occasion and our good wishes for the rapid realisation of the Free Lanka of your dreams? I have no doubt that a free India and a free Lanka will have the closest of associations with each other for their mutual advantage and for the furtherance of peace and progress in Asia.

Yours sincerely,

Jawaharlal Nehru

President,  
Ceylon National Congress,  
Borella,  
Colombo.

Our greetings on Lanka's independence day. We trust that Lanka will be free soon and play her full part as a free nation in the advancing destinies of Asia. Letter follows.

Jawaharlal Nehru.

27th February, 1947.



## 142. "INDIA AND BASIC EDUCATION" BY J. R. JAYEWARDENE, 1940<sup>1</sup>

In Ceylon most of us look on the surface of things and are content. We do not permit the even tenor of our lives to be disturbed by too much thinking about the problems so many and so varied that confront our people today; nor do we seek to avoid the more difficult problems that the morrow must necessarily bring. This placidity is largely due to our insularity and to the security of life and property that we have had during the last 125 years. We think of Ceylon as something unique in the world, something that stands apart and isolated from the rest of the world and especially from that great sub-continent, twenty miles away from our shores, India.

No visitor to India from Ceylon who meets the men and women who lead the peoples of India today, can return without his conscience being awakened. India is awake and she is awake in many ways. Soon, possibly sooner than we imagine, the repercussions of that awakening will be felt here. We feel it already in the sphere of commerce. Politically too we in Ceylon may have to take decisions looking to Allahabad, where the Congress headquarters are, and not to London for an answer. It behoves us therefore to inquire what the leaders of India are seeking to do there; and where possible we should seek to follow their ideals.

### Ideals of the Indian Congress

Of these ideals the most important is the ideal of non-violence, truth and justice. When the peoples of civilized Europe are slaying each other, non-violence may seem an empty dream. Yet in India it is not. It was only a few days ago that Jawaharlal Nehru publicly said, that the Indian Congress would not start civil disobedience merely because

1. C. N. A., 60/328. Pamphlet No. 3 in the series printed by the Observer Press for Congress in 1940. Also see J. R. Jayewardene's other essay on basic education, found among the J. R. Jayewardene MSS, which we print below, item 143 0.



the British were in difficulties in France. "It is not the way of truth to take advantage of such a circumstance," he said. It is now, more than ever, when the use of ruthless and efficiently controlled force is winning daily victories, when even here in Ceylon we find men and women thinking in terms of violence and applauding violence, as the method whereby victory can be gained or an ambition realised, it is now that adherence to the ideal of non-violence may yet be able to establish a new world order. The Indian National Congress has accepted non-violence as its creed. It has eschewed violence, not because the question of violence is only of theoretical importance to an unarmed and disarmed people, but because the Congress seeks to rebuild India upon a definite ideology. It is important for us in Ceylon to note this.

#### A Revolutionary Movement

The Indian Congress does not seek for freedom alone, it is not the transference of political power from the hands of some into the hands of others that it seeks; it seeks to change the entire life of the Indian people. It is not only a struggle for independence; it is a struggle which is more comprehensive and more revolutionary in the sense that its policy and programme are based upon distinct ideals that seek to change the values of life. It is the influence of these ideals which has made the Congress movement in India a genuine mass movement and a unique mass movement. The education of these masses not only to take part in the struggle, but to take their place in the new scheme of things, when it becomes possible for Congress to shape the future of India, required a new system of education. Just as the principles which the Congress seeks to establish require from the individuals who support it a particular character requiring that armies of Satyagrahi should be trained by the doing of various constructive work such as spinning, and by being disciplined to undergo any



suffering, so must the children of the masses be trained by a new system of education to occupy their respective places in the new epoch.

### Education and Non-violence

Mahatma Gandhi's plan of education is impregnated with his cardinal creed of non-violence. It has been called "the application of the law of non-violence in the training of the child as a prospective citizen of the world." Mahatma Gandhi drew attention to the fundamentals of his scheme of education when he said, "If we want to eliminate communal strife and international strife, we must start with foundations pure and strong by rearing our younger generation on the education I have adumbrated. That plan springs out of non-violence... We have to make them true representatives of our culture, our civilization, of the true genius of our nation. We cannot do so otherwise than by giving them a course of self-supporting primary education. Europe is no example for us. It plans its programmes in terms of violence because it believes in violence. I would be the last to minimize the achievements of Russia, but the whole structure is based on force and violence. If India has resolved to eschew violence, this system of education becomes an integral part of the discipline she has to go through. We are told that England spends millions on education, America also does so, but we forget that all that wealth is obtained through exploitation. They have reduced the art of exploitation to a science, and might well give their boys the costly education they do. We cannot, will not, think, in terms of exploitation, and we have no alternative but this plan of education which is based on non-violence."

### The Wardha Scheme of Education

On the 22nd and 23rd of October, 1937, on the occasion of the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the Marwari Education Society, a momentous Educational Conference was held at Wardha, under the presidency of Mahatma Gandhi. The



conference was attended by some select educationists of India as well as by all the Ministers for Education in the seven Congress provinces. At the close of the conference the following four resolutions were adopted :—

- (1) That in the opinion of this conference, free and compulsory education be provided for seven years on a nation-wide scale.
- (2) That the medium of instruction be the mother-tongue.
- (3) That the conference endorses the proposal made by Mahatma Gandhi that the process of education throughout this period should centre around some form of manual and productive work, and that all the other abilities to be developed or training to be given should, as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child.
- (4) That the Conference expects that this system of education will be gradually able to cover the remuneration of the teachers.

### Gandhiji's Ideas

These resolutions were the outcome of a comprehensive discussion on the following propositions which contain Mahatma Gandhi's ideas on education in all stages :—

“ 1. The present system of education does not meet the requirements of the country in any shape or form. English, having been made the medium of instruction in all the higher branches of learning, has created a permanent bar between the highly educated few and the uneducated many. It has prevented knowledge from percolating to the masses. This excessive importance given to English has cast upon the educated classes a burden which has maimed them mentally for life and made them strangers in their own land. Absence of vocational training has made the educated



classes almost unfit for productive work and harmed them physically. Money spent on primary education is a waste of expenditure inasmuch as what little is taught is soon forgotten and has little or no value in terms of villages or cities. Such advantage as is gained by the existing system of education is not gained by the chief taxpayer, his children getting the least.

2. The course of primary education should be extended at least to seven years and should include the general knowledge gained up to the matriculation standard, less English plus a substantial vocation.

3. For the all-round development of boys and girls all training should as far as possible be given through a profit-yielding vocation. In other words, vocations should serve a double purpose—to enable the pupil to pay for his tuition through the products of his labour, and at the same time to develop the whole man or woman in him or her through the vocation learnt at school. Lands, buildings and equipment are not intended to be covered by proceeds of the pupil's labour.

All the processes of cotton, wool and silk manufacture, commencing from gathering, cleaning, ginning (in the case of cotton), carding, spinning, dyeing, sizing, warp-making, double twisting, designing and weaving, embroidery, tailoring, paper making and cutting, book binding, cabinet making, toy making are undoubted occupations that can easily be learnt and handled without much capital delay.

This primary education should equip boys and girls to earn their bread by the State guaranteeing employment in the vocations learnt or by buying their manufactures at prices fixed by the State.

4. Higher education should be left to private enterprise and should be to meet national requirements whether in the various industries, technical arts, belle letters or fine arts.



The state universities should be purely examining bodies, self supporting through the fees charged for examinations.

Universities will look after the whole field of education and will prepare and approve courses of studies in the various departments of education. No private school should be run without the previous sanction of the respective universities. University charters should be given liberally to any body of persons of proved worth and integrity, it being always understood that the Universities will cost the State nothing except the cost of running a Central Education Department."

### Congress Accepts

A committee composed of persons competent to speak with authority was appointed to report on this scheme. The committee submitted two reports and at the Haripura sessions of the Indian National Congress held in 1938, the following resolution on national education was passed:—

"The Congress has emphasised the importance of national education ever since 1906, and during the non-co-operation period many national educational institutions were started under its auspices. The Congress attaches the utmost importance to a proper organization of mass education, and holds that all national progress ultimately depends on the method and content and objective of the education that is provided for the people. The existing system of education in India is admitted to have failed. Its objectives have been antiquated and it has been confined to a small number of people and has left the vast majority of our people illiterate. It is essential, therefore, to build up national education on a new foundation and on a nation-wide scale. As the Congress is having new opportunities of service and of influencing and controlling state education, it is necessary to lay down the basic principles which should guide such education and take other necessary steps to give effect to them. The



Congress is of opinion that for the primary and secondary stage a basic education should be imparted in accordance with the following principles :—

- (1) Free and compulsory education should be provided for seven years on a nation-wide scale.
- (2) The medium of instruction must be the mother-tongue.
- (3) Throughout this period education should centre round some form of manual productive work, and all other activities to be developed or training to be given should, as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child.

“Accordingly the Congress is of opinion that an All-Indian Education Board to deal with this basic part of education be established and for this purpose requests and authorises Dr. Zakir Hussain and Shri E. Aryanayakam to take immediate steps, under the advice and guidance of Gandhiji, to bring such a Board into existence, in order to work out in a consolidated manner a programme of basic national education and to recommend it for acceptance to those who are in control of state or private education.

“The said Board shall have power to frame its own constitution, to raise funds and perform all such acts as may be necessary for the fulfilment of its objects.”

This resolution was moved by the leader of the Socialist Party, Acharya Narendra Deo and seconded by Acharya J. B. Kripalani. The resolution was passed unanimously and the sanction of the Congress, with its power in seven out of the eleven provinces, was given to the new scheme.

The All-India Education Board was thus appointed in April, 1938, and on the resignation of the Congress Ministries in 1939, the programme of basic national education carried on by the Board had come to the close of its second year.



### Present System—Its Defects

What are the defects of the present system of education which the new scheme proposes to eradicate? Mahatma Gandhi was of opinion that, "the present primary education is a snare and a delusion. It is not only wasteful, but positively harmful. Most of the boys are lost to the parents and to the occupation into which they are born. They pick up evil habits, affect urban ways and get a smattering of something which may be anything but education."

We see in Ceylon too, defects in our system of education, similar to the defects in India. Many pupils even at the end of their school career do not know what they will do after completing their studies. Many pass on from primary schools to secondary schools, and then to the University College, not because they love the cultural education which schools profess to give, but because they have nothing else to do. Those who decide upon careers have only the very limited field of professions, or Government service to choose from.

Our system of education has other drawbacks. It is intellectual in the narrow sense of the term. Things are verbally described and no concrete objects illustrate them. The child is locked in the class room. All the faculties of the pupil are not developed. It is a system cut off from all life and reality, and the result is, that proficient babblers and imitators are produced, but not those who are able to meet the difficulties of life and overcome them. Very often those who neglect books show better results in after life.

### The Remedy

The Wardha scheme, therefore, seeks to remedy some of these defects. I do not think anybody will quarrel with these two fundamental features of the scheme: namely, seven years' free and compulsory education, and the mother-tongue as the medium of instruction.



### (1) The 7 Years' Course

The 7 years' instruction is supposed to begin at the age of seven and continue till fourteen. With the experience gained by working the schools these figures may undergo modification. It may be necessary to start the scheme at the age of five rather than seven for the pre-Wardha age is a very important period in the child's life. The necessity for organisation of pre-school education run by the state has not yet been considered. The pre-school age which is in most cases spent in unfavourable surroundings, in the case of the poor, can be reduced by beginning the Wardha education at the age of five. With regard to the age limit of fourteen, it was thought "absolutely essential that the child should be in school until he is fourteen, in order to ensure that he will receive the essential modicum of social and civic training which—for psychological reasons—is not possible earlier—in order to become a better citizen; that is, his literary training will be thorough enough to make lapse into illiteracy impossible, and that he will acquire sufficient skill in his basic craft to practise it successfully if he adopts it as his vocation."

### (2) The Mother Tongue

Today English is the first language. Under the Wardha system the mother-tongue will take the place of English as the first language and the medium of instruction, and Hindustani will be given the place of second language. English is thus banned from the Wardha school. That the medium of instruction should be the mother-tongue and not English is almost beyond controversy. In the commission's first report they say: "the proper teaching of the mother-tongue is the foundation of all education. Without the capacity to speak effectively and to read and write correctly and lucidly, no one can develop decision of thought, or clarity of ideas. Moreover, it is a means of introducing the child to the rich heritage of his peoples ideas, emotions and aspirations and can therefore be made a valuable means of social education, whilst also instilling right ethical and moral values."



### (3) Education through a Craft

The other two principles of this new scheme have been considered novel and unpractical and even called Gandhi's "latest fad." In short they mean that :

- (1) All education be woven round a craft.
- (2) The produce of the craft be made economically remunerative so as to defray the recurring cost of education, namely, the teachers' salary.

The principle of intellectual training in and through a craft is the most fundamental feature of this scheme and necessitates a great revolutionary change in the system of education. Gandhi explained it thus : "My point is not that the start should be made with a craft, and the rest should come in as auxiliaries. On the contrary, I had said that the whole of the general education should come through the crafts and simultaneously with their progress . . . . . It is not the teaching of some handicraft side by side with so-called liberal education. I want that the whole education should be imparted through some handicraft or industry." He says again, "You have to train the boys in one occupation or another. Round this special occupation you will train up his mind, his body, his handwriting, his artistic sense and so on. I do not want to teach the village children only handicraft. I want to teach through handwork all the subjects like history, geography, arithmetic, science, language, painting and music." It is this co-relation of purely intellectual training with the basic craft which constitutes the novelty of the new scheme and makes it entirely different. This method of intellectual training in and through a handicraft must not be confused with our present-day manual training as a supplementary course to the intellectual course. In the new scheme the development of the mind comes through manual training, and through the craft the child learns the other sciences.

Syllabuses have been drawn up to provide for various crafts such as spinning, agriculture, carpentry as the basic



crafts. Mahatma Gandhi has himself stressed spinning and weaving because he thinks it is the only one which can be taught throughout the country. He does not, however, rule out the other crafts.

### Teaching through a Craft

Let us consider how the pupils will be taught if spinning and weaving has been accepted as the basic handicraft through which the child is taught. The pupil will begin by knowing his material, cotton, the history of its discovery, cultivation and spread and the centres where cotton is grown in the world. He will learn the conditions of weather, water and soil under which it is grown. He will know it in comparison with other crops. Then he will learn a bit of geography, history and agriculture. It will not be necessary for him to memorise mechanically any portion of his knowledge. When he learns carding he also gets a knowledge of the different devices that through human history have been evolved for cleansing and ginning cotton. Spinning gives him an idea of weights and measures and the time divisions. He gets a knowledge of the various machines that have been invented for the purpose. He learns the mechanics of the machine he uses. When he learns weaving he again learns the more complicated mechanics of the weaving machine and the history of its evolution. At every new process the child's information increases, his personality develops and he finds joy in his work, his school, his companions and his teachers, which he lacks today. That the handicraft becomes the method, the medium and the language of education is shown by the following method of co-relation between the basic craft and other subjects.

### Mathematics through a Craft

Counting the number of rounds while winding the yarn on the winder ; counting the slivers given out of spinning ;



the number of accessories of spinning, such as taklis, winders. Subtraction tables can be constructed by counting the slivers given out for spinning.

The mother-tongue is taught in Grade I by naming the various tools used in the craft, describing the various processes of picking, carding and spinning with the takli; harvest songs and folk songs connected with spinning.

### Importance of Environment

The various syllabuses for different grades are now being worked out at the various training schools. But one important feature should be noted and that is, the whole scheme emphasises co-ordination of the various subjects and the adjusting of the study of the child intelligently and actively to his environment. With this object in view, the committee has chosen "three centres, intrinsically inter-connected, as the foci for the curriculum, that is, a child's physical environment, his social environment, and craft work (which is the natural meeting-point since it utilises the resources of the former for the purposes of the latter)."

### (4) Remuneration

The fourth feature of the scheme expects the expenses of teachers' salaries to be met through the manual and productive work of the children. It is the poverty of India that has driven Mahatma Gandhi to propose this solution. The figures I quote speak for themselves. The number of primary schools in British India increased from 142,203 in 1917 to 204,250 in 1931, whereas the money spent on such education increased from 2,997,000 to 70,950,000 rupees within the same years. The percentage of literates has only increased from 7.5 per cent in 1917, to 8.6 per cent in 1931. These figures are sufficient to make any Indian weep. Where is the money necessary for this huge outlay on schools and teachers to come from? The answer to this question is the Wardha Scheme of Education.



### Its Purpose

The main purpose of this method of education is the fitting of the child to take his place in our complex social structure. After all, education is for life. The vast majority in India have to earn their living or to support their families before they are fourteen years of age. A purely intellectual education divorced from the reality of earning one's living is useless. This new system of education picks up the child as he is, as his senses begin to function and follows the natural course of evolution. All his capacities, and not his brain alone, are exercised, strengthened and evolved; his eyes, his hands and other senses are trained, as they only can be trained, through manual work and play.

### The Future

In modern India, citizenship is destined to become increasingly democratic, in the social, political, economic and cultural life of the country. This new system of education, by making education compulsory and free, by making education productive and pay for itself, seeks to liquidate illiteracy and give the masses an opportunity of understanding their problems, and rights and obligations.

Secondly, this scheme seeks to make the average citizen an active and useful member of society, by producing workers who will look upon all kinds of useful work—including manual labour, even scavenging—as honourable.

### 143. ANOTHER PAPER ON BASIC EDUCATION BY J. R. JAYEWARDENE, n. d.<sup>1</sup>

On the 22nd and 23rd of October, 1937, on the occasion of the celebration of the Silver Jubilee of the Marwari Education Society, a momentous educational conference was held at Wardha, under the presidency of Mahatma Gandhi. The

1. Taken from an untitled and undated typescript in the J. R. Jayewardene MSS (try C.N.A. 60/831) The first paragraph is a verbatim repetition of a passage from his previous paper on "India and Basic Education."



conference was attended by some select educationalists of India as well as by all the Ministers of Education in the seven Congress provinces. At the close of the conference the following four resolutions were adopted :—

- (1) That in the opinion of this conference, free and compulsory education be provided for seven years on a nation-wide scale.
- (2) That the medium of instruction be the mother-tongue.
- (3) That the conference endorses the proposal made by Mahatma Gandhi that the process of education throughout this period should centre around some form of manual and productive work, and that all the other abilities to be developed or training to be given should, as far as possible, be integrally related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child.
- (4) That the conference expects that this system of education will be gradually able to cover the remuneration of the teachers.

After further discussion and investigation the Haripura sessions of the Indian Congress held in 1939 accepted the principles embodied in the resolutions. An All India Education Board was appointed in April, 1938. This Board was named "The Hindustani Talimi Sangh" and its chief function was, "to work out in a consolidated manner a programme of basic national education and to recommend it for acceptance to those who are in control of State or private education." The Secretary of the Board was, and still is, Sri E. W. Aryanayakam, a Ceylonese.

The Sangh completed three years of work in 1941, and the third annual report of the Secretary has just been published. The scheme of education which the Board had to apply and develop is now popularly known as the Wardha Scheme. Few will quarrel with the first two features of the



scheme, namely, seven years free and compulsory education and the mother tongue as the medium of instruction. The other two principles, namely, the development of a technique of co-ordinated teaching centred around a basic craft and the attempt to make the produce of the craft economically remunerative so as to defray the recurring cost of education, namely, the teachers' salary, have been considered novel and unpractical and even called "Gandhi's latest fad."

The third annual report tells us the story of the evolution of the educational ideal of basic education into educational practice in different parts of India under varying circumstances during the last three years.

The first experimental centre where the principles of basic education through handicrafts were put into practice was at the Training School opened at Wardha on the 21st April, 1938. Hundred and sixty teachers were to be trained for the vidya mandirs which the Congress government proposed to open for the spread of education in the village of the provinces. We can follow progress of this scheme month by month; firstly, the government had to officially adopt basic education. Secondly, a new syllabus had to be introduced. The next problem was the conversion of the existing normal school into basic training schools and the re-training of the normal school teachers to teach the new syllabus.

We can trace the progress of basic education in the various provinces. The resignation of the Congress governments in 1940 was a severe set-back to the progress of the work and in many provinces the programme of basic education is being conducted through the education department purely as an official experiment. The report not only gives us a brief account of the steps taken by the different provincial governments, local bodies and national institutions in different



parts of India carrying out the experiment of basic education. It also gives us an assessment of the results. The report says, "A new methodology is gradually being evolved in the training schools and basic schools. A new kind of literature is in the process of preparation. A fresh outlook is brought to bear on problems of administration and supervision. A new experimental attitude of mind towards the problems of children's education and particularly of rural children is evident."

Different attempts have been made to assess the results of this experiment. The Bihar Board of Education published a report on the progress of basic education in Bihar 1940-1941 and conferences and exhibitions have also been arranged to achieve this object. The second conference of basic education held in April, 1941, at Jamyanager, Delhi, arrived at this important conclusion :

"This Conference records with satisfaction that the reports of the working of basic schools run by the government, local bodies and by private enterprise are almost unanimous that general standards of health and behaviour, as well as intellectual attainment, are very encouraging. The children in basic schools are more active, cheerful, self-reliant, their power of self-expression is well developed, they are acquiring habits of co-operative work, and social prejudices are breaking down. Considering the difficulties inherent in the initial stages of a new scheme of education, involving a new ideology and a new technique, the progress reported holds out promise that even better results can be expected in future."

The report continues to give us valuable extracts of investigations made by educational inspectors on the working of this educational theory and concludes with the following impartial picture gathered from the available evidence :—

"First, that the fundamental principles have been accepted by all representative educational opinion in India.



Second, that under this new experiment, imperfect as it is today, both teachers and children have shown signs of a new life, awareness of their environment, and an awakened sense of citizenship, which promise further development. Also that the community, apathetic or even hostile to start with, has in many cases been won over to friendly co-operation.

Third, it has been possible to cover the prescribed syllabus of basic education and the standard of cultural attainment of the pupils in basic schools compares favourably with that of the pupils in existing primary schools.

Fourth, though it is only the beginning of the experiment, and the craft work has not yet been fully developed as a medium of education, the available figures prove that given trained teachers, raw materials, equipment of the required standard and the other favourable conditions of work, as also the necessary arrangements for the disposal of finished products, craft work in schools will have an economic value and will progressively cover a portion of the current expenditure of these schools.

In modern India, citizenship is destined to become increasingly democratic, in the social, political, economic and cultural life of the country. This new system of education, by making education compulsory and free, by making education productive and pay for itself, seeks to liquidate illiteracy and give the masses an opportunity of understanding their problems, and rights and obligations.

Secondly, this scheme seeks to make the average citizen an active, useful member of society, by producing workers who will look upon all kinds of useful work—including manual labour, even scavenging—as honourable.



144. "INDIA AND CEYLON : REPORT OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS DELEGATION TO THE RAMGARH SESSIONS," 1940<sup>1</sup>

The Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress at a meeting held on 8th March, 1940, accepted an invitation extended to the President of the Ceylon National Congress by the All-India Congress Committee, to attend the 53rd annual sessions of the Indian National Congress, to be held in March, at Ramgarh, in the Province of Bihar. As the President was unable to go, the Committee appointed us, as delegates, to represent the Congress, at Ramgarh. We took with us the following message from our President Mr. G. C. S. Corea, to the President of the Indian National Congress :—

" On behalf of the Ceylon National Congress I convey to you our fraternal greetings and also our heartiest wishes that you will succeed in winning for India her freedom so that she may with other civilised nations of the world contribute to a world order founded on justice and non-violence."

<sup>1</sup> Derived from a pamphlet of 9 pages printed by the Observer Press ; C. N. A., 60/329. This pamphlet was pamphlet No. 2 in the series of pamphlets put out by the Ceylon National Congress in 1940. The title above is the title used in the pamphlet. Among the Sir Edwin A. P. Wijeyeratne MSS was another pamphlet containing the same report under the heading "Report of the Delegates of the Ceylon National Congress to the 53rd Sessions of the Indian Congress at Ramgarh—March 1940". This pamphlet has the names of J. R. Jayewardene, P. D. S. Jayasekera and J. E. Amaratunga at the end of the report.

The J. R. Jayewardene MSS provided a series of typescripts, with separate titles, which would appear to be the work of J. R. Jayewardene (see C. N. A., 60/381). The first of these typescripts, entitled "The Ramgarh Sessions," is virtually the same as the two pamphlets referred to above, though scissors and paste had obviously been resorted to in a few places. It is probable that the typescript provided the foundation for the pamphlet rather than vice versa.

The series of typescripts has been subsequently paginated in a continuous series in pencil. Following the order indicated by such pagination these typescripts (exclusive of that on the Ramgarh Sessions) are reproduced below as items 145-152.



Two of the delegates, Messrs. J. R. Jayewardene and J. E. Amaratunga left for India by aeroplane on Friday, the 15th March. Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera left by train on Wednesday, the 13th March. We left Madras by train for Calcutta, on Friday the 15th March. At Calcutta, we were interviewed by the Associated Press of India, on our arrival, on Sunday the 17th. We said, "We have come to India on the invitation of the All-India Congress Committee. It gives us great pleasure to be afforded an opportunity of witnessing this great democratic assembly of Congress leaders. We of Lanka owe our very existence, culture and our traditions to India. India is our motherland as it is yours. As delegates from the Ceylon National Congress we wish to state that we are modelling the Congress on the lines of the Indian organisation by forming Congress branches in every village. The young men of Lanka are determined to make Congress an organisation of the masses and for the masses. Our object is the same as yours, and when freedom is attained by both our countries, we hope India and Lanka will draw even closer together."

We left for Ramgarh that very night. We arrived at Congress Nagar, at Ramgarh, on Monday morning and were given accommodation in the Leaders' Camp and next to the Burmese delegation. We were at the Congress Nagar till Wednesday. We were treated with the greatest cordiality, as their distinguished guests, and were afforded an opportunity of meeting as many of the Indian leaders as were there, and of attending the meetings of the All-India Congress Committee and the open sessions.

We had an interview with Mahatma Gandhi on Wednesday, the 20th March, and his first words to us were, "It is an unfortunate thing that is happening to Indians in Ceylon." We explained to him that the problem was an economic one and that the Indians in Ceylon, apart from the labourers and a few others, were mainly exploiters. Petty traders and Chettiars have captured the entire import and export trade. The people of Lanka only see this side



of India. Gandhiji replied, "Yes, that is too true. The fault is on both sides."—We told him that there was no racial animosity against Indians as made clear by the receptions accorded to Pandit Nehru. Till poet Tagore, Gandhiji, Pandit Nehru and a few other eminent Indians came to Lanka our people met only the exploiting Chettiars and the immigrant Indian labourers. Gandhiji replied, "Unfortunately we have not many Nehrus or many men of the same calibre. Wrong people if sent might spoil everything." We asked him what Ceylon could expect from a free India. Many in Lanka prefer to remain as a dominion in the British Empire than to be free and run the risk of being exploited by India which could easily swamp Lanka. Gandhiji laughed and said, "Ceylon has nothing to fear from a free India."

#### The Congress Sessions at Ramgarh

The annual sessions of the Indian Congress is something unique in the whole world. An unknown village is chosen and the Congress members in that area create for the purpose of the sessions a small township close to this village. Temporary thatched huts are put up. Broad streets are laid out and all the amenities of civilised life such as water service, and electric lights are provided. There are also special post, telephone and radio-services and the leading newspapers of India have their own establishments and offices at the Nagar. Over one lakh of people came to the Congress Nagar during the sessions which lasted for one week.

The entrance to the Congress Nagar was flagged on 3 sides by three huge pandals. One pandal gave access to the vast open amphitheatre where the open sessions was held. The other was the entrance to the Congress Nagar where the delegates and the visitors lived. The third gave admission to the Khadi exhibition. The work of the Congress began with the opening of the Khadi exhibition. This is an exhibition not only of hand-woven and hand-made goods, but it



is in reality a provincial, industrial and agricultural exhibition. We found every kind of clothing and material necessary for human needs, made by hand, exhibited here.

### Working Committee

The next item was the meeting of the Working Committee. The Working Committee met in a special hut erected in the Leaders' Camp.

The Working Committee consists of the President and 13 members appointed by the President, from amongst the members of the All-India Congress Committee. The Working Committee is the executive authority of the Congress and as such it has the power to carry into effect the policy and programme laid down by the All-India Congress Committee. The Committee that meets at the sessions is the outgoing Working Committee, but it is presided over by the President-elect. This committee submits to the Subjects Committee the draft programme of work for the sessions.

### Subjects Committee

Really the most important work of the sessions is done at the meetings of the Subjects Committee. The new All-India Congress Committee meets before the meeting of the open sessions, as Subjects Committee, under the Presidentship of the President-elect. The Subjects Committee discusses the programme submitted by the Working Committee and frames resolutions to be moved at the open sessions. Resolutions submitted by the Working Committee, as well as by the Provincial Congress Committees, or by individual members, or by the All-India Congress Committee are considered for inclusion in the agenda to be placed before the open sessions.

The Ceylon delegation and the Burmese delegation were given an opportunity of observing the proceedings of this important body from the platform. These meetings were held on the 17th, 18th and 19th March, in a large thatched building capable of seating about five thousand people. Entrance to this building was by ticket, and elaborate



precautions were taken at the entrance to prevent unauthorised people from entering. The platform was a very large one, covered with mattresses and well provided with cushions and pillows. There was only one chair and one table for the President. Others squatted on the mattresses. Accommodation in front of the platform was provided for the delegates of the All-India Congress Committee numbering about 375. These delegates sat on the floor which was covered with mats. Each delegate had a low table in front of him with paper and pencil. The two sides of the platform were occupied by newspaper reporters, ladies and other visitors. Men and women volunteers, the women in orange sarees and the men in orange shirts and brown shorts, kept order among the audience and served out water whenever necessary. The only resolution suggested by the Working Committee was a resolution pledging Congress to work for the complete independence of India outside the orbit of the British empire.

The Communist Party, led by M. N. Roy, attempted to move an amendment to this resolution. His argument was that Congress should have an economic programme based on certain fundamental principles which the Congress should pledge itself to achieve. Some of the principles included in the amendment were that the constitution of the Democratic State of India should include the following :—

- (a) Private property in land should be abolished.
- (b) Nobody shall labour more than 7 hours a day for six days a week.
- (c) The state shall guarantee employment or relief for every willing worker.

Other measures of social reform intended to make free India a socialist republic were included. Roy argued that the masses may be exploited in a free India by Indian capitalists ; that the masses should be educated to work for the ideals he mentioned. It would be easy then to ask them to struggle for freedom which would guarantee them these rights. These amendments were defeated by a large major-



rity. On the last day of the sitting of the Subjects Committee a number of non-official resolutions were considered. There were over 35. These ranged from a resolution asking for a national anthem to one humbly begging "His Holiness Mahatma Gandhi to become a four anna member of the Congress." All these were either withdrawn or defeated. Only one resolution dealing with independence was left for the open sessions.

### The Open Sessions

The open sessions of the Congress was fixed for the 19th, 20th and 21st March. The open sessions was held in an enormous open-air amphitheatre larger than the Victoria Park, in Colombo.

At the end of the amphitheatre was a big platform with a covered rostrum for the President. On the platform were accommodated the members of the Burmese and Ceylon delegations, distinguished visitors and members of the All-India Congress Committee. The vast crowd sat below.

The first day's business was to commence at 5 p.m., with the Presidential address. But unfortunately torrential rain which continued throughout the evening made it impossible to carry on the proceedings. The vast crowd of one lakh of people was completely drenched. On that next day the sessions was held under a replica of the Asoka Pillar which was erected at the entrance to the Congress Nagar. The sessions did not last long and the Working Committee's resolution on independence was carried by a vast majority. The message sent by the President of the Ceylon National Congress was read at the open sessions. This concluded the work of the Ramgarh Congress sessions and the Ceylon delegates left Ramgarh for Calcutta that very night.

### India Today

On the 26th and 27th March we were the guests of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru at his house "Ananda Bhawan" at



Allahabad. We were shown round the offices of the All-India Congress Committee at Swaraj Bhawan, and given some literature published by the Congress. We were introduced to the Secretary of the Congress Indians' Overseas Branch and we promised to send them the Ceylon National Congress Handbook and also any information we had of Indians in Ceylon.

We were also entertained as guests of the Agra Congress Committee during our stay at Agra.

We must here record our thanks to the All-India Congress Committee and particularly to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Dr. Balakrishna Keskar, the Secretary of the Foreign Department of the Congress, for the kindness and courtesy shown to us during our visit to India.

During the remainder of our stay in India we availed ourselves of every opportunity offered us of meeting leaders of political parties in India and editors and proprietors of the leading newspapers. We have made some very valuable friendships and contacts, and we promised to send to India full information with regard to events in Ceylon which affect Indians and India. This will in time be very valuable, for false news is very often sent to India from Ceylon.

We found the Indians, both leaders and followers, and we met many during our 4,000 mile journey, very friendly towards Ceylon and the people of Ceylon, and very appreciative of the Buddhist culture which has been preserved in Ceylon for over 2,000 years.

We discussed many problems in general. The main conclusions we can draw from the views of Indians is that Ceylon is perfectly justified in taking whatever steps she thought necessary to preserve Ceylon for the Ceylonese and to prevent the masses of Ceylon from being exploited. They however expressed the hope that in future Ceylon would confer with India before action is taken in any matter affecting Indians in Ceylon.



The Congress leaders offered us any help they could to prevent the exploitation of the masses by Indians. Mr. Subas Chandra Bose whom we met in Calcutta even promised us any help he could to send away Indians who exploit the Ceylonese.

It must however be remembered that Congress and the other political parties of any consequence are not in office today. They are engaged in a life and death struggle with British Imperialism, and whatever views they express will continue to be pious hopes until India is free.

Those Indians who control some Provincial Legislatures and influence the British government's policy at Delhi, are not men who have the same wide outlook and love for the masses as the Congress leaders. We must not therefore blame Congress India for what may be done by those who are in power in India today.

### The Indian Struggle

Congress India is preparing in a very large and intensive way to struggle for freedom. The opposition to the Congress by men like Subas Chandra Bose is not an opposition to the ideals which Congress is pledged to establish. All India is determined to be free from foreign domination. The opposition is to the refusal by the Congress to start the struggle immediately. On the day we left India, April 6th, Subas Chandra Bose, who has large support from among the students, particularly in Calcutta and Madras, and among the Kisans (peasants), started his civil disobedience movement. Daily we read reports of arrests of socialist leaders. The Congress itself is not quiet. They are actively preparing for the struggle. We also saw British troops being moved by practically every train we met to unknown destinations. New repressive measures are enacted daily under the emergency laws. India will soon witness a vast upheaval, and the opinion of the majority of those we met was that India would be free and that her future political and economic structure will be based on socialist principles.



## India and Ceylon

There are two main problems that we must consider as between India and Ceylon. One is our economic connections with India and the other our political relationship with India. The second problem will not arise till India and Ceylon are free and we will therefore deal with it later.

Trade between the two countries and the position of the Indians in Ceylon would be part of our economic problem.

### Trade

The balance of trade is entirely in favour of India. In 1938 Ceylon bought from India, goods to the value of Rs. 51 million and India reciprocated to the extent of Rs. 9 millions only. The duty paid is also entirely in favour of India. Ceylon paid Rs. 3,500,000 for the 9 million rupees she sent to India. Whereas India paid only Rs. 5,000,000 for the 51 million rupees she sent here. It must however be remembered that over 90 per cent of the goods we buy from India consist of eatables, rice, etc., which we can grow in Ceylon. Once Ceylon is self-supporting in these products, as we hope she soon will be, our imports from India will dwindle to almost nothing. As most of the leaders we met were Congress men, and as they were out of office and preparing for a struggle against the government, it was impossible to talk to them about trade.

### Indians in Ceylon

We can divide the Indians in Ceylon into three categories. The Indian immigrant labourer on the estates is the first, the Indian labourer, skilled or unskilled, in government, municipal and other employ is the second, and the Indian trader is the third category.

The labourers on the estates number today about 800,000. This constitutes a really serious problem to a small people like the Sinhalese, numbering 3½ million people. This problem is a creation of British Imperialism. The Indian



Raj has already imposed a ban on the immigration of these labourers into Ceylon. The Congress is entirely in support of it.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to the second category also, Congress India will welcome any legislation prohibiting immigration of skilled or unskilled labour into Ceylon. The Congress view of repatriation of Indian labourers by the Ceylon government in 1939 is put thus in the official report for 1939-1940 :

“The Working Committee recognises the right of the people of Ceylon to give preference to nationals in State service or Otherwise in their country but surely the Indians who had settled there and made Ceylon their home, etc., had secured the right to be considered on a par with the other inhabitants of the island. Steps taken to adjust relationship should not be taken unilaterally.”

It is the third category of Indians that is most dangerous—the Indian trader. He is an exploiter pure and simple. Indian leaders recognise this and would support us in any legislation against exploiters, but they do emphasize that no difference should be made on the ground of race.

### The Future

India will undoubtedly be a free country, possibly in our life time. A free India, we feel, will also be a socialist India, where the exploitation of the masses will be put an end to. The balance of power east of Gibraltar will then completely change. The power of England in the East will dwindle to nothing. A free India will soon be one of the most powerful and wealthy countries in the world. We in Ceylon, a small country peopled by a small population, will be profoundly affected by this change. Our way lies with a

1. The typescript-draft in the J. R. Jayewardene MSS has an additional sentence in Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's hand at this point. It reads: “A free Ceylon can prohibit immigration and India will not oppose. The status of the Indians here can be determined by mutual agreement.”



free India. Hardly any argument is necessary to show that. A free and friendly India can be of great help to Ceylon. An unfriendly India can exterminate us.

We must also educate our people to realise that exploitation is not a matter of race but an incident of the political structure which British imperialism maintains here, in her other colonies and in India, for Britain's benefit. Complete freedom from the British Empire as now constituted, alone will leave us free to frame our own democratic constitution and to create an economic structure which will eliminate exploitation. A free Ceylon must march together with a free India. The idealism and love of the masses which is so characteristic of the Indian Congress, the future ruler of a free India, give us room to think that India will not exploit, but help, a free Ceylon.

J. R. Jayewardene,  
P. D. S. Jayasekera,  
J. E. Amaratunga.

145. "A MESSAGE FROM RAMGARH" BY J. R. JAYEWARDENE, n. d.<sup>1</sup>

The little village of Ramgarh is today famous throughout the world. For here gathered the men and women of the new India, her beauty and her chivalry, intent on freeing their motherland from foreign rule. It was a pretty countryside that we passed through on our way, for over a hundred miles to the west of Calcutta. Ramgarh itself is very similar to Diyatalawa, undulating plains, small hills and mountain streams abounding. It is also a countryside with a history unequalled in the world. The founders of Buddhism and Jainism spent large portions of their lives in this province, now called Bihar. Buddha-Gaya is hardly a hundred miles

1. An undated typescript from the J. R. Jayewardene MSS ; this was a continuation of his essay "The Ramgarh Sessions: 1940" (which was later turned into "India and Ceylon"). See C.N.A, 60/381.



away towards the north. "Every particle of dust in this province," said the retiring President, Rajendra Prasad, to the delegates, "is sanctified by the touch of the feet of Gautama, the Buddha." As a tribute to India's greatest son and to his disciple Asoka, India's greatest monarch, a facsimile of one of Asoka's pillars, over a hundred feet high, had been erected at the entrance to the Congress town. On this pillar the Congress flag was later hoisted, and as she fluttered in the breeze, the people of India paid their homage. The new India they wished to create, called them to action, and this flag was their symbol. How appropriate it was that a replica of India's ancient greatness should bear it aloft.

What was scrubby jungle had been converted into a small town. The main street was over a mile long and as broad as the Galle Road at Kollupitiya. Electric lights and water services had been installed. A railway station, radio and telephone exchange, and a post office completed the township. Policemen there were, but none from the British Government. Men and women volunteers, recruited as honorary workers from the district, controlled the traffic, helped those in trouble and guarded the leaders' huts. The buildings were hardly ready when there came the inhabitants to this township. Over a lakh of people, a population larger than that of Kandy or Galle, lived there for four or five days, and then disappeared. They came from the North-West Frontier, they came from Madras, over two thousand miles away. There were women and children from every part of India, from every race in India, from every religion in India. Delegates and visitors from Burma, Ceylon, England and America. A Japanese monk was there beating his drum to drive away the evil spirits. The streets were packed with humanity. There was bustle but no bluster. Everyone was friendly. The mention of Ceylon brought forth a kindly smile and a word of greeting.

The leaders of India were there, living like the rest, sitting on the floor while they ate, and mixing with the crowds. Mahatma Gandhi alone had a hut to himself, wherever he went he was mobbed. Crowds would suddenly break all



barriers, rush up to his hut and shout, "Gandhi-Ki-Jai." His stay there was an endless series of interviews. And thus to business.

The work of the sessions begins with the opening of the exhibition and the meetings of the Working Committee. After that the All-India Congress Committee holds its meetings. These are really the most interesting meetings, for here takes place the moving of motions and amendments for debate. For this purpose the committee converts itself into the Subjects Committee. No motion or amendment rejected by the Subjects Committee has any chance of being accepted by the sessions. The Patna resolution on independence was the only official motion to be discussed. M. N. Roy attempted to bring on a communist amendment but found very little support. The motion was accepted without much trouble.

It was interesting to see these leaders of India and their followers. Perfect order was maintained. The leaders and the invited guests were on a huge platform covered with a large mattress. The delegates sat on low benches in the body of the hall. The other visitors sat on the floor round the delegates. There were no chairs. Girl volunteers in orange sarees kept order and served out water. The Congress colours and flags were used to decorate the platform and the pandal. Abdul Gaffar Khan, over six feet in height, was there, almost sleeping on the platform. Mrs. Naidu found the low table on which a model charka was kept, more comfortable than the mattress. Pandit Nehru, quick of temper was being calmed down by Jamlalal Bajaj, the Congress Treasurer. He lost his temper more than once. It was to a speaker from the Punjab who said, "the country is ready to fight, we are ready, the Congress is ready, our Nehru and Gandhi are not ready," that he angrily retorted, "I am ready." A young Communist speaker angered him terribly. He rushed to the presidential table and exchanged a few words before calm was restored. And then came Gandhiji; Vallabhai Patel was speaking when he arrived, yet, it was only necessary to whisper, "Gandhi is coming," for the cheering to break out. He slipped in quietly and set on the floor. No



remark could anger him. When one of the speakers said "It is this little man who I can put into my pocket who is delaying us," he laughed loudly and beckoned him to do so. The resolution was passed unaltered and then Gandhiji spoke. He spoke for about an hour. There was no interruption. There was no stir. Even those on the platform crowded round the speaker to hear his words. There is no doubt that Mahatma Gandhi, though he is not a member of the Congress, is still its leader, nay, its dictator. He says so himself. Congress, he says, cannot be a democratic assembly when it is waging war. It must become a fighting unit and must have one general. As long as they have him as general, he wants unquestioned obedience. If they wish they can change him and follow another. But can they? Thus concluded the meeting of the Subjects Committee, and then to the sessions.

Three days had been allotted for the open sessions. The members of the Congress Committees throughout India are entitled to vote, numbering over a thousand. At one end of the stadium was a platform and a rostrum for the President. The first day was set apart for the presidential address and the other two days for discussion of motions. A crowd of over a lakh of people had assembled by 5 p.m. on the 19th March. The President was expected at five-thirty. More were coming in, when came the rain. In half an hour the vast amphitheatre was one sheet of water and in some places the water was knee deep. The President's speech was taken as read. Thus ended the Congress sessions. The next morning as the theatre was still wet, a make-shift sessions was held under the Asoka pillar, and in a few hours the Patna resolution urging "independence outside the orbit of the British empire," was passed. By the evening the crowds had started to leave. In a few days Ramgarh will assume its normal quiet. The jackals will wander through the empty streets and huts. The aborigines will weave into their history the legends of Ramgarh, the story of a town which sprang up in a few days, of motor cars, trains and electric lights; of an "avatar," an incarnation of God, whom they saw... Mahatma Gandhi.



But what does Ramgarh mean to India and to the world ? How are we in Ceylon to adjust ourselves to the results that may flow from Ramgarh ? Two facts are clear. Firstly, India is united in her demand to be free and she wants her freedom outside the British Commonwealth of Nations ; secondly, Mahatma Gandhi is still the leader of India. Opposition there is to his leadership. S. C. Bose held a counter show at Ramgarh proclaiming his anti-compromise and forward bloc ideals. These meetings were attended by the kisan (peasant) organisations and had the support of large gatherings. The opposition is not however to Gandhi's leadership ; it is to his refusal to begin the fight. His opponents wish to push him on to act at once. He says that the country is not ready, and if he is leader he must give the signal to begin. In the Congress itself, there is little opposition. That India will begin her struggle again there is no question. That she will soon be free is also not in doubt. In their minds and in their actions, even today, the Indians are free. They wear clothes made in India. They do not recognise the British flag nor the British connection. To the men and women who think as the political parties think, the British crown, British ideals and customs mean nothing. India is determined to travel on her own path.

We in Ceylon can learn many things. Firstly, the idealism and complete absence of racial or personal feeling, which characterised the political discussions at Ramgarh, were a contrast to the petty methods prevalent among us. No man or woman we met, leader or follower, talked except in terms of ideals, of social and economic reconstruction, of a new world order, based not on exploitation, but according to a planned economy. In the field of politics, the masses of India are being trained to think, not in terms of race or religion, but in terms of social equality, equal opportunity for all, and anti-imperialism. Can we in Ceylon close our eyes to these great movements so close to our shores ? Is it not the duty of our leaders, our men of letters, our newspapers and all those who love this country, to quicken the awakening consciousness of our people, and help them too to feel the impulse of the idealism which animates India today ?



146. "THE LAST PHASE" BY J. R. JAYEWARDENE,  
n.d. [1942]<sup>1</sup>

India is in turmoil once again. Every 10 years from 1920 have the Indian people shed their blood for the cause of freedom. It was in 1920, and again in 1930, that civil disobedience on a mass scale, brought India closer to her goal of freedom. Ten years passed and in 1940, individual civil disobedience was launched, to attain the same goal. Deliberately did the Congress confine this last campaign to individual Satyagrahi. Britain's war effort, Congressmen thought, should not be embarrassed. Today, two years after that event, mass civil disobedience on the widest possible scale, has been launched again, by the Congress. We in Ceylon, wish to know the motives that impelled India's leaders, to take this desperate course; to take steps which may disorganize and disrupt India's social order, when at their gates there stand the armies of a new Imperialism.

With the release of political prisoners, the campaign of individual or symbolic satyagraha as it was called, begun in October 1940, had ended in December 1941. The prisoners were released to create the good feeling that was necessary for the reception of Sir Stafford Cripps and his proposals. March 1942 saw the arrival of Sir Stafford Cripps in India, and the discussions at Delhi, on the Cripps proposals. India was promised freedom after the war, but till then she must fight with the United Nations. The Viceroy's Executive Council, was to be enlarged by the inclusion of a few more Indians, but defence would not be transferred to them. Indian leaders were expected to tour the country, together with the British Rulers, calling upon their countrymen to sacrifice their lives in the hope that Cripps' promise of freedom after the war, would be fulfilled by a victorious England. The Congress rejected these proposals. The whole country and the world awaited the next step.

1. Items 146-152 are from the J. R. Jayewardene MSS (C.N.A., 60/381).



Congress Ministries belonging to the eight Congress provinces were still out of office ; the satyagrahis had been released and the Cripps Mission had proved a failure. What was India to do ? Was the satyagraha movement to be resumed ? Should it be individual or mass disobedience this time ? There were dangers ahead. The Cripps proposal of freedom after the war, the Japanese military successes especially the conquest of Burma, and the world situation in general, had converted many Congressmen to the view that the present situation was too serious to launch a campaign against England. Some, such as Mr. C. Rajagopalacharia, were definitely of opinion that the Congress should come to terms with the Muslim League, and take up the reins of ministerial office to resist Japanese aggression. He raised this question before the All-India Congress Committee, and not finding support, resigned from the Congress. Absence of action against the British did not improve Indo-British relations. They became worse. Sir Stafford Cripps made many speeches in England, blaming the Congress for the failure of his mission. Congress leaders replied ; and Pandit Nehru publicly stated that Sir Stafford Cripps had done more harm to India than any other Englishman. In the meantime, Japan was massing her troops on the borders of India. Anti-British feeling was so intense that a Japanese invasion may have made it pro-Japanese. There was a feeling that the people of India had had enough of British rule, and that anything would be better than the existing state of things.

This was the environment in which the Congress Working Committee met, at Allahabad, to consider the situation in India, on the 27th April, 1942. It was to this meeting that Gandhiji sent, through Miraben, his draft proposals for consideration. They contained the following points :—

- (1) A demand of [*sic*] the British Government to clear out ;
- (2) India is a zone of war, because of British imperialism ;
- (3) No foreign assistance needed for the freedom of this country ;



- (4) India has no quarrel with others ;
- (5) If Japan invaded India it shall meet with non-violent resistance ;
- (6) Form of non-co-operation laid down ;
- (7) Foreign soldiers a grave menace to Indian freedom.

The Working Committee considered these proposals at a secret sessions. Notes of the proceedings, discovered during a police search of the premises of the Congress office, were published by the government, on the eve of the A. I. C. C. Meeting. This was done to influence international and Indian opinion against the Congress. The government wished to make out, that Congress was a pro-axis organization. Gandhiji and Pandit Nehru immediately criticised the publication of passages torn from their context, and covering only a few columns in the newspapers, whereas their discussions had lasted a few days: the first shot that the Viceroy's government fired against the Congress ended unsuccessfully. The Working Committee considered various resolutions, and at a meeting held at Wardha, on the 14th July, at which meeting Gandhiji was present, the Committee accepted the "Quit India" resolution, for submission to the A. I. C. C., on August 7th. India was again awakened, and Mahatma Gandhi claimed, that when he raised the slogan, "Quit India," the people of India who had been despondent till then, felt that he had placed before them a new thing.

The whole world now talked of this resolution ; many abused, and few were sympathetic. The Anglo-Saxon press could not appreciate that even in the presence of a Japanese invasion, India yearned for freedom and was prepared to sacrifice her all to secure it. Mahatma Gandhi writing in the "Harijan," on the 2nd August, under the heading, "A Plea for Reason," refers to the chorus of indignation from Great Britain and America with which the resolution on the contemplated mass action had been treated. He says,



that the veiled or open threats which had been hurled at the Congress, would not deter them from their purpose. "Hitherto," he continues, "Congress has thriven on opposition and attempts at repression. It will not be otherwise this time. The repression, of which perhaps the hysterical outburst in America and Great Britain is a precursor, may cow down the people for the moment, but it will never put out the light of revolt once it has been lighted."

Let us not join this chorus of indignation ; let us instead try and understand the demand of "Quit India."

### The Demand

The "Quit India" demand involves three main issues, namely, the demand for the ending of British Rule, the handing over of power to a free India and the future status of the armies of the United Nations in India. The demand for the ending of British Rule is not new. It is a demand which Congress has reiterated over and over again, since the famous "Independence" resolution of 1929. When the second World War began in 1939, the Congress repeated the demand. The Ramgarh sessions held in 1940, affirmed this decision. The satyagraha movement of October 1940, under Gandhiji's leadership was intended to implement this decision. Pandit Nehru who was one of the first to be sentenced to gaol, addressing the British government, a few weeks before his arrest, said, in the words of Cromwell, "You have sat too long here for any good you have been doing. Depart, I say, and let us have done with you. In the name of God, Go." It is not a demand for the British armies to leave India. It does not mean that the Britishers should pack up things and go away. It means that British authority, British power, British rule should quit India, and leave the Indian people to manage their own affairs.

The justice of this demand has never been questioned. It is the considered view of the British government that this demand should be granted. The Cripps proposals sought to give effect to this demand by granting India freedom after



the war. If the Cripps proposals were accepted, the Congress slogan of "Quit India," with all its consequences, would have taken effect after the war. The objections then seem to be directed not at the demand itself but against the moment chosen for enforcing it. This is the target of attack. This criticism will be dealt with later, under the heading of the civil disobedience movement.

### Who will Rule in a Free India

The demand, if granted, implies the transference of political power to Indian hands. The Congress has defined its attitude on this issue. "Hand over power to the Muslim League or to the Hindu Maha Sabha or any political party which is able to represent the people of India," say the Congress leaders. Sardar Vallabhai Patel raised loud cheers at the A. I. C. C. meeting, when he said, "I do not mind if power is transferred to thieves and dacoits provided they are Indians." The Congress visualises the handing over of power without reservation to any party or combination prepared to assume power. This party will have to look to the remaining parties for the retention of its power. In a free India even the Congress will not be able to function efficiently without the support of other parties. The Bombay resolution asks for the formation of a provisional government on the declaration of India's independence. The resolution concludes, "this will be a composite government, representative of all important sections of the people of India . . . . The A. I. C. C., wishes to make it quite clear to all concerned that by embarking on mass struggle it has no intention of gaining power for the Congress. The power when it comes will belong to the whole people of India."

### Foreign Armies in a Free India

What of the millions of British and American troops now in India, once independence is established? The Congress is agreeable to the stationing of the armed forces of the Allies in India, should they so desire, in order to ward off



and resist Japanese or other aggression, and to protect and help China. The army will, however, have no power of interference with the affairs of India, which will be as free as Great Britain herself.

### The Bombay Resolution of 7th August

The Bombay resolution, in addition to crystallising for the last time in the slogan of "Quit India," India's repeated demands for freedom, goes further than any previous resolution, and expresses the Congress view of the provisional government, a constituent assembly, the federal government of a free India and a world federation.

The provisional government will evolve a scheme for a constituent assembly, which assembly will prepare free India's constitution acceptable to all sections of its people. This constitution is to be a federal one, with the largest measure of autonomy for the federating units, and with the residuary powers vesting in these units. The Congress will work, not only for the freedom of India, but for the freedom of all those countries now overrun by the Allied or Axis powers, such as Burma, Malaya, Indo-China, Dutch Indies, Iran and Iraq. "Ceylon's freedom," Pandit Nehru stated in his opening speech, "is included in the freedom of India." This view was supported by Mahatma Gandhi. The countries now under Japanese control must not be later placed under the rule or control of any other colonial power. Congress goes even further. It seeks freedom not only for all subject Asiatic countries, it wants to secure the future peace, security and ordered progress of the world. A world federation of free nations with a world federal defence force to preserve world peace and prevent aggression is foreshadowed.

It is also possible for us, on a close analysis of this resolution, to find out the attitude of the Congress, in a free India, to the war. There is no doubt that the Congress leaders believe that the United Nations contain the progressive elements among the participants in this war. Russia and



China are constantly in the minds of the Congress, and their sympathy towards these countries is embodied in the resolution itself. With regard to Great Britain, Congress feels that her possession of an Empire has become a burden and a curse. Great Britain will be judged by her attitude and actions towards India, "the classic land of modern Imperialism." A free India alone is not sufficient. This freedom, "must be the symbol of and prelude to the freedom of all other Asiatic nations under foreign domination." Congress hopes for the ending of British rule in India and throughout Asia. Then alone will the taint of imperialism which affects the fortunes of the United Nations be erased, and a free India be able to take arms with the United Nations in a war for freedom.

I foresee the representatives of a free India meeting the representatives of the United Nations and discussing their common war aims. The Congress War aims are contained in the Bombay resolution. If the United Nations accept the high ideals of India, India will join them in this common enterprise for freedom, for British imperialism will exist no longer in the East. The empire will be liquidated, and the free peoples of Great Britain and America, will shed their blood with the free peoples of India and Ceylon, to release from bondage those races which have so long been the vassals of Anglo-Saxon domination. A high purpose. A noble ideal. Will the leaders of the United Nations agree? It is they who are on trial and not India. If they do not agree, I cannot consider the possibility of a Free India joining them to restore Burma, Malaya and the other former British territories to the British Empire, and Java and the other Indonesian countries to the Dutch Empire. The Bombay resolution is pregnant with revolutionary ideas. Would that the leaders of the United Nations had the idealism of the Indian leaders. Japan would have to give in before the strength of this combination, and before the force of all subject and oppressed humanity which will then be arraigned against her.



## Civil Disobedience

We now come to the last part of the resolution, and the part that suggests action. "The Committee resolves, therefore, to sanction for the vindication of India's inalienable right to freedom and independence, the starting of a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale. ... such a struggle must inevitably be under the leadership of Gandhiji and the Committee requests him to take the lead and guide the nation in the steps to be taken." Simple words, but what a world of suffering and sacrifice they will bring to thousands of Indian homes. India is desperate and determined. Desperate, because an imperialism that is still young, and for that reason, more dangerous than the imperialism of Britain, knocks at her doors and India's masses have no heart to defend their slave country; determined is she therefore to get rid of those who have for so long kept her in subjection, and even now refuse to give her the power to defend herself.

It is not for outsiders to criticise the Congress for starting the Civil Disobedience Movement. It is for the Indian people alone to judge and act. The Congress leaders have often made their news public, as to why they have decided on civil disobedience when the war is going so badly against the United Nations. Mahatma Gandhi explains this by saying that the surest way for the United Nations to win the war is to grant freedom to India. "India" he says, "is not playing an effective part in the war. Some of us feel ashamed that it is so and, what is more, we feel that if we were free from the foreign yoke, we should play a worthy, nay, a decisive part in the world war which has yet to reach its climax. We know, that if India does not become free, *now*, the hidden discontent will burst forth into a welcome to the Japanese should they effect a landing. We feel that such an event would be a calamity of the first magnitude. We can avert it if India gains her freedom. To distrust this simple, natural and honest declaration, is to court disaster."



Could any statement be clearer. The Congress position seems to be this :

- (a) The United Nations are engaged in a war.
- (b) Their war effort is tainted by imperialism and therefore impeded.
- (c) The freedom of India will remove that taint.
- (d) India herself is imperilled.
- (e) It is not the United Nations but India alone that can defend herself.
- (f) To defend herself India must be free.
- (g) A slave India will be a menace. She will be an easy prey to a new invader, for anti-British feeling will burst forth as pro-the new invador.
- (h) India is determined to be free, to function in her common interests and the interests of humanity.
- (i) A determined people cannot be held back any longer from "endeavouring to assert its will against an imperialist and outhoritarian Government." The Congress has therefore sanctioned this mass movement.

The object of the mass movement launched by the Congress is not the hindrance of the war effort or non-co-operation in the war ; it is to vindicate India's inalienable right to freedom and independence.

The movement must necessarily, as it gathers momentum, impede the war effort. Non-co-operation in the next war, has been the creed of Congress since the end of the last war ; in pursuance of this non-co-operation in the present war was decided upon by the Congress immediately after the war commenced. The Congress has made every effort to prevent Britain's war effort from being embarrassed. In September 1939, the Congress declared its attitude to



the war and demanded a statement of war aims from the British government. Neither the British government, nor the Viceroy, nor any British statesman paid any heed to India's request. The Ramgarh sessions of the Congress, held in March 1940, declared that "Congress men and those under the Congress influence cannot help in the prosecution of the war, with men, money or material." The fall of France and the serious defeats suffered by the United Nations, influenced Congress to abandon non-violence and the leadership of Gandhiji. At the A. I. C. C. meeting held in Poona in July 1940, provided a free national government was granted to India, Congress offered to throw its full weight into the efforts for the effective organisation of the defence of the country. This was refused, and reverting to Gandhiji's leadership, Congress decided upon individual civil disobedience in September 1940. The desire not to embarrass the British war effort was still present in the minds of the Indian leaders, and the movement was restricted to individual civil disobedience. "For three years," says Vallabhai Patel "we kept silent in order that no embarrassment might be caused to the British war effort. That was not appreciated. The Congress now felt that they would jeopardise the destiny of the country if they continued the same policy." The Bombay resolution of August 7th again wished to postpone the struggle and appealed to Britain and the United Nations to recognise India's right to freedom immediately. Mahatma Gandhi was to write a personal letter to the Viceroy before commencing the movement. The Congress resolution was to be forwarded to President Roosevelt, General Chiang Kaishek and the Soviet Ambassador in London. Within 12 hours of the passing of this resolution, the Indian leaders were arrested, the Congress was declared an illegal organization, and India's last fight for independence had begun.



147. "MAHATMA GANDHI" BY J. R. JAYEWARDENE,  
2 October 1940<sup>1</sup>

Mahatma Gandhi is today 71 years of age. In course of time, though we all wish that he may be spared to the world as long as possible, Gandhiji himself will pass away. Gandhiji may die, but Gandhism will live.

What is Gandhism? What is it that this great man has been teaching to the world and following himself, during these long years of service to mankind? To us, in Ceylon, particularly to Buddhists, Gandhiji's life and teaching convey a special meaning, for, the two ideals he is striving to achieve, Satya and Ahimsa, are still part of the living teaching of the Buddha. The search of Satya (Truth), and the practice of Ahimsa (Compassion) have been the motivating influences moulding Gandhiji's life and work.

It was Satya that attracted him first. A few weeks after reaching South Africa, he made his first public speech. The subject was satya. He was then about 25 years of age. The whole world is now aware of Gandhiji's incessant search for Truth, and his insistence on truth, in public and private life. The early part of his life was spent in the service of truth. The idea of Ahimsa developed later. The search for Truth included also the duty to know. As such, Gandhiji made every effort to know and understand the people he lived and worked with. In South Africa where he was, he travelled in the third class, so that he may know the conditions in which the masses travelled, before he sought to better them. He cleaned the latrines, tended the plague-stricken, served the wounded under fire, so that he may come into contact with, and know, the ordinary man; so that he may know the truth about the people with whom he lived and worked. Thus he became a satyagrahi, a seeker after truth.

1. The date has been inserted by the editor. Gandhi was born on the 2nd October 1869.



His second ideal is Ahimsa. Ahimsa is not merely Non-violence ; it is not a negative creed ; it is not mere passivity or non-retaliation ; it is positive ; dynamic, embracing all that the word, "maitriya" means in Buddhism. It means the practice of goodwill, friendliness, compassion to all living things. Gandhiji has called this, "that rule and pattern of his life." For the proper practice of these two ideals, Gandhiji realised that a worldly life, a life of pleasure and satisfaction of craving, was a hindrance. It must necessarily be so. At every point in our worldly lives, we come in contact with our neighbours ; such contact means conflict, opposition, profit to one or loss to another. Human beings leading worldly lives can only advance at the expense of other human beings. How could a follower of Ahimsa, who cannot willingly harm another, lead a worldly life. To Gandhiji the practice of Ahimsa meant the gradual weakening of worldly conflicts with his neighbours. Conflicts between humans arise through attachment to worldly things. Gandhiji, therefore, as we all know, gave up the indulgence of the senses. For instance, with regard to food, he realised that eating for taste must be abandoned. "One must eat," he said, "not for taste, but only to maintain the body. A man must be so self-controlled that he works only for the gradual rise of spiritual knowledge."

We see then, that as a result of the search for Truth and adherence to Ahimsa, Gandhiji has become one striving incessantly to be a non-attached man ; non-attached to his bodily senses and lust ; non-attached to craving, power and possessions ; non-attached to anger and hatred, wealth, fame and social position. And, as he approaches the ideal of the completely non-attached man, so too does he approach perfection. Many others in India have striven to attain this perfection and some have attained it. Gauthama the Buddha was one. 2,500 years after the Buddha, another great son of India seeks a similar goal.

In the large place that Gandhiji occupies in the life of the world today, as India's leader, leading her to freedom,



we are apt to forget the moral purpose behind Gandhiji's life. Many emphasize only his career as a politician. As a political leader, Gandhiji may soon be forgotten, but as one striving for perfection his name will live. Let us, therefore, value Gandhiji's life as a life inspired by a moral purpose, striving incessantly to attain the goal of perfection. It is Gandhism, that is, his search for Truth and the practice of Ahimsa, upon which background he has sought to build and remould the lives of the Indian people, that will live.

148. "REBEL INDIA" BY J. R. JAYEWARDENE,  
n.d. [April 1941]

We in Ceylon do not fully realise the vastness of India. In extent it covers 1,805,000 square miles, Ceylon covers only 25,000 square miles. India's longest breadth is over 1,500 miles and its length is also over 1,500 miles. Ceylon's greatest length is 230 miles and breadth only 140 miles. India is over 70 times as large as Ceylon, and more than 20 times as large as Great Britain. India has a population of 400 millions. India is larger than the whole continent of Europe, excluding European Russia. Her population is larger than the sum total of the population of all European countries, except Russia. These figures emphasise the enormous advantage to Britain in keeping India as a subordinate member of the British Empire. It is similar to Great Britain ruling over the whole of Europe, excluding Russia. Her sway over India covers a larger area, controls a greater population, and permits her to use more raw materials and minerals than Europe can ever supply.

India itself has a complex, political and social structure. There are two Indias, British India and the Indian States. Out of the total area that is India, more than one third lies within the boundaries of the Indian states, with a population of over 70 millions. These territories are not British territories, though they are under the suzerainty of the British crown. British India itself is at present divided into eleven provinces. These provinces themselves cover vast areas. For instance, Bombay province, smallest of the



provinces, has an area of 77,000 square miles, and a population of 17 millions. Madras province is as big as Italy, and has a population of 47 millions, greater than that of Great Britain.

It is this vast, rich land that Britain rules. Why does she do so? Why does she not give India her freedom? It is because she can exploit this vast land that she keeps her people in bondage. It is because she gets Imperial power and prestige, and can command several sea ports to Australia and the Far East. It is because she can maintain a large army at India's expense. India also affords an outlet for many of her unemployed young men. She further gets booty and plunder. Thirty-eight per cent of Britain's exports go to India, thirty-two per cent of India's imports come from Britain. In 1930, gold to the value of £ 250,000,000 went to Britain from India. British investments in India total £ 850,000,000, that is one-quarter of all her overseas investments; the annual return on this, at 5 per cent, is £ 42,500,000.

In return for this, what has Britain done for India? The British say, they have given irrigation works and provided social services such as hospitals; yet, a free India would have done all this and more. They further claim that they have given peace and unity,..... "yes," say the nationalists, "this is the peace of the looted grave yard." There was peace and unity in India before, on an India wide scale under Asoka, and under Akbar. Mahatma Gandhi thinks that the British have (a) impoverished the dumb millions of India, (b) established political serfdom, (c) sapped Indian culture, (d) caused spiritual degradation.

This is the background of the Indian struggle for freedom. India claims freedom as an inalienable right, for she says British imperialism throttles her full development. The spearhead of this movement for freedom is the Indian National Congress. What gave birth to the Indian Congress; what are the stages through which the movement travelled in its struggle for complete



independence and separation from the British Empire? These are some of the questions answered in this essay.

The Indian National movement does not begin with the founding of the National Congress in 1885. It dates many years further back. The years 1828-1833 are generally accepted as the starting point of the whole national movement of modern India. This was the period when Raja Ram Mohan Roy, rightly called the prophet of Indian nationalism and the father of modern India, began his great reform work in Bengal. The first movements were religious. Mohan Roy founded the Brahma Samaj in 1824, and after him, a Hindu monk called Dayanand founded the Arya Samaj. These societies challenged Hindu orthodoxy and appealed to many young men educated on western lines. Branches were formed throughout the country and the discussion of social and religious reforms attracted the younger intellectuals. The third great movement was started by Ramakrishna and is today a world-wide organisation. Ramakrishna, after many years of spiritual analysis, came to the conclusion that all religions were equally true and that they were various paths leading to the same goal. This was a great help to the rising national movement, for in India as in Ceylon Christian missionaries had characterised the Hindu and Mohammedan methods of worship as superstitions. Ramakrishna taught that God can be worshipped and realised by following the traditional methods of India. Indians now clamoured that their religions were good enough for them. The process of proselytising and consequent denationalising was considerably hindered. If their religion was good for them, they were capable of looking after themselves, thought the Indian. Therefore, politically too, they could do without the foreigner.

The activities of the Ramakrishna Mission were given world-wide prominence by the eloquence and personality of Swami Vivekananda. He came back from America, after delivering at the World Conference of Religions, a



popular address, on 'Hinduism,' a national hero. The self-respect of India had increased in the face of the world at large. The time had passed when Indians should petition the British for the redress of grievances. Vivekananda struck a new note and it found an immediate response among his younger brethren. He urged his countrymen to work out their own salvation. He walked through the length and breadth of India, preaching, 'Be proud that you are an Indian.'

There were various other movements, religious movements by Muslims, Sikhs and others. The Indian nation was gradually awakening to a sense of its spiritual unity and grandeur, and a realisation of its subjection to a foreign ruler. Side by side with these religious movements, educated Indians founded political organisations, "to secure improvements in the system of Government." There were many such associations scattered throughout India. Indians and English were among the members, but they had no support from the masses.

While India was quietly waking up, there broke out the Indian Mutiny of 1857. The greatest change in the relationship between the rulers and the ruled arose after this. The gulf between the rising English-educated Indians and the British residents became wider. It became slowly apparent to a handful of Indians, and later to the vast multitudes, that India must shake herself free by her own efforts from this external bondage. It was the desire to achieve a unity of purpose which would transcend all racial and religious differences, that led to the foundation of the Indian National Congress, in 1885.

An Englishman, Mr. A. O. Hume, was the "father of the Congress;" its first President was W. C. Bonnerjea. The first circular invited "politicians well-acquainted with the English language," to assemble from all parts of the country, and the main idea was to form a native parliament. After many speeches, the gathering dispersed amid cheers for the Queen Empress. The second sessions was attended



by 436 delegates, and the 1887 sessions had 607. The first few years of the Congress were free of opposition from the British government. Some of the Viceroy's even invited the delegates to garden parties. The leaders of the Congress soon became disappointed with merely passing resolutions once a year. Branch societies were formed and newspapers were started. Business was conducted in English. It was only in 1905, that the mother tongue was adopted by Rabindranath Tagore, on an important occasion.

The original leaders of the Congress were men like G. K. Gokhale and Surendranath Banerjea. It was Banerjea who said in 1895, that "no Congressman had ever asked for representative institutions for one woman or for the many." Another speaker said, "A more honest and sturdy nation does not exist under the sun than this English nation." Such was the character of the Congress at that time. Gokhale was a selfless man whom Gandhi called "the greatest mind in national affairs." He started the Servants of India Society, a body of men who gave up their wealth, and devoted themselves to the cause of their country.

The first victory gained by Congress was in 1892. By the act of 1892 the principle of election was accepted. Members of Council were given the right of voting. The official majority was however maintained. This instalment of reforms characterised the first phase of the struggle. From 1892 to 1905, the Congress thought that by presenting a fair and reasonable case to the British authorities, they could obtain relief and ultimate freedom. At this time there arrived on the scene, Lord Curzon, the prancing pro-consul, a "most superior sort of person." He lived in pomp, and advertised India as the brightest jewel in the imperial throne. He divided Bengal into two, splitting up the Bengalees into two provinces. He characterised the orientals as lacking in veracity and nearly caused a revolt. The note of imperialism hardened and the spirit of the Indian leaders also changed. Bal Gandahar Tilak, Bepin



Chandra Pal, and the Ghoses, were the leaders of the new order; they made an immediate and lasting impression on the younger Indians.

Their earliest victory was to change the attitude of Congress from one of "petitioning for favours" into one of "demanding rights." The turning point of the Indian struggle was the 23rd sessions of the Congress, held at Surat, in 1907. This sessions, attended by 1,500 delegates, promised to be one of the most brilliant of all the Congress sessions. Instead, it turned out to be a free fight between the extremists led by Tilak, and the moderates; the result was that the moderates were left in full control. A few years later, a convention was signed, and the Congress met again at Madras. In the meantime, Tilak was sentenced to jail several times, for preaching and publishing sedition. A man of great learning and courage, he first started the slogan, "Freedom is my birthright, and I will have it." He first suffered jail and deportation in the cause of his country, and he roused up the masses of India to a realisation of what was due to them. The Morley-Minto reforms of 1909, followed the agitation of Congress. In spite of Tilak's opposition, the Reforms of 1909 were accepted, and the moderates still ruled.

The Great War of 1914 changed the political atmosphere. England was rich in promises. The Congress passed a resolution offering "humble assistance to the great Empire." The Governor of Madras attended the sessions of the Congress, and was enthusiastically received by the 3,000 delegates. To reassure the nationalists, the Secretary of State stated in the House of Commons that the "goal of British policy is the progressive realisation of responsible government in India." As the war progressed, the Indian leaders began to realise that the British government was not anxious to concede to India any freedom. The war had broadened the views of the moderates and induced the extremists to make common cause with them. Mrs. Annie Bessant was elected President of the 32nd Congress, held at



Calcutta, in 1917. In her presidential address she was eloquent and bold. She declared that, "India's right to freedom must be immediately recognised." "India," she said, "stands erect, no suppliant people: her hand is stretched out to Britain in friendship, not in subservience; in co-operation, not in obedience."

The war was over now, and the British pretended to put into effect the fine words they had spoken, to secure India's assistance in the war effort. Mr. Edward Montague, Secretary of State for India, came out to India for a personal investigation. After consultation with the Viceroy Chelmsford, the Montague-Chelmsford reforms were published in 1918, and aroused fierce controversy. The moderates, still led by Surendranath Banerjea, welcomed the reforms, as an advance. The extremists carried Congress and resolved that, "nothing less than self-government would satisfy the people of India." A more resolute spirit was rising in the people, and the loyalty motions were abandoned. Villagers were coming in large numbers to Congress meetings and were permitted to speak in their own languages. Soon after the war, the Congress with greater determination than before, claimed to represent a free nation and elected its own representatives to the peace conference. These were Tilak, Gandhi and Hasar Iman.

With the vision of freedom still far away, universal unrest increased daily. Indian leaders took the case of India before independent foreign countries, such as America and France. The issue of Indian freedom was gradually assuming a world-wide importance. The Constitution that was ultimately passed in 1919 fell far short of giving India, "a government acceptable to the people, because responsible to them." Though, both in the centre and in the provinces, legislative councils with a majority of elected members was created, power remained concentrated in the hands of the Governors, sent out from England. In the provinces, however, certain subjects were transferred to Indian Ministers. How much actual power the Ministers enjoyed, could be judged from a statement made by one of



them, in 1923. "I am Minister of Development minus forests. I am Minister of Industries without factories and electricity. I am Minister of Agriculture minus irrigation. The subjects of labour and boilers are also reserved." No wonder nationalist opinion in India regarded this constitution as inadequate.

It is the year 1919 now, and the advent of Mahatma Gandhi into the Indian political world. He had already, in South Africa, shown a new method of fighting wrongs, the non-violent method, and he had done so successfully.

Soon after the war, it became evident that the government intended to pursue its old policy. In 1919, it passed a law, the "Rowlatt Act," to replace the emergency measures that had existed during the war. This Act gave the Executive, among other powers, the right to imprison people without trial for political offences, for an indefinite period. Mahatma Gandhi started a non-violent revolt against these unjust laws. Sporadic outbursts of violence followed. The British government sought to crush the revolt by imposing martial law. Terrible measures were committed by the British, especially in Amritsar, led by General Dyer. Indians were humiliated by being forced to crawl on their bellies through certain streets. At Jallianwalla Bagh, an unarmed crowd, trapped in a public square, bounded on three sides by high walls, was mercilessly shot down; bombs and machine guns were used against these unarmed people. 370 were killed and 1,200 left wounded on the ground.

The Congress strongly condemned these actions, and moving closer to the people, decided on direct mass action. In September 1920, the Calcutta sessions of the Congress decided to adopt a policy of non-cooperation with the new constitution. The movement was greatly strengthened by the support of the Mohammedans, particularly the Khalifat leaders, the brothers Shoukat and Mohammed Ali, who were dissatisfied with the attempts of the Allied Powers to dismember Turkey. The words 'constitutional means' for the



attainment of Swaraj were dropped, from the Congress Creed and instead, 'by all legitimate and peaceful means' were inserted.

The campaign of direct action that was launched was known as the "non-co-operation movement." Its main features were the boycott of legislatures, the boycott of foreign cloth, the boycott of law courts and all educational establishments maintained by the government. The boycott extended to the visits of the Duke of Connaught and the Prince of Wales to India in 1921. Thousands and thousands of people were in jail and India was in seething foment. In Bengal, there was a no-tax campaign among the peasants; in Punjab there was the Kali movement; in South India there were the Moplah Rebellions. The Congress was declared an illegal body. The Nagpur Congress of 1920 adopted a new role, unique in the history of the world. In addition to the triple boycott mentioned above, the Congress decided on the renunciation of all titles conferred by—and resignation of all posts held under—the government.

The Ahmedabad Congress, in December 1921, under the Presidency of C. R. Das, called upon the whole country to adopt a policy of individual and mass civil disobedience. Every man and woman was exhorted to join the National Volunteer Corps, to defy the emergency Ordinances and to court imprisonment. The Indian revolt raged with great intensity, and with the dawn of the new year 1922, it was expected that the climax would be reached. Mahatma Gandhi now decided to proceed to the last item in his plan—namely, the non-payment of taxes. With bated breath the country awaited the new step, when suddenly, violence broke out at a place called Chauri-Chaura in the United provinces. Mahatma Gandhi at once called off the movement. A few weeks later he was arrested, and after trial, sentenced to six years' imprisonment. Non-co-operation had ended.

During the next few years, the Congress exchanged direct action for policy of constitutionalism. The leader of the new movement was Deshabandhu C. R. Das. Das was a famous



lawyer who had for many years been opposing Gandhi's policy of non-co-operation. He had, however, obeyed the decision of the sessions, and with his followers had gone to jail. The suspension of the movement gave his views greater strength, and together with Pandit Motilal Nehru and Lala Lajpat Rai, he formed the Swaraj Party whose object was to enter the councils and by obstructionist methods, to render them ineffective. His fame as a lawyer, his powers of oratory and his sacrifices, gave him a larger following. A sudden change however occurred in the year 1925. C. R. Das died and the country did not know what it was to do, or how the struggle was to be continued. Mahatma Gandhi had gone into retirement and was only interested in constructive work, such as spinning. Till 1927 there was no concerted movement, but the appointment of an all-white commission in November of that year, gave an impetus to the unrest that existed in India. Even the moderates considered that the composition of the Simon Commission was an insult to the people of India. The Commission was boycotted wherever it went, and as a challenge to the Commission, an All parties Conference drafted a constitution for a free India.

Things were moving rapidly again. Congress gave up the idea of Dominion Status and preferred Complete Independence. The Lahore Congress presided over by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, hoisted the flag of independence on the 1st January 1930. "In spite of the bitter cold of a Lahore weekend, there was a mammoth gathering, and as the flag went up, a thrill went through the vast audience." India was again preparing for a vast upheaval. People looked anxiously to the Congress for leadership, and the Congress looked to Mahatma Gandhi. He placed himself therefore, at the head of the national struggle, and fixed January 26th, as the day to be observed throughout India, as the Day of Independence. The Mahatma decided that "civil disobedience, once begun this time, cannot be stopped and must not be stopped so long as there is a single civil resister left free or alive." On the 17th March 1930, he commenced a march from his Ashram at Ahmada-



bad to the sea coast, with 78 of his chosen followers, and after arriving there, he proceeded to break the salt laws. Men and women joined the movement, and as before, other laws were also broken. Congress organisations were declared unlawful and the usual repressive measures were enacted. Mahatma Gandhi was arrested, and the jails were full of Indian men and women.

The movement went on with unabated strength, till the beginning of 1931, when it seemed that the time was favourable for an understanding between the government and the Congress. Lord Irwin was more sympathetic than any previous English Viceroy, and with his help, the Gandhi-Irwin Pact was signed. Civil disobedience was called off, and the Congress decided to send a representative to the Round Table Conference in London, which was now discussing the Simon Commission's Report. Mahatma Gandhi was sent as the sole representative of the Congress and in September 1931, he arrived in London. The Round Table Conference did not achieve much, and on Gandhi's return, the struggle was resumed in 1932. Lord Willingdon was now Viceroy, and he, adopting a different attitude to that adopted by Lord Irwin, even refused to interview Mahatma Gandhi. The campaign was revived, and began to grow in strength. In 4 months, over 80,000 people had gone to jail. In the midst of the struggle, Mahatma Gandhi decided to fast on a side-issue, communal representation, and from that time, the forces of government began to gather strength. In 1933, Mahatma Gandhi suspended the movement, and mass civil disobediences was stopped.

An entirely new phase was begun in 1935. The British government, after discussions in Parliament, introduced the Government of India Act, which divided British India into 11 provinces, with elected ministers. The second part of the Act made provision for a Federal Government at the Centre, composed of representatives from these provinces and the Indian states, together with nominees of the British Government. The first part of the Act was introduced, and



elections were held in 1937, for the purpose of creating provincial parliaments. Congress took part in the elections and polling nearly 77 of the total votes cast, assumed office in 6 provinces, with a clear majority over all other parties. In two other provinces, the Congress was able to form a Government with the co-operation of other parties. Congress members took offices, "not to Co-operate with the Act, but to end it." For two years, within the Congress ranks itself, there was dissension between those who wanted to follow the present policy of constitutionalism, and the other led by Subhas Chandra Bose, who wanted a co-ordination of all mass agitation in a firm struggle against Imperialism. In September 1939, the second World War broke out and India and Britain drifted further apart.

At the Ramgarh sessions, held in March 1940, the Congress whilst alive to the dangers arising from Fascism and Nazism, said, they could not forget the older danger of British Imperialism. The Congress decided not to help in the prosecution of the war with men, money or material, and affirmed that nothing short of Complete Independence would be accepted by the people of India. The Congress Ministers resigned, and Mahatma Gandhi launched his third movement against British Rule. He demanded of the Government, "the right of free speech and the right to speak against the war." Individual Congressmen publicly courted arrest, by expressing Congress views and up to date (April 1941), over 2,000 Satyagrahi have been arrested, including most of the leaders.

What the future holds for India and the world, we cannot say. The Indian movement, however, is destined to be marked in history as a movement of the greatest moral significance. It has striven to achieve for over 400 million people, political and economic freedom. Wherever in the world there has been a movement for freedom, or a struggle for the assertion of human rights, it has given a helping hand. It has laboured for the common good of humanity, always true to its great ideal of Ahimsa.



149. "AN INDO-LANKA FEDERATION," BY J. R. JAYEWARDENE, n.d.<sup>1</sup>

India ever calls to us, children of Lanka, for have we not been friends for over two thousand years. That friendship has moulded our culture, our language and our customs. Often, it is true, there has been conflict between some of the races of India and ourselves, yet, to Buddhist Lanka, India remains the Holy Land. Whenever I find an opportunity to do so. I travel across the narrow waters that separate my country from her, and journey to those places which are sanctified by the touch of Gautama the Buddha. It is natural that India should draw us to her, for is she not the cradle of our race ?

The subjection of both India and Lanka to a foreign power created a barrier between us. We forget that from the time of Vijaya, Sinhalese kings and nobles sought their brides in India ; we forget that our princesses too, such as the famous Princess of Chitoor, were sought for by Indian princes. The fast moving events of today may rid us of that subjection and remove the barrier. India and Lanka may be free tomorrow, to do as they please. Do we know then whither we are bound ?

The older generation who believe in self-government and dominion status, in the indestructibility of empires, do not know exactly what to do were India to be free tomorrow and we are left to fend for ourselves. No one wishes to continue the Donoughmore constitution and the crown colony status which it protects. Dominion status within the British Commonwealth of Nations would hardly be possible were India to secede from such a commonwealth. A free Lanka, independent of all other nations of the world, is difficult to conceive of. An Indo-Lanka federation may have to be discussed, may even have to be planned for and may be useful for us to achieve.

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1. This item has been mostly handwritten ; the last part is typed roughly and has been subject to several amendments.



The word "federation" is used to contrast it with our present status of a crown colony and also with that of a dominion. It is used to make the reader realise that our present political aspirations are out of date and must be replaced by new conceptions and a fresh outlook.

It is not possible here to define the status of Lanka in such a federation, nor to specify her rights and obligations. Such a political union is bound to be advantageous to us, provided certain essential conditions are fulfilled. The most important of these seem to be :

- (1) The people of Lanka must have the unfettered right to determine the internal political structure of their country.
- (2) The official language must be Sinhalese.
- (3) The parliament of Lanka must have the right to determine the composition of Lanka's population.
- (4) India and Lanka must be one unit for the purpose of defence.
- (5) In the Federal Legislature, Lanka must be accorded a status equivalent to the status of the Indian Provinces.

It is not possible for us ever to be again the Lanka of old. We can only dream of the days of Dutugamunu and Parakramabahu and of the deeds of valour of the Sinhalese heroes against the invaders from India. I visualise a greater future for Lanka and its people. Sinhalese or Tamil they may be by race, yet citizens of a great and powerful India. Protected beneath the shade of this great federation, we can give to India and through her to the world, the teaching which we have preserved ever since our race came to these shores, the teaching of the Buddha. Influencing India and her peoples, we also influence the larger world outside, for a Free India can and will change(?) the path of nations. Can we, so close to her, so akin to her, stand aloof?



## 150. "REBEL CEYLON," BY J. R. JAYEWARDENE, n.d.

If we consider politics to mean the administration of public affairs in the interests of "the peace, prosperity and liberty of those who constitute the State," then we see that politics in a subject country such as Ceylon, must concern itself primarily with the struggle of its people to gain freedom from foreign rule for it is only when the exploitation of a subject race by its foreign rulers has ceased can a free people devote themselves to making full use of the resources of their country.

Politics in Ceylon since the British occupation, so far as the native population is concerned, has undergone three main phases ; we are now on the threshold of the fourth. In the first phase, the basis of our political life was the welfare of certain families, the second phase was based on caste, and the third phase had as its foundation, racial differences. The fourth phase, which I hope will usher in a new era, must be based on economic considerations with "the greatest good of the greatest number," irrespective of family, caste or race, as its only slogan. A consideration of our political history since 1815, when the whole island went under British rule, shows how it was possible for these factors to arise.

Until 1833, the Governor exercised all executive and legislative powers in Ceylon. He was assisted by an Advisory Council of officials. Over 2½ million people living in this country were governed by this dictator, not for the benefit of the people, but for the benefit of the few white colonists who had come to Ceylon to make money. As a result of agitation by these colonists, a Legislative Council of 9 officials and 6 unofficial nominated members was established in 1833. The nomination of unofficials was based wholly on family considerations. The Governor, who had the right of nomination, selected members of those families which had rendered services to the British throne, and made them members of this council. The first native officials such as the



Mudaliyars, who were the main supporters of British rule, were also appointed from these same families. British rule, therefore, in its earliest stage, existing for the benefit of a few white men, fortified itself in the legislature and outside, by placing in positions of power, prominent members of loyal families. These families were further favoured with grants of land and honours by the foreign ruler.

For seventy-five years, this system continued with hardly a protest. It is true in 1865, a few of the white colonists and educated Burghers wanted an unofficial majority, and to establish this they formed the Ceylon League, but there was no suggestion that the principle of nomination from certain families should be disturbed. In the beginning of the twentieth century however, as a result of the progress of English education, and also as a result of the beginnings of the Indian movement for freedom, educated Ceylonese who did not belong to the small circle of favoured families, began an agitation for reforms. 1909 saw the birth of this movement. A number of associations, political and cultural, the Ceylon Reform League and the National Association being prominent among them, agitated for Ceylonese representation by election, in the council, and also for representation in the Executive Council. The agitation was characterised by the then Governor, MacCallum, as the movement of "a very small number of the natives of Ceylon who have assimilated an education of a purely western, as opposed to oriental type, and who are to be regarded, not as native Ceylonese, but as a product of the European administration of Ceylon on lines approved by British traditions."

One sees the growing feelings of dissatisfaction against the nomination from certain families in the memorandum addressed to the officials by the above named organisations. They say that the unofficial members "do not gain the confidence of the communities; that they represent no one but themselves; and that members returned under some form of popular franchise would be more truly representative."



In reply, these agitators were called "nobodies trying to be somebodies," by Sir S. C. Obeyesekere, a member of one of these selected families. In spite of the Governor's advice, the Secretary of State agreed to a scheme of reforms, in 1910, which included provision for 4 elected members, one of these being a member to be elected by the educated Ceylonese residents in the whole island. We see now with the introduction of elections, the emergence of a new factor in our political life, namely, caste. The first election contest for the Ceylonese seat was between Sir P. Ramanathan and Sir Marcus Fernando. The election was fought on caste. The Sinhalese members of the Goigama caste supported Sir P. Ramanathan, a Tamil, against Sir Marcus Fernando who belonged to another caste. Similar caste cries were raised to gain success in the municipal elections during these years. We need not be surprised at these episodes in our political life. Success at elections depends on winning the majority of voters to one's side. In an uneducated electorate, the caste cry has a powerful effect. Supporters of a particular candidate think that the success of their candidate is socially and morally good, the good end, therefore, justifies in their eyes, the unfair means taken to achieve the end. This is a phenomenon not peculiar to Ceylon.

Ceylon went on in this way, for a few years after the first election of 1911, when Ramanathan won, then came the great war of 1914-1918. New impulses were generated throughout the world. People thought a British victory meant freedom for small nations. Ceylon was also affected by these influences. The Indian movement growing in strength moved us too. The greatest impulse towards a desire for freedom was created by the riots of 1915 and the atrocities committed by the British rulers under the guise of martial law. In 1918 therefore, the hopes of the people took permanent shape in the formation of the Ceylon National Congress, which held its first sessions in December, 1919. The goal of the Congress was stated to be "the



attainment by the people of Ceylon of responsible government," and further, "to foster the intellectual, moral and economic structure of the country by a vigorous development of self-governing institutions."

The Ceylon National Congress was founded in imitation of the Indian National Congress, which then was over 30 years old. The Congress organisation permitted the affiliation of all political and national societies which accepted the main creed of "responsible government" for Ceylon. The bane of caste seemed to be gradually disappearing, for on the Congress platform were members of all castes. All races too were represented, in the Congress, for its president was the Tamil knight, Sir P. Arunachalam. As a result of the agitation carried on by the Congress, by the sending of deputations to England and by the writing of memoranda, the Legislative Council was reformed in 1920 by the provision of 16 elected members, of which number 11 were to be elected on a territorial basis, and 5 elected by special interests. The elections to these new seats were to be held in 1921 and the Congress at its sessions decided not to participate in the elections because of the reactionary nature of the Order-in-Council in that the scheme was conducive to the creation of communal seats. In view however of the undertaking given by the Governor that the constitution would be revised and the more objectionable clauses removed within an year, the Congress decided to accept the offer of the Governor and to co-operate in working the new constitution.

The racial phase now begins to develop. The 1920 constitution provided for the representation of special interests, some of which were purely racial interests. The election to a new council also saw rivalry between a leading Sinhalese, Mr. James Peiris (later Sir), and a leading Tamil Sir P. Arunachalam, both Congressmen, for one of the Colombo seats. The years 1922-1923 were periods of intense racial strife. The Sinhalese and Tamil professional classes aided



by British imperialism, fanned two flames. The Tamils seceded from the Congress and the fight for self-government was temporarily hindered. The Congress, however, maintained its agitation and the Congress members in the Council even resigned in a body because the Governor had acted in contravention of a promise he had made to them. The Congress was then so powerful in the country that at the bye-elections these same members were returned unopposed. The members however did not take their seats until the right of the unofficial members to financial control was acceded to by the Governor.

In 1924 a new constitution was again granted. The mild Ceylonese were again satisfied with 37 elected seats instead of the previous 16. Twenty-three of these seats were territorial seats, 3 were nominated seats and 11 were communal seats. Every change of the constitution was marked by further racial demands and further concessions to these demands by the imperial government. The unofficial members were given the power of criticism but no responsibility. Even the demand for the enlargement of the Executive Council was not acceded to, except in a very minor way. In 1926 the Congress at its sessions voted for self-government, having abandoned the earlier doctrine of responsible government and further decided that there should be no half-way house. It was clear even to the British authorities that an unofficial majority which had the power of criticism without responsibility, could not for long form a feature of the constitution, so in 1927, on a secret memorandum sent to the Secretary of State by the Governor, Sir Hugh Clifford, a Royal Commission headed by the Earl of Donoughmore came out to Ceylon to report on the future political structure of this island.

After many months of inquiry and the taking of evidence, the commission suggested for Ceylon the constitution which we now know as the Donoughmore constitution. Three main features in this report are to be commended, firstly the



abolition of communal representation, secondly the creation of elected ministers with wide powers over local affairs, and thirdly the grant of universal franchise. The "Committee System" of government was however condemned as unworkable. The Congress at its sessions in 1928, though it was disappointed that self-government had not been granted, decided to accept the new reforms, subject to modifications. In 1931 was held the first election to the State Council created by the Donoughmore constitution. We reach now the fourth phase in the development of Ceylon's modern political history, the economic era.

We still have the remnants of the racial cries with us. The cry for communal representation is now raised mainly to win elections. Tamil electorates naturally respond to the cry of balanced representation for the Tamils. Preaching a united Sinhalese front against other communities has its appeal among Sinhalese voters. Yet let not those who raise these racial cries forget that the adult franchise for men and women has given a new complexion to our political structure. We are well in the fourth phase of our political life. For 125 years, our country was governed for the benefit of the white colonists and a few Ceylonese. Today more and more the pressure of mass opinion is felt in the legislature and progressive social legislation is slowly finding its way into the statute book. The emergence of socialist parties and the attempts to revive the Congress, which had almost ceased to function after Congress members became Ministers, and make it an anti-imperialist organisation, are symptoms of the new era. The modern slogan therefore should be "the greatest good of the greatest number." Caste and racial cries may still be raised at elections, but these cries are not raised publicly but in secret. The age of family and caste privilege is finally dead.

We must therefore prepare ourselves to lead our people on the correct path. A return to racial politics is a step backwards as far as the vast majority of our people are



concerned ; for if it is the business of politics to administer public affairs for the benefit of the masses, then the only problems that arise and the only questions that need answering are the problems affecting the masses. A vast majority of the Sinhalese and Tamil peasants and workers live in poverty and hunger, and form the havenots as contrasted with the few Sinhalese and Tamils who are possessed of wealth and form the "haves." Racial unity means the union of the "havenots" with the "haves," the peasant with landlord, the worker with the employer. It means the perpetuation of the existing system. If on the other hand the existing system, social and political, does not enable the masses to better the conditions, then the destruction of the social order as we know it, and its replacement by a socialist state, a state where production and distribution of essentials are in the hands of the state, where the economic life is planned and conducted for use, and not for private profit, must be our goal.

**151. "COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION," BY J. R. JAYEWARDENE, n.d.**

The British learnt a bitter lesson in India during the Mutiny. They made use of this experience to prevent another uprising in the the future. One of the methods they adopted to deal with the Indian national movement, gradually growing in strength, was that of consulting the various communities and classes which arose out of this conflict. In spite of this, the Congress movement gained strength in India. In 1906, Lord Morley, Secretary of State for India, wrote to Lord Minto, the Viceroy :

You cannot go on governing in the same spirit ; you have to deal with the Congress party and Congress principles whatever you may think of them. Be sure that before long the Muhammedans will throw in their lot with the Congress against you.



The stage was set for the next struggle. It was then that the British applied to India a new method of opposition to the national movement. The method of consulting different communities was abandoned and instead one community was set against the other. Communal representation was born. Official recognition was given to this idea in the Morley Minto Reforms of 1909. The alliance between the Congress and the younger generation of Muslims was prevented. The moderates allied to the government side, and British rule was strengthened. A letter received by Lord Minto from an experienced official clearly showed the deliberate steps taken to weaken the national movement; it read thus, "I must send your Excellency a line to say that a very, very big thing has happened today. A work of statesmanship that will affect India and Indian history for many a long year. It is nothing less than the pulling back of 62 million of people (Muslims) from joining the ranks of the seditious opposition (Congress)." Year after year this new system of caste created by British Imperialism eats more deeply into the life of India. Every grant of reforms contain further concessions to the communal demand. If British statesmen are to be believed, communal disunity created by the British, alone, prevents the grant of freedom to India.

What of Ceylon, so close to India and so affected by her aspirations and sufferings. We too aspire for freedom, and we too have suffered because the loyalty of some of our people has been purchased by the concession of communal representation. The people of Ceylon did not want communal representation. In 1909, when the Ceylon Reform movement began, the Jaffna Association sent a memorial to England, asking that all unofficial, elected seats should be based on provincial and not racial representation. From 1917 to 1919, Sir P. Arunachalam, one of the founders of the National Congress, and its first President, in a series of speeches, emphasized that the general principle of election



should be territorial. The Congress, which then represented all communities, urged that, "no special provision is necessary for the Sinhalese and Tamils. These communities will largely preponderate in numbers of constituencies and will be able easily to elect men of their own community if they so desire it."

The authors of Ceylon's first elected Council however, thought otherwise. In 1920, the Duke of Devonshire and Governor Manning gave us a new Order-in-Council, "which sought to extend racial representations," and in the words of the Congress, "elevated communal representation to the position of the determining principle of reform....it is liable to be construed as an attempt on the part of the government to intensify and perpetuate racial differences among the Ceylonese in order to postpone, if not prevent, their reaching the goal of full responsible government." Prophetic words, for the apple of discord achieved its purpose. The years 1921-1923 were years of acute controversy over this question. The Tamils left the Congress, mushroom organisations sprang up to struggle for the loaves and fishes of office, which each successive set of reform was expected to give. The reforms of 1922 went further than 1920 in concession to communal representation. Governor Manning, who was earlier characterised by Sir Arunachalam, as "one whose political ideas are out of harmony with the spirit of the times.....a man without courage and wisdom ..... a reactionary" was feted in Jaffna, Sir Arunachalam's home town, as "the man who obtained for the Tamils preferential treatment and concessions." India and Ceylon were well on the road to self-government, a road planned out and constructed with consummate skill by British imperialism. A strange thing, however, which seemingly led us away from the stormy path along which we had travelled for 10 years, happened to us in Ceylon. The Donoughmore Commissioners recommended that communal representation should be abolished. The Legislative Council, the Governor,



Sir Herbert Stanley, and the Secretary of State, Lord Passfield endorsed this view. In 1931 was introduced the Donoughmore constitution without communal representation.

Yet the demand for communal representation persists. When changes are proposed in the constitution the demands become higher. The All-Ceylon Tamil Conference has raised again its fifty-fifty slogan. They want 50% of the 50% of the seats demanded for all minorities. If the other minorities demand a similar proportion, would not the demand be unreasoned and unreasonable? Are we again to tread these stormy paths while the foreign ruler enjoys the benefits that should belong to our people? I ask this question of Jaffna and at the same time I wish to sound a warning. The abolition of communal representation was no abandonment of the policy of "divide and rule." It was only an extension of it. To divide and rule, concessions must sometimes be made to these who are weak; sometimes, favours must be showered on those whose opposition is the strongest. The weak, propped up by British authority, can be used often as a counterpoise against the stronger group, that is why the cause of the minorities was espoused by the British from 1920 to 1930. The abandonment of communal representation was not an abandonment of the counterpoise policy; it was, on the other hand, an attempt to purchase the loyalty and the good behaviour of the stronger group. The Sinhalese leaders were in a strong position, for they were now able to wield power. The Sinhalese group supported the new reforms, mainly because Communal representation was abolished. They distrusted the people of Jaffna who advocated a boycott of the constitution. The constitution was accepted.

Now, after 10 years experience of the Donoughmore constitution, the British government say that a parliamentary commission is necessary before reforms can be granted. Why? Because of the differences of opinion, presumably



among the different races of Ceylon. Communal representation is again to the fore, and those who believed that the abolition of communal representation in the Donoughmore constitution did not impair the essential basis of British policy in Ceylon, are not surprised. In the immediate years before us we will see a recrudescence of communal distrust, of a few individuals posing as racial leaders and seeking power for themselves, and above them all, now favouring one and now another, will be the representatives of the British government, maintaining their authority, by dividing those whom they continue to rule.

Let us consider for a moment what communal representation is and what interests it seeks to preserve. The problem of communal representation is the problem of minorities, and the problem centres mainly round representation in the councils, recruitment to the public services and the preservation of cultural and religious interests.

It is the wish of a few to throng the seats of civic power which give impetus to the communal demand in Ceylon. "More seats for the Tamils," or "Equality with the Sinhalese" are as effective as "Lanka for the Sinhalese," among election slogans. The racial cry is an effective election cry, for the thin veneer of civilisation that surrounds us has not removed man's primal instincts. The large majority, whatever race they may belong to, are, however, not much affected and their conditions not improved, by racial representatives. The problems that face most of us today are mainly economic ones. The want of food and clothing, landlessness and unemployment need urgent solutions. We want legislators who seek out the true cause of these evils; we want men and women, who, realising the exploitation that prevails within this capitalist society, strive to end rather than mend this system, above all, we want them to know that this system is preserved by the British ruler for his benefit, and that no effective solution can be found to



our social and economic troubles until British rule in this country is completely ended. Does it matter then if the legislator or group of legislators who have these views are Tamil or Sinhalese, or even English ?

Dissatisfaction caused by recruitment to the Public Services is also a cause adduced for the perpetuation of communal representation. This can easily be solved. Appointments can be placed above politics by the appointment of an independent Public Services Commission. After all, how many can be absorbed into government service ? 20,000 government posts cannot help six million people. If these services are to be filled on a racial basis the Tamils stand to lose ; for now, with their greater perseverance they have very often beaten the Sinhalese in competitive examinations, and in many services hold more posts than their numbers entitle them to hold.

We come then to the last reason, that cultural and religious interests are threatened, if there is no communal representation. Language, customs and religion are the heritage of each race group. No one in Ceylon wishes to destroy anyone of these, nor does anyone visualise that the people of Ceylon will grow according to one mould. The language of the Tamils is not threatened by the Sinhalese ; both Sinhalese and Tamil are however being destroyed by English. The religion of the Tamils is part of the ritual of the Buddhists ; and Hindus, Muslims and Christians never complained and never need complain of the intolerance of the Buddhist majority. The cultural and religious interests of the minorities will not suffer in a free Lanka. The minorities should welcome freedom, for then, free from the suffocating protection of British rule, these three great groups can plan with care, a purer synthesis.

Let us then wake up, my friends, before it is too late. The world marches on and it is all that we can do, a small nation like ours, even if we are united, to keep alive. What



choice have we if we break up into fragments and hide behind narrow racial walls. The present is full of storm and stress ; yet, assuredly the future is ours to mould to our hearts' desire.

152. "THE CONGRESS AND FREEDOM," BY J. R. JAYEWARDENE, n.d.<sup>1</sup>

A free Lanka is a necessary prerequisite for future social and economic progress. Sufficiently long have our resources been utilised to fatten the foreign ruler. It is when we consider how freedom is to be obtained that we pause to think of the Congress. The Ceylon National Congress was born in December 1918. It was born of the cruelties inflicted on the people during the 1915 Riots, of the rise of the Indian movement for freedom, and of the desire of the increasing number of our men educated in English, for a share of political power. All communities and castes, all shades of political opinion, co-operated in this new endeavour. The national pride, wounded by the riot atrocities, found expression in the new movement for freedom. The first sessions of the Congress was held on the 11th December, 1919, under the presidency of Sir P. Arunachalam, and the Congress pledged itself to work, "for the realization of responsible government for Ceylon" !

The years passed. The old order changed. The one elected member of 1911, was replaced by 16 elected members in 1920 and by 37 elected members in 1924. Throughout this period the Congress was active. It worked for, and later opposed, by even boycotting the Legislative Council, the constitution of 1920. It worked the constitution of 1924 and fought for further reforms. It carried on a vigorous campaign throughout the country, for the acceptance of the Donoughmore constitution and for placing in the seats of power as State Councillors and Ministers, of Congress leaders. The elected members in the 1920, 1924 and 1931 Councils, were mainly Congressmen. The very elections

1. Also from C. N. A., 60/381.



which the Congress had asked for caused dissension in its ranks. Party discipline did not exist ! Congressman contested one another, and the Tamils withdrew in a body in 1924, having quarrelled over a seat. Throughout the period 1924-1931, the Congress though considerably weakened, continued its agitation for reforms by sending deputations and memoranda to the British government.

In 1931, the Donoughmore constitution was inaugurated, introducing a State Council elected on a universal franchise, without any communal representation, with executive powers vested in the Council, and a Board of Ministers elected by the Council. The Congress accepted this constitution and signed its own death warrant. Congress members fought each other at elections, office-bearers worked against office-bearers, and after the elections, they fought for positions of power. One of the causes which gave rise to the Congress had ceased to exist. The educated men who had organised the Congress and asked for a share in the direction of government policy had obtained it. Having assumed office, they forgot the riots and the increasing tempo of the Indian movement, the other two causes which helped to found the Congress. For 9 years few cared or even talked of the Congress. The Congress had ceased to function, except for its annual sessions and the sending of an occasional memorandum. Political organisations wedded to Communist ideals seemed to catch the fancy of the masses ; communal parties fanned dormant racial hatreds.

During the years 1940 and 1941, however, a change came over Congress. A band of young men joined it and sought again to win the allegiance of the masses for the struggle for freedom. Freedoms, they thought, should be the central factor in our public life, for unless freedom was attained, there would be no communism, socialism or even national existence, if the present degradation of the nation continued.

For two years we have striven to make the Congress a "People's Party." To some extent we have achieved it.



While attempting to widen our political goal from self-rule to complete freedom, we have also sought to give our party an economic programme based on "the greatest good of the greatest number." The support of the worker and the peasant has been our chief aim. The support we have attempted to win by working for him and working with him. We have reorganised the Congress as a body which consists of branch organisations throughout the country. In every village or group of villages, in every town, we hope to have our branches. These branch organisations elect representatives to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee, and from this is chosen the Working Committee, presided over by the President. The strength of the Congress lies now in its branches, and those who control them—I hope they will be workers and peasants—will control the Congress. Throughout the country there are now over forty Congress organisations; throughout the country, we as Congressmen, take office in and direct workers unions; throughout the country we are attempting to win mass support by propaganda, by contesting municipal and State Council elections as a party, and on a party programme; by helping the worker and the peasant to establish co-operative societies, rural centres and village industries.

The Congress message of freedom has once again begun to travel throughout the island. Organisations were formed to receive it and spread it in urban and rural areas; annual conferences were held in villages to discuss the year's work and plan for the future. Two such conferences were held, one at Mirigama, in December 1940, and the other at Dummaladeniya, in December 1941. Mirigama saw a vast gathering. The masses heard again from the lips of Congressmen that Lanka must be free. Reforms were not wanted any more; it was freedom from foreign rule that the Congress delegates demanded. This demand must have been discussed in thousands of peasant homes, for the first time since the fall of the Kandyan Kingdom.



During 1941, more work was done. More organisations were formed and party discipline was enforced. Then came the Dummaladeniya sessions in December. The masses that came to this sessions could not compare with the Mirigama gathering in point of numbers. There were many drawbacks. The eastern War, petrol rationing and the blackout created difficulties. Yet sufficiently large numbers came to hear the President reiterate the Congress creed that the country wanted not reforms but complete freedom, and that there could be no co-operation unless freedom was granted after the war. In thousands of peasants homes this demand was again heard and awakened thoughts of 2,000 years of freedom. In the number of delegates that attended, in the keenness they showed, and in their expressions of loyalty to the Congress cause, Dummaladeniya outshone Mirigama ; from a party point of view it was definitely an advance.

With Mirigama and Dummaladeniya to inspire us, we can look forward with confidence to the future. Mistakes we have made and will continue to make. Old loyalties cannot be abandoned in a few months, and minds accustomed to travel in certain ruts cannot easily adjust themselves to new ideas. If Congress is to advance it must this year, definitely and finally, plan out some effective course of action and make the people to follow it. Such action must have mass backing and determined leadership. If Congress does not take up this leadership, then others will without a doubt take it up.

We have today in the Congress constitution the necessary framework for a peoples' organisation. No individual or group can dominate it. I want young men and women to join our organization or form organisations themselves. I want workers and peasants to join us and help us, for freedom alone will help them to rise from the poverty which is their common lot today. I want them to come into our councils and help to mould the Congress policy to be in sympathy with the spirit of Young Lanka, for I know that the hope and wishes of Young Lanka is to make this land of ours free once again.



## 153. A NOTICE ABOUT A PUBLIC LECTURE, 20 June 1941

## Public Lecture

Under the auspices of the Ceylon National Congress  
by

*Speakers :* Sirimati Asha Devi, M. A.  
Sri E. W. Aryanayakam,  
Secretary, All-India Education Board,  
Wardha.

*Subject :* THE CONSTRUCTIVE PROGRAMME OF  
THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS.

*Place :* Ananda College Hall, Colombo.

*Time :* Friday, 20th June, at 5 p.m.

*Chairman :* Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, President, The  
Ceylon National Congress, Colombo.

Admission Free



## LOCAL GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS, 1933—1943



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**154. REPORT OF THE CONGRESS SUB-COMMITTEE  
ON REFORM OF THE COLOMBO MUNICIPAL COUNCIL,  
6 October 1933<sup>1</sup>**

“ Congress Hall ”  
41, Silversmith Street,  
Colombo,  
6th October 1933.

The sub-committee consisting of Messrs. H. W. Amarasuriya, Geo E. de Silva, D. R. Jayawardene, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and P. D. S. Jayasekera appointed by the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to consider and report upon the draft of Colombo Municipal Council (Constitution) Bill, met on the 6th instant at the State Council committee room. The members of the sub-committee excepting Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike were present and were unanimous in making the following recommendations regarding the amendment of the bill :—

**Franchise**

1. The provisions in the bill relating to the franchise should be subject to the proviso that non-ceylonese should in addition to the qualifications mentioned in section 14, be required to prove by affidavit that they had been in residence in the island continuously for the 5 years immediately preceding the date of commencement of the preparation of the register of voters and also their intention to have their domicile permanently in this island. (“ Animus Manendi ”). The affidavit referred to should inter alia contain particulars regarding the places of residence in the island during the aforesaid 5 years, giving the addresses and dates of residence in the various places during the period in question.

<sup>1</sup> C. N. A., 60/127.



### Qualifications of Councillors

2. In addition to the qualifications enumerated in section 15, no person should be eligible for election or nomination as a Councillor unless he has one of the following qualifications :—

- (a) Property within the Colombo Municipality, in his or his wife's name, of the value of Rs. 3,000.
- (b) Residence in a house for which he pays a rent of Rs. 600 per annum, situated within the ward for which he seeks election.

### Mayor

3. (a) The Mayor should be elected for one year, but should be eligible for re-election.

(b) The Mayor should be the chief Executive Officer of the Municipal Council, but he should have the right to delegate any of his powers to the Commissioner.

### Commissioner

4. The Commissioner should be subordinated to the Mayor and should occupy a position similar to that of a Head of Department in relation to a Minister of State Council.

### Appointment and Dismissal of Officers

5. The Commissioner should have the right to appoint or dismiss without reference to the Council, only officers drawing a salary not exceeding Rs. 100 per mensam.

### Contracts

The Commissioner should not have the power to enter into any contracts exceeding Rs. 1,000 in value without the prior sanction of the Council.

### Retirement of Officers

6. There should be no provision relating to compensation for loss of career of officers retiring of their own accord. The provision relating to public servants in the (State Council) Order-in-Council should not apply to Municipal Officers.



### Governor's Powers

7. The Governor's powers should not exceed those enumerated in the Municipal Council Ordinance No. 6 of 1910.

#### Foot-note

The new Municipal Council Ordinance should be made applicable to other Municipalities as well simultaneously.

Geo. E. de Silva.

H. W. Amarasuriya.

D. R. Jayawardene.

P. D. S. Jayasekera.

### 155. STATEMENT BY THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS ON THE VILLAGE COMMUNITIES DRAFT ORDINANCE, June 1937.

A meeting of the sub-committee was held at "Chanmuga Lodge," de Saram Place, Colombo, on the 16th June, 1937.

*Present* : Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa in the chair, and Messrs. W. R. Wijemanne, Clement Dias, R. T. Kuruwita Gunasekere and Victor C. Perera.

*Section 12* : Qualification of voters. We suggest the addition of the following sub-section (d) : or if he is not so resident, and has immovable property to the value of Rs. 1,000 within that ward.

The restriction on Indians becoming voters should remain even if they deprive themselves of their special privileges, for the following reasons :—

- (a) Indians are members of a floating population, and they have no permanent interest in the village.

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1 C. N. A., 60/189.



(b) The effect of giving them the vote is that the permanent villagers will be swamped by the Indian vote in planting areas.

(c) The reason why Indians are given certain privileges is that they are not permanent inhabitants of the colony.

Section 13 : Qualification for election as member. We suggest the addition of the following words to sub-section (a) : "or is possessed of an income of not less than Rs. 300 per annum and."

We should also suggest that the Arachy and the Sanitary Inspector in every Village Committee area should be nominated by Government as official members.

Section 16 : (3) We would make the preparation of a register of voters obligatory.

Section 25 : (3) We would suggest that the officer of government deputed by the Government Agent to preside at the election of a chairman, should never be a chief or minor headman.

Section 43 : We would add the following sub-section (n) to apply any part of the communal fund for educational purposes in the village.

Section 45 : We approve of the land tax being levied, but would suggest that it should not exceed 50 cents per acre. We approve of it being raised to one rupee, only if education is made one of the subjects for which Village Committees are responsible.

Lastly we suggest that strict provisions should be introduced for the regular audit of Village Committee accounts by government auditors, and that when proclaiming the Village Committee areas, care should be taken to see that they are not unwieldy or too small.



**156. A SCHEME FOR THE REGENERATION AND EXTENSION OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION IN CEYLON PRESENTED BY THE PANADURA MAHAJANA SABHA,<sup>1</sup>  
16 November 1938**

In regard to local administration in Ceylon, the Donoughmore commissioners, in their report of the special commission on the Ceylon constitution, state as follows:—

*From the facts summarised in the foregoing paragraphs and from the very brief epitome there given of evidence placed before us, we came to the conclusion that the various forms of Local Government in the Island had on the whole been carried out with reasonable successes. We share, however, the feeling expressed to us alike by Official and Unofficial witnesses that some regeneration and extension is urgently needed.*

We fully recognise that we are not ourselves in a position to indicate the precise direction which any such extension should take, but during our stay in Ceylon, we made a careful study of the question, so far as time permitted, and in view of the urgency of the problem, we wish to make certain recommendations with a view to facilitating its consideration under the new Constitution.

As an ultimate aim of policy, there is obviously much to be said in favour of a future decentralisation of Government upon elected, or partially elected, Local Bodies created for the purpose. Any step towards further decentralisation will have to be taken, however, after striking a most careful balance between the admitted advantages of touching further administrative centres into life and the view of many experts in favour of the adoption in their organisation of the

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<sup>1</sup> C. N. A., 60/190; an unsigned typescript on the official notepaper of the Panadura Mahajana Sabha. The letterhead indicates that its Patron was D. S. de Fonseka, its President W. R. Wijemanne, its Secretary, E. H. de Fonseka and its Treasurer, G. Beno Fonseka. The association was apparently inaugurated in 1923.



largest possible areas of administration. What does immediately stand out is that the nicest discrimination and adjustment between the duties and powers of the central and local authority is a necessity.

2. With a view to facilitating action being taken to put the above ideas into practice, the commissioners advocate the creation of a new government department for exploring the matter more closely, and of preparing a scheme, suitable to the prevailing conditions in the country after proper consultation with the government departments that are now in touch with provincial administration. In regard to the creation of such a department, the commissioners express as follows:—

of this Department, we contemplate that the Controller of Revenue to be styled, in future, the Controller of Local Administration, should be the permanent head. The Department will be under an Executive Committee of the Council and will work in close connection with already existing Departments, notably those of Public Health, and Public Works. This Executive Committee will also have charge of Land Administration, business in relation to local option, and the Land Settlement and Survey Departments. The Committee will be responsible for the conduct of Local Government and for schemes for its extension. It will exercise supervisory powers over Local Bodies, including approval of their By-Laws which are, at present, in the hands of the Governor in Executive Council. Similarly, the working of the Municipal Councils should be permanently supervised by the Department with a view to the exercise by the Committee, when necessary, of those powers of intervention now possessed by the Governor in Executive Council.

3. With the object of regeneration of local administration, as at present exists, the commissioners suggest the creation of a Provincial Council in each of the provinces, and in support thereof, they state:

We recognise that progress in the spread of popular Local Government may not be immediate, but we



should not expect it to be long delayed if the opportunity is now taken to establish such an Office (Local Government Office), as has been described, with instructions to prepare schemes in connection with other Departments for submission to the Executive Committee. One of the schemes which it is clearly necessary that they should explore and which to some students of the problem promises to [sic] the best results is that for *the creation of co-ordinating bodies to which certain administrative functions of the Central Government should be delegated.*

The argument in favour of the establishment of a Provincial Council in each Province is that such a scheme might result (a) in a large part of the administrative work now carried out in the Legislative Council coming into the hands of persons permanently resident in the country districts, and there [sic] more directly in contact with their needs ; (b) in the relief of the Departments of the Central Government of much detailed work and in their being thereby set free to consider and advise on the larger affairs of the country ; (c) in the special views of the different races predominant in the different parts of the Island having effect in the administration of these parts ; (d) in members of the growing body of politically minded persons in the country being placed in an honourable position to render real assistance in the administration ; and (e) in an increase in knowledge and capacity of the representatives of lesser local bodies who might be summoned to sit on the Council.

With regard to the constitutional powers and duties and financial arrangements of Provincial Councils, such matters as the following will require to be considered : whether members of the Legislative Council in each Province should be members of the Provincial Council and so form the connecting link



between the Central Provincial Administrations ; whether with a view to further co-ordination other members should represent the Municipal Councils, the Urban District Councils, groups of smaller towns and the Village Committees of each chief headman's division ; whether the Government Agent should in the first instance be Chairman and Executive Officer of the Council and the Provincial Officers of the technical departments, its technical advisors, attending meetings of the Council but not voting ; whether there should be delegated by the Central Government, large powers with regard to public works and communications, irrigation and agriculture, medical and sanitary services, education and finance and general administration ; and whether these powers and those of existing Road Committees and District Education Committees should be exercised by Committees of the Provincial Council, and be subject to those possessed by any other local authorities, at the time of the Councils coming into existence and, of course, also to the Ordinances of the Island and rules and regulations that might be made by the Central Government under the authority of those ordinances, as well as to inspection and to some extent technical control by the officers of that Government.

4. In respect of the finances necessary for provincial local bodies the commissioners state :

If Provincial Councils were established in existing circumstances it would be necessary for their expenditure to be provided from the general revenue by the Central Government, the necessary amount being allotted to each Provincial Council by the Legislative Council when passing the estimates for the year.

As regards the other forms of local bodies in the provinces, the commissioners favour the extension of Urban District Council administration to places where at present local boards operate, Town Committees to Sanitary Boards, and the retention of Gom-Sabhas.



6. Finally, the Donoughmore commissioners stress the importance of improving the conditions of the agricultural population in the country, who form the great mass of Ceylonese, through the development of local government bodies.

7. Considering the scheme of local government administration through Provincial Councils and lesser local bodies as foreshadowed in the Donoughmore commissioners' report, the system of administration in Ceylon, during ancient times, through Raja Sabha, Dissa Sabha, Rata Sabhas and Gam Sabhas visualise [sic] in one's mind.

8. Administration of the island, through a co-ordinating system of sabhas (local bodies), comprised of elected members, with the collaboration of government officers in the provinces functioning as Executive Officers, should enable the people to administer the different parts of the country in accordance with their natural conditions and requirements, in pursuance of the wishes of the residents of the various localities. Executive work in accordance with the decisions arrived at by the various local bodies, should of course be done by officers appointed by government, and not by the chairman of these local bodies, similar to government departments carrying on the executive work decided by the Executive Committees of the State Council in the existing system of administration.

9. The present system of local administration empowers the existing local bodies to administer only a small fraction of the subjects that come under provincial administration, the major portion being administered by the officers of the central government without any heed being paid to the wishes of the people in the provinces. This method of administration, which is undoubtedly more unsatisfactory than diarchy, often works at cross purpose



to the disadvantage of the general progress of the rural districts in many respects. On the other hand, it has been found by experience that the executive functions of local bodies where done by the elected chairmen, have in many cases, resulted not only in laxity in executive functions, but also in certain financial irregularities as well. This is evidently the result of electing either a very busy man, or one who lacks a correct understanding of what public responsibility is, as chairman of a local body.

10. To achieve success in local government by elected bodies executive functions should, therefore, be delegated to a wholtime officer who should be a responsible man liable to be punished for any laxity in executive functions, or financial irregularities. It is, however, a remote possibility to find suitable public men who are prepared to accept such responsibility without remuneration commensurate with the responsibility involved.

11. Payment of salaries to elected members of local bodies not only creates a heavy burden on the taxpayer, but also takes away the honorary character that is generally attached to such service. The remedy, therefore, lies in getting the executive work of local bodies done by government officers appointed by the central government.

12. In an arrangement of this sort, it will be incumbent on local bodies to see that the executive officers executing schemes passed by them, do their duties properly. If not, such officers should be reported to Government for suitable punishment including transfer or dismissal.

13. A system of local administration by the establishment of a co-ordinating series of local bodies as set forth below is likely to answer all the requirements enumerated above.

(a) A Dissa Sabha (Provincial Council) in each of the 9 provinces.



- (b) A Maha Nagara Sabha (Municipal Council) in the chief town of every province.
- (c) A Nagara Sabha (Urban Council) in every other town of importance.
- (d) A Rata Sabha (Rural Council) in every division of a Mudaliyar, Rate Mahatmaya or Maniagar.
- (e) A Gam Sabha (Village Council) in every Vidane Arachey's or Korale's division.
- (f) A Gam Karya-Karaka Sabha (Village Executive Committee) attached to the Gam Sabha—vide (e)—in every Police Headman's division within the Gam Sabha area.

#### 14. *Formation of different Sabhas*

(a) Dissa Sabha to consist of the chairman of each of the sabhas referred to in (b), (c), (d) and (e), Members of the State Council elected within the province with the heads of government departments stationed within the province who, of course, should be only advisory members without the power of vote. The chairman of this sabha should be the Government Agent of the province.

(b) Maha Nagara Sabha (Municipal Council) to consist of 5 members elected from each ward of the maha nagara (Municipality). The chairman to be elected by the elected members of all wards.

(c) Nagara Sabha (Urban Council) to consist of 5 members elected from each ward of the nagara (Town). The chairman to be elected as set forth in (b).

(d) Rata Sabha (Rural Council) to consist of the chairman of every Gam Sabha within the area of the Rata Sabha. The chairman to be the Divisional Revenue Officer proposed to be appointed in the near future.



(e) Gam Sabha (Village Council) to consist of 5 members elected from each Police Headman's division, within the area of Gam Sabha. The chairman to be elected as set forth in (b).

(f) Village Executive Committee (Gam Karya-Karaka Sabha) to consist of 5 members. One to be elected from each of the 5 wards into which the Police Headman's division is to be delimited. These members become members of the Gam Sabha, representing the Police Headman's division. The chairman to be elected from amongst the 5 members, by themselves, and such chairman to be made the Police Vidhane of the area.

*Note.*—As in the formation of the Provincial Sabha, the government officer of each of the different departments stationed within the area, or in charge of the area, to be a member of the respective sabha in an advisory capacity only.

#### 15. *Functioning of Sabhas with Executive Committees*

Each Maha Nagara Sabha, Nagara Sabha and Gam Sabha should function with 5 committees, viz., (a) Education, (b) Health, (c) Agriculture, Irrigation and Public Works, (d) Industry, Trade, Social Service and Economy, (e) Crime Preventing and Conciliation.

All members of each of the 3 sabhas, excepting the chairman, should divide themselves into the 5 committees referred to above—one member from each ward to each of the committees. The chairman of each sabha to be the chairman of each committee. In the case of Gam Sabha, the chairman of each Village Executive Committee who is the Police Vidhane should be a member of the Crime Preventing and Conciliatory Committee.



157. SOME CORRESPONDENCE IN 1939<sup>1</sup>

157: A. THE CONGRESS TO THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL  
ADMINISTRATION, 13 JANUARY 1939

President: Hon. Sir Baron Jayatilaka,

Vice-President: J. N. Jinendradasa, Esq.

Hony. Joint Secretaries:

Victor C. Perera, Esq.

253, Hulftsdorp,

Phone 1819.

J. E. Amaratunga, Esq.

Bar-at-law,

21, Gower St.,

Colombo.

Hony. Treasurer: P. D. S. Jayasekera, Esq.

“Old Crown”,

Hulftsdorf.

Congress Office,

“Treleaven,”

Union Place,

Colombo, 13th January 1939.

The Minister for Local Administration,  
Colombo.

Sir,

Extension of Local Self-Government

I am directed by the Ceylon National Congress to forward for the favourable consideration of your committee, the following resolution unanimously adopted at the annual sessions of the Congress held on the 17th of December 1938:—

*Resolution referred to*

That in the opinion of this Congress more vigorous measures should be taken for the extension and strengthening of local self-government.

1. C. N. A., 60/191-194.



In this connection Congress will be glad to know when it is hoped to introduce in the State Council the amending Ordinance to Ordinance 11 of 1920.

I am also forwarding for the information of your committee a memorandum on local self-government prepared by the Panadura Mahajana Sabha.

Yours faithfully,  
Jt. Hony. Secretary, C. N. C.

157 : B. REPLY FROM THE MINISTER FOR LOCAL  
ADMINISTRATION, 20 JANUARY 1939

No. A 162.  
The Ministry of Local Administration,  
P. O. Box 500,  
Colombo, January 20, 1939.

#### Extension of Local Government

Sir,

With reference to your letter of January 13, 1939 I am directed by the Honourable the Minister for Local Administration to state that he will be glad to know what the "more vigorous measures" are that the Ceylon National Congress contemplate.

2. The new Urban District Councils Ordinance will be introduced shortly.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,  
J. F. Jansz,  
for Secretary to the Minister  
for Local Administration.

V. C. Perera Esq.,  
Jt. Honorary Secretary,  
Ceylon National Congress,  
"Treleaven", Union Place,  
Colombo.



157 : C. A LETTER FROM L. M. GOONERATNE, 12 JUNE 1939

Mutwal Street,  
Colombo, 12th June 1939.

The Hony. Secretary,  
Ceylon National Congress.

Sir,

Draft Bill—Local Government Ordinance

I think it is best that the National Congress study the Draft Bill of the Local Government Ordinance so that necessary amendments could be secured during the Committee stage.

I shall thank you to be so good as to include the said item on the agenda ; and also to secure the co-operation of a member or members who could study the bill and place necessary amendments before the committee early for acceptance<sup>1</sup>.

Yours faithfully,

L. M. Gooneratne.

158. PAMPHLET ON CONGRESS AND THE MUNICIPAL  
ELECTIONS, 1941<sup>2</sup>

Introductory

The Congress has decided to nominate candidates and to work for their return to the Municipal Council at the forthcoming general elections in December. It arrived at this decision for the following among other reasons :—

- (a) The Congress has decided to work as a political party pledged to achieve certain ideals.

1. A pencilled annotation on the letter reads " Messrs. Victor C. Perera and Abey . . . . . (?) " — either Abeyratne or Abeysondera.

2. C. N. A., 60/331, or 25.21/4. This pamphlet was No. 4 in the series of pamphlets printed in 1940-41 and was printed at the Lankabhinawa Vissruta Press.



- (b) The new Municipal Constitution Ordinance vests all power and responsibility for the development of the city and for the administration of its affairs in the citizens themselves, who act through their representatives, in the Municipal Council. Whatever the Council decides by a majority, provided the decision is not contrary to the law, it enforces through its executive.
- (c) When a party puts up its manifesto and nominates candidates to implement it, the electors know before-hand with certainty, the policy and programme that will be enforced if a majority of the party candidates are sent into Council by them. Under this form of democracy, a planned purpose with long-range works of improvements and sustained endeavour to reach a desired end are unobtainable in practice, without a party majority being in power in the Council.

Therefore the Congress feels that it has a duty to perform by active participation in the elections with a view to educating the voters in their rights and obligations, and guiding them in the choice of true and worthy Councillors. Congress would be shirking a duty, if it does not put up its manifesto before the electors, and invite them to vote for its candidates on party principles, policies and programme.

The policy of a party in Local governing bodies can be indicated only in wide and general terms. It must necessarily reflect the policy of the party in the central government. The Congress stands for democratic freedom and unfettered self-government. It works for the good of the country as a whole, and not for any part of it or for any section of the people who have made it their permanent home. "The greatest good of the greatest number," shall be the compelling drive behind Congress policy, seeking expression in all its endeavours. As such, the



Congress will endeavour to make our municipal body a real poor man's corporation. Our programme is a programme of service of the poor. How can it be otherwise, when we know that one quarter of the city's population (over 50,000) is living in slum quarters, and another quarter lives in houses and conditions far below the accepted modern standard. In some areas, 500 people live within an acre. In one house, seven adults and seven children occupied a room measuring 13 by 15 feet. Nothing raises the standard of living more than decent housing, and the main object of Congress is to raise this standard. We therefore begin our programme with "Housing for the Poor" and hope that we in the Congress, who have the passion, the zeal and the desire to serve the poor, will be afforded an opportunity of doing so in full measure.

1. (a) Housing for the Poor: The average income of a labourer in the city can be estimated at Rs. 20 per mensem. The average number of dependants on him (wife, children, aged parents, etc.) can be stated at three. So that with Rs. 20 per mensem, he has to support himself and three others. To expect him to pay more than Rs. 2 per mensem in house-rent is to invite him to live under conditions of overcrowding and slumming, and to breed disease and pestilence, and be a constant menace to the health of the city. So that the problem of adequate and sanitary housing for the working classes and the poor of the city, resolves itself into providing housing accommodation, each unit of which should accommodate four persons and cost not more than Rs. 2 per mensem in rent to the labourer-tenants. This is impossible of attainment unless the employer is made to contribute wholly or in part to the housing of his workers. Without social legislation providing for the adequate and sanitary housing of the working classes, and fixing responsibility for such housing on the employer and the government, slums, overcrowding, disease, ill-health and sub-human conditions of life for the working classes in capitalist society cannot be surmounted. The best model tenements built will soon become slums from overcrowding.



There are at least 50,000 houses, wanted on an average rent of which varies between Rs. 2 to Rs. 3.50 each a month, necessary for housing the city's workers and the poor.

The municipality has built tenements for its workers which it rents out to them at Rs. 3.50 each. For similar tenements in the city under private ownership, an average rent of Rs. 10 each per mensem is the ruling rate.

A fact that must be taken into consideration in providing housing for this section of the population is that in certain classes of work, such as that in the harbour which has no fixed hours, and depends on when ships call and leave, housing must be provided close to the place of work. Experience in other cities has proved the impossibility of shifting workers from proximity to the place of certain classes of work. Because land is cheap, a few miles outside the city limits, to build housing for city workers outside the city may well prove a failure. In any case, such building outside the city limits must be left to employers and the municipality must concern itself to housing within the city limits.

The Congress Party in the Municipal Council will immediately settle down to this problem. While social legislation and government subsidy are tackled, it will begin to enforce a plan by which it proposes to build tenements for housing the workers and the poor. It will plan to build 50,000 tenements in various parts of the city for a beginning on a loan. Irrespective of cost, it will fix the rent for each of these tenements from Rs. 2 to Rs. 3.50 per mensem, and rent them out only to bona fide labourers. It will press for a Rent Restriction Act for all houses whose monthly rent is not more than Rs. 20. When the Rent Restriction Act has been passed, it will sell these tenements to private owners and apply the proceeds of the sale for building another set of similar tenements to be sold in turn, and so on, till all the loan originally floated for the first 5,000 tenements is exhausted. On the loan, interest and sinking fund will be paid from the revenue, and all income from



renting the tenements while in municipal possession, will be credited to revenue. When the loan is exhausted, another loan will be floated, and the scheme of building continued.

The building of these tenements indirectly solves the problem of slum clearance, for when these tenements become more and more available, the rent in slum land must go down, and the owners of slums will be faced with either improving, or demolishing and rebuilding the slums.

The problem of adequate and sanitary housing of the working classes and the poor, has become an urgent necessity on account of the alarmingly rapid spread of tuberculosis in the city within the last five years. The Congress Party will tackle this problem and push on with its solution, before any other.

1. (b) Housing Scheme for the Middle Class Employees : The position in which employees of the middle class (such as the clerks, etc.) find themselves in regard to housing conditions is even worse than that of labourers in an economic sense. The clerk whose salary is Rs. 50 a month has to pay between Rs. 10 to Rs. 15 per mensem for a room in a boarding house, or if he is a married man with children, Rs. 25 for a small house. Wage-earners of this class whose monthly salary is up to Rs. 150 pay anything from 25 to 40 percent of it in house rent. They are compelled to maintain a style of living, unlike the labourer, far in excess of what their salaries will permit them to do, in order to keep their jobs.

The Congress proposes a scheme of housing for this class, under which the tenant can become the owner of the house occupied by him, provided the occupation is continuous for a number of years, on regular payment of the monthly rental.

The Congress Party will set in motion the building of blocks of cottages in various parts of the city. To each of these blocks of a hundred cottages or so, a primary school



with a playground will be attached, and a small park. Each cottage will have a verandah, a stores room, etc., attached. Each cottage will have a small garden and be detached from the adjoining cottages.

These cottages will be rented out on rents varying from Rs. 25 to Rs. 50 per mensem, and a provision will be included that when a tenant has been in continuous occupation of one of these cottages for about 15 to 20 years or so, he shall become the owner of the cottage and cease to pay rent thereafter. In order to prevent these cottages from passing into the hands of capitalist exploiters in course of time, another provision of ownership will be that these cottages can be owned only by persons of the class for whom they were built, and who should reside in them and not rent them out. Wherever this condition is not fulfilled, the Council will reserve the right for it to buy these cottages back at a price based on its annual value for a number of years.

There are undeveloped and unbuilt on portions of the city where this scheme can be worked out. There are also tracts of land now belonging to the government, and used for recreation and amusement purposes by the rich, such as golf-links, etc., which should be availed of, for this scheme of housing. The rich can always go a few miles outside the city limits for space for sports and recreational activities, as is the practice in other modern and rapidly growing cities. Sanitary facilities, such as water, drainage, sewerage, etc., are not available outside the city for housing schemes. In any case these schemes undertaken by the Municipal Council, can be confined only within city limits.

2. Sanitary Prevention and Treatment of Disease : The sanitary and medical services of the Council have been handicapped by its having to share its responsibility for them with the government. A good deal of the treatment side of the work, which the government undertook to do in its entirety, has been forced on the Council. There is no hard and fast line to be drawn between prevention and



treatment. Often treatment in the early stages is more a preventive than a curative process. Once the financial relation between the government and the municipality are satisfactorily adjusted, the Congress Party will work for the Council to be independent of the central government and to be solely responsible for sanitation and the prevention and treatment of disease within the city.

The sanitary service, efficient in so far as it goes, has still a long way to travel before it can become complete. Less than half the city is connected to the underground sewerage and drainage system. This is due largely to insufficient water and absence of a policy for laying down underground sewers. The Congress loan<sup>1</sup> Party will work for speeding up the completion of the Kalatuwawa Augmentation Scheme for the water supply to the city and with a loan rapidly lay down underground sewers for those parts of the city where they are not existent now, compelling owners to connect their properties to the underground system of sewerage and drainage.

The municipality has been compelled to open dispensaries and maternity homes for the treatment of disease among the poor. There cannot be any going back on this now. It must increasingly bear the burden of treatment of disease now, in addition to its prevention. This means municipal free hospitals and maternity wards, a municipal infectious diseases hospital, municipal tuberculosis hospital, a central tuberculosis dispensary, and such other institutions for which the municipality depended on the government up to now. The divided responsibility for the health of the city between the government and the municipality has tended in recent years, with the growth of the city and its population, to become unsatisfactory. The Congress Party in the Council will work for the municipality to assume sole responsibility for the health of the city in all aspects, and for the government to fulfill its financial obligations to the municipality for doing so.

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1. This would appear to be a printer's devil.



3. **Public Baths and Swimming Baths:** The Congress Party will work for the establishment of an up-to-date public bath in each ward, where for a small fee all conveniences for a hot or cold bath will be made available.

It will also work for providing the citizens with municipal swimming baths and facilities for sea-bathing.

4. **Parks, Playgrounds, Reading Rooms, and Community Centers:** The Congress Party will work for a park, a playground, a reading room and community centers for each district of three or four wards in the City. It will also work for the establishment of a children's playground, for children under 12 years of age, in each ward. In the more congested areas it would be possible to do this by buying up the slums and eliminating them, and by providing housing for those without houses somewhere else in the same districts. At the community centre, regular lectures embracing health, food, clothing, exercise, personal hygiene, citizenship and other such useful information should be a regular feature, as also concerts and variety entertainments.

The playground movement should as far as possible be made to serve the children attending the municipal schools.

5. **Municipal Schools:** There are at present about 10,000 children of schoolgoing age in the city who attend no schools at all. The Congress proposes that all free primary and middle school education in the City should be run either by the municipality or by private societies under its control. It should also run schools for vocational training, such as industrial, commercial and technical schools, and also night schools, mainly for adult education. The education in the schools should be restricted to the children of bona fide residents of the city who cannot afford to pay for their children.

In spite of the increase in the number of schools in the country, unemployment is ever on the increase. Is it because the schools are not paying heed to the needs of the country,



and the education imparted in them is something apart from, and not in preparation for the life and living of the children on leaving school. The needs of every trade and business in the country are supplied for, from outside, chiefly by India; barbers, dhobies, shoemakers, tinkers, masons, tailors, domestic servants, boutique keepers, shop assistance, etc., etc., are pouring in an ever increasing stream from the unwanted and unemployed in India. An effective way of checking this, apart from legislation restricting immigration, is by a radical change in the outlook and policy of our educational system. An important step towards this is to decentralise education and make the local authorities responsible for all free education. A country that cannot turn out the supply to meet the demands of its employment in every phase of its growth, expansion and life has no economic future, and will inevitably be submerged.

The central government must subsidise the local authority and bear a share of the cost of these municipal schools. The financial relations between it and the local authority in respect of these schools must be fixed by legislation.

6. (a) Building and Improvement Trust: Long-term works, such as improvements and rebuilding schemes, slum clearance, planned expansion and development of the city, should be entrusted to a trust operated by law, as is done in the case of most big cities. The term of each Council is fixed for three years, and experience has proved that planned developments and works extended over a number of years is in conflict with the outlook and programmes of short term Councillors who must needs do something and have something to show to the electors when the elections come round. So the only way that long-term works and planned development can be effectively achieved, is through a trust.

There are large tracts of lowlying grasslands within the City which require to be filled up and made suitable for building upon, and for habitation and trade.



The city of Colombo has been allowed to grow haphazard, so that a good deal of improvement and rebuilding is now necessary while planned development is being enforced for the future. All this cannot be undertaken by the Council because it changes every three years, and because its financial resources are limited.

So the Congress proposes the creation of a trust, with adequate representation on it for the Municipal Council, but independent of interference from it, for long-term works.

6. (b) Work of Maintenance: When a trust has been brought into existence for all long-term works of improvements, building and development, the main work of the council in regard to works will resolve itself into one of maintenance. Here there is room for economy and efficiency to be enforced. It is a by-word that the cost of works done by the municipality is very high. Even the government has complained that our rates for road maintenance (government pays the Council for the maintenance of the trunk roads running through the city) are very much higher than those of the P.W.D. The Congress members will settle down to reduce costs of maintenance works. There is something radically wrong with the municipal workshop. Since it is not expected to earn a profit, work done in it must be cheaper than work done by a private firm. The same remarks apply to the work of the municipal quarries as apply to the workshop, and to much of the work done by the Municipal Engineer's Department. Better organisation and stricter control of the Municipal Engineer's Department, one feels, must result in a saving of a million rupees to the rate payers, a sum equivalent to about a fourth of what this department now costs and spends.

7. Ceylonisation of the Services: (a) The Congress stands for the Ceylonisation of the services. In this is included not merely the employment of Ceylonese in place



of non-Ceylonese in the services, but also Ceylonising the scale of salaries and emoluments paid to the officers. The scale of salaries was originally fixed to suit the need of officers recruited from abroad. At that time, Ceylonese were not available, and the number of officers required were not so many. With the expansion of work and the very large number of officers that have now become necessary, the continuance of the old salary scale swallows so large a slice of the revenue that very little is left for urgent development and the social services.

(b) The Congress stands for efficiency and economy in public administration. This involves the selection of officers with the necessary qualifications for the post, but even more, with the necessary temper and aptitude for the work. No other consideration based on race, religion, caste or any other factor, will guide Congress policy in regard to appointments and promotions. It also involves the breaking up of all "customs" of bribery and corruption. Some of the means by which the Congress proposes to rid the administration of bribery and corruption is indicated below in its programme.

(c) The appointment, promotion, transfer, and leave of, or disciplinary action against, all officers and servants of the Council other than the Executive Officers mentioned in Section 68 of the Constitution Ordinance, should be withdrawn from the Council and be vested in a service commission. This is necessary in the interests of efficiency. It has been the rule rather than the exception that Councillors have consistently refused to countenance any recommendations made by executive officers, with the result that these officers now make no recommendations at all. When the head under whom an officer has to work has no voice in his appointment or promotion or in any disciplinary action to be taken against him for incapacity, negligence or misconduct, efficiency cannot result.



3. Non-Ceylonese : (i) The Congress stands for the introduction of legislation on lines similar to the law of naturalisation in autonomous countries, under which all non-Ceylonese who have lived in Ceylon and made Ceylon their permanent home, can acquire Ceylonese status. Those non-Ceylonese who have acquired Ceylonese status will be treated without any discrimination whatever.

(ii) The Congress also stands for legislation restricting immigration. No reasonable person can object to this, because such a step is an economic necessity for the non-Ceylonese who have made Ceylon their home just as much as it is for the Ceylonese themselves. Ceylonese rightly claim that, that which gives them individuality and makes Ceylon different from any other land, must be preserved from submergence by an influx from other countries.

9. Finance : The Congress Party will aim at a speedy and reasonable solution of the financial relation between the municipality and the central Government.

10. Loan Works : There is at present no fixed policy as to what works should be financed from loans and what from current revenue. Such works as Maradana Road widening, triplication of the water main from Labugama to the reservoir at Maligakanda, the Kochchikade area slum clearance and rebuilding scheme, and such other works where the benefits from these works is not only for the present generation of ratepayers but also for the succeeding ones, have been undertaken on current revenue. The objection to this is obvious. In the first place, the present set of ratepayers are made to forego amenities and conveniences to which they are legitimately entitled to, by their being made to pay the entire cost of works, the benefit from which results not only to them, but also, in even greater measure, to their successors. The other objection to this procedure is, that owing to the uncertainty of financing such works from



current revenue, the progress made in such works is slow uncertain and haphazard, resulting in their cost being enhanced. Sometimes the work will have to be abandoned before full completion, for want of funds, as has happened with the Kochchikade slum clearance and rebuilding schemes. The Congress Party in the Council will prepare a schedule of works to be done on loans spread over a number of years, for which interest and sinking fund alone is to be paid from current revenue. This will greatly reduce the cost of these works and lead to a more rapid and planned development of the city. It will also, while making the present set of rate-payers bear their due share for these works, release the rest of the revenue for providing services and amenities which they are entitled to receive.

11. Reform of The Constitution—(a) Nominated Members: The provisions for nominated members should be deleted. The city should be divided into a larger number of wards than at present. This will make possible representation for every section and shade of interest in it. The larger the number of Councillors the easier it is for a party system to develop and for intrigue to disappear in public administration.

Nomination is fundamentally in conflict with the democratic principle. It is the vestigial remains of the dead and dying age of privilege and vested interests, and has no place in representative democracy. What special interest can there be in local government which must needs be safeguarded by nomination !

(b) Term of Office of Mayor and Standing Councillors : The Mayor once elected should continue to hold office till the next Mayor is elected. At present he goes out of office at the end of the year in which he is elected, and a new officer is elected in his place in the January of the ensuing year. There is thus an intervening period each year when



the office of Mayor is vacant. The constitution vests officers with administrative and executive functions. In an emergency, where previous sanction of Council cannot be obtained, the constitution lays down that the Commissioner may incur expenditure with the written approval of the Mayor. These considerations make it necessary for the constitution to be amended as indicated above.

The Mayor once elected should continue to hold office for the full term of a Council. This becomes all the more necessary with a new constitution, till conventions have been established, for continuity of practice and certainly of procedure.

12. Conclusion : The above gives some of the reasons which have impelled the Congress to nominate candidates for the general elections in December and to work as a party in the Colombo Municipal Council. It also indicates, in broad outline, the Congress policy and programme. There is no sharp dividing line possible between policy and programme, particularly in local government. The one runs into the other, and they must both be taken together as outlining in a general way Congress convictions, outlook, and what, among other things, it proposes to do. Though much has been said, much still remains unsaid. It is hoped, however, that after a perusal of the foregoing, what the Congress attitude will be on any question that may arise cannot admit of much doubt. With the experience that comes from working, it will be possible to work out the programme into more definite items of executive endeavour and achievement, during the term of the Council.

In calling upon the electors to vote for Congress candidates, the Congress feels that the time has now arrived when the affairs of the city should be directed and controlled by a plan and a purpose, urged by the greatest good of the greatest number.

**WILL YOU VOTE FOR CONGRESS :**



**159. CONGRESS AND THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS,  
October 1940-January 1941<sup>1</sup>**

159: A. ITEM IN THE CEYLON OBSERVER, 26 OCTOBER 1940

Congress Opposed to Nominated Seats  
Proposals for Reform of City Council

Reform of the existing constitution of the Colombo Municipal Council entirely abolishing the nominated seats but dividing the city into a larger number of wards than at present, is one of the proposals in the manifesto which is to be adopted by the Ceylon National Congress in connection with the forthcoming municipal elections in Colombo.

As previously announced the Congress has decided to nominate candidates for these elections on a party ticket.

A reform of the constitution on the lines stated is advocated on the ground that it will make possible representation for every section and shade of interest.

"The larger the number of Councillors the easier it is for a party system to develop and for intrigue to disappear in public administration," states the draft memorandum.

The principle of nomination of members is condemned as "the vestigate remains of the dead and dying age of privileged and vested interests."

It is suggested that the Mayor once elected should continue to hold office for the full term of a Council. The standing committees too, should continue to function for the full term so that continuity of practice may be secured.

Service Commission

The appointment, promotion, disciplinary action, etc., of all officers and servants of the Council, other than the Executive Officers mentioned in section 68 of the constitution ordinance, it is recommended should be withdrawn from the Council and vested in a services commission.

1. Largely derived from a scrapbook of newspaper cuttings in the possession of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene. Some items are from C. N. A., 25. 21/8.



The creation of a Building and Improvement Trust is suggested to deal with long-term works such as improvement and rebuilding schemes, slum clearance, planned expansion and development of the city.

It is stated in this connection that experience has proved that planned development and works extended over a number of years is in conflict with the outlook and programmes of short-term councillors, who must needs do something and have something to show to the electors when the elections come round. So the only way that long-term works and planned development can be effectively achieved is through a Trust.

The proposal is the creation of a Trust with adequate representation on it for the Municipal Council, but indelisation of the bus and tram service.

#### Buses and Trams

Another major item of Congress policy is the municipalisation of the bus and tram service.

It is stated that the municipality should run the bus services for the city. The tram-cars should be taken off the road, and wherever it is found to be suitable trolley-buses should take their place. The motor-lorry transport within the city should be restricted to lorries specially licenced for that purpose.

Through traffic, such as from Kandy to Galle, should be given definite routes with halting places to which alone they should be restricted.

Municipalisation of the traffic, it is stated, will lead to more effective control of it, and also lead to a cleaner and cheaper and more uniform and regular service for the residents of the city.

#### Distribution of Current

The Congress further advocates municipalisation of distribution of electric current for lighting and power



within the city. It says it is a service which the Council should undertake by buying the current in bulk from the government.

By the Council undertaking the distribution, as the figures point at present, it will be possible for the Council to reduce the cost of current to the consumer considerably.

The Congress party, the manifesto states, will work for the Council to be independent of the Central Government and to be solely responsible for sanitation and the prevention and treatment of disease within the city.

Special prominence is given to the question of housing, and in this connection it is stated that while social legislation and government subsidy are tackled, the Congress will begin to enforce a plan by which it proposes to build tenements or cottages for housing the workers and the poor. It will plan to build 5,000 of them in various parts of the city for a beginning on a loan.

**159 : B. PRE-ELECTION SURVEY BY THE MUNICIPAL CORRESPONDENT,<sup>1</sup> CEYLON DAILY NEWS, 7 NOVEMBER 1940**

**Party Contests in Municipal Elections  
Keen Interest in All City Wards**

The municipal elections in Colombo next month will undoubtedly be the liveliest and most significant in the history of the city. November 19 has been fixed as nomination day, and with the brisk canvassing that is going on at the moment in practically all the 20 wards, there is promise of keen contests everywhere.

This will be the second general election under the new Municipal Ordinance. But the march to the polls in December 1940, will be as much unlike that of March, 1937, as the latter differed from all previous elections. There are two

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1. Mr. P. B. Fernando.



important developments which invest municipal politics today with a new importance—showing, incidentally, the progress that has been made both in the municipal Constitution itself and in the general recognition of the ratepayers' right.

Firstly, the electoral lists this year reveal that there is practically universal franchise for city voters, though not so in name; and secondly, for the first time in municipal politics, the nominees of various parties, pledged to support the party program, will face the hustings.

### Far-Reaching Changes

The first of these two developments acquires a striking interest in that, as everybody knows, the municipal franchise falls short of universal suffrage. In 1938 far-reaching changes were effected in the voters' qualifications, enabling tenants paying a monthly rental of not less than one rupee and personel drawing a monthly income of Rs. 15 to become registered, as well as those holding property of the annual rate of Rs. 10, and boarders in clubs, hotels and boarding-houses. This was not universal franchise; but in the results of the registration, it has really outstripped in numbers the results of universal suffrage for elections to the State Council.

One result of the new franchise is that large numbers of non-Ceylonese, especially Malayalees, who lived in crowded boarding-houses, have been enfranchised, and they hold a commanding influence in some of the larger wards.

The total number of voters in the 20 municipal electoral lists stands at 108,525, after the revision of the lists this year, as against a paltry 29,284 in 1937, whereas for the State Council elections, the total number of voters of the three city constituencies, Colombo North, Central and South, as revised in 1939, was 108,297.

Thus, the restricted municipal franchise beats the universal franchise of the State Council.



### Voters' Strength

As of interest, I give below the voters' strength in the 20 wards :—

Mutwal	..	..	7,437
Kotahena	..	..	7,320
Moderā	..	..	4,938
St. Paul's North	..	..	3,642
St. Paul's South	..	..	6,094
New Bazaar East	..	..	4,523
New Bazaar West	..	..	5,547
Pettah	..	..	5,224
San Sebastian	..	..	4,106
Fort	..	..	1,314
Maradana North	..	..	10,816
Maradana South	..	..	4,854
Dematagoda	..	..	8,055
Slave Island North	..	..	4,610
Slave Island South	..	..	4,912
Cinnamon Gardens	..	..	2,620
Kollupitiya	..	..	6,547
Thimbirigasyaya	..	..	4,780
Bambalapitiya	..	..	3,499
Wellawatte	..	..	7,687

### Dearth of Women Candidates

Another interesting fact in the electoral lists is that 31,110 of the 108,525 voters are females—that is about 30 per cent of the full electoral roll. Maradana North (3,390) has the largest number of female voters, followed by Dematagoda (2,799), Mutwal (2,646), Kollupitiya (2,061).

With women claiming so large a place in the voters' lists it is surprising that so far not more than one or two of them have shown a desire to attempt to enter the Municipal Council.



There is no doubt of the valuable service they can render, as party members or even in their individual capacity, on such subjects as housing, sanitation, child welfare work, etc.

In 1937, two women candidates contested seats; and one of them Mrs. (Dr.) Mary Ratnam won in Bambalapitiya beating two men candidates, but after some months was disqualified on a technical objection.

Is it a lack of public spirit that is keeping women candidates away from the municipal elections this year? Or, as I have heard it said, is it due to the "low standards" of electioneering prevalent in the city?

#### Congress Policy

As regards the other interesting development I have referred to, namely the entry of parties in to the lists, it had been known for some time that both the Ceylon National Congress and the Labour Party would put forward a number of candidates. Two other parties, the Ceylon Muslim League and the Ceylon Indian Congress, I understand, will restrict themselves to nominating candidates only for a few of the wards, especially those in North and Central Colombo. At the same time, there are bound to be some independent candidates.

The Congress has issued an interesting manifesto, of the policy and program its members would pursue if elected. "The time has now arrived when the affairs of the city should be directed and controlled by a plan and a purpose," it says. Few there are who will disagree with the progressive policy of municipal work which the Congress promises to undertake.

Those who framed this manifesto, especially Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, the live-wire of the whole Congress campaign, have, it must be said, laid their finger on some



of the real defects of the present municipal administration. There are valuable suggestions, such as the creation of a Building and Improvement Trust, the preparation of a schedule of works to be done on loans spread over a number of years, municipal schools and housing schemes for both the poor and the middle classes. Long-suffering ratepayers will especially welcome the declaration that the Congress is out to break up "all custom of bribery and corruption."

#### Communal Votes

As for the entry of the Ceylon Muslim League and the Ceylon Indian Congress into the fray, it is a fact that these two bodies, if they come in at all, will make their attempts in wards where communal votes will favour them.

Another proof that communal strength is being readily exploited by some people is to be found in the fact that, a few nights ago, the Malayalees held a large meeting to decide on the candidates whom they should support in a body.

So far, communal considerations have been, more or less, kept in the background in municipal politics. Will the larger franchise succeed in introducing the canker of communalism into the municipal body also?

#### "Key" Electorates

It is not possible, at this distance, to give with certainty the names of the candidates who will seek election on November 19. Up to date I have been able to count more than 50 aspirants who have been canvassing, or are canvassing, in the various wards. Some of them, of course, will drop out before November 19.

In February, 1937, 15 seats were contested and 39 candidates in all entered the lists. Both these totals will very probably be exceeded this year.



There are some "key" electorates where party leaders are said to have a strong hand, or are in danger of being defeated. Among them are—St. Paul's South, where Dr. R. Saravanamuttu will seek re-election on the Congress ticket, Maradana South, where Mr. A. E. Goonesinha is likely to be opposed by Dr. A. P. de Zoysa ; Maradana North, the ward with the largest number of voters, where the sitting member, Mr. N. M. M. Ishak, will not seek re-election ; Slave Island North and South, where the two sitting members, Dr. A. Ratnapala and Mr. R. F. S. de Mel, are to be contested by a business man and a professional man, respectively, both of whom are residents of the area ; San Sebastian, where it is understood that a rift has occurred in the Labour Party's following ; New Bazaar East and Cinnamon Gardens, where, it is said, the sitting members, Messrs. A. R. A. Razik and G. H. C. Fernando will meet with stiff opposition.

### Greater than Policy

In spite of the entry of the various parties, the indications at present are that personal influence and popularity will count more than policy or principles. The party contests will certainly clarify certain issues, but at the same time it may happen that there will not be much difference between the professed programme of one party and another.

Furthermore, there has grown in the city a hard tradition, that a candidate who is in earnest should be prepared to spend money to win his seat. The result is that, in many instances in the past, money has really won the day !

With the larger franchise and the interest of parties, will this tradition, which is a disgrace to the city, also vanish into the limbo of the old, forgotten constitution ? Or, will it have a larger field wherein to spread ?



159 : C. JAYEWARDENE—RAZIK CORRESPONDENCE, NOVEMBER  
1940<sup>1</sup>

1. J. R. Jayewardene to A. R. A. Razik, 10 November 1940<sup>2</sup>

10th November, 1940.

A. R. A. Razik Esq.,  
Hajira Villa,  
Bambalapitiya.

Dear Razik,

The Ceylon National Congress has nominated me to stand for election for the New Bazaar East Ward.

I am prepared however to ask the Executive Committee and the Nominations Board for permission to withdraw my name in your favour, provided you join the Congress as a member and fully accept its policy and programme. As you have recently expressed views diametrically opposed to the present policy of the Congress, it will be necessary for you to make a public declaration that you accept the Congress creed.

I suggest that you should make this declaration : " I am willing to join the Ceylon National Congress, and I hereby accept its policy and programme. In accordance with that policy, I shall therefore :

(1) Resign immediately from all organisations which advocate the representation of communal or special interests in the legislature.

(2) Advice members of my community to join the Congress as its present policy is comprehensive enough to safeguard the interests of all communities.

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1. Located among the J. R. Jayewardene MSS; now in C.N.A., 60/360.

2. Two typed copies of this letter were available together with a Sinhalese version in J. R. Jayewardene's hand.



(3) Resign my nominated seat in the State Council at the bidding of the Executive Committee of the Congress, as the Congress policy is against nominated seats.

(4) Make a public declaration to the New Bazaar East electorate and also through the press that I have joined the Congress and accepted its policy, particularly the facts stated above."

Please let me know as early as possible your decision, so that I may summon a meeting of the Congress Committee.

Yours truly,

**2. A. R. A. Razik to J. R. Jayewardene, 11 November 1940<sup>1</sup>**

Dear Jayewardene,

I am in receipt of your letter of the 10th instant. You are aware that I am not in a position to give any definite undertaking without consulting my community and the Association of which I am the President. In due course I shall communicate to you their views.

Yours truly,

A. R. A. Razik.

**3. A. R. A. Razik to J. R. Jayewardene, 13 November 1940**

Dear Jayewardene,

As indicated in my letter I have placed your proposal before a representative Committee of my community and the advice they gave me was not to withdraw from my candidature for the New Bazaar East ward.

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1. Mr. Razik's letters were written on a letterhead bearing his address (Hajira Villa, Fareed Place, Bambalapitiya) and were addressed to Mr. J. R. Jayewardene in his capacity as Honorary Secretary of the Ceylon National Congress.



The Committee further expressed indignation at the terms in which your letter was couched.

Yours truly,  
A. R. A. Razik.

159 : D. ITEM IN THE CEYLON OBSERVER, 19 NOVEMBER 1940,  
ON NOMINATION DAY

Nine candidates were returned unopposed when the nomination papers for the election of members to the Colombo Municipal Council were received at the Town Hall today. They are :

Dr. R. Saravanamuttu	—	St. Paul's South
(Congress)		
Mr. J. R. Jayewardene	—	New Bazaar East
(Congress)		
Mr. George R. de Silva	—	Kotahena
(Congress)		
Mr. Justin Kotelawala	—	Cinnamon Gardens
(Congress)		
Dr. S. D. Fernando (Labour)	—	Moderia
Dr. E. A. Coorey	—	Wellawatte
Mr. S. Saravanamuttu	..	St. Paul's North
Mr. R. Doresamy	—	Fort
Mr. D. S. Fonseka	—	Thimbirigasyaya.

The keenest enthusiasm was displayed by candidates and their supporters. Mr. H. B. Kannangara, the Returning Officer for the forthcoming election, received the nomination papers.

The great interest taken this year in the elections is attributable to the decision made by the Ceylon National Congress to enter the field of municipal politics and sponsor the candidature of its nominees on a party ticket. The



Ceylon Labour Party which has a majority in the present Council appears to be determined to put up a good fight against its new rival.

There is promise of the keenest rivalry at the elections.

Among the eleventh hour surprises were Mr. K. Natesa Iyer (Slave Island South), Mr. R. Sivagurunathan (San Sebastian) and Mr. V. Ekanayake (Maradana North).

The following are the nominations :—Kotahena : Mr. George R. de Silva (Congress); New Bazaar (East): Mr. J. R. Jayewardene (Congress); New Bazaar (West) : Mr. N. Saravanamuttu, Mr. A. R. A. Razik and Mr. N. D. H. Abdul Wahab ; San Sebastian : Mr. M. L. M. Reyal (Labour) and Mr. R. Sivagurunathan ; St. Paul's (North) : Mr. S. Saravanamuttu ; St. Paul's (South) : Dr. R. Saravanamuttu (Congress) ; Slave Island (South) : Mr. R. F. S. de Mel, Mr. W. A. D. Ramanayake and Mr. K. Natesa Iyer ; Cinnamon Gardens : Mr. Justin Kotelawala (Congress) ; Fort : Mr. R. Doresamy ; Slave Island (North) : Dr. A. Ratnapala (Congress) and Mr. M. E. Akbar ; Maradana (South) : Mr. A. E. Goonesinha (Labour) and Dr. A. P. de Zoysa ; Dematagoda : Mr. J. R. Dharmasena (Labour) and Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa (Congress) ; Pettah : Mr. V. R. Somanathan and Mr. M. F. Ghany ; Maradana (North) : Mr. P. Givendrasinghe, Mr. D. N. Hapugalle and Mr. V. Ekanayake Kollupitiya : Dr. C. S. S. Fernando (Labour) and Mr. R. A. de Mel (Congress) ; Thimbirigasyaya : Mr. D. S. Fonseka ; Mutwal : Dr. A. F. J. Casie Chetty (Congress) and Mr. B. R. de Silva (Labour) ; Modera : Dr. S. D. Fernando (Labour) ; Bambalapitiya : Mr. Gilbert Perera (Congress) and Mr. D. C. Weerasekera ; Wellawatte : Dr. E. A. Coorey.

An objection raised on behalf of Mr. Givendrasinghe against the nomination of Mr. Hapugalle was overruled, as was one against Mr. Ghany raised on behalf of Mr. Somanathan.



### Allocation of Colours

The following colours were allotted to the candidates :—

**RED** : Messrs. A. E. Goonesinha, V. R. Somanathan, J. R. Dharmasena, K. Natesa Iyer, Dr. C. W. S. Fernando, Messrs. M. L. M. Reyal, D. N. Hapugalle, B. R. de Silva, A. R. A. Razik and D. C. Weerasekera.

**YELLOW** : Mr. P. Givendrasinghe.

**GREEN** : Messrs. M. F. Ghany, R. F. S. de Mel, Gilbert Perera, N. D. H. Abdul Wahab, V. Ekanayake, R. Sivagurunathan, M. E. Akbar.

**WHITE** : Dr. A. F. J. Casie Chetty, Dr. A. P. de Zoysa, Messrs. J. N. Jinendradasa, W. A. D. Ramana-yake, N. Saravanamuttu and Dr. A. Ratnapala.

**159 : E.** ANOTHER REPORT FROM THE MUNICIPAL CORRESPONDENT OF THE CEYLON DAILY NEWS, 21 NOVEMBER 1940

#### Side-Lights on City Council Nominations State Councillors in Three Contests

A nomination day without surprises may be regarded as exceptional in Ceylon. The most surprising fact about the Colombo municipal nominations was not the discomfiture of a few of the sitting members nor the list of last-minute entries into the field, but the large number of prospective candidates who gave up the struggle at the very first hurdle and disappointed their supporters.

Twenty-five candidates are to contest eleven seats. But I have been able to count up at least fifteen others who had intentions of coming forward and actually canvassed in the respective wards. Some of them were mere "adventurers"—those who made a camouflage of their real purpose and, perhaps, thought they had thus increased their own value in the election business. Others there were who were



genuinely interested, but found out their limitations in time. All praise to the latter ! For, they have themselves learned a few good lessons and, at the same time, made easier the difficult task of the voters.

The nine members returned unopposed, Messrs. Geo. R. de Silva, S. Saravanamuttu, J. R. Jayewardene, R. Dore-samy, Justin Kotelawala, D. S. Fonseka, Dr. E. A. Coorey, Dr. R. Saravanamuttu and Dr. S. D. Fernando, represent a total of 42,918 voters.

The respective strength of their wards is as follows :—  
Kotahena (7,320), New Bazaar East (4,523), Fort (1,314), Cinnamon Gardens (2,620), Thimbirigasyaya (4,780) Wellawatte (7,687), St. Paul's South (6,094) and Modera (4,938).

Since the full strength of the electoral roll is 108,525 voters, the forthcoming elections in the eleven wards will affect a total of 65,607 voters—a sufficient number to spread the excitement all over the city !

It is also an interesting fact that, since the inauguration of the reformed city Council, the voters of two of the wards, St. Paul's North and South, have not had the privilege of exercising the right of franchise. In 1937 also Dr. Saravanamuttu and Mr. S. Saravanamuttu were returned unopposed.

So far, the success of the National Congress nominees is striking. Four of them have been returned unopposed. Two others who have not had to face an election belong to what is known as the Saravanamuttu group in the present Council. And among the eleven contests, one can easily see five or six others who are fairly certain of being elected and who belong either to the National Congress or the Saravanamuttu group. This is not to say that the members of the Saravanamuttu group will, all of them, take the side of the National Congress.



But it shows definitely that the National Congress nominees and their other supporters will occupy a commanding place in the next council.

As everybody knows, the worst defect of the present Council, from which most other defects have arisen, is the group rivalry centred round individuals and not based on any principle or policy. This has brought the personal factor into great prominence, and militated against the achievement of any useful long-range work.

It remains to be seen whether the National Congress nominees will effectively break up this undesirable group rivalry, and substitute in the new Council a well-ordered scheme of party politics containing the elements of co-operation as well as opposition, where necessary.

Three of the sitting members have not sought re-election, namely Messrs. N. M. M. Ishak, Merrill W. Pereira and C. H. Z. Fernando. Seven sitting members are involved in contests, and will have in the coming weeks to prove to their electors that they have not neglected the rate payers' interests in the past three years, or that still they are better than their opponents.

Of the contested wards, chief interest is bound to be centred in the three areas where members of the State Council are directly involved.

In New Bazaar West, Mr. A. R. A. Razik, nominated member of the State Council, will contest the sitting member, as well as another old opponent, Mr. N. D. H. Abdul Wahab. In Maradana South, Mr. A. E. Goonesinha, M. S. C. for Colombo Central, will try conclusions with Dr. A. P. de Zoysa, M. S. C. for Colombo South; and in Slave Island South, Mr. K. Natesa Aiyer, M. S. C. for Hatton, will fight the issue with the sitting member, Mr. R. F. S. de Mel, and with Mr. W. A. D. Ramanayake.

Mr. Razik's plight is unenviable. He is the sitting member for New Bazaar East. When originally Mr. Jayewardene



declared his intention to come forward for this seat, Mr. Razik of his own accord withdrew to Bambalapitiya, where he stated he had resided for 43 years. A few days later, friends of his "after much persuasion succeeded in inducing Mr. Razik to reconsider his decision and contest to seek re-election to the New Bazaar Ward."

But on Tuesday, Mr. Razik turned West instead of East!

One finds it difficult to associate with a politician of Mr. Razik's experience the fault that he was not able to make up his mind.

In Maradana South, Dr. de Zoysa, true to tradition, has sprung a real surprise. The member for Colombo South has been described as the "bogey man" of local politics. When he first came into State Council politics, there were prophets who discounted his chances almost contemptuously, but he went on to beat his opponent, literally, all along the line.

Maradana South has 4,354 voters, and a keen and close contest is expected, according to present reports.

As regards Slave Island South, this is one of those wards where the wider franchise has brought into the list a large number of Malayalees and other Indian electors. There is not the slightest doubt where the majority of these votes, if not all of them, would go.

A period of about three weeks must intervene before the elections. Already, I am told, leaflets and other literature have been circulated containing personal and abusive references. The candidates themselves generally deny all knowledge of them, and attribute the effusions to over-enthusiastic supporters. Cannot every candidate insist that supporters should not issue any literature without his sanction?

Such a step would help to minimise one of the most unseemly features of these elections.



159 : F. Results of the Municipal Elections, December 1940<sup>1</sup>

<i>Bambalapitiya</i>		<i>Kollupitiya</i>	
Gilbert Perera (CNC)	.. 1,178	R. A. de Mel (CNC)	.. 2,297
D. C. Weerasekera (Labour)	.. 760	C. W. S. Fernando (Labour)	.. 2,137
	Maj. .. 418		Maj. .. 160
<i>New Bazaar West</i>		<i>Pettah</i>	
N. Saravanamuttu	.. 2,444	M. F. Ghany	.. 2,071
A. R. A. Razik	.. 1,978	V. R. Somanathan	.. 1,720
N. H. Abdul Wahab	.. 32		
	Maj. .. 466		Maj. .. 351
<i>Maradana North<sup>2</sup></i>		<i>Maradana South</i>	
P. Givendrasinghe	.. 4,247	A. E. Goonesinha (Labour)	1,871
D. N. Hapugalle (Labour)	.. 1,854	Dr. A. P. de Zoysa	.. 1,465
V. Ekanayake	.. 73		
	Maj. .. 2,393		Maj. .. 406
<i>San Sebastian</i>		<i>Dematagoda</i>	
M. L. M. Reyah (Labour)	.. 1,981	J. R. Dharmasena (Labour)	3,437
R. Sivagurunathan	.. 737	J. N. Jinendradasa (CNC)	.. 1,292
	Maj. .. 1,244		Maj. .. 2,145
<i>Slave Island North</i>		<i>Mutwal</i>	
Dr. A. Ratnapala (CNC)	.. 1,940	Dr. A. F. J. Casiechetty (CNC)	2,698
M. E. Akbar ..	.. 1,513	B. R. de Silva	.. 1,883
	Maj. .. 427		Maj. .. 813
<i>Slave Island South</i>			
R. F. S. de Mel	.. 2,728		
W. A. D. Ramanayake	.. 1,177		
K. R. Natesa Iyer <sup>3</sup>	.. 33		
	Maj. .. 1,551		

1. The results are derived from news items in the *CDN* in the course of December 1940.

2. In the speeches that followed the announcement of the results, Mr. Givendrasinghe said that the contest was actually between him and A. E. Goonesinha. He added: "I have nailed Mr. Goonesinha's political coffin today and in two years time I shall see that he is given a public burial." See *CDN*, 9 December 1940.

3. Iyer withdrew from the contest but gave notice too late for the ballot papers to be altered.



159 : G. CEYLON DAILY NEWS EDITORIAL, 16 DECEMBER 1940 :  
" THE MUNICIPAL ELECTION "

Colombo has just had the interesting experience of a municipal election run for the first time on party lines. By far the most outstanding of its many features has been the almost complete rout of the party calling itself the Labour Party. With the exception of three of its candidates every contestant who went to the electorate on the Labour ticket was rejected by the voters, and Mr. Goonesinha himself, the leader of the party, suffered what amounts to virtual defeat at the hands of a rival who was a complete stranger to the ward he contested as well as to city politics. In this connection the pathetic case of Mr. C. H. Z. Fernando, one time the stable companion of Mr. Goonesinha, has its own lesson for those who would play a part in politics, whether local or national. In his own way a capable politician—which is more than can be said of many State Councillors and Municipal Councillors—Mr. Fernando has in the course of his career pledged his allegiance at some time or another to practically every party that has been in existence until today no party apparently has any use for him. No longer a darling of the Labour "bosses," he failed to secure the benediction of the Congress for his candidature and has disappeared from a sphere where he was active for many years.

People will remember the craft and corruption associated with municipal politics in Colombo a quarter of a century ago. The most undesirable practices that can mar a municipal administration were indulged in so freely that responsible citizens determined to bring an end to that state of affairs. Their efforts succeeded in purging the body municipal of much of its evils, and for a fair period municipal politics remained comparatively clean. During the last seven or eight years, however, a process of deterioration has set in, and it is to redeem this tendency



that the Congress, we believe, decided to enter the arena of municipal politics after having confined its attention entirely for over twenty years to national problems. By rallying in such large numbers to the support of candidates sponsored by the Congress the voters have shown that they are dissatisfied with the way in which affairs were being conducted by the party which has just been dealt such a staggering blow, and have furnished the Congress with a mandate and an opportunity to remedy the existing state of affairs.

Taken as a whole, the result of the election shows that the average voter is not such a fool as some people try to make out. The voters of the city of Colombo have convincingly demonstrated their ability to weigh the claims of the rival candidates and vote for the man they consider the best without being swayed by irrelevant considerations. It is curious to find that the European community, who have of late begun to question the fitness of the people for the adult franchise, should have made common cause in the election that is just over with the very forces which wanted the workers to vote like sheep without discrimination for the Labour Party nominees. It is no secret that the Europeans, to whom not so very long ago Mr. Goonesinha was like a red rag to a bull, went all out in support of Mr. Goonesinha and his party. But their joint blandishments failed to prevent the generality of voters doing their duty as men with wills of their own at the polls. The results of the election must be heeded as a sign and warning to all politicians that sooner or later in a democracy there comes the day of reckoning. We hope the next three years will be a better and cleaner era in the history of municipal politics, and that citizens will have tangible evidence at last of really good work being done for the progress and advancement of the city of Colombo.



159 : H. CEYLON DAILY NEWS REPORT<sup>1</sup> ON THE ELECTION OF  
THE MAYOR, 8 JANUARY 1941

Dr. R. Saravanamuttu Once Again Mayor

“Pledged to A Policy for The First Time”

“Labour Party” Stands Out of Committees

“For the first time in the seventy-five years’ history of this Council we assemble today pledged to a policy and a program,” declared the new Mayor of Colombo, Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, when he was elected to the office yesterday afternoon by 15 votes to 8, one member declining to vote.

The galleries of the Council chamber were never so crowded as they were yesterday, although admission was restricted to ticket-holders.

The Municipal Commissioner, Mr. S. P. Wickremasinha, sprang a surprise on the members when he mounted the Mayor’s rostrum, to preside over the Mayoral election, attired in an Indian costume consisting of a long ash-coloured coat and jodhpurs.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene was the first to rise in his seat to propose the name of the new Mayor but Mr. A. E. Goonesinha rose simultaneously and forestalled Mr. Jayewardene by proposing the name of Dr. E. A. Coorey for the office. This was seconded by Mr. M. L. M. Reyal.

Mr. Jayewardene, who was still on his feet, then proposed the name of Dr. R. Saravanamuttu. Mr. Justin Kotelawala seconded the motion.

A ballot was then taken and the Commissioner announced the results as follows :—

			<i>Votes</i>
Dr. Saravanamuttu	..	..	15
Dr. Coorey	..	..	8
Declined to vote	..	..	1

1. *CDN*, 9 January 1941.



The announcement of Dr. Saravanamuttu's election by the Commissioner was greeted with loud and prolonged cheers in the chamber and the galleries.

This was followed by the election of Mr. George R. de Silva, uncontested, as the Deputy Mayor. Mr. de Silva's name was proposed by Dr. Saravanamuttu and seconded by Mr. P. Givendrasinghe.

Dr. Saravanamuttu then took the Mayoral chair.

### Mayor Congratulated

Mr. K. A. Gilbert Perera, speaking on behalf of the Congress Party, congratulated the Mayor on his election to that high office. For the first time in the history of this country, he said, elections had been fought on party lines. He did not say that party politics were the best for a country but so far no better system had been discovered.

Mr. Perera next referred to the "fiasco" brought about by the Donoughmore commissioners, who had tried to create a constitution that would work without party politics. It had only put a premium on political intrigue and afforded the political opportunist a wide field for his machinations.

One reason for the Congress to enter municipal politics as a party was to show that the country was sufficiently advanced politically to work on party lines and that the different communities were fundamentally united in spite of disputes as regards details.

### "Labour" Assurance

Mr. A. E. Goonesinha, speaking on behalf of the four "Labour" members in Council, offered their congratulations to the Mayor. He hoped that the Mayor would, as he (Dr. Saravanamuttu) had done when he was elected the first Mayor of that Council, seek the co-operation of all the members and not look down on the members of the other party.



So far as the members of the Labour Party in the Council were concerned he assured the Mayor of their co-operation, in the same manner as Dr. Saravanamuttu had extended the co-operation of his party when he (Mr. Goonesinha) was Mayor. But, in order to ensure the homogeneity of the Congress Party in the Committees, the members of his party had decided to allow the Congress Party to fill all the committees and the "Labour" members would keep out of all committees.

Wherever possible, however, they would give their co-operation and assistance in Council, in open debate. He asked that no member of his party be included in any of the committees.

Mr. J. R. Toussaint (nominated) said that, as a "No-Party" man, or one who belonged to both parties, he wished to add to the felicitations already showered on the Mayor. Mr. Saravanamuttu's record of service in that Council was a sufficient guarantee that he would maintain the dignity of his office as it should be. He assured the Mayor that they would do everything in their power to see that the interests of the Council did not suffer during the present Mayoralty.

#### Mayor's Reply

Dr. Saravanamuttu, in reply, thanked the Council for calling him again to be the first servant of the city. From his boyhood he had lived and grown in this city and he had come, in recent years, to establish a personal relationship with the city. He had shared in its joys and sorrows, in its fears and its hopes. He had also dreamed dreams with it.

Continuing, Dr. Saravanamuttu said that for the first time in the seventy-five years' history of that Council they assembled that day pledged to a policy and a program and, though it was on those lines that the electorates had returned Congress members, he felt confident of the enthusiastic co-operation and support of all members of



that Council. Mr. Goonesinha and members of his party would find that what was proposed belonged as much to the left-wing as they could desire it to be. From Mr. Goonesinha and his party he would always have encouragement and assistance. From the right wing he anticipated equal help. After all, political parties were but the means to an end, the end being the expression of their love for the city and for the country.

### Planned Development

Dr. Saravanamuttu suggested that the Council should push ahead first with that part of the program which falls within utility works, which were completely or partially remunerative.

In war time, the financial implications of new works must necessarily loom big and increased taxation could not be lightly undertaken, but they could not be satisfied with just maintaining what was and crying halt to new works, when unemployment was daily on the increase.

With the assembling of this Council, said Dr. Saravanamuttu, great hopes had been released among the citizens of planned development and achievement. "You have put me at the helm. Will you not help me to serve you and this city, which we all love, and unitedly offer our best in such service?" concluded the Mayor.

### How They Voted

The voting in the Mayoral election is believed to have been divided as follows :—For Dr. Saravanamuttu : Messrs. K. Adamaly, R. A. de Mel, Dr. Casie Chetty, Messrs. R. F. S. de Mel, George R. de Silva, R. Doreswamy, D. S. Fonseka, P. Givendrasinghe, J. R. Jayewardene, Justin Kotelawala, Gilbert Perera, Dr. Ratnapala, Messrs. N. Saravanamuttu, S. Saravanamuttu and Dr. Saravanamuttu ..... 15.



For Dr. Coorey : Messrs. F. A. Bond, J. R. Dharmasena, Dr. Coorey, Dr. S. D. Fernando, Messrs. M. F. Ghany, A. E. Goonesinha, M. L. M. Reyal, and J. R. Toussaint .....  
 ..... 8.

159 : I. TIMES OF CEYLON REPORT<sup>1</sup> ON THE ELECTION OF THE  
 MAYOR, 8 JANUARY 1941

New Mayor's Dreams for Colombo  
 Predecessor's "We will avoid the Coffins"

Dr. R. Saravanamuttu was elected Mayor of Colombo (as stated in our later editions yesterday) by 15 votes to eight. One declined to vote. His opponent was Dr. E. A. Coorey.

Mr. Geo. R. de Silva was unanimously elected Deputy Mayor in the absence of an opposing candidate.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene proposed the name of Dr. Saravanamuttu, which Mr. Justin Kotelawala seconded. Mr. A. E. Goonesinha proposed the name of Dr. E. A. Coorey. Mr. M. L. M. Reyal seconded.

Mr. Gilbert Perera, in congratulating the Mayor said : "For the first time in the history of our country, elections have been fought on party lines. I do not think that party politics are the best for a country, but so far human ingenuity has not been able to discover a better means.

We are aware of the fiasco that has been enacted by the Donoughmore commissioners who tried to form a constitution that will work without party politics. The only result of such a political experiment has been that political progress has been retarded. It has put a premium on intrigue and afforded to the political opportunist a wide

1. *The Times of Ceylon*, 9 January 1941.



field for his machinations. The result has been that principles of public morality are at a very low ebb in the country. Moreover this novel experiment has afforded our enemies the opportunity to charge us with political ineptitude and disunion.

One reason for the Congress to enter municipal politics as a party is to show that the country is sufficiently politically-minded to work on party lines and that the various communities are fundamentally united in spite of disputes as regards details."

After referring to the problems confronting them such as slum clearance, poor relief, etc., Mr. Perera said: "It is at this critical stage in the development of our country that you, no stranger to this high office, have been chosen to be the first Congress Mayor. May we be able with your help to achieve the main purpose of the Congress Party and that our policy of 'the greatest good to the greatest number' make this municipal body a real poor man's corporation."

#### Labour to Co-operate

Mr. A. E. Goonesinha assured the Mayor of the co-operation of the Labour Party. He hoped the Mayor would seek the co-operation of every member of the Council and not seek to down other parties and sing the virtues of only one, and not endeavour to prepare coffins and nail them.

"At the same time, our party decided in order to ensure homogeneity with the Congress, that you should fill up all the Committees and for our party to keep out wherever possible. We will give you the co-operation and assistance, if necessary."

Mr. J. R. Toussaint speaking as a no-party man said: "Your record as the first Mayor is sufficient guarantee that you will maintain the dignity of this office as it should be maintained.



I should like to offer you my assurance that we shall do every thing in our power to see that the interests of this Council do not suffer during your Mayoralty.”

### Mayor's Thanks

The Mayor acknowledging the thanks of the Council said: “Thank you for calling me again to be the first servant of this city. If there was any hesitation on my part, believe me it was due to diligent searching within me as to my fitness.

“From my boyhood I have lived and grown in this city. She has created for me all the heritage which is the opportunity of my life. Dwelling in that concept of the civic sense to which Valmiki gives expression in a scene of the Ramayana in which Hanuman contends in the darkness with the woman who guarded the gates saying: ‘I am the city of Lanka.’ I have come in recent years to establish a personal relationship with her. I have shared in her joys and her sorrows, in her fears and her hopes. I have also dreamed dreams with her. She will be fashioned by the dreams which her citizens will dream with her and for her.

“Now, has Colombo a soul? Those who will approach her with imported ideas and will look on her through imported glasses must needs find her distant and soulless.

“For the first time in the 75 years' history of this Council we assemble today pledged to a policy and a programme. Though the policy and programme are those on which the electorates have returned Congress members, I feel confident of the enthusiastic co-operation and support of all of you. My friend the Labour leader and others of his party will find what is proposed belongs as much to the left-wing of political thought as they could desire it to be.

“From him and his party, I know that I shall have always encouragement and assistance. From those of the right-wing of thought I anticipate equal help. The provision of adequate housing conditions, within their means,



for the workers of the city and such amenities as schools, playgrounds, public baths and community centres for the citizens is something with which no one can quarrel, to whichever school of political thought he may belong. After all political parties are merely the means to an end, the end being the expression of our love for our city.

### Utility Works First

“If you will permit me to make one suggestion, let us push ahead with that part of the programme first which falls within utility works, which are completely or partially remunerative. In war time, financial implications of new works must necessarily loom big and increased taxation cannot be lightly undertaken. But we cannot be satisfied with just maintaining what is and crying ‘halt’ to new works, when unemployment is on the increase. To the extent to which remunerative works can pay sinking fund and interest on loans, we must push ahead with them.

“With the assembling of this Council, great hopes have been released among the citizens of planned development and achievement. You have put me at the helm. Will you not help me to serve you and this city, which we all love and unitedly offer our best in such service?”

Council at this stage adjourned for a short interval prior to the election of the Standing Committees.

When the House resumed the election of members to the different Standing Committees was taken up. While the ballot papers were being distributed, Mr. M. L. M. Reyal reiterated the position of the Labour members in Council who he emphasized were not prepared to serve on any Committee, but would co-operate in open Council.

Mr. P. Givendrasinghe caustically interrupted. “I should like to know, sir, whether they would be elected to any committee at all?”



Mr. Goonesinha : " It is for the coffin makers to know that. "

The Mayor : " You can send in your resignation if you are elected. "

Mr. Goonesinha : " We will avoid the coffins. "

Finance : Messrs. R. F. S. de Mel, Geo. R. de Silva, Gilbert Perera, S. Saravanamuttu and Dr. A. Ratnapala with the Mayor as ex-officio Chairman.

Law and General Subjects : Messrs. K. Adamaly, R. A. de Mel, A. E. Goonesinha, Justin Kotelawala, Gilbert Perera and J. R. Toussaint.

Mr. Goonesinha tendered his resignation.

Sanitation and Markets : Dr. A. F. J. Casie Chitty, Dr. E. A. Coorey, Messrs. D. S. Fonseka, P. Givendrasinghe, J. R. Jayewardene and Dr. A. Ratnapala.

Municipal Works : Messrs. R. A. de Mel, D. S. Fonseka, P. Givendrasinghe, Justin Kotelawala, N. Saravanamuttu and S. Saravanamuttu.

Housing and Town Improvements : Messrs K. Adamaly, R. F. S. de Mel, Geo. R. de Silva, R. Doresamy, J. R. Jayewardene, and Sir Mohamed Macan Markar.

#### Special Committees

Public Library : The Mayor, Mr. Gilbert Perera, Sir Mohamed Macan Markar, Mr. F. A. Bond, Mr. D. S. Fonseka, Mr. M. F. Ghany, Col. T. G. Jayewardene, (V.D., J.P.), Mr. G. A. Wille (M.S.C.), Mr. Dadabhoy (J.P.), Mr. A. B. Gomes, Mrs. F. B. de Mel, Mrs. Clara Motwani, the Hon. Mr. Justice F. J. Soertsz (K.C.), the Rev. Fr. Y. M. Le Jeune, Prof. E. F. C. Ludowyk, P. E. P. Deraniyagala, Dr. G. P. Malalasekera, Prof. S. A. Pakeman, Mr. John M. Seneviratna, Mr. E. L. Bradby and Mr. C. P. G. Abeyewardena.



Traffic Advisory Special Committee: (5 members of Council including Deputy Mayor).

The Deputy Mayor, Mr. R. Doresamy, Mr. K. Adamaly, Mr. M. P. Ghany, Mr. N. Saravanamuttu, Mr. Justin Kotelawala, the Municipal Commissioner, the Municipal Treasurer, the Municipal Engineer and the Superintendent of Police, Colombo.

Public Assistance Committee: Mr. N. Saravanamuttu, Mr. Gilbert Perera, Mr. D. S. Fonseka, Mr. R. Doresamy and Mr. P. Givendrasinghe.

Member to the Committee of Management, Colombo Museum: Mr. Justin Kotelawala.

Members to the Local Advisory Committee (Education): Messrs. R. A. de Mel and N. Saravanamuttu.

Member as Unofficial Hospital Visitor: Dr. A. Ratnapala.

After the meeting a group photograph of the new Council was taken, followed by a social at which the Mayor was the host to the Council and the ratepayers who had earlier flocked to the galleries in large numbers.

**159: J. TIMES OF CEYLON NEWS ITEM ON INTERVIEW WITH DR. R. SARAVANAMUTTU, 9 JANUARY 1941**

Congress Plans for Better Colombo Houses for Poor,  
on Loan Capital  
"No Bribery" Campaign

"We have a good team; we can work hard and fast," said Dr. Saravanamuttu, the newly elected Congress Mayor of Colombo, to a "Times of Ceylon" reporter today, discussing his party's policy and programme for the next three years.

In aiming at a speedy and reasonable solution of the financial relations between the municipality and the central government, the Municipal Council would, he said, first



examine the finances of the Council. With a view to increasing its revenue the Council would seek to appropriate for itself fees from liquor licences and "from such other licences as a Municipal Council should rightly receive". Entertainment taxes would be another source of revenue that would be fully explored for the benefit of the ratepayer.

Dr. Saravanamuttu said that as regards new works only remunerative items would be proceeded with and the Council would concentrate on more tenements for labourers, and also public baths.

The Congress Party would enforce a plan by which it proposed to build tenements for housing the workers and the poor. It would plan to build 5,000 tenements in various parts of the city, for a beginning on loan, and irrespective of cost fix the rent for each of these tenements from Rs. 2-3.50 a month, and rent them out to bona fide labourers.

It would also press for a Rent Restriction Act for all houses whose monthly rent was not more than Rs. 20 and, when that was passed, sell the municipal tenements to private owners and apply the proceeds of the sale to building another set of similar tenements to be sold in turn, and so on till the loan originally floated for the first 5,000 tenements was exhausted. The party, he said, felt that the building of these tenements indirectly would solve the problem of slum clearance.

The Mayor is particularly interested also in providing public baths and swimming baths for the citizens. He and his party will, therefore, work for the establishment of an up-to-date public bath in each ward where, for a small fee, every convenience for a hot or cold bath will be made available. The party will also work for providing the citizens with municipal swimming baths and facilities for sea-bathing.



“Our schools’ programme is as important,” said Dr. Saravanamuttu. “There are at present about 10,000 children of school going age in the city who attended no schools at all. The Congress proposed that all free primary and middle school education in the city should be run either by the municipality or by private societies under its control. It should also run schools for vocational training, such as industrial, commercial and technical schools, and also night schools, mainly for adult education.”

Dr. Saravanamuttu regrets very much in this connection the defeat at the polls of the candidate the Congress Party put forward mainly to tackle this problem, but feels confident that his place can efficiently be filled by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, the member for New Bazaar East.

### Bribery

“What about bribery and corruption about which we hear so much ?”

Dr. Saravanamuttu knows of it himself and so does every other member of his party, who are all, he said, determined to break up all “custom” of bribery and corruption.

The chief means by which the Congress administration proposes to get rid of bribery and corruption is by pressing for a service commission. “The appointment, promotion transfer, and leave of, or disciplinary action against, all officers and servants of the Council, other than the Executive Officers, should be withdrawn from the Council.

“It has been the rule rather than the exception that Councillors have consistently refused to countenance any recommendation made by Executive Officers have begun to make no recommendation at all.”

“Above all,” said Dr. Saravanamuttu, “my party will see that there is no possible practice of the cook paying his master a santosum for increasing his wages !”



159: K. EDITORIAL IN THE YOUNG CEYLON, JANUARY 1941 :  
 " THE MUNICIPAL POLITICS AND ADMINISTRATION "

The general elections for the Colombo Municipal Council held in December 1940 can be considered to be the first indication of the reactions of the city and its ratepayers to the implications of the reformed constitution under which the Council now functions. The general elections in 1937 though the first under the reformed constitution did not indicate any change in the attitude of the candidates and the voters who supported them. The first term of the new Council did not usher in any change of policy, any new outlook or any visible or overt orientation either in the political viewpoint of the members or the hide-bound character of the administration. The recent elections brought with it a new outlook and a new orientation. The elections themselves were conducted on definite party lines and two organised parties, the Ceylon National Congress and the Ceylon Labour Party, tried conclusions. It is useful and profitable to review the results and implications of the elections and foreshadow the possible and inevitable reactions in the working and in the policy of the Colombo Municipal Council under its new personnel.

The number of registered voters in the city is 108,525 representing 20 wards with the largest voting strength in the Maradana North with 10,816 voters and the least in the Fort Ward with 1,314 voters. In nine wards there were no contests. Thus 42,918 voters representing the uncontested wards had no opportunity of manifesting their views by the exercise of their franchise. The elections were thus confined to 63,607 of whom a little more than 66 per cent, to wit, 43,547 voters, took part in the polling. Thus out of a voting strength of 108,525 only 42,547 or less than 50% influenced the election. The percentage is disappointing and is unfortunate when considered from the best interests of the city.

The strength of parties is in a very interesting proportion. Of the members who were returned unopposed, four Congress candidates represented 20,557 voters, one Labour



candidate 4,938 voters and four independent members 17,423 voters. In the wards in which there were contests the results were as follows: four Congress candidates were returned by 8,111 votes, two Labour candidates by 5,308 voters and five independent candidates including Mr. P. Givendrasinghe, who since the elections is reported to have embraced the Congress creed, by 13,471 voters. The position then is that the Congress Party has 8 Members with a voting strength of 28,668, the Labour Party has 3 Members with 10,246 and 9 independent members with 30,894. If Mr. Givendrasinghe is counted among the Congress members then the Congress Party will have 9 members with 32,915 as the voting strength and the independent members will be reduced to 8 members with 26,617.

The Congress Party is thus in a strong position. It can control the policy of the Council during the next three years. The independent members lack cohesion and alignment hence they are not a powerful factor. It is inevitable that the majority of them will run and carry for the Congress party.

The first act of the Congress Party was to capture the Mayorship and the Deputy Mayorship. For both the party nominees, Dr. R. Saravanamuttu and Mr. Geo. R. de Silva, were successful. It will be difficult for Congress to justify the two nominations. Both are by no means stalwart Congressmen. Dr. Saravanamuttu is fundamentally a Labour man and though a nominee of the Congress Party he is essentially a Labour Mayor. Mr. Geo. R. de Silva never had strong political convictions and his emergence as a Deputy Mayor in the Congress toga is a personal victory but no party triumph. It must be remembered that both Dr. Saravanamuttu and Mr. Geo. R. de Silva held the offices of Mayor and Deputy Mayor before now, so it is a case of Congress appearing through borrowed leaders.

The decision of the Labour Party to accept no office and to decline any place in the Standing Committees is not an act of statemanship. It is an act of betrayal. The Labour



Party has a distinct mandate and its observance implies the necessity to influence the policy of the Council. By keeping out it shirks its obligations and denies to the Council the benefit of the impact of comment and criticism.

The Congress Party issued prior to the elections a manifesto indicating its policy and programme. The basis of both is "the greatest good of the greatest number" and that the Colombo Municipal Council should be "a real poor man's corporation." But the Ceylon National Congress has yet to convince the country that it is the poor man's Congress. Nevertheless on this convincing foundation the Congress party will initiate social legislation for the housing of the poor and the middle class, prevention and treatment of diseases, public baths, playgrounds, reading rooms and community centres, municipal schools, building and improvement trust, Ceylonisation of the services, laws governing naturalisation and finance and loan works. The programme is broadbased, socialistic and satisfying. The country will without doubt endorse the well meant efforts of the Congress Party to create a poor man's corporation.

#### 160. A LIST OF MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS MUNICIPAL PARTY n.d.<sup>1</sup>

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Sir Mohamed Macan<br>Marker             | —Turret Road, Colombo.             |
| 2. J. R. Jayewardene Esq.                  | —Ward Place, Colombo.              |
| 3. Dr. A. Ratnapala                        | —Link Road, Wellawatta.            |
| 4. Sir Ratnajoti Sara-<br><b>vanamuttu</b> | —Retreat Road, Bambala-<br>pitiya. |
| 5. Dr. Casie Chetty                        | —Mutwal Street, Mutwal.            |
| 6. Geo R. de Silva Esq.                    | —Green Street, Kotahena.           |

1. From a typescript in the Gilbert Perera MSS. See C.N.A. 25.21/2. The numbering has been done subsequently in red pencil. De Zoysa's and Ghany's names have also been bracketed in pencil and the annotation "omit" added.



- |                                     |                                 |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 7. Justin Kotelawala Esq.           | —Ward Place, Colombo.           |
| 8. R. A. de Mel Esq.                | —Galle Road, Colpetty.          |
| 9. Kurban Adamaly Esq.              | —Galle Road, Bambalapatiya.     |
| 10. R. Doresamy Esq.                | —45, Rosmead Place, Colombo.    |
| 11. R. F. S. de Mel Esq.            | —Horton Place, Colombo.         |
| 12. P. Givendrasinghe Esq.          | —Skinners Road South, Maradana. |
| 13. A. F. Ghany Esq.                | —Alwis Place, Colpetty.         |
| 14. Dr. A. P. de Zoysa <sup>1</sup> |                                 |
| 15. Gilbert <sup>2</sup>            |                                 |

#### 161. RULES OF THE CONGRESS PARTY GROUP, COLOMBO MUNICIPAL COUNCIL [c. 1941]<sup>3</sup>

1. All members of the Congress Party in the Municipal Council and other members of the Municipal Council who express their willingness to co-operate with the said Party shall be members of this Group.

2. The Group shall meet on the Wednesday previous to the monthly general meeting of the Council. A meeting may also be summoned by the Whip on the Tuesday before the general meeting, if there are new items on the agenda to be considered. Meetings will normally be held at the Congress office at 9.00 p.m.

3. The Congress Whip shall send out notice of this meeting and all other meetings of the Group.

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1. This name has been added in pencil.

2. This name has been added in red pencil.

3. C.N.A., 60/22 or 25.21/4 ; contained in a printed card. Compare these rules with those noted under item 164 (1).



4. The Agenda for all meetings shall be prepared by the Whip with approval of the leader of the party. Members wishing any matter to be brought up should give notice to the Whip.

5. Decisions taken by the Group at its meetings shall be binding on the members of the group and members shall vote accordingly.

6. Any member who has conscientious objection to voting according to the group decision shall consult the leader and act according to his decision.

7. In the absence of any decisions by the group, members should support the attitude adopted by the respective Chairman of the Standing Committees provided he is a member of the group.

## 162. A LIST OF STANDING COMMITTEES <sup>1</sup>

### (1) *Finance :*

Dr. R. Saravanamuttu  
K. A. Gilbert Perera  
S. Saravanamuttu  
George R. de Silva  
Dr. A. Ratnapala  
R. F. S. de Mel.

### (2) *Law and General Subjects :*

K. A. Gilbert Perera (Chairman)  
R. A. de Mel  
Justin Kotelawala  
Kurbanhusen Adamaly  
A. E. Goonesinha  
J. R. Toussaint.

1. These lists are headed by a note signed by Gilbert Perera as Party Whip which states : " In the selection of Committees, etc., members are earnestly requested to adhere to the personnels [*sic* ?] given under the various heads. Great care should be exercised in entering the names. To avoid any error it is best that the page dealing with a particular item should be torn off at the conclusion of that business. " See C.N.A., 25.21/4.



(3) *Sanitation and Markets :*

Dr. A. Ratnapala (Chairman)  
 Dr. A. F. J. Casie Chetty  
 P. Givendrasinghe  
 D. S. Fonseka  
 J. R. Jayewardene  
 Dr. E. A. Coorey.

(4) *Municipal Works :*

S. Saravanamuttu (Chairman)  
 N. Saravanamuttu  
 D. S. Fonseka  
 P. Givendrasinghe  
 Justin Kotelawala  
 R. A. de Mel.

(5) *Housing and Town Improvement :*

R. F. S. de Mel (Chairman)  
 George R. de Silva  
 Kurbanhusen Adamaly  
 J. R. Jayewardene  
 R. Doresamy  
 Sir Mohamed Macan Markar.

(6) *Public Library Committee :*

The Mayor  
 Mr. Gilbert Perera  
 Dr. S. D. Fernando  
 Mr. A. E. Goonesinha  
 Mr. M. F. Ghany  
 Col. T. G. Jayewardene, V.D., J.P.  
 Mr. G. W. Wille, M.S.C.  
 Mr. F. Dadabhoy, J.P.  
 Mrs. Clara Motwani



Mrs. F. B. de Mel  
 The Hon. Mr. Justice F. J. Soertsz, K.C.  
 Rev. Fr. Y. M. Lejune  
 Prof. E. F. C. Ludowyk  
 Mr. P. E. P. Deraniyagala  
 Dr. G. P. Malalasekera  
 Prof. S. A. Pakeman  
 Mr. John M. Seneviratne  
 Mr. E. L. Bradby  
 Mr. C. P. Abeyewardena.

(7) *Traffic Advisory Committee :*

George R. de Silva  
 N. Saravanamuttu  
 Kurbanhusen Adamaly  
 R. Doresamy  
 Justin Kotelawala.

(8) *Public Assistance Committee :*

N. Saravanamuttu  
 George R. de Silva  
 P. Givendrasinghe  
 K. A. Gilbert Perera  
 R. Doresamy  
 D. S. Fonseka.

(9) *Committee of Management of Colombo Museum :*

Mr. Justin Kotelawala.

(10) *Local Advisory Committee (Education) :*

Mr. R. A. de Mel  
 Mr. N. Saravanamuttu.

(11) *Unofficial Hospital Visitor :*

Dr. A. Ratnapala.



**163. SOME CORRESPONDENCE PERTAINING TO THE  
CONGRESS MUNICIPAL PARTY, December 1940-  
February 1941<sup>1</sup>**

**163 : 1. The Secretary to Dr. Saravanamuttu, 19 December  
1940**

19th December, 1940.

Dear Dr. Saravanamuttu,

Mayor of Colombo

At a meeting of Congress members elected to the Municipal Council, Colombo, it was the unanimous wish that you be requested to stand for the mayoralty for 1940. Mr. Geo. R. de Silva consented to be Deputy Mayor.

Hoping that you will be pleased to accede to the request.

I remain,  
Yours sincerely,  
Secretary, Congress Party,  
Colombo Municipality.

**163 : 2. Dr. R. Saravanamuttu to Gilbert Perera, 20  
December 1940**

The Dispensary,  
344, Wolfendhal Street,  
Colombo,  
December 20th, 1940.

Dear Mr. Gilbert Perera,

Mayor of Colombo

In reply to your letter of the 19th instant, I accede with pleasure to the request of the Congress members that I should stand for the mayoralty in 1941.

I am,  
Yours sincerely,  
R. Saravanamuttu.

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1. From the Gilbert Perera MSS. See C.N.A., 25.21/2.



163 : 3. Gilbert Perera to R. A. de Mel, 7 January 1941

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Borella Junction,  
Colombo,  
7th January, 1941.

R. A. de Mel Esq.

Sir,

At a joint conference of the Congress Municipal Party, the Independent Labour Party and some other members it was unanimously decided that Dr. R. Saravanamuttu and Mr. George R. de Silva be put forward as Mayor and Deputy Mayor respectively for the year 1941. The former will be proposed by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and seconded by Mr. Justin Kotelawala. The latter will be proposed by Dr. Saravanamuttu and seconded by Mr. P. Givendrasinghe. It is hoped that members will vote accordingly. The Mayor will be congratulated by Mr. Gilbert Perera.

2. As regards the Committees, particulars for voting will be given to you at the Town Hall.

3. Admission to the galleries will be by ticket which can be obtained from the secretary, Mr. Kannangara.

4. Please note that the meeting is fixed for 3 p.m. and that it will be advisable to be at the Town Hall at 2.30 p.m. should there be any need for a last minute discussion.

Yours truly,  
Gilbert Perera,  
Whip,  
Congress Municipal Party.

163 : 4. Gilbert Perera to R. F. S. de Mel, 25 February 1941

25th February, 1941.

R. F. S. de Mel Esq., M.M.C.,  
Horton Place,  
Colombo.

Sir,

At a meeting of the party held on the 18th instant your failure to vote against the motion of Mr. Goonesinha was



considered. The meeting was of opinion that such act has been very detrimental to the interests of the party and have directed to request you not to repeat such action.

In that connection I will draw your attention to No. 7 of the rules approved at that meeting which is as follows :—

“Every member shall faithfully, carry out the decisions of the party and any failure to do so shall make such member (subject) to disciplinary action extending even to expulsion from the Party. Such expulsion shall be notified to the Congress Working Committee for necessary action.”

I shall send you a copy of these rules as soon as they are printed.

Yours faithfully,

#### 164. SOME NOTICES SENT TO MEMBERS OF THE CONGRESS MUNICIPAL PARTY, January-October 1941<sup>1</sup>

164 : 1. Dated 2nd January 1941

67, Alexandra Place,  
Cinnamon Gardens,  
Colombo,  
2nd January, 1941.

Sir,

Congress Municipal Party

A meeting will be held on Saturday the 4th instant at 4 p.m. at the Congress headquarters, Borella, to transact the following business :—

- (1) Mayor.
- (2) Committees.
- (3) Any other business.

Yours faithfully,  
Gilbert Perera,  
Hony. Secretary.

1. From the Gilbert Perera MSS. (A.C.N, 25.21/2). Unless otherwise stated the notices were sent by the Honorary Secretary, Mr. Gilbert Perera. Most of them are circulars.



164 : 2. Dated 3rd January 1941<sup>1</sup>

3rd January, 1941.

Sir,

## Congress Municipal Party

A meeting of the above Party has been fixed for the 4th instant at 8.30 p.m. at the headquarters, Borella, to transact the following business :—

- (1) Selection of a candidate to be Mayor—1941.
- (2) Selection of a candidate to be Deputy Mayor—1941.
- (3) Selection of personnel of the various Committees.
- (4) Any other business.

It is the unanimous wish of the Party that you should be requested to be kind enough to be present in order to take part in the deliberations.

Thank you.

I remain,  
Yours faithfully,  
Whip and Hony. Secretary.

164 : 3. Dated 3rd January 1941<sup>2</sup>

3rd January, 1941.

Dr. Casie Chetty, M.M.C.,  
Elie House Rd.,  
Mutwal.

Sir,

## Congress Municipal Party

With reference to the notice sent to you yesterday please note that the meeting will be held at 8.30 p.m. *instead of* 4 p.m.

This alteration has been made to suit the convenience of some members.

Apologising for any inconvenience caused.

I remain,  
Yours faithfully,  
Hony. Secretary.

1. A note indicates that this letter was sent to D. S. Fonseka, R. Doresamy, N. Saravanamuttu and S. Saravanamuttu.

2. A similar notice was sent to Justin Kotelawala.



164 : 4. Dated 16th January 1941

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Borella Junction,  
Colombo,  
16th January, 1941.

Dear Sir,

Congress Municipal Party

A meeting of the Party will be held on Saturday, the 18th instant, at 9 p.m. at the Congress headquarters to discuss any motions, notice of which will be given at the next meeting of the Council.

2. You must have by now received the "List of Meetings" from the secretary of the Council. It is very important that you should attend the committees into which you have been elected as the question of electing chairmen will take place at these meetings. The members nominated by the Party to be Chairmen are : Mr. Gilbert Perera (Law), Mr. S. Saravanamuttu (Works), Mr. R. F. S. de Mel (Housing and Town Improvement), Dr. Ratnapala (Sanitation). Please vote accordingly.

3. Please note further that according to a decision of the Party no notice of motions should be given without previously consulting it.

4. At the last meeting it was decided that members should pay an annual subscription of Rs. 10 (in advance) to defray expenses of the party. I should be obliged if you would send me a cheque for the amount by return of post.

Yours faithfully,  
Hony. Secretary,  
Congress Municipal Party.

..... Esqr.,

M. M. C.



**164 : 5. Dated 28th February 1941**

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Borella Junction,  
Colombo,  
28th February, 1941.

Dear Sir,

A meeting of the party will be held at 9 p.m. on Monday the 3rd March, 1941, to discuss the agenda at the meeting of the council on Wednesday.

Yours faithfully.

**164 : 6. Dated 13th March 1941**

13th March, 1941.

#### Group Meeting

A group meeting will be held on the 18th instant and not on the 14th instant as previously arranged, at the bungalow of Mr. R. F. S. de Mel, at 6 p.m. to consider the following business :—

- (1) Delegations of powers.
- (2) Powers of standing committee.
- (3) Auditor General's report.
- (4) Appointment.

**164 : 7. Dated 25th March 1941**

25th March, 1941.

#### Congress Municipal Party

The next meeting of the Party will be held at No. 67, Alexandra Place, Cinnamon Garden (near Horton Place, Alexandra Place Junction) on the 1st proximo at 8 p.m., to consider the agenda of the next council meeting.

I should be very much obliged if you will make it a point to be present as the Civic Study Group of the Women's Political Union wishes to meet the Party regarding the question of centralised maternity homes.



From representations that have been made personally to me I think it will be worth the while of the party to hear their representations on this somewhat important matter.

Thanking you.

*Appendix : List of persons to whom sent*

R. A. de Mel	— Colpetty.
Geo. R. de Silva	— Green Lodge, Kotahena.
P. Givendrasinghe	— Skinners Rd., B'pitiya.
J. R. Jayewardene	— Ward Place, Colombo.
Dr. A. Ratnapala	— Bharata, Link Rd., W'watte.
D. S. Fonseka	— Havelock Rd., B'pitiya.
N. Saravanamuttu, Esq.	— 375, Dam St., Colombo.
S. Saravanamuttu	— C. L. I. Barracks, Col- ombo.
Dr. Casie Chitty	— Mutwal St., Mutwal.
K. Adamaly	— Bambalapitiya.
R. Doresamy	— Kynsey Rd., Colombo.
R. F. S. de Mel	— Horton Place, Colombo.
Justin Kotelawala	— "Manohari", Ward Place Colombo.

**164 : 8. Dated 21st October 1941**

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Borella Junction,  
Colombo,  
21st October, 1941.

Dear Sir,

A meeting of the Group will be held on the 27th instant at 9 p.m. at the residence of Mr. Justin Kotelawala, "Manohari," Ward Place.



The business for the day will be to consider the adoption of Sinhalese and Tamil in the proceedings of the council, the budget for the next year and the recommendations of the various Committees.

Yours faithfully,  
Hony. Secretary.

**165. SOME CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE CONGRESS SECRETARIES AND THE CONGRESS MUNICIPAL PARTY, February-March 1941<sup>1</sup>**

**165: 1. Rules of the Congress Municipal Party, 1941**

1. The Party shall be known as the Congress Municipal Party.

2. Every member of Congress shall, on being elected to the Council, ipso facto, become a member of the Party and be bound by its rules and decisions.

3. The Party shall, at its first meeting, or as early as possible, elect—

(a) a Leader who shall normally preside over its meetings,

(b) a Deputy Leader who shall act for the Leader in his absence, and

(c) a Whip who shall also act as Secretary of the Party.

4. The office-bearers of the Party shall hold office for the full term of 3 years unless they have voluntarily resigned or have been expelled from the Party.

5. The quorum for a meeting shall be half the number of members in the Party.

6. An annual subscription of Rs. 10 shall be paid in advance by every member.

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1. From the Gilbert Perera MSS, C.N.A. 25.21/2.



7. Every member shall faithfully carry out the decisions of the Party and any failure to do so shall make such member [liable] to disciplinary action extending even to expulsion from the Party. Such expulsion shall be notified to the Working Committee of the Congress.

8. No resolution shall be moved in the council without the prior consent of the Party, but in the case of an emergency, members shall inform the Whip who shall consult the Leader and as many members as possible. If a majority of members is agreeable the Whip may allow such resolution to be moved. Every such case should be brought up at a meeting of the Party, as early as possible.

9. When there is a great divergence of opinion in the Party on any question a free vote may be allowed, provided, such vote shall not violate any accepted programme of the Party as principle of Congress.

10. The Whip shall be responsible for keeping members informed of all decisions of the Party, and for ensuring attendance of members at meetings of the Council and for their correct voting.

11. All members shall carry out the directions of the Whip.

**165 : 2. To the Secretary, Ceylon National Congress, 26  
February 1941**

26th February, 1941.

The Secretary,  
The Ceylon National Congress,  
Borella.

Dear Sir,

At a meeting of the Congress Municipal Party the following rule was submitted for approval :—

“Every member of Congress shall, on being selected to the Council, ipso facto, become a member of the Party and be bound by its rules and decisions.”



As doubts were expressed whether a person should be regarded as a Congress member, whether he stood for election on Congress nomination or independently, I shall be obliged if you will kindly consult the Working Committee on it.

I shall also thank you to let me know what the position is when the Congress nominee is contested by any other Congress man.

I am enclosing for your information the other rules that have been adopted.

Yours faithfully.

**165 : 3. From the Secretaries of the Ceylon National Congress, 6 March 1941**

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Borella Junction,  
Colombo,  
6th March, 1941.

The Hony. Secretary,  
Municipal Congress Party,  
Municipal Council,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

Your letter dated the 26th February 1941 was considered by the Congress Working Committee.

The Committee approved of the 1st rule mentioned in your letter. It was also decided that a member of the Congress Party, whether he stood for election on Congress nomination or not, should be considered a member of the Congress Party in the Municipal Council.



Disciplinary action will be taken against any Congress member who contests a Congress nominee.

Yours truly,  
Dudley Senanayake,  
J. R. Jayewardene,  
Jt. Hony. Secy., C.N.C.

### **166. REPORT OF THE CONGRESS MUNICIPAL PARTY, January-August 1941<sup>1</sup>**

1. Congress members were elected Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairman of Committees except the Works Committee.
2. A motion advocating a planned programme of slum clearance was moved by the Congress Party.
3. A motion advocating a Rent Restriction Act was moved by a member of the Congress Party.
4. A motion advocating municipalisation of omnibus transport services in the City was moved by a member of the Congress Party.
5. Congress members are serving on the Salaries and Cadre Committee and on various other special committees.
6. The discipline of the Party has been good.

Hony. Secretary,  
Congress Municipal Party.

### **167. MINUTES OF THE CONGRESS MUNICIPAL PARTY, April-December 1942<sup>2</sup>**

**20 April 1942**

The Minutes of a meeting held on the 20th April, 1942 at 4 p.m. at the Town Hall.

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1. From the Gilbert Perera MSS.  
2. From the Gilbert Perera MSS. C.N.A., 25.21/4.



*President* : Dr. R. Saravanamuttu in the chair and Messrs. Cassie Chitty, P. Givendrasinghe, J. R. Jayewardene, Justin Kotelawala and Gilbert Perera.

Mr. Givendrasinghe informed the meeting that he has given notice of the following motion :—

This Council strongly protests against the recent increase of passenger fares imposed by the Colombo Electric Tramways, which operates under Municipal by-laws, as the said increase is unwarranted and without cause and it imposes an additional burden on the middle class and poorer sections of the city's population, particularly at this period when the cost of living has risen enormously.

It was pointed out that before any such notice of resolution is given to the Council it should have been referred to the Party.

The Mayor explained that a great deal of inconvenience has been caused after the last air raid by the absence of certain officers of the Council and that during the existence of this emergency it will be advisable to delegate to him the powers vested in the Council as regards dismissals and disciplinary actions.

The meeting agreed to the suggestion and requested the secretary to formulate the resolution and propose it. The delegation to be limited to 3 months only.

Gilbert Perera,  
Hony. Secretary.

### **27 May 1942**

Minutes of a meeting held on 27th May, 1942 at the Town Hall.

*Present* : Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, Messrs. Justin Kotelawala, R. A. de Mel, P. Givendrasinghe, J. R. Jayewardene and Gilbert Perera Secretary.



The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The secretary informed the meeting that Mr. Justin Kotelawala and Mr. R. A. de Mel voted against the motion delegating powers to the Mayor. Both these gentlemen explained their position and promised not to do so in future.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene brought to the notice of the Party that a recent judgment had upheld an old by-law, which prevented carters from being seated while driving. He wishes to bring up a motion to repeal that by-law. This was agreed to.

Hony. Secretary.

## 20 July 1942

Minutes of a meeting of the Municipal Congress Party held at 4.30 p.m. at the Town Hall on 20th July, 1942.

*Present:* Dr. R. Saravanamuttu in the chair. Messrs. Justin Kotelawala, P. Givendrasinghe, Kurban Adamaly, R. A. de Mel, A. F. Ghany and Gilbert Perera Secretary.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

A long discussion took place as regards the Kalatuwawa lease. It was pointed out by Dr. Saravanamuttu that there have been a number of irregularities with regard to the lease. For example, he had not been informed of the protest sent in by the waterworks engineer on 28th March. Besides, he said that although the official took upon himself the responsibility for entering upon the lease in reality he did not even peruse the papers very carefully.

The meeting decided that when the matter is considered by the Finance Committee it should recommend that a committee of the council should investigate into the whole question. It was further agreed that Sir Macan Markar,



Messrs. Justin Kotelawala, N. Saravanamuttu and Kurban Adamally be appointed to the committee.

The Mayor brought to the notice of the meeting the position as regards food supplies of the city. He said that more than once he has taken up the matter with the authorities and he did not think that anything proper will be done. He was of opinion that excepting those articles which were a monopoly in the hands of government the municipality should deal with the rest. The meeting did not appear to favour the suggestion and the discussion was rather inconclusive.

The meeting terminated by 6.15 p.m.

Hony. Secretary.

### 10 November 1942

A meeting of the Congress Municipal Party and group was held at the Mayor's chambers, Town Hall, Colombo on the 10th instant at 4 p.m.

*Those present were :* Dr. R. Saravanamuttu (Chairman), Messrs. J. R. Jayewardene, Justin Kotelawala, R. A. de Mel and Gilbert Perera.

The meeting requested Mr. Gilbert Perera to study the question of the purchase of the tramways and make out a case in council.

Gilbert Perera,  
Hony. Secretary,  
22.12.42.

Colombo, 23rd November, 1942.

### 22 December 1942

Notes on the group meeting held on 22nd December, 1942.

*Present :* Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, Dr. A. Ratnapala, Dr. Casie Chetty, Messrs. J. R. Jayewardene, R. A. de Mel, Geo. R. de Silva, Givendrasinghe, Justin Kotelawala, Kurban Adamaly and Gilbert Perera.



It was resolved that Mr. Geo. R. de Silva should be supported for the mayoralty provided he is able to obtain the support of two independent members.

Similarly, Mr. R. A. de Mel was nominated for the deputy mayoralty.

### 168. REPORT OF THE CONGRESS MUNICIPAL PARTY, 1942<sup>1</sup>

The Congress Party in the Municipal Council consists of : Messrs. J. R. Jayewardene, Geo. R. de Silva, Justin Kotelawala, R. A. de Mel, Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, Dr. A. Ratnapala, Dr. Casie Chetty, Mr. R. F. S. de Mel, Mr. P. Givendrasinghe and Mr. Gilbert Perera in an assembly of 24.

As such, it has been necessary to get the aid of independent members in order to carry out the programme of the Party. The Party should be very grateful to Sir Mohamed Macan Markar and Mr. Kurban Adamally who consistently worked as members of the Group in almost all the major questions decided upon by the Party.

No attempt was made to make every question a Party matter owing to the very nature of Municipal activities.

Upon a resolution passed in Council sponsored by the Party a report has now been submitted to the Council on the question of slum clearance. It is regretted that in view of the present circumstances it has not been possible to put the recommendations contained therein into effect.

It has now been decided by the Council that the bus services of the city should be municipalized and it has requested Government to pass the necessary legislation for the purpose.

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1. From the Gilbert Perera MSS. C.N.A. 25.21/2. The actual title is : "Report of the Congress Party (Colombo Municipality)."



The Party was instrumental in submitting to Government the necessity for a Rent Restriction Act, in view of the hardship that may be caused to tenants.

The terms of employment of daily paid employees have not been examined by the Council at any time and there are consequently, a preponderant number of daily paid employees who have not received any increase of wages since 1929. A special committee has now been appointed by the Council to consider the conditions of daily paid labourers in all aspects. In the meantime, it has been possible to introduce an eight-hour working day for all labourers.

The Party was mainly responsible for resolving that the tramway services should be bought up by Council in the exercise of an option contained in the agreement between the Council and the tramway company.

As already mentioned, owing to the numerical weakness of our Party it has not been possible to implement the full Congress programme.

Colombo, December 9, 1942.

### **169. MEMORANDUM ON SLUM CLEARANCE AND RE-HOUSING BY THE CONGRESS MUNICIPAL PARTY, 1941<sup>1</sup>**

It is not generally known that there are 1,200 acres of slums in Colombo, that one quarter of our population, about 80,000, live in slums, and another one quarter live in conditions far below modern standards of living.

Overcrowding creates disease and the other conditions of life which are considered sub-human. Tuberculosis, which is one of the chief causes of death in the city, is also caused and rapidly spread by slum conditions. A solution to this problem therefore largely solves the problem of tuberculosis and other diseases which are as much social problems as they are medical ones.

1. No. 5 in the series of pamphlets which appeared in 1940-41, this pamphlet was printed by the Lankabhinawa Vissruta Press. See C.N.A., 60/332.



Haphazard work in the clearing of slums is dangerous. More than ever it is necessary therefore that there should be a planned programme of slum clearance and building of new houses. Therefore the Municipal Council on the 5th February 1941, accepted the following motion: "In view of the fact that no loan policy has so far been formulated, this Council is of opinion that a planned programme of slum clearance and new housing should be immediately commenced, if necessary financed by the raising of a loan." The Housing and Town Improvement Committee to which this motion has been referred interviewed the Local Government Town Planner, Mr. O. Weerasinghe, and Mr. Weerasinghe has kindly agreed to submit before the end of July, a comprehensive report on slum clearance for the city, in collaboration with the Municipal Engineer and the Municipal Town Planning Engineer.

It is impossible to carry out any planned programme without preliminary work. In this memorandum therefore we intend to show some of the factors which should guide the Council in achieving its purpose of clearing slums.

### The Problem

Colombo has an area covering 8,317 acres. It has a population of about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  lakhs and the average density of population per acre is 38.8. The Cinnamon Gardens ward has a population density of only 11.005, whereas in some of the other wards such as St. Paul's, it rises up to an average of 170-200 per acre. The open spaces in the city are also unevenly distributed. The northern part of the city which is most overcrowded has only two pocket-size parks and a few playgrounds. The central and southern portions of the city from Cinnamon Gardens southwards are better served, e.g., Galle Face Green 41 acres; three large lakes 270 acres; Victoria Park 82 acres; Havelock Park 21 acres; Race Course 116 acres and 4 private golf courses 254 acres. Of these open spaces too, it will be seen that the southern portion is comparatively poorly served with only the Havelock Park and the Havelock Golf Links.



In certain areas, the density of population rises up to 500 per acre. In page 17 of Mr. Holliday's Memorandum of Town Planning, he gives facts in greater detail (see Appendix I). He further thinks that at least 15,000 new houses are required. "The eradication of slums in Colombo," he says, "is the chief town planning programme."

### Slum Survey

The first step is a preparation of a slum survey. A preliminary survey was carried out in 1939 as a result of a motion moved in Council. A more detailed survey is now being carried out in the other areas. This survey must not only show the areas which are considered slum areas, but also show (a) the slum area to be cleared immediately according to a programme, (b) how many inhabitants will be dehousing if a slum clearance scheme is started in a certain area, (c) where it is possible to house the people while new houses are built, (d) details of the conditions of the inhabitants that live in slum areas, place of work, wages and, etc., (e) description of open spaces available. From these statistics it is possible to calculate with accuracy the population to be dehousing, formulate a planned programme, assess compensation, and calculate the amount of money that needs to be spent. These are some of the main features that will have to be included in a slum survey. Once the slum survey is concluded, the Council will have to decide as to the area which it intends to clear up.

### Comprehensive Slum Clearance

The Council may decide to clear up certain slums immediately and draw up a list of the other areas it intends to clear up during a period of say 10 years, according to a priority list. Once the area to be cleared is decided upon, the Council will have to decide whether the buildings in that area are (a) to be completely demolished, or (b) to be reconditioned. Either method means the dehousing of the people living in the area. The first concern therefore must be to find accommodation for the dehousing people



pending the building of the new quarters for them. This must be done with great care. Workmen live close to their places of work. If their houses are demolished, new quarters must be found close to their workshops. The question of compensation to be paid to the owners of the buildings demolished has also to be considered.

If this factor of how and where to house the dehouseed people is not properly considered, then the Council may repeat the blunder caused at Kochchikadde where a large slum area was cleared and the inhabitants who were ejected went away and created new slums.

### New Houses

New houses can be built either (a) in selected open spaces or on land made available by slum clearance in the city, (b) in open spaces outside the city by the creation of satellite towns, (c) by the reconditioning of slums. With regard to (a) and (b), various considerations must be taken into account—such as the type of the building to be put up, whether inhabitants are workers or middle class gentry, and the rent to be charged.

Reconditioning of the slum areas is a method which can be used where the conditions are not too bad. For instance, the Council has under Section 41 of Ordinance No. 19 of 1915 (Chapter 199), declared a certain area in New Bazaar ward to be an insanitary area, and a general improvement scheme for the area is now being prepared. This scheme can suggest how the insanitary houses are to be made habitable and what other improvements are necessary in the area. The work can then be carried out by the private owners, if necessary subsidised by the Council.

### Finance

Once the Council has all the previous facts mentioned before it, it will be in a position to know what finances would be required for the carrying out of a comprehensive scheme. It is not necessary in this memorandum to state



how these schemes are to be financed, for we do not know what the resources of the Council will be when these schemes are considered. However, once the Council has decided upon a complete slum clearance and new housing scheme, once it has decided upon the areas to be cleared and when they are to be cleared, once it has decided upon the nature of the new houses, it will be possible then to decide whether the expenses are to be met by internal or external borrowing, or to be paid for from current revenue.

### *Legislation*

At present the only legislation available for slum clearance is contained in the Housing and Town Improvement Ordinance of 1915 (Chap. 199). In this ordinance the whole subject is dealt under the two main heads of "preventive measures" and "remedial measures." Under the former head, (a) no building is allowed without the approval of the chairman or the commissioner, (b) wide powers are given to the local authorities with regard to laying down street lines, reservation of land for new streets, construction of streets, taking over of streets, and reservation of areas for particular buildings. Under the head of "remedial measures," our ordinance provides for the framing and execution of improvement schemes and for the payment of subsidies to private owners whose buildings are affected, to enable them to recondition their buildings. Until the new Town Planning Ordinance which is now with the legal draftsman is accepted by the State Council, attempts should be made to improve slum areas under general improvement, rebuilding and rehousing schemes as provided by the Ordinance of 1915.

### Steps to be taken

In addition to the suggestions made, we recommend that (a) legislation should be introduced to prevent new buildings or additions to existing buildings within the area shown as a slum area in the survey, pending reconstruction, except in exceptional cases; (b) improvement schemes



should be framed for the insanitary areas under the existing ordinance, and housing schemes should be commenced in suitable undeveloped lands in the city, land-owners affected by improvement schemes should be given the opportunity of rebuilding in accordance with the scheme and, if necessary be granted subsidies; (c) the Council should lay down a 10-year programme and seek to build 10,000 new houses during that period at 1,000 houses a year; (d) rent restriction acts should be passed; and (e) the minimum standard of new houses and reconditioned houses should be 2 living rooms, a verandah, a cooking place, a bathroom; a W. C. should be provided for each block of 3 houses. No back-to-back houses should be allowed. All houses which do not conform to the abovementioned standards should be gradually demolished. All these houses should have electric lights and be let at an inclusive rent not exceeding Rs. 5 a month; (f) The Council should spend Rs. 1,000,000 a year for 10 years; of this sum government should contribute half.

#### Government Subsidies

Mr. R. F. S. de Mel in an interesting memorandum written in February 1939 on this subject, says that since the war 3,510,000 new houses have been built in England and Wales, and 290,000 in Scotland. Over a million and a half of the new houses have been built by government subsidies. The subsidies paid up to date are as follows:—

England and Wales	..	£ 233,000,000
Scotland	..	£ 35,000,000

The London County Council up to the end of March 1938 owned and managed nearly 87,000 buildings occupied by 382,000 persons. These buildings were erected on demolished slum land at a capital expenditure of £ 56,000,000. From the years 1856-1938, out of an expenditure of £ 186,000,000 over 33% has been spent on housing, and most of this after 1920. In Ceylon on the other hand, from the years 1885-1940 out of an expenditure of Rs. 183,037,413 the Council has spent Rs. 2,272,318.46 on new housing (vide Appendix II



and III). The government grants given to the Council for new housing amounts to Rs. 150,000 for the Kochchikadde scheme. With regard to the Wanathamulla housing scheme, the government gave the Council a block of crown land 5 acres in extent at Wanathamulla for the land on which the Dehiwela Zoo stands. The government further gave a lease to the Council of 11 acres at Wanathamulla at a rental of Rs. 50 per year. The attached statement (Appendix IV) compiled by Mr. Tudor Perera, the acting treasurer shows that in the United Kingdom grants have been given for housing during 1936-1937 to the extent of £ 14,011,914, which is 10% of the rates collected by the local authorities.

The principles applied in the United Kingdom during 1919, when after the war there was a shortage of houses, were laid down in the House and Town Planning Act of 1919: (1) Local authorities to prepare housing scheme to meet the needs of their areas, (2) extended powers of compulsory acquisition given to local bodies, (3) decided for the first time that subsidies should be given to local authorities by the central government.

The later acts recognised these principles and even extended the scope of government aid. It will be entirely in keeping with the principles followed in England for the Council to ask for a grant of Rs. 500,000 a year for a ten year scheme. We must spend at least one million rupees a year for ten years if any impression is to be made on this problem. The government must also bear its proper share of this cost.

### Conclusion

Our aim should be to raise the standard of living in Colombo. Nothing raises the standard of living more than decent housing. We hope that the Council, the central government and the public will co-operate in beginning a dynamic rehousing drive.



## APPENDIX 1

## SLUM AREAS

No.	Areas	Acreage		
		A.	R.	P.
1	Mattakkuliya	7	1	04
2	Rajamalwatte	58	2	27
3	Modera Street	29	1	24
4	Alutmawatte	19	0	02
5	Madampitiya	12	2	32
6	Elie House Road	9	0	38
7	Lower Street Andrews Place	2	2	00
8	Elie Lane	3	3	10
9	Nagalagam Street	6	3	24
10	Urugodawatte	11	3	36
11	Santiago Road	39	3	26
12	Kotahena	29	1	10
13	Prince of Wales Avenue	8	0	24
14	St. Joseph's Street	29	1	02
15	Parakrama-Prince of Wales Junction	0	3	24
16	Wolfendhal	225	2	10
17	Grandpass Road	95	2	13
18	Prince Street (Pettah)	2	0	00
19	St. Sebastian Street	32	0	06
20	Pichaud's Lane	53	3	01
21	Maligawatta	38	3	06
22	Panchikawatta	11	0	26
23	Drieberg's Lane	2	3	32
24	Malay Street	12	3	32
25	Dematagoda	117	0	34
26	New Road, Union Place	18	0	04
27	Kolonnawa Road	105	0	20
28	Wekanda	22	1	15
29	Dean's Roda	59	0	38
30	Vauxhall Street	2	1	15
31	St. Michael's Road	19	3	32
32	2nd Division Maradana	6	2	24
33	Kollupitiya	7	0	20
34	Model Farm Road	6	0	32
35	Kitulwatte Road	4	2	38
36	Narahenpitiya Road	19	1	34
		<hr/>		
		1.132 1 04		
		<hr/>		



## APPENDIX II

## Slum Clearance and Housing for Municipal Workers Since 1930

<i>Place and Vote</i>	<i>No. of Tenements constructed</i>	<i>Cost of Construction and Acquisition</i>	
		<i>Rs.</i>	<i>c.</i>
Kochchikadde—Slum clearance ..	404 ..	1,653,386	13
Prince of Wales' Avenue for Municipal Workers	155 ..	247,168	74
Kanatta Road for Municipal Workers	43 ..	27,310	18
Magazine Road for Municipal Workers	44 ..	210,492	95
High Street (Ash Tip) for Municipal Workers	36 ..	30,840	81
Wellawatte Treatment Works for Municipal Workers	24 ..	23,425	46
Wanathamulla — Slum Clearance, 1939—100,000	28* ..	79,684	99
1940—200,000			
500,000 ..	.. 185 ..	—	
	<b>Total</b> ..	<b>2,272,318</b>	<b>46</b>

Expenditure till end of April, 1941

## APPENDIX III

## Expenditure of the Colombo Municipal Council from 1885 to 1940

	<i>Rs.</i>	<i>c.</i>
1885 .. ..	370,577	0
1886 .. ..	368,014	0
1887 .. ..	396,805	0
1888 .. ..	449,805	0
1889 .. ..	514,463	0
1890 .. ..	531,437	0
1891 .. ..	595,643	0
1892 .. ..	*	
1893 .. ..	634,135	0
1894 .. ..	630,337	0
1895 .. ..	655,372	0
1896 .. ..	704,856	0
1897 .. ..	798,423	0

\* Amount not available.



				<i>Rs.</i>	<i>c.</i>
1898	..	..	..	837,809	0
1899	..	..	..	927,229	0
1900	..	..	..	902,408	0
1901	..	..	..	1,306,278	0
1902	..	..	..	1,175,727	0
1903	..	..	..	1,494,429	0
1904	..	..	..	1,656,127	0
1905	..	..	..	1,387,277	0
1906	..	..	..	2,528,662	0
1907	..	..	..	2,217,100	0
1908	..	..	..	1,846,000	0
1909	..	..	..	2,068,958	0
1910	..	..	..	2,191,141	0
1911	..	..	..	2,670,743	0
1912 and 1913*	..	..	..	4,876,915	0
1913 and 1914*	..	..	..	4,869,851	0
1914 and 1915*	..	..	..	4,485,561	0
1916	..	..	..	3,460,904	0
1917	..	..	..	3,334,400	0
1918	..	..	..	3,583,810	0
1919	..	..	..	3,554,971	0
1920	..	..	..	3,841,599	0
1921	..	..	..	4,627,267	0
1922	..	..	..	4,956,084	0
1923	..	..	..	5,787,138	0
1924	..	..	..	6,226,586	0
1925	..	..	..	5,989,763	0
1926	..	..	..	6,526,322	0
1927	..	..	..	6,873,250	0
1928	..	..	..	7,173,202	0
1929	..	..	..	7,647,268	0
1930	..	..	..	7,821,951	0
1931	..	..	..	6,932,201	0
1932	..	..	..	6,864,790	0
1933	..	..	..	6,466,318	0
1934	..	..	..	6,430,338	0
1935	..	..	..	7,054,447	0
1936	..	..	..	6,599,646	0
1937	..	..	..	6,660,891	0
1938	..	..	..	7,176,715	0
1939	..	..	..	7,360,038	0
1940	..	..	..	6,789,432	0
Total ..				<hr/>	<hr/>

† Amount for 18 months.



## APPENDIX IV

## Grants to Local Authorities in U. K.

	£
The total amount of rates collected in England and Wales, 1936-37 .. .. .	172,837,119
Government Grants, 1936-37—	
i.e., 80% of the rates .. .. .	139,730,066
Particulars of Government Grants—	
Grants under Local Government Act of 1929 applicable to Local Government Services generally ..	45,281,531—32%
Grants in aid specific services—	
Education .. .. .	44,785,022—32%
Housing .. .. .	14,011,914—10%
Police .. .. .	11,848,745—09%
Highways and Bridges .. .. .	9,669,567—07%
Relief of the Poor .. .. .	3,944,333—03%
Other specific services .. .. .	4,150,244—03%
Other grants on Revenue Account .. .. .	1,883,102—01%
Grants on Capital Account .. .. .	4,155,818—03%
	139,730,066

**170. ANALYSIS OF THE BY-ELECTION FOR THE COLOMBO NORTH SEAT IN THE STATE COUNCIL BY THE POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT<sup>1</sup> OF THE CEYLON DAILY NEWS, 29 April 1941**

Factors which influenced the Results

The result of the Colombo North by-election and certain events connected with it, certain lessons worthy of notice by all politicians in Ceylon.

There were many factors which apparently appeared to favour the National Congress candidate, Dr. R. Saravanamuttu.

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1. Mr. J. L. Fernando.



First of all, there was the personal influence of the Saravanamuttu family in Colombo North. In 1931 Dr. Saravanamuttu had defeated three opponents polling more votes than all of them put together. Then after his disqualification on an election petition, his wife the late Mrs. Naysum Saravanamuttu, beat all her men opponents in two successive by-elections, on each occasion by a comfortable majority. Among those then defeated was a nominee of the Labour Party, Mr. M. L. M. Reyal. Once again in 1936, Mrs. Saravanamuttu successfully staved off a challenge from three men opponents, among them the Labour Party candidate, Mr. M. Joseph de Silva.

And what is more, the results of the polls in the city elections barely six months ago revealed that six out of the seven wards directly situated in Colombo North, had returned either pro-Congress candidates or those favourable to Dr. Saravanamuttu.

These were overwhelming advantages in Dr. Saravanamuttu's favour. How, then, did it come about that last Saturday he was beaten by a majority of over 2,000 votes?

There is nothing like an election for the opportunity it gives to exploit to the utmost one's personal animosity and rancour against another. The by-election just concluded had its full measure of such recriminatory propaganda, from both sides.

But, generally speaking, the result may be attributed to three major causes, namely, (1) opposition to the Congress creed by various so-called minority interests, (2) the racial cry raised against Dr. Saravanamuttu, and (3) the rowdyism which prevailed in Colombo North for nearly two months, and which not only must have rendered possible both impersonations and trafficking in ballot papers but must have also kept away some proportion of the respectable voters from the poll.



It is well known that the National Congress is not at all liked by various communal-minded leaders and their followers. The Congress stands for the unification of the Ceylonese people as a whole, and is expressly opposed, in its policy, to any communal distribution of seats, office or power.

Hence it happened that on this occasion there were communal-minded people, representing various minority interests, who were ready to look upon Dr. Saravanamuttu's candidature with suspicion. They remained lukewarm in the contest if they did not actually support his opponent. This is not to say that all Tamils, Muslims, Burghers or Indians whose names were on the lists were uninterested.

There was the case of Mr. A. R. A. Razik, for instance. He appealed to the Muslim voters not to support the Congress candidate, on the grounds, perhaps, that he himself had been thrown out of his municipal seat last December after a contest with Mr. N. Saravanamuttu, and also that the entry of the Congress nominee into the State Council would weaken his own work in favour of Muslim interests. There was, in strange contrast, the case of Mr. T. B. Jayah, who, though not a supporter of the Congress, saw in Dr. Saravanamuttu one who would not act adversely against the Muslims.

As regards the racial cry raised against Dr. Saravanamuttu, there is sufficient reason to believe that certain followers of the Labour Party exploited this question among the less-educated voters, especially the women-folk. The cry of "jathiale" was, in fact, the one big slogan among this class of voters, and at meetings held in favour of Mr. de Silva and conducted in Sinhalese there were pointed references, as was said, to the "rivalry" between the Sinhalese and the Tamils.

There was a large poster in the Kotahena area showing a picture of King Dutu-gemunu driving away the Tamils. It was a deliberate attempt to rouse up racial animosity, but nothing at all seems to have been done to bring to book those disseminating such literature.



This is not the first time the racial cry has been raised in Ceylon elections. But the Congress workers, it would appear were not equal to the task of counteracting this propaganda.

These subversive ideas of racialism that are insidiously spread among the less-educated voters cannot be destroyed by mere speeches at meetings or by spasmodic attempts in election time.

At the same time, there was more than a touch of irony in the fact that a labour organisation should have countenanced the racial cry. The loss must ultimately rebound to the Labour cause.

As regards the hooliganism which prevailed for many weeks beforehand in the area, it is true that the Police tried to become more vigilant after complaints had been made. But how could the mere patrolling of streets prevent cases of terrorism in isolated areas, mild though they were when these were directly not under the Police eyes ?

Terrorism of this type has the effect of keeping respectable voters away from the poll, and making possible a certain number of impersonations which the impersonators are fairly sure will not be detected.

In spite of added Police vigilance in the last few days, there is no doubt that the idea had gone abroad in Colombo North that the Police were powerless to stop certain happenings.

On election day, for instance, it was found that certain buses were plying on unauthorised routes, taking "voters" from Maradana and other places, from polling booth to polling booth. These were obviously impersonators.

Not only must all parties in Ceylon exert their best to prevent hooliganism in election time, but it is necessary that the Police themselves in charge of an election area should be a hundred per cent above suspicion.



Much has been said and written about impersonations. In any Colombo electoral area, it would be found that about forty per cent of the voters in the lists are not easily traceable. The unofficial cards issued by the candidates are left undistributed in such cases, and armed with these cards the impersonators find their task easy. Why should these cards be permitted to be brought into a polling booth at all ?

It is being said that there are gangs of people in Maradana, Dematagoda, and in places like Biyagama and Kelaniya, who are prepared to be hired as impersonators. Surely, these people can be rounded up by the Police, to some extent at least, during election time.

It is a difficult problem to eliminate impersonation altogether. It was once suggested that the government should take upon itself to print in the lists the photographs of all voters. The cost of such expenditure would be amply repaid, it was said, by the assurance of a fair franchise.

There are certainly other, and less costly measures which can be adopted to minimise impersonation. In the case of the State Council lists, I have observed that the names of the voters appear in alphabetical order ; whereas in the municipal lists the names are grouped according to the number of household occupants.

If impersonations are to be detected by questioning, the form of the State Council lists affords less chances of detection. An impersonator, generally, cannot be coached sufficiently to state the names of their residents in his house or give a list of his relations—a question which might lead to the detection of impersonation in a municipal list.

Taken all in all, the defeat of the Congress candidate was due to the failure of Congress methods and strategy—if there was any strategy at all ! The Labour Party, it must be said, exploited fully both the strength and weakness of the Colombo North electors.



**171. A CONTROVERSY: THE CONGRESS AND  
COLOMBO MUNICIPAL POLITICS, July 1941**

**171: A. REVIEW OF MUNICIPAL POLITICS BY THE MUNICIPAL  
CORRESPONDENT OF THE CEYLON DAILY NEWS, 11 JULY  
1941**

**Congress Party in City Council  
Comfortable Myth found Useful during Elections**

Is there a Congress Party in the Colombo Municipal Council? Of course, there is. Everybody knows that the elections last December were fought on that issue.

When the elections were over the Congress had won eight seats, and when the Council met there was a further accession of members to their ranks. Thus they were able, without much opposition, to elect two of their party men to the two posts of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

Previously, the Congress Party had issued an impressive manifesto on municipal policy. It was emphasized therein that the party members would work together "to a planned purpose with long-range works of improvement and sustained endeavour to reach a desired end."

Later, the Congress Party elected a Secretary and Whip, in order to co-ordinate their municipal activities in the best party style.

Though much of this was elaborate window-dressing, the public were led to believe that the Congress "carcass" of the post-Donoughmore period had definitely come to life, and that from henceforth it was going to be a real party affair in the City Council.

But what happened last week would go to show that the Congress Party have no intention of acting unitedly in the questions of principle or policy, however important these may be. True to recent traditions of the Congress itself, individual members of the Congress Party, it would appear are free to range themselves on this side or that according to personal leanings and not on grounds of public policy.



Undoubtedly one of the most important subjects discussed in the last six months was the question of an allowance for the Mayor.

It was realised that not only would the fixing of a definite allowance create a precedent so far as the City Council was concerned, but such a move would lead also to wide repercussions in other Municipal and Urban Councils.

The City Council had appointed a special committee to report on the question. This committee had recommended that the Mayor should be given an entertainment fund of Rs. 2,500 and a travelling allowance of Rs. 1,800 a year, and that the Council should also provide a free motor-car and a chauffeur.

When these proposals came up for discussion at the meeting in June there arose a wide divergence of views. There was Mr. Gilbert Perera, the Whip of the Congress Party, who stated that the acceptance of the recommendations "would bring disgrace" on the office of Mayor. They should not be blind, he said, to the moral effect their actions would have on the other local bodies who looked to the premier Municipal Council in the island for guidance. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, one of the Secretaries of the Congress, also opposed both the entertainment fund and the grant of a motor-car.

Did these two Congress members speak only for themselves, or on behalf of their party ?

The result of all these views was that the subject was postponed for decision in July.

At the meeting held last week, the following proposals of the Finance Committee, which were identical with the special committee's recommendations, were put to the vote :—

- (1) That a vote of Rs. 2,500 be provided in the Budget annually, designated the "Mayor's Entertainment



Fund " from which the Mayor could draw for entertainment. Such expenditure should be at the Mayor's sole discretion.

(2) That the Council should provide the Mayor with a car and chauffeur. The car should be one in keeping with the dignity of the office and should bear the Council crest and flag. The maintenance of the car should be by the Council. The Mayor should also be granted a travelling allowance of Rs. 150 a month.

How did the Congress Party vote on the motion ?

There are at present ten members who belong to the Congress, including the Mayor, Dr. Saravanamuttu, but exclusive of those who are personal adherents of his. Of these ten, three voted against the motion and five for it. Two Congress members were absent.

The motion was carried by 15 votes to 5.

Why did not the Congress members act as a party ?

Could it be that they thought the subject was a trivial one, on which no party decision need be made prior to the voting in the Municipal Council ? The words of Mr. Perera, the Congress Party Whip, quoted above, would belie such an assumption.

Could it be that the party made no attempt to bring its members together on this very vital issue ? If so it shows that, despite the promises held out last December, the Congress members are lacking in the ability to differentiate a public from a personal issue.

Or could it be that the party did make an attempt to stand together on this question, but failed owing to individual caprice ? If this is the truth, then it shows that the " experiment " of a Congress Party in the Municipal Council has failed !



It must not be forgotten that the Congress Party in the City Council have only behaved as other Congress men have done in a larger sphere. In recent years the public have been told that there is a Congress Party in the State Council. Sir Baron Jayatilaka once boasted that he and his friends had worked to bring about a Congress Ministry.

But have these Congress men in the Board of Ministers or the Congress Councillors in the State Council ever acted or voted as a party? No! The party slogan has been raised by them only when personal interests are at stake, to be discarded when public issues arise.

If that is the record of Congress leaders in the past few years, who can blame the Congress Party in the Municipal Council for dismissing the interests of the party as of on consequence and each member going his own way?

The manner in which the Congress Party in the City Council is working to "a planned purpose" would indeed be amusing, were it not that the whole affair is a sad commentary on the standards of public life in this country.

Last week's meeting of the Municipal Council was also noteworthy for the way in which the Council proceeded to recruit a new Mechanical Engineer.

It was stated in the course of the discussion that the advertisement for the post gave the salary as laid down in the 1935 salary scheme, and ignored the recommendations in the recent Goonetilleke report.

It was also mentioned that the advertisement for another post, that of Workshop Foreman, had stipulated an alteration of salary.

Then again in May this year, the Council had approved the salary scale proposed by Mr. Goonetilleke in the appointment of Health Nurses.



Of what use is the Retrenchment report if it is going to be dealt with piece-meal, and while the report itself is still under discussion if salaries are going to be fixed for new entrants on the old scale? And why is a difference made in the advertisement of the salary scales for one post and another?

One fact is clear. The entry of the so-called Congress Party into municipal politics has not altered one whit the old policy of the Council, when personal interests reigned supreme and the welfare of the city and of the ratepayers was always of secondary importance.

**171 : B. GILBERT PERERA'S REPLY TO THE MUNICIPAL CORRESPONDENT, 12 JULY 1941<sup>1</sup>**

Sir,—The article by your Municipal Correspondent on "The Congress Party in the Municipal Council" raises two questions :

- (1) Is the Congress working as a party in the Municipal Council? ; and
- (2) Should the payment of an entertainment allowance and the providing of a car for the Mayor have been made a party issue?

With regard to the first, I wish to disabuse any impression that may be created in the minds of the public that the Congress is not working as a party in the Council. The question of this allowance arose out of certain decisions arrived at at the Mayors' Conference at Madras in 1940. The Congress Party discussed the matter but decided not to make it a party issue. I may also state that no member of the party has as yet voted against the decision of the party.

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1. *CDN*, 12 July 1941.



With regard to the second point various reasons may be urged for or against a question of this nature being made a party issue. The Congress manifesto issued during the elections did not refer to this question, for the Congress primarily intends to work as a party on matters appertaining to the improvement of the living conditions of the people of Colombo. This is the theme of the Congress manifesto. Further the question of payment to members of local bodies, and the principle involved therein, did not arise in the final discussion before the Council, since the recommendations of the committee were only with regard to an entertainment allowance and a car.

With regard to the many matters that arise in the Council, the party is given a discretion to decide as to what should be made a party issue. The party does not intend to make its members mere voting machines on the numerous questions that arise in the Council. It will, however, enforce discipline when it is necessary "to work together to a planned purpose with long-range works of improvement and sustained endeavour to reach a desired end."

As regards the new appointment to the post of Mechanical Engineer referred to by your correspondent, I may add that this appointment, as in the case of all other appointments made subsequent to the Auditor-General's report, is as regards salary and allowances, subject to "alteration in the event of a general revision of salaries and allowances as a result of the Auditor-General's report on the Salaries and Cadre of the Municipal Service."—Yours, etc.

Gilbert Perera,

Secretary,

Congress Municipal Party.



172. **LETTER FROM DR. R. SARAVANAMUTTU TO  
E. A. P. WIJEYERATNE, 27 November 1941<sup>1</sup>**

Municipal Council,  
Colombo,  
November 27, 1941.

My dear E. A. P.,

Thank you much for your kind letters enclosing tokens of goodwill from members of our party. I need hardly tell you how heartened I feel by this encouragement and support.

The case is nearing its end. In spite of the reluctance of people to get into the witness box, we have been able to place before the court a volume of evidence in support of the allegations we have made. We had also to keep the enquiry within reasonable limits in regard to time, and so shut out a good deal of evidence of the type we have had. There was some really good evidence available on impersonation, but as the judge said he would assume that if we prove general intimidation, we had to keep this also out. The defence appears unimpressive. They seem to rely largely on the police evidence. The police, unfortunately, have taken up the attitude that this enquiry is a censure on them and except for Inspector Vanderstraaten of the Pettah, all the others have denied things well within their knowledge. It was a revelation to me of the extent to which the police can lie. But from the remarks made by the judge in the course of the trial I have little doubt that he has placed the police evidence in its place and evaluated it correctly.

We should win, but whether we win or not, the case will do good by exposing and getting rid of some of the corrupt practices which are becoming a feature of the elections in the country. If adult suffrage is to remain, I think that the raising of communal, caste and religious cries should be

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1. E.A.P. Wijeyeratne was President of the Ceylon National Congress in 1941.



declared illegal practice. Democracy will fail if this is not done. Please convey my thanks to all our friends for their goodwill and sympathy sent through you. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,  
R. Saravanamuttu.

### 173. SOME NEWS ITEMS ON THE MAYORAL ELECTIONS, January 1943<sup>1</sup>

173: A. EDITORIAL IN THE TIMES OF CEYLON, 13 JANUARY  
1943

#### Colombo Mayoral Election

The election of Mr. George R. de Silva as Mayor of Colombo has been received with general satisfaction. It is a fitting recognition of his devotion to the civic interests of Colombo, an important part of which he represents in the State Council. Mr. de Silva is one of the few who, having the time and the resources for it, has devoted himself exclusively to public work. Undeterred by reverses, he has persevered and has earned his reward. The only unfortunate feature of his election was the allegation made by the ex-Mayor that, at the last moment, the communal cry has been raised. This is a serious allegation and calls for some explanation. An explanation is all the more urgent, because Sir Ratnajothi Saravanamuttu has long been regarded as a sign and a symbol of freedom from communal prejudice. He was twice elected Mayor of Colombo by a majority of Sinhalese members. Once elected State Councillor for Colombo North, also with Sinhalese support, he was on a later occasion defeated in the same constituency by the refusal, it was said, of the members of his own community, the Tamils, to support him on account of his pro-Sinhalese sympathies.

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1. Derived from news clippings in the Gilbert Perera MSS. See C.N.A. lot 25.21/8 and 7.



All this lends a special interest to the serious allegation Sir Ratnajothi has now made that the raising of the communal cry compelled him at the eleventh hour to put himself as a rival to his old friend and ally and suffer defeat at his hands. Past history has proved that Sir Ratnajothi is no opportunist. On a previous occasion his loyalty to the present Mayor was responsible for his own defeat in a mayoral election. Judged by his previous record Sir Ratnajothi has shown himself as one not lightly to be lured from his settled principles and convictions. Indeed the newly elected Mayor went so far as to concede that Sir Ratnajothi "had contested him on a matter of principle." What precisely was the principle involved? Sir Ratnajothi has been put forward by the Sinhalese as a shining example of a Tamil whom they have consistently supported because he was one of the few Tamils who did not think on communal lines. Has this exceptional Tamil now begun to think on communal lines? Or is it that he has discovered all too late that his Sinhalese friends are addicted to communal ways of thinking? It is noteworthy that when Sir Ratnajothi made his allegation and it was questioned by a Sinhalese, another Sinhalese member firmly asserted that the communal cry was raised.

One need not necessarily be a cynic in saying that this is just what is to be expected in the present stage of politics in Ceylon. The introduction of the Western machinery of politics into an Eastern country presupposes the existence or the emergence of the party system. The Donoughmore commissioners fondly hoped that the party system would be established in Ceylon. Nothing of the kind has happened. Such parties as were forced into existence and carefully nurtured for a time vanished into space at the first touch of reality. The Congress has tried in vain to organize the party system in the State Council and has failed. In the Colombo Municipal Council the Congress achieved a small measure of success, but it was ephemeral. And now even that pretence will have to be abandoned in the light of Sir Ratnajothi's charge. That this should happen just at



the moment when by a master-stroke of diplomacy the self-styled Congress "homogeneous" ministry has introduced a non-Congress Tamil who had for years refused to see eye to eye with them is ironical. But, after all, if in these permutations and combinations there is no need for surprise, there is also no cause for despair. In any country, so long as parties are not founded on definite political principles, personalities must ultimately decide the issue. And when it comes to personalities, the features which distinguish one man from another—race, caste, religion—must inevitably effect the choice. This must happen till higher ideals begin to prevail. That the masses should be governed by petty prejudices is to be expected. What is disheartening is that it should occur among those higher in the political scale.

173 : B. A REVIEW BY "THE WHIP," 14 JANUARY 1943<sup>1</sup>

#### How Have The Mighty fallen ?

I had classed myself among the admirers of Dr. R. Saravanamuttu. I had regarded him as a man of high principles and unswerving loyalty to his political ideals.

But I must say that I am rather embarrassed by his first public action as Sir Ratnajoti.

Even so late as 10 a.m. on Monday he made no secret of his intention not to stand for election as Mayor of Colombo. What happened between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. ? According to Sir Ratnajoti something momentous seems to have happened during those critical five hours. What is it ?

In fairness to himself and to the public who have always regarded him as a high-souled leader he should make some explanation.

Was Sir Ratnajoti not until 3 p.m. on Monday, January 11th, 1943, a member of the Ceylon National Congress ?

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1. *The Times of Ceylon*, 14 January 1943. "The Whip" was Mr. Dalrymple N. W. de Silva.



Was he not a member of the Congress group in the Colombo Municipal Council which made him Mayor in 1941 and 1942? Did he not participate in the deliberations of the Congress group which decided, without dissent, to put forward Mr. George R. de Silva for election?

What is the communal cry that, he says, was raised? Who raised it? What did he do to counteract it before 3 p.m. on this black Monday for the Colombo Municipal Council?

Evidently the new Mayor is satisfied that his former ally and predecessor had some reason for his sudden change of front. Mr. de Silva said that Sir Ratnajoti had contested him "on a matter of principle." What is this principle?

The Mayor and the ex-Mayor should not keep these secrets to themselves. They should tell the public who would then know how to act "on principle."

Meanwhile we have to lament that the mighty have fallen. Sad but true.

Let me examine the voting for the Colombo Mayoral election. The voting no doubt was by secret ballot. But I am entitled to make my own analysis to form my own opinion.

For Mr. de Silva: J. R. Jayewardene, Gilbert Perera, R. A. de Mel, K. Adamaly, Sir Mohamed Macan Markar, M. F. Ghany, Dr. A. Ratnapala, Justin Kotelawala, R. F. S. de Mel and R. Doresamy—11.

For Sir Ratnajoti: P. Givendrasinghe, F. A. Bond, J. R. Toussaint, Dr. A. P. de Zoysa, Dr. E. A. Coorey and Dr. A. F. Casie Chetty—7.

For Mr. N. Saravanamuttu: S. Saravanamuttu, M. L. M. Reyal, J. R. Dharmasena, D. S. Fonseka and Dr. S. D. Fernando—6 (the six that I stated days earlier he could hope to secure).

Where then are the grounds for a charge of communalism?



173 : C. A REVIEW BY THE CDN MUNICIPAL CORRESPONDENT,  
14 JANUARY 1943<sup>1</sup>

### City's Mayoral Election

#### Why Sir Ratnajoti was defeated

The sensation of the week, if I may so call it, was the mayoral election in Colombo. Those who hail the election of Mr. George R. de Silva as a victory for the Congress group in the Municipal Council are very much mistaken ; for, the Congress group does not command a majority in the council, and the votes cast for Mr. de Silva fall short of the irreducible minimum of 13 which will enable him to carry on office with the unfailing support of his group. Nor were all the 11 votes he received those of members claiming to be in the Congress group.

Sir Ratnajoti Saravanamuttu's last-minute bid for re-election was not so surprising. It may well be that he thought that, even in a triangular contest, he would still hold a majority. Apparently, what happened was that the political differences between the two brothers, Sir Ratnajoti and Mr. N. Saravanamuttu, could not be healed ; though, I hear, efforts were made till Monday afternoon to make one of them keep out, preferably the latter. If these differences had been reconciled, then the Congress group candidate would have certainly lost.

What did surprise both friends and critics and the general public alike was the "red herring" which Sir Ratnajoti chose to drag across the trail of his defeat. He said that "the communal cry had been raised for the first time in a mayoral election in the city." This was immediately denied by Mr. Gilbert Perera, the so-called "Whip" of the Congress group, but repeated by Mr. Givendrasinghe, who was, and may still be, a member of the Congress group but has always been the ex-Mayor's Man Friday. Be it remembered that Sir Ratnajoti himself is a leading member of the Congress.

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1. The Municipal Correspondent was Mr. P. B. Fernando.



It is up to Sir Ratnajothi to explain what he meant by this charge. How many non-Sinhalese voted for Mr. de Silva, and how many Sinhalese for the other two non-Sinhalese candidates? Whether members were swayed by communal feelings or not, may be tested by such an analysis—only tested, but not proved, for a Sinhalese may vote for a Sinhalese and a Tamil for a Tamil without any considerations of community but solely on merit or suitability.

It is not possible to analyse the voting exactly in a secret ballot of 24 men, but to those who have some knowledge of municipal politics in Colombo it must have been clear that Sinhalese members voted on all three sides, as also the non-Sinhalese members.

It is necessary that Sir Ratnajothi should explain how the voting went, or how he thinks the voting went, in view of an attempt that has already been made in a well-known reactionary quarter, on the strength of his statement, to make out that there has been some communal cleavage where none existed before.

The real reason for Sir Ratnajothi's defeat is to be found elsewhere than in a communal cleavage, real or imagined. Sir Ratnajothi is not such a tyro to politics as not to have observed in the last few months of his mayoralty that he was gradually becoming very unpopular with his fellow-members.

There was the question of the relations between the Municipal Council and the civil defence authorities. In this, the charge was made that Sir Ratnajothi—he had not then attained to knighthood—had done many things without consulting the Municipal Council members, and tried to play the role of a petty dictator.

It was a fact that he co-operated very actively with the civil defence authorities and knew the inner working of the organisation they had set up. And yet he permitted municipal officers to draw salaries or allowances from the civil defence authorities apart from the emoluments paid



them by the municipal council. Is it not a fact that certain officers of the Municipality are even now making use of motor-cars provided by the Civil Defence Department? Why were these not taken notice of?

There was also the question of the Mayor having virtually become an agent of the central government for the purpose of administering certain defence regulations in respect of cars in the city.

In other words the members of the Municipal Council had every reason to accuse the Mayor of having bartered away certain rights of the municipal constitution. This was not the way to attain municipal home rule, especially in a council which takes pride in having enjoyed autonomy for several decades.

173 : D. GILBERT PERERA'S LETTER TO THE EDITOR, CEYLON  
DAILY NEWS, 15 JANUARY 1943

69, Hyde Park Corner,  
15th January, 1943.

The Editor,  
"Ceylon Daily News,"  
Lake House,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

In view of the communal cry raised by Sir Ratnajoti Saravanamuttu in regard to the election of the Mayor of Colombo, I wish to mention the following facts.

The Congress Group of the Municipal Council met twice for the purpose of nominating a candidate for the mayoralty. At the first meeting Sir Ratnajoti initiated the discussion and stated that he would be pleased to stand down in favour of Mr. Geo. R. de Silva, provided he was in a position to obtain two independent votes. The meeting decided to nominate Mr. de Silva under those conditions.

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1. From draft of letter in the Gilbert Perera MSS. Also see *CDN*, 16 January 1943.



At the second meeting Mr. Geo. R. de Silva informed us that he had assurance of the support stipulated for, at the previous meeting. Sir Ratnajoti hotly contested the bona fides of these assurances, but the group endorsed its previous decision to nominate Mr. de Silva, being satisfied with his statement.

The result of the election has demonstrably proved that the statement of Mr. de Silva was correct, because if Sir Ratnajoti and other delinquents voted for Mr. de Silva there would have been more than 13 votes for him.

The communal cry is very often the last lament of disappointed aspirants to office.

Yours faithfully.

**174. "BADULLA URBAN COUNCIL ELECTIONS AND THE NATIONAL CONGRESS PARTY," 1 November 1941<sup>1</sup>**

Ceylon National Congress Party,  
Badulla Branch.

President :

Joint Secretaries :

Treasurer :

Auditor :

Office & Free Reading Room,  
No. 14, King's Street,  
Badulla.

*Introduction*

The Ceylon National Congress which has won the confidence of the people as the leading political organization in Ceylon today works for the benefit of the whole country

1. Translation of a Sinhalese pamphlet, with the title printed in English and Sinhalese, which was located in the Gilbert Perera MSS. See C.N.A., 25.21/9. A note on the front cover in Sinhalese requests readers to circulate the pamphlet among their friends after they have read it. The pamphlet includes photographs of the six individuals nominated to contest the municipal elections as representatives of the Ceylon National Congress Party.

The pamphlet was translated by Mr. E. G. Gamage, an officer attached to the Sinhala Encyclopaedia Office in 1971.



and not for a particular section, caste or class. The Ceylon National Congress having the object and the principle of "the greatest good of the greatest number"<sup>2</sup> marches forward with courage and firm determination and stands for the *People's Sovereignty and Full Autonomy*. At the 21st anniversary of the Ceylon National Congress held at Mirigama in December 1940, a resolution was adopted to the effect that the Ceylon National Congress is of the opinion that we must work promptly and firmly for such constitutional reforms for Ceylon as will confer on the people full liberty to prepare their own system of government and to determine their own internal and external policies.

The Ceylon National Congress will strive to formulate its principles and activities with regard to agriculture, land, cottage industry, trade, transport, labour, taxes, salaries, education, health services, etc., in keeping with the above policy of the greatest good of the greatest number. The 22nd annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress will be held from 27th to 30th December, 1941 at Swarajjiya Pura at Dummaladeniya on the Negombo-Chilaw road.

#### Badulla Branch of the Congress

With the concurrence of the Ceylon National Congress the Badulla Branch of the Ceylon National Congress was formed on the 23rd November, 1940 with high expectations. It had the honour of sending delegates to a general meeting of the Party within a month of its inauguration. Our Branch was represented at the Mirigama session of the Congress by Messrs. K. B. H Adikaritilaka (President) and D. J. M. Mahipala (Hony. Co-Secretary). This Branch ceremonially opened a reading room for the benefit of the people on the 10th July, 1941 at the Branch Office at King Street, Badulla (opposite the clock tower). It is a great pleasure to see that a vast number of readers have benefited so much from this reading room maintained by means of

2. *Vādi dhenagē vādi yahapatha.*



the generous donations from the members of the Badulla Branch of the Ceylon National Congress. Three general meetings and eleven committee meetings have been held within the short spell of its existence. Furthermore, two mass rallies, one on December 1940 to discuss the sudden rise in prices of rice and foodstuffs and to represent matters to the government, and the other last May to decide on the actions required to get redress on the unpaid assessment rates to the Urban Council, Badulla, and three other rallies to accommodate Messrs. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne (advocate and President of the Ceylon National Congress), J. R. Jayewardene (advocate and Co-Secretary), George E. de Silva (M. S. C. for Kandy) and P. D. S. Jayasekera (proctor), on their arrival here to help us in our campaigns in Badulla, were held. This Branch which, from its inception, marches to greater glory and has already won the hearts of the people stands not for a particular section, caste or class, but for the benefit and justice of all and the sovereignty of Mother Lanka. Further, the members of the Badulla Branch of the Ceylon National Congress enthusiastically hope to take the light which this movement provides to every nook and corner of the province of Uva.

### The Problem of Unpaid Assessment Rates in Badulla

When in May 1941, the Badulla Urban Council made a gazette notification to the effect that it would sell private properties to make good the unpaid assessment rates for the fourth quarter of 1939, a mass rally was held in the King's Theatre under the auspices of the Ceylon National Congress, Badulla Branch and, among other demands, it was decided to ask the Badulla Urban Council to write off the assessment rates because they were unpaid solely as a result of poverty. Last August two delegates discussed the problems and the hardships of the taxpayers with the Commissioner of Local Government and the Badulla Urban Council. The Urban Council made it known last September that, on the advice of the Commissioner of Local Government, it had decided to



collect all arrears of taxes within six weeks. Ever since the Urban Council gazetted its intentions last May to sell private properties as mentioned earlier, as a result of the efforts of our Branch and the action taken to get some sort of redress, poverty stricken people have been exempted from paying assessment taxes, while others have got the concession of not paying the arrears till the end of October 1941. Further, the arrears from the second quarter of 1940 to the second quarter of 1941 could be paid at the Urban Council office till 31st October 1941 without an interest on it. On this issue of unpaid assessment taxes a member of our Congress Branch, the councillor for Hindagoda, Mr. Murugesu, resigned from his seat, as he was not satisfied with the outcome of the discussion between the Commissioner and the Urban Council (as it didn't give any relief to the poor). The councillors of Jaffna Urban Council came forward to protest against the advice of the Commissioner of Local Government on this question of unpaid taxes, and considering the hardships it would cause to the taxpayers, adopted a resolution, in order to give them some relief, which stated that "the old pattern hitherto observed regarding the issuing of warrants prohibiting [the sale of?] properties and collection of unpaid taxes should be followed." We hope the residents of Badulla would have got to know, in detail, the praiseworthy actions taken by the chairman and members of the Jaffna Urban Council on behalf of the poor on the one hand and the unsatisfactory programme adopted by the Badulla Urban Council on the other hand, by means of the pamphlets entitled "Evidence to justify the demand of the Ceylon National Congress from the Badulla Urban Council regarding Unpaid Taxes" and "Justifiable Action of the Ceylon National Congress" published by C. A. J. Dharmagunaratne.

The justice of the demand made by the National Congress Branch of Badulla is clearly proved by the decision of the Jaffna Urban Council. Just think what would have happened and where matters would have ended if the National Congress did not take immediate and prompt



action regarding the impending danger and hardships to the poor taxpayer on the occasion when the Badulla Urban Council promulgated gazette notification last May in order to sell properties to recover arrears. Indeed, if the National Congress had held power in the Urban Council on the occasion when the problem of unpaid taxes came up for debate, the story we would be relating would have been entirely different from that which we have related today.

### Badulla Urban Council Elections

The election of Councillors to the Badulla Urban Council will take place in November this year. The Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress has endorsed the decision of our branch to contest all the wards at the election. The names of the six Congress candidates for the said elections were announced at the public meeting held on 18th October at the Town Hall, Badulla under the chairmanship of Advocate E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, the President of the Ceylon National Congress. They are as follows :—

- Ward 1. Mr. W. A. Ratwatte (Puwakgodamulla)
- Ward 2. Mr. C. A. J. Dharmagunaratne (Pinarawa)
- Ward 3. Mr. K. B. H. Adikaritilaka (Mailagasthenna)
- Ward 4. Mr. V. K. Murugesu (Hindagoda)
- Ward 5. Mr. S. M. Hadji Noor-Uddeen (Central)
- Ward 6. Mr. T. A. Miskin (Gurendawatta).

### Our Programme

The National Congress will strive, on the basis of working for the benefit of the majority, to make our Urban Council a real benevolent unit for the poor, to raise the standard of living through the activities of our Urban Council, to ensure justice and fairplay for the taxpayers and to improve the city.

In our country it is widely held today that the urban councils, far from contributing their due share for the upliftment of the common people, actually bring great hardships and sorrow to the people. Overtaxation is one reason which causes the displeasure among the people towards the urban councils. As townfolk are generally living a



hand-to-mouth life it is impossible for them to pay heavy taxes. People entertain a great suspicion and fear of the Urban Council because it utilizes their taxes to pay vast salaries to a body of urban council employees in excess of the number of employees needed, for the buildings, roads, etc., which incur lots of expenditure. This fear and suspicion could be erased if these taxes are reduced to a minimum and expenses on staff and other works curtailed to the minimum, and if the Urban Council embarked on a scheme really beneficial to the people. We are therefore happy to inform you that the National Congress resolutely expects to effect a complete change in the policy regarding town development and administration and to implement a scheme aimed at the maximum benefit to the greatest number, while avoiding heavy taxation as well as heavy expenses.

*Housing.*—Today the people of the working and lower classes in the town of Badulla are without dwellings. Because of the high rentals they are forced to live in small unhygienic houses (*gēvala*). The living standard of the people could be raised by providing habitable houses. People cannot be protected from various sicknesses when their living conditions are below standard and unhealthy. The workers and the poor in the town cannot afford to pay more than Rs. 2 to Rs. 3 as rent. Regarding the housing problem the conditions faced by the middle class as well are very unsatisfactory. The houseowners of the town have very unsympathetically rented out houses at exorbitant rates. A scheme to build suitable houses on the unused lands in the town so as to give them out at moderate rents could be implemented. The National Congress Party will embark on a movement to provide suitable and comfortable houses which could be rented out at low rents to the working and poor classes as well as to the middle class, while at the same time exploring ways and means of getting full government assistance and enacting social legislation.

*Health Services.*—The elimination of slums and provision of habitable houses can be considered the basic policy with regard to the health services. Besides housing, provision



of good and pure water and educating the people to act according to certain rules and regulations regarding sanitation are keynotes in the upliftment of the health conditions of the people. The Urban Council must take the initiative in these fields as the people are unable to conform to these regulations on their own due solely to poverty and illiteracy. Providing scope for the renting of more houses at low rents will automatically resolve the problem of slums. The high rentals charged for houses will then fall. An infinite number of people in the Badulla town today undergo untold sufferings and are subjected to illnesses like malaria. The so-called social workers must turn their eyes towards the number of people who die, unattended and untreated, due to poverty. Free dispensaries, children's homes, I. D. clinics, T. B. institutions, etc., must be opened up by the Urban Council. In England, T. B. has been wiped out by means of a proper health scheme. Hence, a keener interest should be taken by the Urban Council regarding the anti-T.B. campaign. The National Congress Party will (certainly) strive to inaugurate a full-fledged and well equipped health service to improve the health conditions of the townfolk and also try to get government grants for this purpose.

*Water supply.*—Water wasted at various places in the town should be fully utilized for the benefit of the townfolk. While the Urban Council should promptly take action to control or increase the present supply of water, it must see whether the present water supply services could be improved and enlarged. Therefore, the water problem of Badulla Town will receive special attention from the National Congress Party.

*Public Baths, Lavatories, Reading Rooms and Public Playgrounds, Public Halls, etc.*—The National Congress Party intends to provide lavatories and public baths with all modern facilities wherever necessary and to divide the town into three or four zones and provide each with a playground for poor children, a public hall and a reading room.



*Schools.*—The National Congress Party proposes that elementary and intermediate education as well as industrial education should be provided free to all children of a schoolgoing age either by the Urban Council or by societies under its control. Further, it proposes that an institution to teach Commerce and night schools for adult education should be established. The National Congress Party is of the opinion that the central government should assist the Urban Council financially to maintain these schools and that the relationship between the central government and the local authorities on financial matters should be specified by law.

*Taxes, Industries, Maintenance Work and Rajakariya.*—It is an accepted fact that urban councils have become targets for criticism from the people on account of their heavy taxation. To speak honestly Badulla is a poor town. If our Urban Council, which was established in order to transfer the power and responsibility of town development and administration to the taxpayer following the abolition of the old Local Board system, is to function as a real public-spirited body or a welfare board for the poor, taxes must be reduced. There is widespread talk that the expenses incurred on works (*karmantha*) undertaken by the Urban Council are too heavy. Hence the Urban Council must make all the necessary arrangements to cut down expenses on these works (*karmantha*) and on their maintenance. While refraining from appointing unnecessary staff, it must be the policy of the Urban Council to appoint qualified and suitable, good humoured and conscientious officers who are ready to work as friends of the people. The National Congress Party expects to restore the efficiency and purposiveness of the Council and by these means to raise the administration to a satisfactory level and to give some sort of relief to the taxpayer by curtailing to the maximum the expenses incurred on industries (*karmantha*), maintenance works (*nadaththukireemè vada*), and rajakariya.

*The Problem of Beggars and the Unemployed, Poor Relief and Social Welfare.*—The number of unemployed in Badulla



is not small. The need for the preparation of a list of unemployed and for the evolution of methods to give relief to them is urgent. Also, the beggar population within the town is on the increase. This too is a problem warranting attention. The National Congress Party will engage itself with the task of working out means of providing assistance to the unemployed and the poor, solving the beggar problem, taking a keen interest in welfare work and helping the social workers to do welfare work.

*Appointed Members and Town Wards.*—The appointment of councillors to local bodies by the central government is a negation of democracy. Therefore, this should be stopped and, at the same time, the number of wards in the council should be increased. A decision arrived at by the majority of the elected members, if not contrary to law, must be implemented. An increase in the number of wards would enable the election of councillors to represent all shades of opinion, while at the same time facilitating the improvement of the party system. Also it will prevent a few capitalists from taking control of the town administration.

*Local Government and Swabasha.*—Local bodies must pay heed to the widespread demand that the administration of Ceylon should be conducted in swabasha so that the vernaculars will be improved. The Galle Municipal Council has amended its sub-laws to permit speeches in Sinhala. The Colombo Municipal Council too is considering a proposal to draft legislation with the same objective in view. It is a pertinent question to raise as to why only the urban councils still prefer English, when leading administrative bodies in Ceylon are so keen to switch over to swabasha. At a public meeting held a few days back at Jaffna it was resolved to request the Jaffna Municipal Council to conduct its business in Tamil. We must not elect to the Urban Council people with a false pride (*boru ahankarayen yuth*) who prefer the English language and Western customs to their mother tongue and all that is local. Even the English educationists who despised our mother tongue have now



changed their views. It is surprising to see the urban councils preferring English even more than the central government. The naming of streets only in English for the benefit of people who are not conversant with English goes to prove that the councillors place their own false values above the interests of the public. The urban councils have been established so as to enable the people themselves to conduct their affairs. Hence, the use of English, which is not understood by the vast majority, is a joke in itself. When the work of the urban councils are conducted in English local administration becomes a mystery beyond the comprehension of the people. If the urban council, which consists of elected councillors, acts without regard to the convenience of the people these councillors should not be re-elected. The National Congress Party, which encourages the extension of swabasha and the inauguration of a swadeshi movement, will strive to give prominence to swabasha in the administration of the Badulla Urban Council.

### Our Request

The National Congress Party, with the intention of educating the people regarding their rights and duties and of guiding them in the task of electing genuine representatives who possess the will to work patriotically (*dhèshanurageyen*) and with love for the nation (*jatikalayen*), has nominated candidates to all the wards on the Badulla Urban Council and also presented a long programme of work with a purpose and principle which seeks the greatest good of the greatest number ; [while] in the development and the administration of the area it intends to act as a group within the Urban Council. In local administration no distinction can be drawn between a policy and a movement. These two are intertwined. Although a great many facts have been included here in order to clarify the programme and policy, the expectation and feeling, et cetera, of the National Congress Party, there is much more that could be said. With the experience which it can expect to gain in implementing this



programme, the National Congress Party will be able to achieve a great deal more within the life-span of the Urban Council. It is regrettable to note that a group of capitalists is working not only secretly but openly as well against the National Congress Party which has come forward for the greatest good of the greatest number. While reminding the voters of their duty to use their free vote according to their conscience without bowing down to the capitalists, the National Congress Party strongly feels that it is high time to initiate an administration which would implement a scheme of work geared to the greatest good of the greatest number. Therefore, you may please help our nationalist movement and free our Mother Lanka from the present woeful state of affairs by casting that privilege you have received, a free vote, in favour of the candidates put forward by the Badulla Branch of the Ceylon National Congress.

Colombo, 21st October, 1941.

The Hony. Jt. Secretaries,  
Ceylon National Congress (Badulla Branch),  
Badulla.

Dear Friends,

The Congress Nomination Board has approved the following candidates for the Urban Council election in November 1941 :—

- |                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| No. 1. Puwakgodamulla<br>Ward | — Mr. W. A. Ratwatte                    |
| No. 2. Pinarawa Ward          | — Mr. A. C. J. (sic)<br>Dharmagunaratne |
| No. 3. Mailagasthenna Ward    | — Mr. K. B. H. Adikaritilaka            |
| No. 4. Hindagoda Ward         | — Mr. V. K. Murugesu                    |
| No. 5. Central Ward           | — Mr. S. M. Hadji Noor-<br>Uddeen       |
| No. 6. Gurendawatta Ward      | — Mr. T. A. Miskin                      |

Mr. Gautamadasa will arrive at Badulla on Monday morning by train. The Secretaries and the President will be at Badulla on Saturday the 1st November evening.

Yours truly,  
Dudley Senanayake,  
J. R. Jayewardene,  
Jt. Hony. Secretaries,  
C. N. C. Party.



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XI

MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS



XI

MISCELLANEOUS SUBJECTS



**175. SELECTIONS FROM THE SIR EDWIN WIJEYERATNE CORRESPONDENCE, 1932- 1950<sup>1</sup>**

**175 : 1. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to Sir Graeme Thomson, n.d.  
[c. July-August 1932]**

To : His Excellency,  
Sir Graeme Thomson,  
The Governor.

Your Excellency,

I take the liberty of addressing this letter to Your Excellency at this time of great political stress and anxiety, and my only excuse for writing this letter is due to the feeling which I entertain that all avenues of an honourable settlement are not being explored.

I am taking this step on my own initiative and without consulting anybody else, either official or unofficial. I have not the privilege of knowing Your Excellency personally except having met you on a few formal occasions. I represent the Kegalle Constituency in the State Council, and have in my own humble way continued, since the inception of the State Council, to take as keen an interest as it is within my power in the work of the Council and the affairs of the country in general.

I feel, Your Excellency, that the question of the future of the Public Services, including their pensions, allowances and emoluments is one that cannot possibly be left out of reckoning in the future, even if the present crisis can be averted by an honourable adjustment. As soon as the retrenchment proposals come for discussion in the Council, the question is bound to arise as to how far they can be

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1. Unless otherwise stated, the letters that follow were derived from copies in Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne's letter books which remain in family hands at Kegalla.

Also see item 186 : D below for an exchange of letters between E. A. n Wijeyeratne and L. M. Gooneratne in 1942 which is of some historical significance.



given effect, and the struggle will again centre round the Services. At the same time the dwindling revenues bring into bolder relief day by day the amount that is absorbed by way of salaries, allowances, and pensions of the Public Services, and the proportion such amount bears to the general income.

It is my intention to propose in Council, that a deputation should proceed immediately to England, to discuss the question of any necessary amendments of the present constitution so as to ensure its smooth working, as well as the question of the pensions and the Pension Schemes of the future, and also the retrenchment proposals. I have some measure of support for this action, but I thought that before this question is finally decided by the Council, it would be most helpful if I could get an opportunity of meeting Your Excellency, and of placing my views before Your Excellency and seeking your guidance in the matter. I feel certain that Your Excellency will help us, to the best of Your Excellencies [sic] power, to find a satisfactory formula at this crisis.

As a humble member of the Ceylon National Congress, I remember the time when Your Excellency helped to bring about an honourable compromise at the time of a similar crisis during the regime of Sir Henry Manning.

If Your Excellency will feel disposed to grant me an interview at a time convenient, today or tomorrow, I feel confident that I should be in a position to place certain suggestions which may be considered worthy of Your Excellency's consideration.

I beg to remain,

Your Excellency's obedient servant,



**175 : 2. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to D. E. Weerasooria,  
12 August 1932<sup>1</sup>**

“Gamini”,  
Alfred House Garden,  
Colombo, 12th August, 1932.

D. E. Weerasooria Esq.,  
“Cambridge House”,  
Darley Road,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

National Committee

I am in receipt of your letter dated the 1st instant, informing me of the fact that I have been elected a member of the National Committee.

I shall be glad to serve on this Committee, and subscribe to articles of this Constitution.

Yours faithfully,

**175 : 3. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to D. S. Senanayake,  
27 October 1932**

Kegalle,  
27th October, 1932.

My dear D. S.,

I have considered over the proposal of the Secretary to restore cuts in the Governor's establishment, and have spoken to several members with a view to finding their mind. There is a strong feeling that these cuts should not be restored. I mentioned this fact to Molamure on the last day in Council and told him that there was strong opposition and suggested that the question should be allowed to stand down for discussion at a later date.

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1. “D. E. Weerasooria” probably refers to Durand E. Weerasuriya.



Don't you think that we would be making a mistake by focussing public attention on this point and make the situation embarrassing to the Governor himself? My own feeling is that these items should not be restored and that things should be left alone.

I shall be returning to Colombo tomorrow for a meeting of the committee and shall see you either tomorrow or on Saturday.

Yours very sincerely,

**175:4. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to G. C. S. Corea,  
11 November 1932**

"Gamini,"  
Alfred House Garden,  
Colombo,  
11th November 1932.

My dear Claude,

Let me offer you my hearty congratulations on the high responsibility conferred on you by being selected as a President of the Congress for the coming year.

Your work has been consistent throughout and your continued interest in the activities of the Congress have justly earned for you this well deserved honour. But it is more in the nature of a responsibility that I view your selection.

Unfortunately the Congress has fallen on evil days and it is only a few of us who yet remain to do it even with service. It is losing its grip on the people and the large majority of the intelligent section is indifferent to it.

I trust that you will be able to bring back some life into this body and to create some measure of enthusiasm for the Congress throughout the country.

In spite of all Banda's efforts the response throughout the country has not been very encouraging.



I see that busy-bodies are taking a hand in the selection of a man to act for Sir Baron. This is a deliberate attempt to set up the two of us against each other, for according to the news that appear in some of the papers, the Committee had first selected me and that at a later stage they had decided that I was not good enough and that you should be asked to do the work instead.

I do not mind what news paragraphs in the papers say, but only do not want that the harmony that has hitherto existed in the Committee should in any way be disturbed. Particularly, I do not desire that there should be any shadow between you and me, for apart from our personal friendship with each other for many years we have to work in common in the future.

If you are, therefore, yourself keen to take up the vacancy, I think, we should meet together and decide how best we can proceed. In any way let us avoid a contest or a vote.

My personal suggestion is that the intending candidates should ask the rest of the members to meet together, informally, and decide between them so that the candidates should accept the choice rather than for a formal meeting and a vote. Even this procedure is, I think, unnecessary as you and I as friends ought to decide for ourselves what we should do.

I have mentioned this at length because I know that some effort is being made to bring about discord and misunderstanding.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



175 : 5. A Circular from E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 12 November 1934<sup>1</sup>

“Gamini,”  
Alfred House Gardens,  
Colpetty,  
12th November 1934.

Dear Sir,

I have been elected the President of the Ceylon National Congress for the ensuing year. Although I am fully preoccupied in various other activities, I felt I must not miss this opportunity to render a valuable service to my country and its people and I therefore consented to accept this post of President of the Ceylon National Congress, a post which, I am aware, involves no easy task.

By performing my duties as the President to the best of my ability, I hope to provide the country with a significant leadership (*salakiyayuthu meheyak*) through the Ceylon National Congress during the course of the coming year. I would like to inform you that I need your assistance if I am to fulfill this wish.

The pathetic and sorry state of affairs which the people of this country, taken as whole, are faced with is a fact you are only too aware of. The population of this country increases daily. Yet there is no evidence of any increase in the necessities of life or in the means (*kramaya*) of getting at the conveniences (*sapapahasu*) which are essential for a civilized community. Daily, the problem of earning a living is becoming a grave one for the vast majority of the population. From all directions the increase of poverty and the loss of wealth is noticeable. The country's wealth is being drained out to foreign countries through various means. It has become the custom to import even the items most essential to keep us alive. Although by reducing the cost of food and other supplies, by improving local industries and

1. From a printed letter in C. N. A., 25.20/14 and 25.21/16.



by other ways and means it is possible to retain Ceylon's wealth within Ceylon's shores, we are forced into this pathetic state of affairs due to an absence of any desire or any nationalist objective of working together in united fashion. It is virtually certain that unless we work courageously as a nation now, realising the dangers we are confronting, the future of our citizenry is bound to be worse by several degrees than it is today. Therefore, it is incumbent on all of us who are patriotic and nationalist minded to work with greater enthusiasm for the common good of the country.

Some seem to think that everything will be done by the Government and the State Council. Certainly, a great deal could be done by the Government and the State Council for the good of our citizens. But it has become impossible to get a good job of work done by the Government because of the absence of a national policy or a national goal, or even a well-thought-out plan of work which could be implemented with unanimous agreement.

When considering these matters, no doubt a national organization like the *Ceylon National Congress* has an uphill task of organisation leadership before it. The time has dawned for the Ceylon National Congress to work hard while motivating the people to do likewise. I hope you will agree with my belief that it is very essential that we should forget individual defects and shortcomings and rivalry and work unitedly for the greater good of the country as a whole. If you are in agreement with this, please note that your assistance and support is indispensable for the national movement.

As we need assistance and support from all parts of the country for the scheme of work which the Ceylon National Congress contemplates putting into action in the near future please do encourage us in our efforts at the forthcoming general assembly by revitalising the Congress branch or association in your locality, or, where there is no such association, by establishing one immediately.



I will be greatly obliged if you would let me know your views on these requests without delay. The date of the General Assembly will be notified in the press.

Faithfully,  
E. A. P. Wijeyeratne,  
President for the ensuing year, C.N.C.

175 : 6. Letter from Louis De Witt to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne,  
21 September 1938<sup>1</sup>

2nd Floor,  
Hongkong Bank Building,  
Fort,  
Colombo, 21st Sept. 1938.

Dear E.A.P.,

Adam and I have been thinking for many days past to join in a letter to you, but Adam has had more than one slice of ill-luck and is not in the happiest frame of mind just now.

The mother of Fazlabas (that is, the Municipal Councilor you met on your way out) returned from Madras after treatment which was not successful and died in Colombo. Adam also lost a son of a close friend of his, one of the Hebtulabhoys, a young man who died after a very short illness.

We were wondering how you were keeping in health ; from what news we had received we are glad that all is well with you. D. S. has returned very fit and well but will not be taking up duties till the end of this month. In the meanwhile Bernard is in the saddle galloping for all his worth, and happily, with success.

The Bracegirdle affair is in every man's mouth and prophets are full of evil predictions. The Chief by the way has been not too well these days and has not attended to

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1. From the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS, C.N.A., 25.20/10 or 14.



his work. E. G. P. had a very successful meet in August having won 2 big events together with his friend Freddy. They both won further success when Freddy went on to resume the duties of Commissioner Municipal Council and Edward as Attorney-General. We had a great evening at Edward's and being popular the place was full with all from Hulftsdorf.

We are watching the progress of the Delegates with interest and though it is stated here as a certainty that you are not likely to make much advance we hope you yet may be successful. The Governor was operated for tonsils and ran away to England on short leave. I suppose you all must have met him in England. Taking all things into account he is a good man and I think his return will be of distinct advantage to us who are looking forward to political progress.

Wodeman is at Queen's House and because of Murphy's promotion, Newnham has sent in his papers for retirement. It is said that he is likely to remain in Ceylon and enter a political career. Your friend E. A. L. W. has ascended the Bench taking the place of that good man Maartensz. R. F. Dias from Kandy succeeds O. L. de Kretser as D. J. Colombo and Crossette-Tambiah goes up-country. S. W. R. D. B. is stumping the country and is taking his direction from every wind that blows. The Sama Samajists are closing ranks and did a lot of loud talk in Council. It appears that they are preparing for an onslaught against all other parties at the elections to come. I feel it is time that all intelligent sections interested in ordered progress should form a big party that will rise above creed and community and work together for the common good; unless such a party comes into existence it will be very difficult to achieve any substantial progress. We must support the men at the helm and unless we do it with consistent efforts you will agree that very little can be achieved towards the common good. Ponnambalam has answered a call from the Secretary of



State so his admirers say and has rushed to England. There has been a decided campaign against Goonesinha, and his friends in the Municipal Council and on completion of the list of voters for the current year, objections were taken to the names of Goonesinha, Reyal, Mrs. Rutnam and Dr. Fernando. The names of Goonesinha, Mrs. Rutnam and Dr. Fernando were expunged and Reyal just succeeded by the skin of his teeth in keeping his name on the register. These cases are now in appeal but I am afraid as they were not too well fought in the lower Court they may lose. This means that his party will be under a cloud for some-time as those whose names are expunged will not be able to come in till the next general elections, the bye-election taking place before the completion of the next list. There was also an objection to Fazalabas, Adamaly's nephew, but this was a very long shot and we were able successfully to avoid it.

Goonesinha was not too well when he returned to Ceylon from his interrupted tour ; he did not look too well when Adamaly and I called on him. Though he is out and about, I think he is very much less than his former self. He was full of the kindness shown him by Adamaly's son and nephew and expressed his gratitude to Adamaly who was pleased to receive it.

There was also an attack on Razik by way of an application to have him unseated on the grounds that he had a part in a butcher's contract ; Nagalingam heard the application and dismissed it. An appeal is being filed in this matter and it being now almost restricted to a point of law one can never say what my Lords may think.

We are all fearful of a coming War ; it is a terrible thought and almost a nightmare to businessmen and tradesfolk. Whether or not it was a portent of coming events, Ceylon experienced an earthquake which rattled us while we were in bed for quite 10 to 12 minutes on a



cool September morning. The instruments of the Observatory are said to have broken because of the severity of the shock; no damage, no loss of life—only food for the newspapers next morning and the day after.

We hope all things go well with you and your friends. We send you our goodwill and wish you well.

Yours sincerely,

Louis De Witt,  
for myself and Adamaly.

*P.S.*—The case regarding Basnagalla at the Avissawella Court has been fixed for the 2nd November. If you are not able to come in time, please let me know as I should like to get a postponement; in the meantime the Gazette notices have been published regarding the settlement of Basnagalla so that when you come back there will be work for you.

Good luck,  
Louis.

175:7. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to T. C. Rajaratnam,  
12 February 1939

“Savanti,”  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
12th February 1939

T. C. Rajaratnam Esq.,  
Proctor S. C.,  
Uduvil,  
Chunnakam,

Confidential

My dear T. C.,

I am addressing this letter to you and a similar letter to Nalliah as I believe, the two of you like myself, who are outside the Council will be in a position to bring about an understanding between the various communities at this



momentous juncture. I have just read the "Observer" this morning in which it is stated that the Jaffna Association has passed certain resolutions. I trust that this is not quite true and that it is not too late even now to have a joint conference between your people and ours with a view to taking a common line in regards to the proposals for reforms.

Unfortunately our leaders here are not prepared to take the lead in making any definite offer regarding the distribution of the additional seats. I have, however, a scheme in mind whereby the two existing Indian electorates are to be withdrawn and in their place two additional seats are to be given to the Kandyan community, whilst the entire ten new seats can be distributed between the Tamils, the Mohamedans, and the Indians. Tentatively I suggest, three for Indians, three for Mohamedans, and four for Ceylon Tamils. To this view I can guarantee the support of the Sinhalese leaders like Sir D. B. and Messrs. D. S., Banda and Corea, provided, however, that your people agree in turn to support the reform proposals of the Congress. This will mean amending the Governor's powers, the removal of the Officers of State completely, the abolition of the Committee system and the establishment of a cabinet form of government. We are also insisting that in regard to the Indian franchise, both requirements such as a five years residence and certificate of domicile of choice should be the test of registration. The other details can be discussed at a conference.

I have put these views to Mahadeva, Natesan and to I. X. Pereira, the only people whom I have met so far. If you feel, as I do feel very strongly, that an adjustment of our differences should be brought about immediately, will you please explore the position and let me know without delay whether this scheme will be agreeable to your people and to the Jaffna members. Mr. Senanayake will be in Jaffna this week and I would suggest that one or two of you should discuss the position with him. As far as I am concerned my move is entirely on my own and I would wish my name be kept in the background so as to avoid the charge that you and I



are inter-meddlers. I am sure neither you nor I desire for any kudos in bringing about an understanding. Our satisfaction will be in the knowledge that something substantial shall have been done in the political progress of our country.

If necessary I am prepared to come and see you at Jaffna, but it must be upon an assurance that things are moving satisfactorily.

With kind regards,

Yours very sincerely.

175 : 8. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to G. C. S. Corea, 3 May 1939

“Savanti,”  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
3rd May 1939

Hon'ble Mr. G. C. S. Corea,  
Minister of Industry and Commerce,  
Colombo.

My dear Claude,

I am sending this note to you as I am not sure of my being able to meet you. Would it not be wise if you—or is it for D. S.—to have a commission appointed to inquire into the depression in the tobacco industry in Jaffna and to suggest any possible relief by the Central government. If this comes on the initiative of one of our Ministers and unasked by the people of the North it will be, I think, a good gesture.

With kind regards,

Yours very sincerely.



175 : 9. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to P. J. Field, 28 May 1939<sup>1</sup>

“Savanti,”  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
Ceylon,  
28th May 1939

P. J. Field Esq.,  
68, Fleet Street,  
London E. C. 4.

My dear Field,

It is a pleasure to hear from you from time to time and to know that you are doing well. I shall be very glad to go over the article in case the “Crown Colonist” sends the proof to me for revision.

I wonder how things are in England just now. Are you all getting ready for the fray or are the war clouds likely to disperse? How is the political situation? Is there any prospect of a National Party emerging in the near future? You will remember my having several talks with you regarding the necessity to stress the idea of an Empire parliament or at any rate to plead for a truer commonwealth, in which not only the white colonies but even people like ourselves will form independent units. In this connection I remember Russell Stannard of Fleet Street telling me that a series of articles had been written, in the paper with which he was connected a couple of years ago, emphasising the need for an Empire federation. I wonder if you can find the time to help me to get hold of these articles or to get any literature on the subject. I am prepared to pay for them and the parcel can be sent C.O.D. Stannard himself is, I believe, on the “Daily Telegraph.”

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1. For Field's reply, see *supra*, item 104 : B. 38.



Mr. L. M. de Silva will be here tomorrow and will probably stay here till next spring. Are you keeping in touch with our Ceylon man and the Ceylon House? Will you please give my best regards to Spence.

We have just started an Empire Society in Ceylon and I am intending to take some interest in it. In case I get the necessary literature, I intend reading a paper before the society on this question of the Empire Common-wealth.

With kind regards,

Yours very sincerely,

**175 : 10. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to Sir Drummond Shiels,  
22 June 1939**

Savanti,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
Ceylon,  
22nd June 1939.

Sir (Dr.) Drummond Shiels,  
Tavistock House,  
Southeravistock Square,  
W. C. 1, London.

My dear Sir Drummond,

A few days ago I sent a letter on behalf of a young friend of mine asking your help to get him admitted to the University College, London, to study medicine. At that time I was not aware of the high honour conferred on you. Will you permit me, though belated, to offer you my hearty congratulations. This is one of the few instances where I feel that the recipient adds lustre to the honour itself. If there was one friend more than any other who helped me in England and who showed a complete understanding of our aspirations it was yourself. Ceylon will always be grateful for your many years of service on her behalf. That



you will continue to do all you can to put her on her feet in the path of self-government I have no doubt. I hope you will be spared for many years yet to take an interest in my country.

As for local politics I cannot truthfully give you a bright account. The situation here has worsened since I saw you in England. Communal differences are being accentuated by the unguarded utterances made by politicians on both sides and I fear that these differences may filter down to the ordinary people who have hitherto lived side by side in peace and amity. I tried on my return to get the old man Sir D. B. to resign from Council, but I failed in my effort and in the division at a meeting of the Ex. Co. of the National Congress my motion was defeated by two votes. He seems to have no initiative and no drive and has made no effort to bring about a better understanding. Our friend D. S., out of a sense of mistaken loyalty to his Leader, is merely towing the line. In the meantime<sup>1</sup>..... on the fiery cross of communalism.

I am keeping in the background. I feel unhappy to have to do so, but I have no alternative as my own affairs were so sadly neglected during the five years in Council and my professional work suffered so greatly during my last absence in England that I have to work night and day to get back my work and to adjust my own affairs. This does not mean, however, that I have given up altogether my interest in politics, but for a couple of years more I have to subordinate that interest for the sake of my profession and my children.

It will give me very great pleasure to hear from you from time to time and to know that you are doing well and that your interest in us continues to be abiding.

With the kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

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1. Expunged on lawyer's advice.



175 : 11. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to Dr. S. Petiyagoda,  
24 September 1939

Savanti,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
Ceylon,  
24th September 1939.

Dr. S. Petiyagoda,  
C/o Mrs. Gordon,  
No. 1, Heiles Street,  
Edinburgh.

My dear Cyril,

The last letter we received from England was from Ivy. It reached us before war was declared. Since then we have not heard anything from you or of your whereabouts and we are naturally getting concerned.

In the event of your not being able to obtain passages to return after the completion of your course, I would suggest, that you go to the Colonial Office and see Mr. Cowell, who is now one of the Under Secretaries, and offer your services as a doctor to be engaged in any district in England. You will have a wonderful opportunity of making your own contribution in the cause of the Empire and at the same time bring credit to your own country, subject to getting just sufficient remuneration to maintain yourself and your wife and children. You should do all you can to help the authorities at this time of need.

I am enclosing herewith a letter addressed to Mr. Cowell. If by any chance you find him engaged elsewhere please show the letter to Mr. Creasy, private secretary to Mr. Malcolm MacDonald and I am sure he will advise you as to what should be done.

Yours affectionately,



175 : 12. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to H. R. Cowell, 24 September 1939

Savanti,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
Ceylon,  
24th September 1939.

H. R. Cowell Esq.,  
Colonial Office,  
Bowning Street,

Dear Mr. Cowell,

I am writing this letter on behalf of my brother-in-law, Dr. Pe-ti-ya-go-da, who is at present doing some studies in Edinburgh. He is on leave and he is staying in England with his wife, who is English, and his two children. In case there will be difficulties of his obtaining passages to return I have advised him to see you and offer his services to the Colonial Office. I would feel happy to know that he is rendering his personal services at this time of need.

You will be glad to hear that all the communities in Ceylon are closing their ranks and are already forgetting their communal and other local differences in their endeavour to stand loyally by England and the Empire against the common danger that threatens us all.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



175 : 13. Letters from Sir Andrew Caldecott to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 1939-1940

a. Letter Dated 29 December 1939

Queen's House,  
Ceylon,  
29 December 1939.

Dear Wijeyeratne,

Ever so many thanks for your letter of the 25th (received by me yesterday) and your kind offer of volunteer service in any capacity. At the moment I can think of no suitable work, but directly the opportunity and occasion offers I shall not hesitate to enlist your assistance. These are early days and the war is already finding out the weak points in our administration—not a bad thing. We must have the courage to be corrected! Again ever so many thanks.

Yours sincerely,  
A. Caldecott.

b. Letter Dated 7 March 1940

Queen's House,  
Ceylon,  
7.iii.40.

Dear Wijeyeratne,

Thank you for your letter of the 5th March. You will have seen since my message to State Council. I hope that Ceylon will be spared the curse of non-co-operation. There would be absolutely no reason for it!

Yours sincerely,  
A. Caldecott.



175 : 14. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to C. B. Walgampaya,  
2 March 1941

Savanti,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
2nd March, 1941.

C. B. Walgampaya Esq.,  
Advocate,  
Castle Street,  
Kandy.

My dear Walgampaya,

Please do not think the less of us for having delayed to write to you. We were very happy to learn of your marriage and I congratulate you on behalf of my wife and myself and wish you all happiness and prosperity.

Now that you are settled down in life you should not forget that much can be done by you for the benefit of the villagers around your area. Don't you think you should form some little local group to study their economic needs and to secure employment to the people or to foster little village and cottage industries. This is really the need of the country today and not merely big speeches from the platform as are indulged in today by some of our politicians.

I want the younger men to study seriously the future problem they will have to face as public men. I have no doubt you will find time to interest yourself in this work without neglecting your profession. If there is any matter in which my services are needed I shall be ready to help you.

With kind regards,

Yours very sincerely,



175 : 15. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to E. Wanigasekera,  
2 March 1941

Savanti,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
2nd March, 1941.

E. Wanigasekera Esq.,  
Chairman, Village Committee,  
Talawakelle.

Dear Mr. Wanigasekera,

I am sending a map of the electoral area of Talawakelle. You can fill up the necessary particulars either on the map itself or in a separate sheet of paper. What I require are the following particulars among others :—

- (1) Area covered by estates where there are in villages.
- (2) The number of bazaars within that area.
- (3) Are these bazaars on estate land or on private property ?
- (4) Are there no private lands or even small holdings within this large estate area ?
- (5) Are there no Crown lands ?
- (6) Are there any unplanted lands within this area except river or stream reservations ?

I know it is not possible for you to be exact in the figures you supply ; but try to make them as accurate as possible and send them to me early so that I will deal with the matter when I come to the meeting. It would be best to get hold of two or three enthusiastic workers and form yourselves into a committee and get the necessary particulars.

You have not yet informed me of the date of the meeting. Please do so without delay as I am being booked up for meetings all over.

Yours sincerely,



**175 : 16. J. E. Amaratunga to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne,  
16 July 1941**

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Borella Junction,  
Colombo, 16th July, 1941.

Dear Mr. Wijeyeratne,

I understand that the peon has been instructed to stay in the office from 8 to 9 a.m. each day. As there are some members who are at home early in the morning he would find it difficult to collect their subscriptions if he were to remain in the office from 8 to 9. He may therefore be allowed to leave the office during that time for about two or three days in the week. He can stay in the office on the other days.

Yours truly,

J. E. Amaratunga,  
Hony. Treasurer, CNC.

**175 : 17. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to J. E. Amaratunga,  
20 July 1941**

Savanti,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
20th July, 1941.

J. E. Amaratunga Esq.,  
Hony. Treasurer,  
The Ceylon National Congress,  
Borella Flats,  
Borella.

My dear Amaratunga,

Your letter dated 16th instant to hand. I am proposing to have the Congress office opened for a couple of hours in the morning to enable contacts to be established with the



working class organisations in Colombo. That is the reason why I wanted the peon to open the office daily at 8 a.m. and have the place dusted.

Anyway I shall talk to you about this when I meet you.

Yours Sincerely,

175:18. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to J. R. Jayewardene,  
20 July 1941

Savanti,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
20th July, 1941.

J. R. Jayewardene Esq.,  
Ward Place,  
Colombo.

My dear J. R.,

I told Gauthamadasa to arrange for the Working Committee meeting at 6.30 p.m. on Monday, 28th instant, and I noted the time in his presence in the diary.

I now find from the notice which I have just received, that the date has been altered to the 29th. Evidently this alteration was due to the fact that some of you were not free on the 28th. If so Gauthamadasa should have asked me if the 29th suited me.

As it is I have undertaken to speak at the Twentieth Century Club at that identical hour on the 29th. I shall therefore not be able to attend the meeting of the Working Committee. It is now too late to alter the date of the meeting as notices must have by now gone out to others, and special invitations must have gone out to Sir Baron, Francis de Zoysa and Henry Amarasuriya. Under the circumstances you will have to get someone else to take the chair and explain my absence.



I have received the annexed letter from the Chilaw people. Will you kindly get into touch with the other members of the sub-committee and write to them that I would be willing to take by car [sic] to this conference at 9 a.m. on the 26th instant. We can lunch somewhere and go to the Piduma meeting in the afternoon. Kindly let me know who the other members of the sub-committee are. I am particularly anxious to take G. K. with me. Will you kindly drop him a special note.

You may acknowledge the letter of the Chilaw people.

Yours Sincerely,

**175 : 19. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to J. R. Jayewardene,  
21 July 1941**

Savanta,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
20th July, 1941.

J. R. Jayewardene Esq.,  
Advocate,  
Ward Place,  
Colomo.

My dear J. R.,

A meeting of the inhabitants of Atulugam Korale is to be held on Sunday, 10th August at 3 p.m. at the Deraniyagala bazaar to discuss the ways and means of obtaining relief to the suffers [sic] as a result of the recent floods. This area includes both Dehiowita and Deraniyagala, the two towns which suffered very considerable loss during the recent floods. They are anxious that we should help them by sending our representatives and also by getting



the Congress to preside. I have suggested that as it is it should not be a Congress meeting to begin with, that D. S. should be asked to preside as he will be in a position to deliver the goods. Failing that it will be good to have Corea to preside as he can give relief to suffer [sic] from the floods. Otherwise I suppose I shall have to take the chair.

The Dehiowita Maha-Jana-Sabha, will also take an interest and it will be a good opportunity for the Congress to start some useful activities in that area. Will you and Dudley discuss this question and let me know early so that I may inform Mr. Siriwardhana of Dereniyagala.

Yours sincerely,

**175 : 20. J. R. Jayewardene to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne,  
17 August 1941**

Glendale,  
Bandarawela,  
17.8.41.

My dear E. A. P.,

I have visited the Badulla branch of the Congress and seen their free reading room. The Hony. Secretary, Mahipala, was there and I inquired about the two people you referred to. He was not quite sure that they could give us must help. He has promised to see me when we can discuss matters further.

I am writing to you to take some action on the Churchill-Roosevelt declaration. Clause 3 of this declaration says, "They respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live ; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of



them." One would have been doubtful as to whether this applied to the coloured races in the British Empire, but Attlee's speech to the African students gives us some hope (see Sunday Observer). We must take advantage of these statements, whether they are made bona fide or not. Could you not see D. S. and Dudley and interview the Governor and ask him for a declaration with regard to our future political status? Could you not summon a meeting of the Working Committee, discuss these two statements and wire to Attlee and ask him whether they intend to give us freedom after the war. We might pass a resolution welcoming Attlee's statement and hoping that it applies to us too.

England more than any other country needs the sympathy and help of the World in this struggle. The various declarations she is making if carried out will mean the end of the Empire as it is now constituted. We will never get anything unless we speak out our minds and make everybody know what we want. The Congress must make it clear that we do not want more "reforms" to the constitution, but that we want freedom and the right to frame our own constitution. The Churchill declaration seems to guarantee this. It would be a great achievement for Congress if we could take action first in this matter.

I am writing to Dudley also. I shall be meeting a few people here and discussing the possibility of a Congress branch. The holiday is doing me good and I shall be fit for another 4 months of hard work.

Hope you are well too.

Yours truly,

J. R. Jayewardene.



**175: 21. Correspondence between E. A. P. Wijeyeratne and Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, 18-19 September 1941<sup>1</sup>**

(a) *E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, 18 September 1941*

Savanti,  
17, Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
Colombo,  
18th September, 1941.

Sir D. B. Jayatilaka,  
Dehiwela.

Dear Sir Baron,

There is a special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Congress fixed for Saturday, 20th instant at 9 a.m. at the Congress office. Will you be so good as to make it a point to attend the meeting? You have not been helping us for several months now either at the Working Committee meetings or the Executive Committee meetings.

There is a resolution to be brought up on Saturday by Siripala Samarakkody that the Home Minister be asked to take steps to secure the release of the four detained prisoners in pursuance of the decision of the State Council. In this connection there was some discussion at the last meeting. One or two members expressed divergent views as regards the present position of affairs. It was stated that in spite of the resolution of the State Council you as Home Minister have not up to now taken any action to secure their release. It was also stated that you desired a letter to be written to you by the prisoners and that you were disinclined to act on the letter written to George Silva.

1. From C.N.A., 25.20/10.



If a previous engagement prevents you from attending the meeting will you be so good as to write to me, as President, a note that will enable us to understand the true position of affairs.

Yours Sincerely,

(b) *Sir D. B. Jayatilaka to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 19 September 1941*

Citra-Lata,  
Nikape,  
Dehiwala,  
19th September, 1941.

My dear A. E. P. [*sic*],

Your letter of 18th inst. was received last night.

I am leaving early tomorrow morning for Dandegamuwa where I have some engagements both in the morning and in the afternoon. It is therefore impossible for me to attend a meeting of the Congress Committee tomorrow morning.

As regards the detenues I communicated to the Governor the motion passed by the State Council, but he declined to implement it. That is briefly the position. If you wish to see the correspondence, I shall be glad to show it if you can arrange to see me at the Home Office.

Yours sincerely,

**D. B. Jayatilaka.**



175 : 22. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to E. P. Wijeyetillake,  
9 October 1941

Savanti,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
11th October, 1941.

E. P. Wijeyetillake Esq.,  
Talawakelle.

My dear Wijeyetillake,

I am in receipt of both your letters. In a way I am glad that you are coming nearer home ; but in your own interests of promotion in the department, I think Mawanella is not sufficiently big enough for you. I therefore think that it is best for you to concentrate on getting through the examination and joining the Training College.

As regards Tennekoon there is no need to be disappointed that things have not turned out as expected. I know that you tried to do a good turn because of me and I appreciate it.

As regards my coming forward for a seat, that really is far from my thoughts just now. My intention is not to seek a seat in Council at present. It is in my opinion utterly useless to get in there unless we can get self-government and work this country with a kind of Dominion Parliament. On the other hand there may suddenly come a crisis which will require the presence of men like my way of thinking in order to fighting [sic] the government. Such a situation, in my opinion, will not arise.

I am however making every effort to force a dissolution of the present council so that we may send in men pledged to fight for Home Rule.

Yours Sincerely,



175 : 23. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to G. C. S. Corea, 15 April  
1942<sup>1</sup>

Kegalle,  
15th April, 1942.

Hon'ble Mr. G. C. S. Corea,  
Parnassus,  
Barnes Place,  
Colombo.

My dear Claude,

Just a line to say that I am glad that you have succeeded in your mission in India. I am rather worried that we in the Congress have done nothing to help the distress caused by the present situation. I think it would be an excellent thing if we can shoulder some specific responsibility to help in the maintenance of order and comfort to the civilian population. Will you be able to call together an emergency meeting either on Friday evening, or on Saturday at sometime convenient to you. It would be good if we can get the other Ministers of the Congress group so that we may embark on something useful.

Personally, I feel miserable to be cooped up here in Kegalle completely out of the picture, when my old colleagues are trying their best to help to carry on the civil administration. I wonder if I cannot be fitted into a scheme to do something useful—for the benefit of our countrymen.

Yours Sincerely,

1. From C.N.A., 25.20/10.



175 : 24. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to the Hony. Secretaries,  
Ceylon National Congress, 5 February 1945<sup>1</sup>

Kegalle,  
5th February, 1945.

The Hony. Secretary,  
Ceylon National Congress,  
Colombo.

Dear Sirs,

In view of the many representations which are being made by various sectional interests before the Soulbury Commission without due regard to the real interests of the country as a whole, I am constrained to ask the Executive Committee to reconsider its decision to refrain from placing evidence before the Commission.

I feel strongly that unless steps are taken to expose the many incorrect statements made, and to remove from the minds of the Commissioners the wrong impressions created, we shall be saddled with a constitution infinitely worse than we have agitated for.

Out of loyalty to Congress I have refrained from expressing my views so far, or being associated with any party or group other than the Congress itself. I am now asking the Committee even if it is not prepared to reconsider its earlier decision whether it is prepared to permit its members to place their individual views before the Commission. I am not concerned with the question of urging the form of government before the Commission, for I feel that it is not possible to do so in view of the announcement that they will not hear evidence regarding a constitution which comes outside the Declaration of the Secretary of State. There is, nevertheless, a need, in my opinion, to set to right the immense harm that may be caused by reactionary representations if they remain uncontradicted.

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1. From C.N.A., 25.20/10.



Will you please let me know if such permission can be obtained. As a meeting of the Executive Committee will not be held immediately, will you please place this matter before the Working Committee.

Yours faithfully,

175:25. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to D. S. Senanayake,  
9 September 1945<sup>1</sup>

218, de Saram Place,  
Maradana,  
Colombo,  
9th September, 1945.

Hon'ble D. S. Senanayake,  
Grosvenor House,  
Park Lane,  
London.

My dear D. S.,

As usual with me I have taken sometime to write to you. But though belated, this letter conveys to you my affectionate greetings and the best wishes of my wife and the children. I hope that you are keeping fit and that you have had an opportunity—in the midst of your heavy work, to enter a nursing home for a couple of weeks complete rest. I was glad to note from your letter you were hoping to smooth out all difficulties and to obtain an encouraging response. Please do not tell me that your hopes have been belied.

Have you met your prototype, the new Minister of Agriculture—Tom Williams—who did so much when I was in England. Creech Jones too gave me considerable assistance and studied our then problems with genuine concern. I wonder how he reacted to you and to the case you put forward. Lord Pethick-Lawrence, unfortunately may not

1. From C.N.A., 25.20/10.



be quite so free to assist us, but I assure you that he appeared to me to take a highly intelligent interest in our case. As for Sir Drummond Shiels, he was all out to help me except that he had a lingering affection for a committee system which I found it impossible to eradicate from his heart and mind.

But I am most concerned to know what your own views are. Do you think that they will give us all we require. If we can have our external trade rights, even though subject to consultations and if we can prevent the frequent exercise of the Powers of Veto both here and at the Colonial Office, I am not personally very much concerned even if a Second Chamber is to be given as a solace to the minorities and vested interests. All that we ask for and all that we should insist on is a Second Chamber which can delay, if necessary, but not destroy or over-ride the decision of the Council.

Have you any fears that the minority demands will be conceded to the extent of causing any danger or that a vicious principle of a composite cabinet will be introduced? If you can succeed in these matters in the lines you have discussed so often with me and get the Colonial Office to assist you to settle the vexed question of the Indian domicile, you can rest satisfied for the rest of your life that you have done well by the country.

Now to a more personal matter, and it is with some misgivings that I am writing on this subject. I know, however, that you will never misunderstand my expressing these views. The political situation here in Ceylon has changed fast. The Sama Samajists are out to have a change in leadership. The largest minority, the Tamils will like to see you out of that position. A section of the Congress—the Communist element, are equally vehement in criticising you and I fear that Banda will take full advantage of the opportunities that have come his way. It is most likely that the Kandyans will rally round him at the next general elections.



In spite of your heroic services and the personal loyalties attached to you and your undoubted ascendancy in specific agricultural areas, it will be impossible for you to secure a sufficient following in the absence of a well knit party organisation. The tragedy of it is that we do not want you to lay down the reins of office just yet, but can do nothing to prevent the transference of power into other hands unless you yourself decide on a vigorous course of action. It seems to me that for some years past you have been keeping yourself aloof more and more and not coming into contact with the views and thoughts of the politically conscious section of the people. Oliver has stood by you and given his loyal advice and co-operation in all matters. All that has been to the good, but I honestly believe, that he has failed to realise the true inwardness of the modern political thoughts and discussions in the country.

This is the problem I want you to consider seriously and earnestly. I have had long talks, intimate and in detail with Dudley and I believe he agrees totally with my diagnosis. If the changes that are coming are going to be accepted by us it is all the more necessary that you should remain at your post for a period of at least three years to complete the work you have begun and to set us in the path of ordered progress. I know you will ponder over these questions on your way back and give me an opportunity to discuss the situation with you after your return.

Let me thank you for all the trouble you have taken on behalf of Tissa. You will be glad to hear that he has joined the Inns of Court, the Inner Temple and that he is allowed to sit for his First Examination in Ceylon in October. I shall be sending him to England next year and trust that he may have an opportunity to enter the University in addition to his doing his Law studies.

With kind regards from all of us.

Yours very sincerely,



**175 : 26. Correspondence between the Kegalle National Association and E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 19-21 November 1945<sup>1</sup>**

(a) *L. Jayawardena to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 19 November 1945*

Kegalla National Congress Association,  
19th Nov., 1945.

E. A. P. Wijeratne Esq.,  
218, De Saram's Place,  
Maradana.

Dear Sir,

We have the pleasure to inform you that at a general meeting, of which you were given due notice, a resolution was unanimously adopted condemning the decision of the Working Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to support the Motion of the Leader of the State Council to accept the Secretary of State's White Paper on the Ceylon Constitution.

Therefore, we beg to request you kindly to use your vote as a delegate of the Kegalla National Congress Association at the ACCC Meeting to be held on the 24th instant against the Main Resolution on the agenda paper, a copy of which must have been received by now.

Yours faithfully,  
L. Jayawardena.  
Joint Secretary.

(b) *E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to the Hony. Joint Secretaries of the Kegalla National Congress Association, 21 November 1945*

Dear Sirs,

I am in receipt of your letter dated 19th instant.

The notice of the general meeting reached me only one day before the meeting itself.

1. C.N.A., 25.20/10.



I regret I shall not be able to attend the A. C. C. C. meeting on the 24th instant, as I have to be at Gampaha courts on that day.

As regards my own attitude I think I should make it quite clear to the Kegalle branch, I am in agreement with the proposal that the White Paper declaration should be accepted, and that we should co-operate in working the New Constitution on the lines of the White Paper.

Since it is your desire that, as a representative of the Kegalla branch, my attitude should be otherwise, I am writing this to state that I have no objection to your removing my name from the list of your representatives at the A. C. C. C. and to have another elected in my place. I should, however, like to attend the Galle sessions as a delegate provided that can be arranged ; but only in the event of there being no objection to my supporting the resolution for acceptance of the reforms.

The question as to what attitude the Kegalla branch proposes to take in the event of the motion for acceptance being passed by the A. C. C. C. is an important one and should not be hastily decided upon.

Will you therefore kindly give me sufficient notice of any meeting you intend having after next Saturday so as to enable me to express my views.

Yours faithfully,

175 : 27. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to A. Creech Jones, n. d.  
[1945]<sup>1</sup>

My dear Mr. Creech Jones,

Although this letter comes somewhat late, it carries with it my hearty congratulations to you and my good wishes that you may have many opportunities in your present high

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1. Carbon copy drafts of the five letters that follow (27-31) are filed among the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS., C.N.A., 25.20/11. They are not dated.



office to be of special help to the Colonial peoples. From the newspapers we in Ceylon expected Labour to put up a brave show, but not even the most enthusiastic of us thought that the Party would have such an overwhelming victory.

I consider it a happy omen for this country that you are in the Colonial Office holding a position of power to guide our destinies. I can well recall the sympathy and understanding with which you listened to our case and interested yourself on our behalf when we were in London in deputation in 1938.

I have just heard that Mr. Senanayake will be coming back shortly and we know that he has had every opportunity to present Ceylon's case to you. I trust and pray that as a result of your deliberations we will be granted a constitution which will satisfy the ever growing demand for freedom.

The Memorandum sent by the Board of Ministers to the Colonial Office in 1943 would have been endorsed without such disagreement by the country at that stage. But today, within this short time, things have moved with surprising rapidity, and the victory of the Labour Party is being looked upon as an indication that our own freedom will be given without any restriction. To secure an enthusiastic reception in this country the reform proposals will have to be, in some particulars at least, an advance on the Ministers' proposals of 1943. I have no doubt you will give your best endeavours in the consideration of this problem.

.....

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



175 : 28. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to Sir Drummond Shiels,  
n. d. [1945]

My dear Sir Drummond,

It has taken me some time to write to you and to join your many friends throughout the Empire in offering my congratulations at the great victory which the Labour Party has justly won. I have no doubt that you are continuing to be in the inner councils of the Party and that you will use your earnest endeavours to secure for us that complete freedom for which England has fought for six long and weary years.

The presence, in high office, of three at least out of the group of friends who helped me when in England in my work is a consolation that our case will not go by default. I am writing to Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Mr. Tom Williams and Creech Jones, not to lose sight of Ceylon's case.

I read in the Ceylon papers yesterday that you were present at the students' dinner in London. You must have doubtless met and discussed the future form of the constitution with Mr. D. S. Senanayake.

There is, however, a new and strong element emerging into activity in Ceylon—an ardent Socialist group with a growing and sympathetic support in the larger urban areas, and I feel that they will not be satisfied with the restrictions and limitations which our Ministers were prepared to accept in 1943. Quite frankly there is a growing feeling that even Mr. Senanayake and many others who like himself have hitherto taken a moderate view in politics are now out of date. I am getting concerned whether anything short of full responsible government will have a chance of being accepted by the country.

.....

Yours very sincerely,



175 : 29. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to Sir Clement Attlee, n.d.  
[1945]

My dear Mr. Attlee,

Will you permit me, although sometime has elapsed since the day of your wonderful success, to offer you my tribute of congratulations, not only at the great victory of your party, but also at the unique opportunity given to you to guide the destinies of the Empire. May the God in whom you believe grant you strength to carry out your programme of work for the benefit and the freedom of every section of the people within the Empire.

Perhaps I should introduce myself. I was a member of the deputation that came to England in 1938, with Mr. George E. de Silva, the present Minister of Health, and Mr. Henry Amarasuriya, Member of the State Council. I have had then more than one opportunity of discussing Ceylon's case and of acquainting you with the local problems, and I still recall with gratitude the sympathy which you extended to us and the personal courtesy which you invariably showed us.

Today things have moved with surprising rapidity and Ceylon too has been stirred by other world movements, the promises of freedom given to smaller nations and above all by the resounding success of the Labour Party at the recent elections. I trust that the case presented by our own leader Mr. Senanayake will meet with a kindly response at the hands of the Colonial Secretary and that, under your guidance, we too will be able to enter upon a period of complete freedom and economic prosperity.

With renewed assurances of my respectful regards and loyalty.

I am yours' sincerely,



175 : 30. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to Lord Pethick-Lawrence,  
n. d. [1945]

My dear Lord Pethick-Lawrence,

Although I have delayed a few days to write to you I want you to accept my assurance that my congratulations and good wishes are no less sincere and abiding than those which must have been showered on you from every part of the Empire on your appointment to the present high office.

To me living so far away from the centre of things the idea did not occur that the victory of the Labour Party would be so complete and so sweeping. Nor did I think that you would be called upon to face the onerous responsibility of having to satisfy the craving of three-hundred-million peoples. May the God whom you believe in grant you that strength and that courage to fulfill your high mission and to set India in the path of fulfilling her destiny.

I know that your present position in the cabinet and entrusted with a different portfolio will not enable you to fight the case of little Ceylon in the way you did when you so generously assisted me in my mission in England in 1938. But I have no doubt that where your weight can be thrown in that inner council which is the final arbitor of our own fate you will not forget to give us your sympathy and support.

I wish to add a more personal note. Believe me ; I am very grateful to you for the affectionate interest you took on behalf of my son, Tissa. He has now joined the Inner Temple and has been allowed to sit for the First Examination here, before leaving Ceylon. I propose to send him to England early next year to continue his Law studies and to make another effort, whilst there, to enter Jesus College, Oxford or any College in Cambridge University. I feel happy to note that the boy will have the opportunity, when he comes to England, to make your acquaintance.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



175 : 31. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to Tom Williams, n. d.  
[1945]

My dear Mr. Williams,

Although belated, please accept my congratulations on the great opportunity that has come your way to be [of] special service to your country and the Empire.

The newspapers gave us no advance indication of the complete and overwhelming victory which your Party has secured. Needless to say that in this country too there is rejoicing. We are fortified by the hope that Labour, having fought for the rights of our people during its weary wanderings in the desert, will, after its entry into the Promised Land, give us our freedom.

I recall, with a special degree of gratitude, your acts of personal kindness to me during my stay in England in 1938 and even thereafter. I feel, however, that it will not be fair to expect you to champion our cause as you did as a back-bencher, since you are now in charge of a separate portfolio. But there are occasions when your advice will I am sure be sought, and I have no doubt that, whenever such opportunities occur, you will extend to the cause of Ceylon the same measure of sympathy and kindly interest which you consistently showed to our deputation.

.....

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,



175 : 32. Wilfred Gunasekera to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne,  
26 February 1946<sup>1</sup>

Matara,  
26.2.1946.

Wilfred Gunasekera, J. P.  
Proctor S. C. & Notary.

My dear E. A. P.,

We had a big show for Mr. Senanayake when he came down to Matara on our invitation. I should say that the crowd was even bigger than at Congress Sessions. Our Congressmen—consisting of 100% of the well-to-do good people—are all united now. Their clamour is to get D. S. back. I told him to give a deputation from Matara an interview on a Saturday any time between 1 and 4 on 23rd or 30th March. If you can induce him to come to the Congress we need not come.

With Kind regards.

Yours sincerely,  
Wilfred Gunasekera.

175 : 33. The Hony. Joint Secretaries of the Maradana National Congress Association to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 3 January 1948<sup>2</sup>

35, Ingram Road,  
Maradana, 3.1.48.

Senator: E. A. P. Wijeyeratne,  
Colombo.

Sir,

A delegation from our Association would wish to wait upon you to discuss certain matters, *inter alia*, the present

1. C.N.A., 25.20/10. This letter has some bearing on the propaganda drive in 1946. See *supra*, item 140 and Minutes.

2. C. N. A., 25.20/10.



situation of the National Congress, and we shall be obliged if you will be so kind as to give us an appointment at your early convenience.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours truly,  
P. Galoluwa,  
W. A. E. Aleheeya,  
Hony. Jt. Secretaries,  
Maradana National Congress.

175 : 34. D. A. P. Kahawita to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne,  
3 March 1948<sup>1</sup>

Nagahakelle Estate,  
Koswatta-Lunuwila,  
3.3.48.

Dear Sir,

Received your letter of the 10.2.48 regarding the Ceylon National Congress. I thank you very much for the same. But regret to say that I could not reply it earlier, as I was away from the District. I quite agree with your suggestion, and will give our utmost help in that connection ; our Chilaw District Mahajana Sabha Sammelanaya will stand by. Thank you very much for same.

Yours sincerely,

D. A. P. Kahawita.

Please be good enough to let us know the results of the 29th meeting.

DAPK.

1. C. N. A., 25.20/10.



**175 : 35. Correspondence between George E. de Silva and  
E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, June 1949<sup>1</sup>**

(a) *George E. de Silva to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 24 June 1949*

St. Georges,  
Kandy,  
Ceylon,  
24th June 1949.

Dear Wije,

I have much pleasure to inform you that I have re-elected you as a Working Committee member of the Ceylon National Congress. Please let me know before the 5th of July, 1949, whether you will consent to serve.

Yours sincerely,

Geo. E. de Silva.

(b) *E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to George E. de Silva, 28 June 1949*

June 28, 49.

My dear George,

I am in receipt of your letter dated 24th instant. I shall be very glad if you will drop me out from working as a Committee Member. To say it quite frankly I haven't got any time at all to call my own and my health is causing me grave concern. I am trying to get away for a holiday by the end of next month if it is possible to do so.

Yours very sincerely,

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne.

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1. C. N. A., 25.20/10.



## 176. THE CONGRESS AND MALARIA RELIEF, 1935 and 1939

### 176:1. Report on the Bopitiya Convalescent Home, 23 February 1935<sup>1</sup>

The sub-committee appointed by the meeting of the Committee of the National Congress met at the Council Chambers and those who were present were Messrs. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, R. S. Tennekoon, Geo. E. de Silva, A. W. H. Abeyesundere, *Mudaliyar* N. Wickremaratne and Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekere (Jt. Hony. Secretary).

The sub-committee considered the matter of malaria relief and it was thought that the most expedient measure was to start convalescent homes where necessary. Mr. Tennakoon suggested the starting of one or two in Katugampola area and the sub-committee agreed to start one to begin with at this centre. Mr. Tennekoon promised all local support.

As a preliminary measure Mr. P. H. A. Silva and *Mudaliyar* N. Wickremaratne visited Katugampola on 27th January and met Mr. Tennekoon. They visited Bopitiya village where there was great need of a home and met Mr. M. P. Perera of Bopitiya estate who has already taken an interest in the welfare of the villagers in that area in the present epidemic. The Dharmasalawa of the local Buddhist temple was selected as a temporary home and the incumbent of the temple Rev. Sri Sumana very willingly placed the same at the disposal of the Committee. Mr. Perera was given necessary instructions to get certain necessary arrangements made and it was fixed to open the home on the 30th January.

On 30th January Messrs. Geo. E. de Silva, R. S. S. Gunewardene, J. D. S. Jayasekera and *Mudaliyar* N. Wickremaratne proceeded to Bopitiya. Mr. Geo. E. de Silva declared the home open on behalf of the President of Congress with 11 patients. (Mr. Ondatjee of the Ceylon Daily News accompanied the party and very kindly took a few snapshots of the patients which were reproduced later in the Ceylon Daily News.)

1. C. N. A., 60/128; an unsigned typescript.



The progress of the home is as follows :—

	<i>Date</i>		<i>No. of patients admitted</i>
30th	January 1935	..	11
31st	January 1935	..	2
1st	February 1935	..	24
2nd	do.	..	21
3rd	do.	..	6
4th	do.	..	8
5th	do.	..	6
6th	February 1935	..	5
7th	do.	..	3
8th	do.	..	16
9th	do.	..	3
10th	do.	..	9
11th	do.	..	15
12th	do.	..	3
13th	do.	..	1
14th	do.	..	2
15th	do.	..	7
16th	do.	..	10
17th	do.	..	1
18th	do.	..	5
19th	do.	..	18
20th	do.	..	2
21st	do.	..	18
22nd	do.	..	6

It is our good fortune that the Minister of Home Affairs Sir D. B. Jayatilaka accompanied by the Assistant Government Agent Mr. D. B. Seneviratne, C.C.S., the Provincial Surgeon and Mr. R. S. Tennekoon, Member for Katugampola, visited the home just a few days ago after it was opened and having seen the condition of the inmates and the general work that (is) being carried on there expressed satisfaction and promised every Government support. The Assistant Government Agent immediately after sent a supply of rice and other foodstuffs such as sago, barley, sugar and even cloth for the use of the inmates. They also promised further support in the way of additional temporary buildings as the accomodation available at the Dharmasalawa was not sufficient.



On the 9th February our President visited the home. It was again our good fortune that the Assistant Government Agent Mr. Seneviratne and Mrs. Seneviratne arrived there at the same time. The A. G. A. gave orders to the village headmen to get the two temporary buildings constructed. Mrs. Seneviratne agreed to send some warm clothings for the use of the little ones at the home. On this day there were 82 inmates consisting of 22 men, 24 women and 36 children. On the 23rd (today) on my visit I found 68 inmates consisting of 20 men, 18 women and 30 children. The rest have been discharged as they became fit. The home has received from the very inception all assistance as far as the Home Minister and the Government Agent N. W. P. are concerned. But we cannot say the same thing with regard to the Medical Department. There was great reluctance on the part of medical officers in the neighbourhood to sympathise and co-operate with others. There was great delay in carrying out the instructions issued by the Provincial Surgeon in one instance. But later better counsel prevailed and now there is a medical assistant who is attending to the patients daily and he has also opened an out-patients' dispensary from 2 p.m. every day where a large number come for medicine. Mr. Perera of Bopitiya who is in immediate charge of the home is doing all he can for the progress of the home. He is very keen and has a very warm corner in his heart for the villagers over there. The priest too deserves a word of thanks for the interest he displayed.

The following are some of the donations given up to 23rd February 1935 :—

Mr. D. B. Seneviratne—60 small jackets.

Mr. D. C. Wijeyewardene—8 bottles of milk daily and tea, sugar and sago.

Mrs. C. S. Rajaratnum (Kandy)—2 pillows.

Mrs. E. L. Wijegunawardene (Kandy)—2 pillows and 2 mats.



*Mudaliyar N. Wickremaratne*—16 pillows and 18 mats.

Mr. W. D. Perera—Rs. 2 paid for stitching pillows.

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne—25 blankets, roll of cloth, tea, sago and barley.

Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera—16 blankets, roll of cloth, 12 plates, 12 cups, etc.

Mr. G. E. de Silva—soap.

Mr. P. H. A. Silva—soap.

Mr. S. Perera and Mr. Amarasuriya—12 spittoons.

Mr. A. J. S. Perera, Contractor, Old Town Hall—vegetables and curzystuffs.

Other necessary equipments such as lamps, buckets, baths, basins, plates, cups, spittoons, spoons, jute-hessian, for partitioning, etc. etc., have been purchased and supplied. The cost of these materials as shown in the bills have been given by Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne (Rs. 50) and *Mudaliyar N. Wickremaratne* (Rs. 20).

	<i>Rs . c.</i>
Cost of materials .. ..	34 98
Advanced to Mr. Perera .. ..	15 0
Advanced to Mr. Perera .. ..	20 0
	69 98

At the present time the home is maintained almost by the assistance received from Government and the voluntary workers, but a small expenditure is still required for the supply of the morning meal to the inmates and for the necessary curzystuffs and vegetables. This is a recurring expenditure which the Congress has to meet.

So far Mr. Perera has spent Rs. 73.55 which have to be made good. I visited the home today. The two temporary buildings have been occupied.

23rd February 1935.



**176 : 2. Collections for Malaria Relief Work at Kurunegala,  
May-June 1939<sup>1</sup>**

At the Executive Committee meeting held on Thursday the 4th May, it was decided to organise a party of workers to do relief work in the Wannu, Kurunegala District, and to collect subscriptions for that purpose.

Will those who wish to subscribe please send their donations to Mr. J. R. Jayewardene.

The relief workers will be the guests of Mr. L. S. B. Perera, A. G. A. on Saturday and Sunday, the 20th and 21st May. If you wish to join, please inform the organiser.

D. B. Jayatilaka,  
President, C. N. C.

J. R. Jayewardene,  
Organiser.

5.5.39.

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	<i>Rs.</i>	<i>c.</i>
D. B. Jayatilaka	.. 20	0 paid
D. S. Senanayake	.. 10	0 paid
W. A. de Silva ..	.. 10	0 paid
H. W. Amarasuriya	.. 10	0 paid
J. R. Jayewardene	.. 10	0 paid

---

60 0

2 0

---

58 0 sent to L. S. B. Perera—  
12.06.39.



**176:3. J. R. Jayewardene to The Secretary, Ceylon National Congress, 15 June 1939<sup>2</sup>**

Braemar,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo,  
15 June, 1939.

Dear Sir,

I am sorry I am unable to submit the report of the Policy Committee on Saturday the 17th.

We have fixed our final meeting for the 23rd June, when the report will be signed.

I have sent Rs. 58 out of the collection of Rs. 60 to L. S. B. Perera, Esq., A. G. A., Kurunegala re malaria relief. Rs. 2 was given as bonus to the collecting peon.

Yours truly,

J. R. Jayewardene.

**176:4. The Government Agent, N. W. P. to J. R. Jayewardene, 24 June 1939<sup>1</sup>**

No. M. R. 894.  
Kurunegala Kachcheri,  
24th June, 1939.

#### Malaria Relief

Sir,

I have the honour to acknowledge with grateful thanks the receipt of the cheque for Rs. 58 which accompanied your letter addressed to my Assistant.

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1. C. N. A., 60/243.



The money will be spent in providing hot drinks, dhall, soup, etc. to the malaria patients who seek treatment at the Alawwa and Polgahawela dispensaries.

I am, Sir,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
L. S. Perera,  
Government Agent, N. W. P

J. R. Jayewardene, Esq.  
Braemar,  
65, Ward Place, Colombo.

#### 177. THE CONGRESS MEMORANDUM ON HUXHAM'S INCOME TAX PROPOSALS, n. d. <sup>1</sup> [c. 1930-31]

In proposing an Income Tax Ordinance the Government has anticipated what would certainly have been one of the first tasks of the new State Council. The Government's policy of vacillation and procrastination even when urgent reform had become necessary has left a heavy burden for the reformed council to bear in its very infancy. The clamour of a few admittedly interested capitalists would have been sufficient cause but for the promised reforms, for the Government to shelve this question on the ground that it was impolitic to disturb the present state of things (as the Taxation Commission of 1902 had reported).

Under the new Constitution however, the interests of the capitalist few would not be permitted to prevail against those of the rest of the public. Our land laws would be administered for the benefit of the peasant, gambling laws against the rich and poor alike, and above all, taxation burdens would be laid upon those who could bear them, and not allowed to press upon the poorer masses.

1. C. N. A., 60/247 ; a typescript that is not dated or signed.



## Trade and Taxation

It is unfortunate that the present is a period of trade depression, but there is nothing to show that this state of things would continue indefinitely. It must be appreciated that the business of the Government has to be carried on efficiently, and for this purpose revenue must be contributed by those who alone are in a position to do so whatever the condition of trade. The work of the spending departments, especially of the essential services cannot be disorganised owing to a temporary depression. It is surprising that it has not struck those who oppose any income tax scheme that an Income Tax is the most fair and equitable form of taxation in times of depression as it calls upon only those who are actually above want to contribute towards revenue an amount strictly in proportion to the income of the individual. It is incorrect to urge that income tax would hamper agricultural development. Agriculture is the oldest and the best developed industry, and it cannot be suggested that any other source which is not so well developed should be taxed in preference to agriculture. That would be truly hampering development. Or is it suggested that it is in times of trade depression that agriculturists develop more and more land. There is some truth in this in another sense unfortunately for capitalists do wait for such opportunities to pounce upon and buy out poor landed proprietors. Development of agriculture must wait upon favourable times, that is, on cheap money and good markets.

## Agricultural Products

The Low Country Products Association has urged the remission of the export duty on agricultural products with the introduction of the income tax, and we would gladly support such a measure, at least temporarily to relieve particularly the owners of small coconut lands upon whom the export duty presses unduly heavy, if the Association would help us devise a scheme of Income Taxation which would immediately bring in the necessary revenue to replace the remitted duty in addition to the revenue provided under Mr. Huxham's scheme. The question of



double taxation has been raised. In our opinion, the time is not yet ripe to consider this question. It must wait until we adopt a good income tax scheme and consider, with reference to our requirements under our annual budgets, the maximum revenue that could be raised under such scheme consistently with the ability to pay on the part of incomes other than agricultural.

### The Underlying Principles

The Ceylon National Congress accepts the principle of taxation of income, for the following reasons mainly :—

(1) As the Congress has always stood for it, generally to lighten the burden of taxation which at present pressed heavily on the masses.

(2) As it is the fairest form of taxation, the basis being the ability of the subject to pay.

(3) Export duty being a tax levied on the poor and rich alike it presses too heavily particularly on the owners of small coconut lands and therefore additional revenue cannot be raised by this means.

(4) As it is a tax that cannot be passed on, in spite of much eloquence on the part of local economists to the contrary.

(5) As by this means the major part of the revenue necessary for Government could be raised if the scheme be properly designed.

(6) As it taps the hitherto neglected source of revenue, namely the profits of non-residents.

(7) As this form of tax is levied in most progressive countries and consequently efficient working could be ensured without waste or delay.

(8) As it is the best form of direct tax to awaken the people newly awarded the franchise to a sense of their national responsibilities.



### Objections to Scheme

Whilst approving of and strongly supporting the principle underlying the taxation of incomes, we cannot altogether accept the scheme as placed before the Legislature for the following reasons :—

(a) The scheme has been specially designed merely to increase the present revenue by a specific amount, to wit 15 or 20 millions. These instructions to Mr. Huxham are undoubtedly the outcome of that timidity on the part of the present Government to tackle far-reaching reform and the desire to tinker with and patch up troubles as they arise, which has been characteristic of them. It is more than additional revenue we want. We desire reform in our defective system of taxation; we wish to remit taxation where necessary; we want to make income tax the main basis of our revenue, and merely to supplement the same with peculiar taxes on luxurious and protective tariffs; we want a solution for future budget troubles in case we need additional revenue. Lastly we do not desire that our future legislators be bound hand and foot as regards taxation of the incomes of non-residents.

(b) The present scheme has been designed for a maximum standard rate of 10 per cent with a super tax of 5 per cent on the income of residents alone. The designer admits that an increase of these rates would necessitate remodelling the ordinance at least as regards relief provisions for non-residents with small incomes. The maximum annual yields estimated by the designer is stated to be Rs. 40,000,000 in a boom year. We must have provision to levy at least double this amount.

(c) Though the exemption limit can be raised it cannot be reduced. We are not satisfied, and we must examine Mr. Huxham's figures before we could be convinced that "to apply the full procedure of the scheme to incomes below Rs. 2,400 would create more difficulty and expense than the increased yield of the tax would warrant."



(d) The allowances are too large for the smaller incomes. Smaller incomes in the neighbourhood of Rs. 1,200 could well be brought in at the minimum rate if the allowances are made proportional to the income, the present maxima being retained.

### The Chetty Community

We can well understand the opposition of the Chetty community to an income tax. Theoretically they may not stand to suffer, as there is no doubt that an adjustment would soon be arrived at whereby they would be granted some relief from the taxation in their own country. We are aware, however, that many Chetty firms keep double sets of books in order to cheat the Income Tax authorities of India, and the provisions of sub-section 4 of section 4 of the proposed ordinance is sufficient to startle them. "Doing" the income tax authorities is practised as an art even in England. We need not be frightened by the warning gratuitously supplied by our European friends that we would find this tax inconveniently inquisitorial. If our European friends have no apprehensions we may assure them that we shall have none on that score.

Mr. Huxham is to be congratulated on the details of his scheme especially as regards collection of the tax which may be accepted with but few modifications. In this connection we would recommend a provision that the collection of the tax be to a large extent entrusted to local governing bodies as thereby a great saving in expense may be affected. Mr. Haxham, we are sure, could have designed the scheme more usefully if he had not been instructed that it was to be a scheme intended to raise a specific sum as additional revenue. We recommend that the Ordinance be referred back to Mr. Huxham for the production of a more comprehensive scheme in accordance with the contents of this report.



**178. THE CONGRESS AND THE ALL-CEYLON  
COCONUT EXHIBITION, January-February 1939<sup>1</sup>**

**178:1. A. M. Clement Dias to The Honorary Secretary,  
C. N. C., 18 January 1939**

8, Selbourne Road.  
Colpetty, 18th January, 1939.

Dear Sir,

Your Committee should take an interest about the All-Ceylon Coconut Exhibition to be held this year.

If your Committee agrees with me, I suggest that the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce be asked to appoint one or two members of the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to serve on the All-Ceylon Coconut Exhibition Committee of this year.

Yours faithfully,  
A. M. Clement Dias.

**178:2 The Joint Honorary Secretary, C. N. C. to the  
Minister for Labour, Industry and Commerce,  
26 January 1939**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 26.1.1939.

The Minister for Labour, Industry  
and Commerce, and Chairman, Coconut Board,  
Colombo.

**All-Ceylon Coconut Exhibition**

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to ask you to let it know when it is proposed to hold the All-Ceylon Coconut Exhibition, and

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1. C. N. A., 60/213-18.



whether you have any objection to nominating two members from the Congress Executive Committee to serve on the All-Ceylon Coconut Exhibition Committee. On hearing from you I shall forward the names to you.

Yours faithfully,  
Joint Hony Secy., C.N.C.

**178 : 3. Secretary to the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce to Victor C. Perera, 27 January 1939**

The Ministry of Labour, Industry and Commerce,  
Ceylon,

Colombo, 27th January, 1939.

All-Ceylon Coconut Exhibition

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 26th instant, I have the honour to inform you that All-Ceylon Coconut Exhibition is conducted by the Coconut Board, to whom your letter has been referred for disposal.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
Secretary to the Minister for Labour,  
Industry and Commerce.

**178 : 4. The Chairman, Ceylon Coconut Board to The Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., 28 January 1939**

The Ceylon Coconut Board,  
Queen Street, Fort  
P. O. Box No. 386,  
Colombo, 28th January, 1939.

All-Ceylon Coconut Exhibition—1939

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated the 26th January, 1939, I have the honour to state that the Ceylon Cocount



Board has decided to hold an All-Ceylon Coconut Exhibition during the Wesak Season, 1939.

I enclose a notice of a meeting to be held at 5 P.M. on the 31st instant and shall be glad to see representatives of the Ceylon National Congress present at the meeting.

I am prepared to propose that 2 members of the Congress Executive Committee be members of the Coconut Exhibition Committee.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,  
Chairman.

**178 : 5. The Joint Honorary Secretary, C. N. C. to the  
Chairman, Ceylon Coconut Board, 2 February 1939**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 2.2.1939.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter No. PB/60 dated 28.1.39, I am directed by the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to inform you that Messrs. A. M. Clement Dias of ..... and J. E. Amaratunge of 21, Gower St., Colombo, were nominated to represent the Congress on the All-Ceylon Coconut Exhibition Committee.

Yours faithfully,  
Joint Hony Secy.,  
Ceylon National Congress.



**179. THE CONGRESS AND THE QUESTION OF  
TARIFF POLICY, February-May 1939<sup>1</sup>**

**179:1. The Director of Commerce and Industries to The  
Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., 17 February 1939**

No. TAR.

Department of Commerce and Industries,  
Colombo, 17th February, 1939.

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 13th January forwarding a copy of a resolution adopted by the Ceylon National Congress, I have the honour to request you to be good enough to see me in office on the 24th instant at 10 a.m.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

for Director of Commerce and Industries,  
R. P. A.

**179:2. The Joint Honorary Secretary to A. M. Clement  
Dias, 20 February 1939**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 20.2.1939.

A. M. Clement Dias, Esq.,  
8, Selbourne Road,  
Colpetty,  
Colombo.

Congress Resolution on Raising of Tariffs

Dear Mr. Dias,

In reply to the Congress resolution on raising of tariffs which you moved at the last Congress Sessions, the Director of Commerce and Industries has asked me to meet him at

1. C. N. A., 60/230-37.



his office on the 24th inst. at 10 a.m. As a really know nothing about this resolution, will you kindly meet me at the office of the Director of Commerce and Industries with the necessary facts and figures on the 24th inst. at 10 a.m.

Yours sincerley,  
 Joint Hony. Secy.,  
 Ceylon National Congress.

**179:3. Notice to Members of the Sub-Committee on the Question of Tariffs, 15 March 1939**

Congress Office,  
 "Treleaven,"  
 Union Place,  
 Colombo, 15th March 1939.

Notice

A meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Raising of Tariffs will be held at the above place on Friday the 24th instant at 4.30 p.m. Your presence is earnestly requested.

Victor C. Perera,  
 J. E. Amaratunga,  
 Hony Secretaries, C. N. C.

*Personnel:* Mudaliyar N. Wickremaratne, Messrs. A. M. Clement Dias and Victor C. Perera.

**179:4. Mudaliyar N. Wickremaratne to The Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., 22 March 1939**

"Lincot,"  
 Peradeniya, 22.3.1939.

Dear Sir,

I shall be greatly obliged if you will kindly arrange to meet on Saturday evening or on Sunday evening to discuss



the question of tariff question [*sic*] and the village reconstruction scheme. I am sorry for my absence.

Yours faithfully,  
N. Wickremaratne.

You may write to me to Dominion Hotel, Fort, Colombo.

**179 : 5. Draft Notes by Sub-Committee, 24 March 1939**

1. Foodstuffs—produced in Ceylon

2. List of goods referred to

Rice

dried fish

tomatoes

dhall

yams

coconuts—no imports—duty already prohibitive

1934

1934 { ginger  
eggs  
ghee } tariff raised

chillies

onions

Rice. 1. Rs. 1.00 to Rs. 1.10 per cwt. to be increased, for the purpose of assisting paddy cultivation. The extra duty recovered should be earmarked for the support of the industry now existing

2. Potatoes, to be raised from Rs. 1.00 to Rs. 2.00 and earmark the money for promotion of yam cultivation.

3. Treacle from 15% to 25%.



4. With regard to fixing of prices and raising quotas we understand is already taking action—

any ?  
24.3.39.

Present : Mr. A. M. Clement Dias  
Mr. Victor C. Perera

**179 : 6. The Director of Commerce and Industries to The Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., 28 March 1939**

The Department of Commerce and Industries,  
Ceylon.

Ref. No. TAR.  
Colombo, 28 March, 1939.  
(P. O. Box No. 556)

Sir,

With reference to your interview of the 24th February, I have the honour to state that a memorandum as promised by you has not yet been received.

2. Please return the copy of Ceylon Customs Tariff removed by you from the office, if you have done with it.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
Director of Commerce and  
Industries. AN.

**179 : 7. The Joint Honorary Secretary to The Director of Commerce and Industries, 30 March 1939**

Sir,

With reference to your letter No. TAR dated 28.3.39, I have the honour to inform you that the memorandum has



been prepared, and it will be forwarded to you after it has been considered by the Executive Committee of the Congress on April 1.

2. I am herewith returning the copy of the Ceylon Customs Tariff with thanks. Please acknowledge receipt.

Yours faithfully,  
 Joint Hony. Secy.,  
 Ceylon National Congress.

30.3.39.

**179 : 8. The Joint Honorary Secretary to the Director of  
 Commerce and Industries, 23 May 1939<sup>1</sup>**

Congress Office,  
 "Treleaven,"  
 Union Place,  
 Colombo, 23.5.39.

Protection to Producers of Foodstuffs

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter No. TRR140 dated 6th inst., I am herewith sending you the report of the Sub-Committee on Tariffs which was appointed by the Executive Committee of the Congress, and which was adopted by the Committee. I greatly regret the delay in sending it.

Yours faithfully,  
 Joint. Hony. Secy.,  
 Ceylon National Congress.

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1. I have not been able to locate the report which was sent with this letter.



**180. THE CONGRESS AND THE QUESTION OF RURAL RECONSTRUCTION, March-July 1939<sup>1</sup>**

**180 : 1. Notice to Members of the Sub-Committee on Rural Reconstruction, 13 March 1939**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 13th March, 1939.

Sub-Committee On Rural Reconstruction.

A meeting of the above sub-committee will be held on Thursday the 23rd instant at 5 p.m. at "Treleaven," Union Place, Colombo.

Your presence is earnestly requested.

Victory C. Perera,  
J. E. Amaratunga,  
Hony Secretaries, C.N.C.

*Personnel* : Messrs. H. M. Amarasuriya, D. A. Jayasinghe, A. M. Clement Dias, C. V. Ranawake, Mudaliyar N. Wickremaratne and Mr. J. E. Amaratunga.

**180 : 2. The Joint Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., to J. E. Amaratunga, 20 April 1939**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 20.04.1939.

J. E. Amaratunga, Esq.,  
Bar-at-law,  
Gower Street,  
Colombo.

Dear Mr. Amaratunga,

The Sub-Committee on Rural Reconstruction has to submit its report at the meeting of the Executive Committee

<sup>1</sup> C. N. A., 60/238-41.



on the 4th of May. Please, therefore, send me the report, to reach me on or before the 27th inst.

Yours faithfully,  
 Joint Hony. Secy.,  
 Ceylon National Congress.

**180 : 3. Report of the Sub-Committee on Rural Reconstruction, April 1939<sup>1</sup>**

The above Sub-Committee met at Treleven on April 8, 1939. *Mudaliyar* N. Wickremaratne, and Messrs. Clement Dias and J. E. Amaratunga were present.

The following matters were discussed and agreed upon:

1. There is no doubt that Rural Reconstruction is necessary at the present stage.

2. The chief cause of the deplorable state of the villages is the loss of village land due to the harsh application of the Waste Lands Ordinance and the alienation of village lands through debt.

All lands necessary for village needs should be acquired and given to villagers on a system of easy payment or a system of tenancy. The land given under the present land development scheme is in most areas inadequate because of the lack of sufficient crown land. This should be supplemented by the acquisition of privately owned land.

3. The production of all foodstuffs—especially of rice—should be encouraged.

There should be systematic supervision of paddy cultivation by agricultural instructors and vel vidanes. The latter should be placed under the agricultural instructors.

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1. The report is in manuscript form.



These officers should see that cultivation is carried out properly and at the proper times. They should also encourage the use of more efficient implements and the adoption of better methods.

A tax should be placed on imported rice and other food products which are being or can be conveniently produced locally.

Agricultural instructors should collect complete statistics of paddy—extents under cultivation, production, amounts available for sale, seed paddy, etc.

Agricultural cattle should be improved through the village committees and other official or officially recognised bodies. This would involve the maintenance of stud bulls for the use of villagers by such bodies. Land should be reserved for pasture where sufficient land is available.

Village irrigation schemes should be improved in all areas not only in the dry zones.

4. The Department of Industries should take steps to encourage the production of earthenware and metal household utensils by village craftsmen. Itinerant instructors could demonstrate improved methods.

Immigration of craftsmen, especially potters, should be restricted.

Cottage industries for the manufacture of useful articles such as mats, bags, baskets, etc. should be encouraged.

Easy marketing facilities should be provided.

5. It is suggested that rural reconstruction work in each district should be co-ordinated under the Government Agent as he is the officer who is in closest touch with the village.

Associations may be formed to carry out village welfare work and to provide credit, supply and sale facilities in the village. Such associations should be recognised and controlled by Government.



In any new constitution there should be a rearrangement of subjects under the ministries so as to facilitate the co-ordination of village reconstruction work.

It is the intention of the Sub-Committee to meet again and consider the whole subject further.

J. E. Amaratunga,  
Convener.

**180 : 4. Telegram from the North Ceylon Workmen's Union, 5 July 1939**

Addressed to : Ceylon National Congress,  
Colombo.

North Ceylon Workmen's Union urge your arduous support association trained rural leaders schemes for state rural reconstruction campaign as cure many ills and key to solution unemployment distress Ceylonese.

**181. THE CONGRESS AND GOVERNMENT'S EXCISE POLICY, 1939<sup>1</sup>**

**181 : 1. Revd. John Simon de Silva to The President, C. N. C., 23 January 1939**

Wesley Manse,  
Mutwal,  
23rd Jan. 1939.

Dear Sir,

I want to request the help and co-operation of the Congress Committee for the important temperance campaign in the Pettah this week. As you will doubtless recognise, it is of the utmost importance that the Sinhalese should pull their weight in this matter. Last year this unfortunately was not the case.

1. C. N. A., 60/183 ; 201, 203, 204, 205, 280, 207 and 208.



There are to be open air and other meetings each evening this week, and the local option poll takes place on Saturday.

We should be very grateful for whatever assistance can be given by your committee.

Yours faithfully,  
J. S. de Silva.

**181 : 2. The Honorary Secretary, C. N. C. to The Minister for Home Affairs, 13 January 1939**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 13th January, 1939.

Commission on Excise Policy

Sir,

I am directed by the Ceylon National Congress to forward to you for the favourable consideration of your Committee, the following resolution unanimously adopted at the annual sessions of the Congress held on the 17th of December, 1938.

*Resolution referred to*

"That this Congress demands that a commission be appointed to report on the Excise Policy of the Government, and to make recommendations for the revision of such policy."

The Congress will be glad to know in due course what action you have taken on this resolution.

Yours faithfully,  
Jt. Hony. Secretary, C. N. C.



**181 : 3. The Ministry of Home Affairs to the Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., 3 February 1939**

The Ministry of Home Affairs,  
Colombo, 3rd February, 1939.

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated the 13th January, 1939, forwarding a copy of a resolution, suggesting the appointment of a commission to report on the Excise Policy of Government, I am directed by the Minister of Home Affairs, the Hon. Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, to request you to indicate in which respects the present excise policy needs revision and what proposals the Ceylon National Congress can make to effect such revision.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,  
Secretary to the Minister of  
Home Affairs.

**181 : 4. A Notice to Members of the Sub-Committee on Excise Policy, 15 March 1939**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 15th March, 1939.

Notice

A meeting of the Sub-Committee on Excise Policy will be held on Friday the 24th instant at 5 p.m. at the above place.

Your presence is earnestly requested.

Victor C. Perera,  
J. E. Ameratunga,  
Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.



*Personnel:* Messrs. D. H. Samarasinghe, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, C. V. Ranawake, Stanley de Zoysa and Victor C. Perera.

**181 : 5. The Honorary Joint Secretary of the Wadduwa Mahajana Sabha to The Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., 19 March 1939**

Wadduwa Mahajana Sabha affiliated to the Ceylon National Congress

“Atankari”  
Talpitiya,  
Wadduwa,  
19.3.39.

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated 15.3.39 addressed to the President Wda. Mahajana Sabha regarding the Sub-Committee appointed to consider the present Excise Policy, I have the honour to inform you that at a meeting of the Executive Committee of this Association it was decided to appoint Mr. M. R. Perera (Chairman of Committees) of our Association to represent this Association for the President.

Yours faithfully,  
G. P. Perera,  
Hony. Jt. Secretary.

**181 : 6. Rough Draft of Proposals, n.d.**

**Excise Policy**

1. We suggest that the price of fermented toddy should be fixed by Govt. in the same way as arrack.
2. We suggest that Govt. should pay the toddy producers direct each month.
3. We suggest that the dry areas should be abolished, and local option done away with, as local option has



become an unmitigated farce. These suggestions will restore Ceylon to its old prosperity and benefit Ceylon, and bring in a revenue of nearly Rs. 6 million rupees.

4. Even with the abolition of the dry areas, licensing for fermented toddy should continue.
5. We suggest that the Workmen's Compensation Act should be made applicable to toddy tappers and workers in the industry.
6. We suggest that licences for sweet toddy should be abolished. We suggest that govt. monopoly should be abolished and that the excise policy should be directed—
  - (a) towards the growth of a prosperous industry in indigenous liquor,
  - (b) towards replacing by a policy of protection tariffs, the cheaper qualities of imported liquors with indigenous liquor.

Victor C. Perera,  
Stanley de Zoysa,  
M. R. Perera.

**181 : 7. Letter from E. A. P. Wijeratne to The Hony. Secretary, C. N. C., 3 May 1939**

“Savanti,”  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
3rd May, 1939.

Dear Mr. Perera,

I regret very much that I am not in a position to revise the draft report prepared by you. Will you therefore kindly drop my name out from the Sub-Committee. As a matter of fact I had no intimation previously that I was to be a member of the Sub-Committee, or, I would have begged to be excused from serving.



I would also wish to mention that I am not in agreement with the report. The subject in my opinion requires a much closer study than I believe the Sub-Committee has been able to devote to it. There is already a report prepared by the Sub-Committee of the Executive Committee for Home Affairs and published as a Sessional Paper. This I believe will be of some assistance to the present committee.

Yours sincerely,  
E. A. P. Wijeyeratne.

**181 : 8. A Notice to Members of the Sub-Committee on Excise Policy, 11 May 1939**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 11th May 1939.

Congress Sub-Committee on Revision of Excise Policy

The above sub-committee will meet at "Treleaven" Union Place, Colombo, on Monday the 29th May 1939 at 5 p.m.

Please arrange to be present.

Victor C. Perera,  
Jt. Hony. Secretary,  
Ceylon National Congress.

*Personnel*: Messrs. M. R. Perera, C. V. Ranawake, Stanley de Zoysa, D. A. Jayasinghe and Victor C. Perera.

**181 : 9. The Sub-Committee's Report on Excise Policy, n. d.**

The resolution on this subject passed at the annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress was as follows :

"The Ceylon National Congress requests the Government to appoint a Commission to examine and report on its present Excise Policy."



The resolution was duly forwarded to the Minister of Home Affairs, and he referred it back to the Committee, requesting the Committee to let him know in what respects it was desired to amend the present Excise Policy.

Messrs. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, Victor C. Perera, Stanley de Zoysa and M. R. Perera were appointed to draft a reply to the Minister of Home Affairs. This Sub-Committee submitted a report, but it was not accepted by the Executive Committee as all the members did not sign it. Thereupon Messrs. C. V. Ranawake, Stanley de Zoysa, D. A. Jayasinghe and Victor C. Perera were appointed to draft a report. This sub-committee did not meet. Messrs. C. V. Ranawake and E. A. P. Wijeyeratne were then asked to submit a report, but they too failed to submit it. Lastly, Mr. Victor C. Perera was asked to submit a report. I am unable to submit a full report, owing to my limited knowledge of the subject. I would therefore put down a few suggestions which might be the basis of discussion by the Executive Committee :

1. The Government monopoly in arrack and toddy should continue, and the future excise policy should be directed—

(a) Towards the growth of a prosperous industry in indigenous liquor. With regard to this, I would suggest that the percentage required for the closing of taverns at local option polls should be raised, so as to enable more taverns to be opened. The closing hour for arrack and toddy taverns should also be extended from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

(b) The cheaper qualities of imported liquor should be replaced by indigenous liquor by a system of protective tariffs.

(c) The price of fermented toddy should be fixed by Government in the same way as arrack, and the toddy producers should be paid by Government direct at the end of each month.

(d) Licences for drawing sweet toddy should be abolished.



(e) The Workmen's Compensation Act should be made applicable to toddy tappers, and workers engaged in the arrack industry.

(f) More facilities should be given for the sale of arrack and bottled toddy at places other than taverns, e.g., hotels and restaurants.

Victor C. Perera.

## 182. FINANCES OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS, 1939

182 : 1. Sir D. B. Jayatilaka to The Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., 22 January 1939<sup>1</sup>

Pussellawa,  
22 January 1939.

Sir,

As I am unable to attend the Congress Committee meeting tomorrow, I would ask you to invite the special attention of the Committee to the financial situation. I understand two months' house rent is in arrears. There are no funds available for current expenditure. It is therefore absolutely necessary to start a special fund at once to meet urgent demands and carry on the work during the year. It is hardly necessary to say that without funds it will be futile to appoint committees to carry on propaganda work, etc.

I am,  
Yours faithfully,  
D. B. Jayatilaka.

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1. C. N. A., 60/271.



**182 : 2. Victor C. Perera to Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, 8 February 1939<sup>1</sup>**

Congress Office,  
 "Treleaven,"  
 Union Place,  
 Colombo, 8.2.1939.

Dear Sir Don Baron,

The most pressing need of the moment is finances. Kindly let me know what date and time will suit you for a meeting of the Sub-Committee on Finance appointed by the Executive Committee. This committee should report to the Executive Committee on 1st March, as the matter is most urgent. As it is, we can't carry on for two months, the subscriptions not being enough to meet our monthly expenses, for salaries, postage, etc.

Yours sincerely,  
 Victor C. Perera,  
 Joint Hony. Secy.,  
 C. N. C.

**182 : 3. Notice to Members of the Sub-Committee on the Congress Finances, 9 February 1939<sup>2</sup>**

Congress Office,  
 "Treleaven,"  
 Union Place,  
 Colombo, 9th February, 1939.

#### Finance Sub-Committee

A meeting of the above sub-committee of which you are a member will be held on Tuesday the 14th instant at 5 p.m. at the above place.

1. C. N. A., 60/129. In reply Sir D. B. Jayatilaka sent a note which said "If you can arrange to hold a meeting on the 14th inst. at 5 p.m. I can attend it."

2. C. N. A., 60/130. A note by Sir D. B. Jayatilaka on the copy of letter sent to him indicates that only the Treasurer and Sir D. B. Jayatilaka were present and that the meeting was not held.



Your presence is earnestly requested, as the problem of finances is the most serious question before Congress now.

Hony. Treasurer, C. N. C.

**182:4. Letter from W. A. de Silva to The Honorary Secretaries, C. N. C., 18 February 1939<sup>1</sup>**

Sravasti,  
Edinburgh Crescent,  
Colombo,  
18 February, 1939.

Dear Sirs,

I enclose cheque for Rs. 12 being my subscription for 1939 for National Congress.

I regret I shall not be able to attend the Committee on 1st March owing to a previous engagement at Kandy.

Yours faithfully,  
W. A. de Silva.

**182:5. List of Members who were in Arrears of Subscription for Period January-March 1939<sup>2</sup>**

1. The Hon. Mr. G. C. S. Corea. xx
2. The Hon. Mr. J. L. Kotelawala. xx
3. Mr. D. R. Jayawardene.
4. Mr. F. A. Obeyesekere.
5. Mr. B. H. Dunuwille.
6. Mr. P. P. Siriwardena.
7. Mr. A. Tantrigoda.

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1. C. N. A., 60/289.

2. C. N. A., 60/294 and 298. The mark xx indicates those names which were subsequently crossed out.



8. Mr. Neil Hewavitarne.
9. Mr. D. E. Jayakody.
10. Mr. W. D. Perera.
11. Mr. F. P. Senaratne.
12. Mr. U. L. Perera. xx
13. Mr. H. D. S. Ratnaike.
14. Mr. Simon Abeywickrema.
15. Mr. G. G. Punchihewa.
16. Mr. H. R. U. Premachandra.
17. Mr. A. R. Suwaris.
18. Mr. D. C. Wijesinghe.
19. Mr. P. H. A. Silva.
20. Mr. D. Alagiyawanna.
21. Mr. E. Y. D. Abeygunawardena.
22. Mr. D. Wanigasekera.
23. Mr. R. T. Kuruwita-Gunasekere.
24. Mr. G. C. Perera.
25. Mr. W. O. W. Gunewardene.
26. Mr. Piyadasa Jayasinghe.
27. Mr. D. D. Godage.
28. Mr. H. M. U. Banda.

*Sir Don Baron*

The above members of the Committee are 3 months in arrears. They have been already informed. I propose therefore to move that they be removed from the list of Committee members tomorrow. We are desperately in need of funds, and we will have to enforce Rule No. 8 of Article V.

Victor C. Perera.

31.3.39.



**182 : 6. General Circular to Executive Committee Members with Subscription Arrears, 4 April 1939'**

Congress Office,  
 "Treleaven,"  
 Union Place,  
 4 April 1939.

Dear Sir,

I regret to inform you that as you are in arrears with your subscription for over 3 months, you have ceased to be a member of the Executive Committee, vide Rule 8 of Article V of the Congress Constitution which reads as follows:— "Every member of the Executive Committee shall pay a monthly subscription of Re 1. Any member of the Committee whose subscription is over 3 months in arrears shall lose his membership in the Executive Committee as well as his right to vote at the Annual Sessions of the Congress."

But the Executive Committee has decided to retain your name on the list of Committee members, provided you will pay the arrears due from you, viz. Rs. 4 on or before the 30th April, 1939.

The annual subscription is Rs. 12. It will perhaps be more convenient for you if you will send us a cheque for that amount.

Yours faithfully,  
 Victor C. Perera,  
 Jt. Hony. Secretary,  
 Ceylon National Congress.



**182 : 7. H. R. Premachandra to The Honorary Secretary,  
C. N. C., 19 April 1939<sup>1</sup>**

19th April 1939,  
Kandy.

Sir,

Herein I am enclosing a cheque for Rs. 12 being the membership subscription for Mr. A. R. Suwaris and myself, for six months. The balance Rs. 12 shall be sent at the end of the year. Please acknowledge receipt.

Yours faithfully,

H. R. Premachandra.

**182 : 8. Neil Hewavitarne to The Honorary Secretary,  
C. N. C., 26 April 1939<sup>2</sup>**

P. O. Box 48,  
Colombo,  
26.4.1939.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 4th instant, I am sending you herewith a cheque for Rs. 15 being the amount due as arrears and one year's subscription for one year, i.e. up to the end of March 1940. Please send me your official receipt.

Yours faithfully,

Neil Hewavitarne.

1. C. N. A., 60/290.

2. C. N. A., 60/291.



**182 : 9. Notice to Members of the Sub-Committee on the  
Congress Finances, 8 May 1939<sup>1</sup>**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 8th May 1939.

**Congress Finances**

A meeting of the Finance sub-committee of the Ceylon National Congress will be held on Saturday the 13th instant at 3 p.m. at the above place.

Please arrange to be present, as the subject of Congress finances is of the utmost importance at the present moment.

Victor C. Perera,  
Jt. Hony. Secretary, C.N.C.

*Personnel*: The Hon. Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, Messrs. J. N. Jinendradasa, H. W. Amarasuriya, Thos. Amarasuriya, A. M. Clement Dias, W. R. Wijemanne, P. D. S. Jayasekera and *Mudaliyar* N. Wickremeratne.

**182 : 10. Notice to Members of the Sub-Committee on the  
Congress Finances, 18 May 1939<sup>2</sup>**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 18th May 1939.

**Congress Finances**

A meeting of the Finance sub-committee of the Ceylon National Congress will be held on Friday the 26th instant at 6 p.m. at the above place.

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1. C. N. A., 60/131.

2. *Ibid*, 60/132.



Please arrange to be present, as the subject of Congress finances is of the utmost importance at the present moment.

Hony. Treasurer, C. N. C.

*Personnel*: The Hon. Sir D. B. Jayatillaka, Messrs. J. N. Jinendradasa, H. W. Amarasuriya, Thos. Amarasuriya, A. M. Clement Dias, W. R. Wijemanne, P. D. S. Jayasekera and *Mudaliyar* N. Wickremaratne.

**182:11. Names of Members in Arrears of Subscription, June 1939<sup>1</sup>**

Mr. D. R. Jayawardene	— 5 months
Mr. H. B. Kirimetiya	— 4 „
Mr. B. H. Dunuwille	— 5 „
Mr. P. P. Siriwardena	— 5 „
Mr. D. E. Jayakoddy	— 5 „
Mr. W. D. Perera	— 5 „
Mr. E. P. Senaratne	— 5 „
Mr. U. L. Perera	— 3 „
Mr. H. D. S. Ratnaike	— 5 „
Mr. Simon Abeywickrema	— 5 „
Mr. G. G. Punchihewa	— 5 „
Mr. D. C. Wijesinghe	— 5 „
Mr. P. H. A. Silva	— 5 „
Mr. D. Alagiyawanna	— 5 „
Mr. E. Y. D. Abeygunawardena	— 5 „
Mr. M. C. Jinadasa	— 3 „
Mr. R. T. Kuruwita Gunasekera	— 5 „
Mr. G. C. Perera	— 5 „

1. C. N. A., 60/293



Mr. W. O. W. Gunewardene	— 5 months
Mr. Piyadasa Jayasinghe	— 5 "
Mr. H. M. U. Banda	— 4 "
Mr. D. D. Godage	— 5 "

**182 : 12. Another List of Members in Arrears of Subscription [August 1939] <sup>1</sup>**

1. Mr. D. R. Jayawardene	— 3 months
2. Mr. L. M. Gooneratne	— 4 "
3. Mr. H. Sri Nissanka	— 3 "
4. Mr. H. B. Kirimetiya	— 6 "
5. Mr. B. H. Dunuwille	— 7 "
6. Mr. P. P. Siriwardena	— 7 "
7. Mr. D. E. Jayakoddy	— 7 "
8. Mr. W. D. Perera	— 7 "
9. Mr. F. P. Senaratne	— 7 "
10. Mr. U. L. Perera	— 5 "
11. Mr. H. D. S. Ratnaike	— 7 "
12. Mr. Simon Abeywickrema	— 7 "
13. Mr. G. G. Punchihewa	— 7 "
14. Mr. D. C. Wijesinghe	— 7 "
15. Mr. D. Alagiyawanna	— 7 "
16. Mr. E. Y. D. Abeygunawardena	— 7 "
17. Mr. M. C. Jinadasa	— 5 "
18. Mr. R. T. Kuruwita Gunasekera	— 7 "
19. Mr. G. C. Perera	— 7 "
20. Mr. D. M. D. Wilson	— 4 "
21. Mr. W. O. W. Gunewardene	— 7 "
22. Mr. Piyadasa Jayasinghe	— 7 "
23. Mr. H. M. U. Banda	— 6 "
24. Mr. D. D. Godage	— 7 "

1. C. N. A. 60/294.



**182 : 13. Draft of Letter to the Lanka Mahajana Sabha,  
12 June 1939<sup>1</sup>**

Congress Office, [etc.]  
12 June 1939.

The Hony. Secretary,  
Lanka Mahajana Sabha,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

I regret to inform you that your representative on the Congress Executive Committee, Mr. R. T. Kuruwita-Gunasekera is in arrears with his subscription by Rs. 6. He has thus lost his membership on the Committee by operation of Rule no. 8 of Article V of the Congress Constitution. But the Executive Committee will consider the question of his re-admission to membership in it, provided the full arrears are paid up before the 30th of June 1939.

Yours faithfully.

**183. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE, 1938-1939**

**183 : A. SOME MOTIONS, 1938-1939**

**1. J. R. Jayewardene to The Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.,  
19 December 1938<sup>2</sup>**

Law Library,  
Colombo,  
19.12.38.

Dear Sir,

I bring to your notice that at the next meeting of the Ceylon National Congress I shall move the following motion :—

“This Executive Committee is of opinion that a Committee composed of the following members,

1. C. N. A., 60/297. A note in pencil on the draft copy of this letter reads :

Akmeemana Mahajana Sabha : H. M. U. Banda  
Gangaboda Pattu Mahajana Sabha : D. D. Godage.

W. O. W. Gunewardene

2. C. N. A., 60/47.



Messrs. D. S. Senanayake (Chairman), H. W. Amarasuriya, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, Susanta de Fonseka, A. W. H. Abeyesundere and J. R. Jayewardene (Convenor) be appointed to draft a programme of work for, and to outline the policy of the Congress."

J. R. Jayewardene.

**2. A. W. H. Abeyesundere to The Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C., 1 January 1939<sup>1</sup>**

"Visvanthi,"  
Campbell Place,  
Maradana,  
1st January, 1939.

Sirs,

Please include the following motion in the agenda for the first meeting of the Executive Committee of the Congress :—

"The Ceylon National Congress should come to a decision on the Governor's proposals to reform the Constitution before they are considered by the State Council, and for this purpose a special session of the Congress should be convened."

Yours faithfully,  
A. W. H. Abeyesundere.

**3. George E. de Silva to The Hon. Secretary, C. N. C., 4 January 1939<sup>2</sup>**

4th January, 1939.  
Colombo,

Dear Sir,

I shall thank you to be good enough to put in the Agenda for the next Congress Committee meeting the following motion :—

"In the best interests of this country that we do invite a deputation of the Indian National Congress to come

1. C. N. A., 60/48.

2. C. N. A., 60/49. See minutes of the 1st March 1939, *supra* p. 535.



over to Ceylon in order to have a round table conference to discuss various questions which effect the welfare of this country and India and thereafter evolve a scheme whereby the interests of both countries can be protected."

Yours faithfully,  
George E. de Silva.

#### 4. Draft of Circular of 26 January 1939<sup>1</sup>

To all the members of the Executive Committee except Messrs. C. W. W. Kannangara, S. W. R. Dias Bandaranaike and those elected by Maha Jana Sabhas

Membership of the Executive Committee

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to request you to let it know at your earliest convenience whether you will consent to serve on it during the year 1939.

Yours faithfully,  
Joint Hony. Secy.  
Ceylon National Congress.

#### 5. Young Men's Association, Walagedara to The Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C., 2 February 1939<sup>2</sup>

Dear Sirs,

We request that all leaders of the Sinhalese community<sup>3</sup> as well as all leaders of the Tamil, Muslim and other minority nationalities<sup>4</sup> should be invited to attend the special sessions scheduled for the 6th of this month.

1. C. N. A., 60/219.

2. A translation of a letter in Sinhalese, (C. N. A., 60/53).

3. *Sāma Sinhala jana pradanayeku.*

4. *Sāma sala jathika pradanayeku.*



We specially request that every effort should be made to secure the attendance of several leaders of the minority communities.

Sincerely,  
D. W. Wedisinghe.

**6. F. C. de Saram et al. to The Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.,  
8 March 1939<sup>1</sup>**

The Law Library,  
Colombo,  
8th March 1939.

Gentlemen,

We have the honour to send herewith two resolutions which we desire should be placed before the Congress Committee as early as possible. We shall thank you therefore to summon with the authority of the President an Emergency Meeting of the Committee for the purpose of considering these resolutions.

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa will move. And Mr. J. R. Jayewardene will second the resolutions.

Yours faithfully,  
F. C. de Saram  
J. R. Jayewardene.  
Dudley Senanayake  
P. D. S. Jayasekera  
Stanley de Zoysa.

*Resolution No. 1*

Whereas the Ceylon National Congress is, and has always been anxious to ensure for all sections of the permanent population of the country a fair share in the Government of this country and equality of opportunity in Public affairs the Congress makes the following Declaration

1. C. N. A., 60/58. See item 33, *supra*, pp. 1296 ff; also pp. 539-41 and item 183 : H.

2. From this point the rest of the sentence has been crossed-out.



as regards its position relating to certain matters on which there appears to be some misgivings among certain sections of the community :—

1. The Congress stands for the removal of the Officers of the State and the transference of their present powers and functions to duly appointed Ministers.

2. The Congress stands for the abolition of the Executive Committee system of Government and the introduction of the Cabinet system. It gives the following assurance to the Minorities as regards its policy in the formation of a Government if called upon to do so :

If members of Minority Communities are returned to Council as Congress Candidates, Congress if called upon to form a Cabinet will reserve a certain number of Portfolios, not less than one-third the total, for such minority members. The choice as from these members shall be made by the Chief Minister.

3. The Congress agrees that in the delimiting of new electoral areas Congress will endeavour to secure delimitation in such a manner as to ensure the return of :

12 Tamils for the Northern and Eastern Provinces

2 Indians

4 Muslims

2 Representatives of the Kandyan Rural Interest in addition to the present Kandyan Seats.

4. The Congress stands for the creation of an Independent Public Services Commission composed of three Ceylonese especially selected and appointed by the Governor for a period of five years, who shall be unconnected with the Executive or the Legislature and who shall hold no other appointment under the Crown either during or two years before or after their tenure of office.

As a safeguard against nepotism and Racial Discrimination appointment to the public services shall be by open competitive examination and the viva voce shall be held



prior to the holding of the written examination. The marks shall be published with the results of the examination.

The Congress stands for the abolition of the Governor's power of legislating independently of the concurrence of the State Council and for the definition with greater clarity and precision of his other powers.

*Resolution No. 2*

The Executive Committee of the Congress appoints and authorises the following Sub-Committee to negotiate with leaders and organisations representative of minority interests and to secure their support for the Congress policy on an understanding in terms of the declaration in Resolution No. 1, namely :

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne  
Henry Amarasuriya  
J. R. Jayewardene  
Stanley de Zoysa.

*Note by Victor C. Perera*

Sir Don Baron,  
The signatories.

Victor C. Perera, 9.3.39.

Will the 21st inst. at 5 p.m. suit you ? Please return these papers. The Rural Reconstruction Sub. Committee has been postponed to the 23rd inst. as the Royal Thomian match is on the 17th inst. You need not be present.

*Note by Sir D. B. Jayatilaka*

Secy.

I am not free on a single afternoon till the 31st. Reform debate is expected to continue during the next two weeks. On Saturdays and Sundays I have other important engagements.

D. B. Jayatilaka.  
13.3.39.



7. Letters from H. M. U. Banda, March 1939<sup>1</sup>

Akmeemana,  
17th March, 1939.

The Hony. Secretary,

Indigenous Labour

Sir,

I forwarded a resolution on the above subject on the 17th of this month, but it has not been included in the Agenda for the 1st April meeting.

According to the facts as I will lay before the Congress in support of my resolution it is of very important [sic] in my opinion it is for the interest of the Country.

Therefore will you please have the kindness of including same to [sic] the agenda of 1st April meeting.

If there is any impossibility of doing this will you please let me know by return post and oblige.

Yours faithfully,  
H. M. U. Banda.

N.B.—My resolution will be seconded by Mr. Goonawardena.

H. M. U. Banda.

Akmeemana,  
17th March, 1939.

The Hony. Secretary,

Sir,

I beg to bring to your notice that I desire to move under-mentioned resolutions at the next Committee Sessions of the National Congress :

“The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that immediate steps be taken to ensure an adequate wage

1. C. N. A., 60/61. See minutes of 4th May 1939, *supra*, pp. 542-44.



being paid to indigenous labour in view of the numerous instances of callous exploitations carried out by most employers. It is both expedient and necessary that a deputation of this Congress should call on the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce and get a legalised minimum wage sanctioned for indigenous labour. Supplemented further by a Clause making it imperative on the part of the Employer to see that a legitimate percentage of the labour employed in any Establishment should be clearly indigenous. This percentage should vary with various districts and various conditions provided such percentage in all cases be not less than 50% ; otherwise the very purpose for the Establishment of a minimum wage would be defeated."

I, am, Sir,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
H. M. U. Banda,

**8. The Panadura Mahajana Sabha to The Hon. Secretaries,  
C. N. C., 24 June 1939<sup>1</sup>**

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Panadura Maha Jana Sabha to inform you that at its last general meeting, it was unanimously resolved to request you to seriously consider the desirability of (a) excluding from the Committee of the National Congress, members who do not conform to the Congress rules and principles, and (b) carrying out the deliberations of Congress meetings, in the language understood by the majority of members present.

Yours faithfully,  
E. H. de Fonseka,  
Hony. Secretary.

1. C. N. A., 60/19. The letterhead indicates that D. S. de Fonseka was Patron, W. R. Wijemanne was President and S. E. Dias Hony. Treasurer of this association. Also see minutes of the 21st July 1939, *supra*, p. 548. For the reply see *infra*, item 183 ; H. 6.



9. A. Tantrigoda to The Hon. Secretary, C. N. C.,  
5 July 1939<sup>1</sup>

Ananda Sastralaya,  
Kotte, 5th July, 1939.

Dear Sir,

I request you to include the following resolution in the agenda of the forthcoming meeting of the Executive Committee :—

*The resolution :*

This Committee is of opinion that a scheme of adult education be drafted and all necessary steps taken to give immediate effect to the same.

Yours faithfully,  
A. Tantrigoda.

183 : B. CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE MINISTER FOR  
AGRICULTURE AND LANDS, JANUARY 1939<sup>2</sup>

1. The Joint Hon. Secretary, C. N. C., to The Minister  
for Agriculture and Lands, 13 January 1939

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven",  
Union Place,  
Colombo,  
13th January, 1939.

Establishment of Colonies

Sir,

I am directed by the Ceylon National Congress to forward the following resolutions unanimously adopted by the Congress at its annual sessions held on the 17th of December, 1938. I trust that the resolutions will meet with the

---

1. C. N. A., 60/64. See minutes of 21st July 1939, *supra*, p. 550.  
2. C. N. A., 60/196-198.



favourable consideration of your committee, and that you will let the Congress know in due course what action you have taken on them.

Resolution referred to :

1. "That in establishing colonies, Government should (a) provide irrigation and road facilities, (b) clear and prepare the land for cultivation, (c) build suitable houses for occupation, (d) supply the necessary cattle, planting material and agricultural implements, (e) provide medical facilities, and (f) give monetary assistance for the first six months."

2. "That the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that protection should be afforded to producers of food-stuffs, by the fixing of prices, the imposing of quotas and the regulation of tariffs."

Yours faithfully,

Jt. Hony. Secretary, C. N. C.

2. **A. M. Clement Dias to The Honorary Secretaries,  
C. N. C., 28 February 1939**

8, Selbourne Road,  
Colpetty, 28th February, 1939.

Seed Paddy to Cultivators

Dear Sirs,

This is to inform you that the maha paddy crop in some parts of Kurunegala District was a failure owing to the drought, and there will not be enough seed paddy available for the cultivators, to sow in maha season this year. I hope that your committee will take immediate action and do the needful.

Yours faithfully,

A. M. Clement Dias.



**3. The Joint Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., to The Minister  
for Agriculture and Lands, 3 March 1939**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 3rd March, 1939.

*Seed Paddy*

Sir,

I am directed by the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to forward to you the annexed copy of a letter received by the Congress, and to ask you what steps you propose to take in the matter.

Yours faithfully,  
Joint Hony. Secretary,  
Ceylon National Congress.

**4. The Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture and  
Lands to The Joint Honorary Secretary, C. N. C.,  
9th March 1939**

Ministry of Agriculture and Lands,  
P. O. Box 500,  
Colombo, 9th March, 1939.

*Seed Paddy*

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated the 3rd instant, I am directed by the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture and Lands to inform you that the Executive Committee is making arrangements to secure seed paddy.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
Secretary to the Minister  
for Agriculture and Lands.



**5. The Secretary to the Minister for Agriculture and Lands to The Joint Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., 13th March 1939**

Ministry of Agriculture and Lands,  
P. O. Box 500,  
Colombo, 13th March, 1939.

**Resolutions on the Establishment of Colonies and the Protection to Producers of Foodstuffs**

I am directed by the Honourable the Minister for Agriculture and Lands to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 13th January, 1939, and to inform you that the policy followed by Government is in accordance with the resolutions passed by the Ceylon National Congress.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,

Secretary to the Minister  
for Agriculture and Lands.

**183 : C. CORRESPONDENCE WITH THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR, INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE, JANUARY 1939**

**1. The Honorary Secretaries, C. N. C., to The Minister for Labour, Industry and Commerce, January 1939**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 13th January 1939.

**Curtailment of Immigration**

Sir,

I am directed by the Ceylon National Congress to forward for the favourable consideration of your committee, the

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1. C. N. A., 60/212. A similar letter was sent to the Chief Secretary. A letter, dated 19th January, from the Chief Secretary's office acknowledges receipt.



following resolution unanimously adopted at the annual sessions of the Congress held on the 17th of December 1938 :—

*Resolution referred to*

“That the Ceylon National Congress demands that further steps should be taken to curtail immigration.”

The Congress will be glad to know in due course what action you have taken on this resolution.

Yours faithfully,

Jt. Hony. Secretary, C. N. C.

2. **The Secretary to the Minister for Labour, Industry and Commerce to The Joint Honorary Secretary, C. N. C., 16 January 1939**

The Ministry of Labour, Industry  
and Commerce, Ceylon,  
Colombo, 16th January 1939.

*Curtailement of Immigration*

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 13th instant on the above subject, I am directed by the Hon. the Minister to inform you that the Executive Committee has decided to take steps to restrict immigration and its proposals are now being considered by the Board of Ministers.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Secretary to the Minister for Labour,  
Industry and Commerce.



183 : D. CANDAVANAM AND THE OFFICE RENT, January 1939 \*

1. K. Candavanam to Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, 6 January 1939

Fort,  
Colombo,  
Ceylon,  
6th January, 1939.

Sir,

There is a sum of Rs. 76.50 due to me on account of Congress office rent, telephone, electric fan, etc., up to 31st December 1938. Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya from whom I requested payment refers me to you as the present president of the Ceylon National Congress. I shall be grateful if you will be good enough to favour me with your esteemed cheque for this amount and also at the same time authorise me to deliver the furniture to any person stated by you. Allowing the furniture to remain here causes me loss and inconvenience as I am unable to let the premises out.

I am, Dear Sir,  
Yours faithfully,  
K. Candavanam.

2. H. W. Amarasuriya to P. D. S. Jayasekera, 11 January 1939 \*

Talbot Town Office,  
Galle,  
11th January 1939.

My dear P. D. S.,

With reference to your letter of the 10th inst., I have paid all office rent etc. to November end, hence you will see that I have not passed on any arrears to the new Treasurer.

1. C. N. A., 60/299-302.

2. A note on this letter (probably by Jayasekera) addressed to J. N' Jendradasa states: "My dear Jin, please see what you can do to settle this matter. Candavanam is threatening to inform the Times of this."



I am returning herewith Mr. K. Candavanam's letter.

Yours very Sincerely,

H. W. Amarasuriya.

**3. The Honorary Treasurer, Ceylon National Congress to  
K. Candavanam, 13 January 1939**

13.1.1939.

K. Candavanam Esqr.,  
Income Tax Advisor, Colombo.

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 6th instant addressed to Sir D. B. Jayatilaka which he has handed to me for attention I have the honour to inquire from you how a sum of Rs. 76.50 came to be due to you up to the end of December 1938 in view of the fact that we had paid rent up to the end of November 1938.

We had given notice to quit at the end of November.

I shall thank you for an early reply.

Yours faithfully,

Hony. Treasurer, C. N. C.

**4. K. Candavanam to P. D. S. Jayasekera, 18 January 1939**

18th January, 1939.

Dear Sir,

I have your letter of the 13th inst. I annex herewith a statement showing how a sum of Rs. 76.50 has been arrived at. No rent has been paid to me for November 1938. If a notice was given to me to quit the end of November, my monies ought to have been paid and the furniture removed and I should have been given vacant possession of the premises on 1st December 1938. In spite of repeated requests, the furniture is yet in these premises, and I am



unable to let out the premises. I regret I shall have to charge rent for the current month also and shall continue to do so till my monies are paid and the furniture removed. The whole transaction, I regret to point out, is being carried on in a thoroughly unbusinesslike manner and no one seems to take any care or responsibility.

Yours faithfully,

K. Candavanam.

*statement above referred to*

			<i>Rs. c</i>
Telephone rent for 4th Quarter 1938	..	..	7 50
Rent and Fan Hire for November 1938	..	..	34 50
Rent and Fan Hire for December 1938	..	..	34 50
			<hr/> 76 50
			32 50
			<hr/> 109 0

**183. E. CORRESPONDENCE RE CONGRESS PARTICIPATION IN GOVERNMENT ADVISORY BOARDS, JANUARY-MARCH 1939**

**1. General Circular from the Secretaries of Congress, 26 January 1939<sup>1</sup>**

Congress Office,  
"Treleaven,"  
Union Place,  
Colombo,  
26th January 1939.

Congress Members on Advisory Boards, Research Schemes, etc.

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to request you to be good enough to let

<sup>1</sup> C. N. A., 60/272.



it know on what Advisory Boards, Research Schemes, etc. in your district, you would like to serve as unofficial members.

Yours faithfully,  
Victor C. Perera,  
Jt. Hony. Secretary, C. N. C.

**2. Neil Hewavitarne to Victor C. Perera, 28 January 1939**

P. O. Box 48,  
Colombo,  
28.1.1939.

Dear Sir,

With reference to yours of the 26th instant, I wish to inform you that, I am prepared to work on the Advisory Boards dealing with Agriculture, Education and Commerce.

Yours faithfully,  
N. Hewavitarne.

**3. J. L. Kotelawala to The Honorary Secretary, 28 January 1939**

"Kandawala,"  
Ratmalana,  
Mt. Lavinia,  
28 January 1939.

Dear Sir,

Thank you for your letter. I shall be very pleased to serve on the Executive Committee for the current year.

As regards serving on advisory boards, I am afraid I have not the time just now to serve on any. However if my services are required I shall be willing to be at your service.

Yours faithfully,  
J. L. Kotelawala.



4. **C. W. W. Kannangara to Victor C. Perera, 28 January 1939**

"The Laurels,"  
Alfred Place,  
Colpetty,  
28.1.1939.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 26th instant, I wish to serve on all Advisory Boards, research schemes, etc. in my district.

Yours faithfully,  
C. W. W. Kannangara.

5. **P. P. Siriwardena to Victor C. Perera, 28 January 1939**

Veyangoda,  
31.1.1939.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 26th instant, I have pleasure to inform you that I am prepared to serve on the District Agricultural Committee of Siyane Korale West and on the Rural Education District Committee, Colombo.

I note that you have changed the day we usually held committee meetings. In order to make Fridays free I have altered my own programme of work. If you hold meetings on Mondays and Wednesdays, I shall not be able to attend meetings. Nor will the President be free on Mondays as he is expected to go to..... (?) meetings. I hope other members will also agree that meetings must be held—unless special circumstances compel you to fix other days—on Fridays, as a rule.

I wish you to place this matter before the Committee.

Yours faithfully,  
P. P. Siriwardena.



6. **A. Tantrigoda to Victor C. Perera, 28 January 1939**

Ananda Sastralaya,  
Kotte,  
12th Feb., 1939.

Dear Sir,

I have the pleasure to inform you that I am willing to serve on the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress for the year 1939 and also I wish to serve on the District Education Committee.

Yours faithfully,  
A. Tantrigoda.

7. **Forrester Obeyesekere to The Hon. Secretaries, C. N. C.,  
29 January 1939<sup>1</sup>**

The Nai Villa,  
Naivala Estate,  
Veyangoda,  
29.1.1939.

Dear Sirs,

I regret that my willingness to serve in the Executive Committee of the C. N. C.—to serve in which has been my proud privilege since its inauguration—has not been conveyed to the Congress. I shall be happy to so serve. I have both written in and have personally conveyed my willingness to serve before the last general sessions of Congress.

That expression was personally made to Mr. Jayasekera as I reside at Naivala, Veyangoda and spend a considerable

---

1. C. N. A., 60/263. Letters or notes sent by the following members, indicating their readiness to serve on the Executive Committee, could also be found among the documents: Thomas Amarasuriya, Sri Nissanka, C. V. Ranawake, and S. P. Wijewickrema.

A postcard written in Sinhalese by Arthur V. Dias indicated that he was unable to accept the invitation to serve on the Executive Committee. Susanta de Fonseka wrote a note to the same effect.



portion of my time at "Moratukanda" in the Alauwa district I shall be happy to serve as an unofficial member in any advisory board, etc., etc. in either of those districts.

Thanking you for your enquiry,

Yours truly,  
F. Obeyesekere.

8. **E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to The Hony, Secretary, C. N. C.,  
29 January 1939**<sup>1</sup>

"Savanti,"  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
29th January, 1939.

Dear Sir,

In reply to your letter dated the 28th instant, I wish to inquire if there are any vacancies in any of the existing Boards or Committees in the Kegalle District. May I suggest that it would be useful to obtain by circularizing the different ministries, information as to the various committees now functioning in each district. The Congress can thereafter request the ministries to be so good as to let the Executive of the Congress know when vacancies occur, or when fresh committees have to be appointed, so as to enable us to recommend names of members who may usefully serve in those committees. As you are doubtless aware membership in some of these committees require special knowledge of certain subjects and also constant attendance. In my opinion we should be careful as to the fitness of our own men for this kind of special work before we submit their names.

Yours faithfully,  
E. A. P. Wijeyeratne.

1. C. N. A., 60/220.



9. **E. A. V. de Silva to The Hony. Secretary, C. N. C., 30 January 1939**<sup>1</sup>

Proctor and Notary,  
Avissawella,  
30.1.1939.

Dear Sir,

*Congress Members on Advisory Boards, etc.*

I am in receipt of your letter of the 26th instant, for which I thank you. Will you be so good as to let me know what are the Advisory Boards, etc. you refer to in my district.

Thanking you.

Yours sincerely,  
E. A. W. de Silva.

10. **Mudaliyar N. Wickremaratne to The Hony. Secretary, C. N. C., 30 January 1939**<sup>2</sup>

Lincot,  
Peradeniya,  
30.1.1939.

Dear Sir,

I regret I will not be able to attend the meeting on the 1st February owing to another engagement.

As regards your enquiry I shall be glad to know what "Research" Committee you mean.

Yours faithfully,  
N. Wickremaratne.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter I have consented to serve on the Committee when I attended the annual meeting at Panadura.

Yours faithfully,  
N. Wickremaratne.

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1. C. N. A., 60/221.  
2. C. N. A., 60/274.



**11. Draft of Circular from The Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C. to The Ministers, 1 February 1939<sup>1</sup>**

1st February, 1939.

To All the Ministers,

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to request you to be good enough to let me have a list of Advisory Boards, Committees, etc. under your Ministry, to which unofficial members are appointed by Government. Will you also kindly let the Congress know when vacancies occur, or fresh Committees are appointed, so as to enable Congress to recommend names of members who may usefully serve on those Committees.

Yours faithfully,  
Joint Hony. Secy.,  
Ceylon National Congress.

**12. Secretary to the Minister of Local Administration to Victor C. Perera, 13 February 1939<sup>2</sup>**

No. A 626.

The Ministry of Local Administration,  
P. O. Box 500,  
Colombo, February 13, 1939.

Sir,

With reference to your letter of February 1, 1939, I am directed by the Honourable the Minister for Local Administration to inform you that bodies to which his Executive Committee makes recommendations for nominations are Sanitary Boards, Urban District Councils, Municipal Councils, District Road Committees and Provincial Road Committees.

1. C. N. A., 60/222.

2. C. N. A., 60/223.



2. I am to state that it will not be proper on his part to entertain any recommendations for nominations made by political bodies like the Congress.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
(?) Jansz,  
Secretary to the  
Minister for Local Administration.

**13. Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs to The Joint Hony. Secretary, C. N. C., 16 February 1939<sup>1</sup>**

The Ministry of Home Affairs,  
Colombo, 16th February, 1939.

Sir,

With reference to your letter dated the 1st February, 1939, I am directed by the Minister of Home Affairs, the Hon. Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, to inform you that the Advisory Boards and Committee to which appointments are made through this Ministry are the following :—

- (1) Board of Prison Visitors,
- (2) Local Visiting Committees of Prisons,
- (3) Advisory Board under Buddhist Temporalities Ordinance,
- (4) Zoological Gardens Advisory Committee,
- (5) Excise Advisory Committees.

2. I am to add that you should communicate with the Departments concerned with regard to the nominations of members of the Congress to serve on these Committees. The Departments are :

- (1) & (2) The Inspector-General of Prisons,
- (3) The Public Trustee,

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1. C. N. A., 60/224.



- (4) The Government Agent, W.P., and
- (5) The Excise Commissioner.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient Servant,

Secretary to the Minister of  
Home Affairs.

**14. D. S. Senanayake to The Hony. Secretary, C. N. C., 19  
February 1939<sup>1</sup>**

“Woodlands,”  
Kanatte Road,  
Colombo, 19th February, 1939.

Dear Sir,

Congress Members on Advisory Boards,  
Research Schemes, etc.

With reference to your letter of the 26th ulto., I shall be glad to know what Research Schemes are proposed to be inaugurated.

Yours faithfully,  
D. S. Senanayake.

**15. Secretary to the Minister for Communications and  
Works to The Hony. Secretary, 20 February 1939<sup>1</sup>**

No. G./39.  
Ministry of Communications and Works,  
Colombo, 20th February, 1939.

*Advisory Boards, etc.*

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 1st instant, I am directed by the Minister for Communications and Works,

1. C. N. A., 70/225.

2. C. N. A., 60/226.



the Hon. Major J. L. Kotelawala, to inform you that there are two Advisory Boards under this Ministry to which unofficial members are appointed by Government, namely :

- (1) The Colombo Port Commission, and
- (2) The Wireless Broadcasting Advisory Board.

The unofficial members of the Colombo Port Commission are appointed by His Excellency the Governor on the recommendations of the Executive Committee of Communications and Works. The Postmaster-General appoints unofficial members to the Wireless Broadcasting Advisory Board with the approval of the Executive Committee of Communications and Works.

2. I am to state that the Hon. the Minister regrets that it would not be practicable to consult the Ceylon National Congress before making appointments to these Boards.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

Secretary to the Hon. the Minister  
for Communications and Works.

**16. C. W. W. Kannangara to The Joint Hony. Secretary,  
C. N. C., 24 Feb. 1939<sup>1</sup>**

The Ministry of Education,  
(P. O. Box 500)  
Colombo, 24 February, 1939.

Sir,

With reference to your letter of 1st February, 1939, the only Advisory Boards, Committees, etc., under my Ministry are the following consisting of recognised experts in the

1. C. N. A., 60/227.



subjects dealt with by them and any recommendation made by Congress will be considered along with others when appointments or nominations are made :—

- Education Dept. : (1) Board Education (statutory).  
 (2) Technical College Council (non-statutory).  
 (3) Education District Committee (statutory).

University College : (1) University College Council (non-statutory).

- Colombo Museum : (1) Committee of Management, Colombo Museum (statutory).  
 (2) Committee of Management, Kandy Museum (non-statutory).

I am Sir,

Your Obedient Servant,  
 C. W. W. Kannangara,  
 Minister for Education.

**17. The Secretary to the Minister for Labour, Industry and Commerce to The Joint Hony. Secretary, C. N. C., 11 March 1939<sup>1</sup>**

The Ministry of Labour  
 Industry and Commerce,  
 Ceylon,  
 Colombo 11 March, 1939.

*Advisory Boards etc.*

Sir,

With further reference to your letter of the 1st February, 1939, I am directed to inform you that the assistance of

1. C. N. A., 60/228.



the Congress will be sought if it becomes necessary in finding suitable members to sit on Boards or Committees.

I am, Sir,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
Secretary to the Minister for  
Labour, Industry and Commerce.

**18. J. L. Kotelawala to The Hony. Secretary, C. N. C., 14 March 1939<sup>1</sup>**

No. G/39.  
Ministry of Communications and  
Works,  
Colombo, 14th March, 1939.

*Advisory Boards etc.*

Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 3rd March, 1939, I have the honour to inform you that I presume that your request that the Congress should be consulted in regard to appointments to Advisory Boards etc., under the Ministry of Communications and Works, has not been made to me because it is thought that as a member of Congress I should pay special consideration to the wishes of the Congress in regard to these appointments. If, as I think, your request has been made to me as Minister for Communications and Works, without regard to the fact that I happen to be a member of Congress, you will agree with me that if I were to consult you in regard to these appointments, I could not refuse to consult also such other bodies, political or otherwise, as would request me to do so. This would clearly be impracticable, if not undesirable.

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1. C. N. A., 60/229.



2. I do not consult the Chamber of Commerce in regard to appointments as stated by you.

I am Sir,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
J. L. Kotelawala,  
Minister for Communications and Works.

**183 : F. TELEGRAM FROM SADIRIS SILVA TO ARTHUR V. DIAS**  
3 MARCH 1939<sup>1</sup>

National Congress has no principals [sic] and bars progress of Ceylonese. Sadris Silva.

**183 : G. MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS, MARCH-AUGUST 1939<sup>2</sup>**

**1. Victor C. Perera to J. R. Jayewardene, 6 March 1939<sup>3</sup>**

Colombo,  
6.3.1939.

My dear Dick,

The members of the Committee are :

Mr. D. S. Senanayake (Chairman), Messrs. H. W. Amarasuriya, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, D. S. de Fonseka, A. W. H. Abeyesundere, S. W. R. Dias Bandaranaike, Mudlr. Wickremaratne, R. S. S. Gunewardene, Stanley de Zoysa and J. R. Jayewardene as convenor with power to add to their numbers.

Please send me the resolution on bringing the handbook up to date. Next meeting of the Exec. Comm. will probably be on 1st April.

Yours sincerely,  
Victor C. Perera.

1. C. N. A., 60/276. The telegram was despatched from Akmimana and addressed to Arthur V. Dias at Ananda College, Maradana.

2. From C. N. A., 60/59, 62, 63 and 246.

3. C. N. A., 60/138. The Sub-Committee referred to was that appointed "to draft a programme of work for and to outline the policy of the Congress."



**2. Sir D. B. Jayatilaka to Victor C. Perera, 17 March 1939**

Treleaven,  
Union Place,  
Colombo, 17 March 1939.

My dear Perera,

Stanley Zoysa saw me last night. He undertook to revise his resolutions. Please don't issue the notice re meeting on the 1st April until he gives you the revised resolutions. I expect he will hand them to you without delay.

Yours sincerely,  
D. B. Jayatilaka.

**3. Mudaliyar N. Wickremaratne to Victor C. Perera, 31 May 1939**

31.5.9.

Dear Mr. Perera,

I am sorry I was not able to send you these papers encl. Owing to the present situation the subject matter has taken a different turn. My strong opinion is that a levy of 10 cts. will not serve any useful purpose. But a levy and a direct assistance method will prove very beneficial.

I am returning the papers with my report.

Yours sincerely,  
N. Wickremaratne.

**4. Mudaliyar N. Wickremaratne to The Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C., 17 June 1939**

Colombo,  
17th June 1939.

Dear Sirs,

I regret I am unable to attend the meeting today as I am leaving for Galle on an important engagement. On the last date of your meeting I arrived too late and by that time you had somehow finished your work.



From what I noticed I may state that the appointing of Sub-Committees for consideration of various subjects have not always produced satisfactory results. I would suggest the appointment of permanent Sub-Committees to whom various subjects can be entrusted to for discussion and report. More members will make a point to study the subjects in their charge make good reports. A permanent Sub-Committee for (1) Excise, (2) Reforms of the Constitution, (3) Economic questions such as agriculture, village reconstruction, (4) Health and sanitation, (5) Finance, etc., etc.

I find that the subject of village reconstruction is not on the agenda. I do not know what happened to the proposal.

As regards Congress Policy I know that the Sub-Committee is going to consider its final report next week but I find the subject on the agenda today.

The report of the Excise Policy [*sic*] submitted at one of the meetings was quite unsatisfactory and I wonder whether that is the report which is before the meeting today.

I regret my inability to attend the meeting today. If it is possible to fix a definite date for monthly meetings it would I think be a good thing for members. They can keep that day free from other engagements.

Yours faithfully,  
N. Wickremaratne.

**5. Letter on Adult Education to The Secretary, Board of Ministers, 25 July 1939**

Colombo, 25th July 1939.

Dear Sir,

Adult Education

I am directed by the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to forward to the Board of Ministers the



following resolution unanimously adopted by the Committee at a meeting held on the 21st of July 1939 :—

*Resolution referred to :* That this Congress is of opinion that Government should take all necessary steps to give immediate effect to a scheme of adult education. I am to add that Congress considers that adequate funds should be released to give effect to the scheme of adult education which the Education Department has already in hand. Congress wishes to urge the view that adult education is of the utmost importance, in a country like our's enjoying universal franchise.

Yours faithfully,  
 Joint Hony. Secy.,  
 Ceylon National Congress.

**6. The Hony. Secretary, C. N. C. to The Secretary,  
 Panadura Mahajana Sabha**

Colombo, 25.7.1939.

Dear Sir,

I am directed by the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to acknowledge receipt of your letters dated the 24th June 1939 and 13th July 1939 and to inform you of the following decisions of the Committee :—

- (a) *Members who do not conform to Congress Rules and Principles.* The Committee will consider such complaints if definite charges are made with proper evidence. (Vide Article iv. Sub-section (c) of the Congress constitution).
- (b) *Language of Meetings.* The Committee considers that inasmuch as Congress membership is open to all communities, proceedings should be conducted in English, a language understood by all communities in Ceylon.



- (c) *Sale of Ceylon Products.* The feasibility of this will be considered when arrangements are made for the next sessions of the Congress in December 1939.
- (d) *Wearing of Garments made of Ceylon Cloth.* The Committee considers that this should be left to individual taste.

Yours faithfully,  
 Joint Hony. Secy.  
 Ceylon National Congress.

**7. Circular Letter to Members of the Sub-Committee on the National Fund, 2 August 1939**

Colombo, 2.8.1939.

To :

Yours faithfully,  
 Joint Hony. Secy.,  
 Ceylon National Congress.

Gentlemen,

You were appointed at the last meeting of the Executive Committee to organise a National Fund on behalf of Congress, and that collection papers be issued after you have made the necessary arrangements. Will you please meet to discuss the matter, and submit a report at the next meeting of the Executive Committee on the 25th of August at 5.30 p.m. Mr. Stanley de Zoysa was appointed as the convenor of this Sub-committee.

Yours faithfully,  
 Joint Hony. Secy.,  
 Ceylon National Congress.



**183 : H. NOTE IN FAVOUR OF DEBATE ON THE QUESTION OF THE  
CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS BECOMING A POLITICAL  
PARTY, n.d.<sup>1</sup>**

Is the Congress going to function as a Political Party and nominate candidates for election to the State Council? We wish to have a public declaration. Will action be taken against members and affiliated bodies which work contrary to Congress. Please make the statement to the effect now.

A. W. H. Abeyesundere

J. R. Jayewardene

F. C. de Saram

C. P. G. Abeyewardena

C. C.                   ?   ?   ?

**184. THE INDO-CEYLON PROBLEM, 1940-1941**

**184 : A. MEMORANDUM SUBMITTED TO THE COMMISSION ON  
IMMIGRATION BY THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS,  
n.d.<sup>2</sup>**

1. General : The question of immigration is a vital problem which has already assumed serious and complicated proportions. As time goes on it is bound to be still more serious and complicated. Years of neglect have produced a state of affairs which threatens to strike at the very roots of the economic existence of all Ceylonese, Singhalese, Ceylon Tamils, Burghers, Moors and Malays. The after effects of the general depression in trade have brought this problem into relief and in the interests of the wellbeing and future progress of the people, the question should be settled as early as possible in a manner satisfactory to all concerned. The gravity of the problem of immigration as affecting the

1. C. N. A., 60/18. Also see minutes of the Executive Committee meeting of the 17th January 1940, and its appendices, *supra*, pp. 561-71.

2. From an unsigned, undated copy of a typescript among the Congress documents. See C. N. A., 60/212. Also see item 183 : A.3, 184 : B, 184 : D.



position of the Ceylonese workers was voiced by the Hon. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike a former President of the Ceylon National Congress, when he placed the following motion before the State Council in November 1933 :—

“That in view of the serious and increasing unemployment among Ceylonese workers immediate steps should be taken for the restriction and effective control of immigration into Ceylon of workers from other countries.”

The debate on this motion is fully reported in the Hansard for 1933 and 1934.

The question was again brought up before the State Council by Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, the present President of the Ceylon National Congress, in May 1936 when he moved the following resolution :—

In view of the serious unemployment prevalent among the working classes in the island, this Council requests His Excellency the Governor to appoint a Commission to consider the question of restricting immigration and further to investigate the causes that have contributed to such unemployment.

2. Historically the problem of immigration has been of recent growth. In the absence of any restriction whatever on general immigration there has been a steady influx of both skilled and unskilled labour into the Island. In 1911 the number of miscellaneous immigrants was 39,579; but in 1933 this increased to 1,18,465. These figures have been obtained from the Department of Statistics. The latest figures when available will prove to be very much more. The present economic crisis, as far as the Ceylonese are concerned, has been created entirely by the steady influx of miscellaneous labourers from India, and various other countries. Government is perhaps the largest employer of foreign labour. Then comes private firms, stores, hotels and private traders. Domestic services in European and the better class of Ceylonese homes are now almost monopolised by Indians.



The Indian merchants and petty traders almost exclusively employ their own nationals in all grades of service. There are also a large number of Indian traders, peddlers, hawkers, and money-lenders scattered throughout the Island in towns and villages. These miscellaneous traders are drawn from the Nadars, Coast Moors, Malayalees, Cochins, Wannu Chetties, Brahmins, Baluchis, Borahs, Moplabs and others. The Indian trader is a greater menace to the well-being of Ceylon than even the labourer. Certain types of labourers, especially scavengers and conservancy coolies, are essential to Ceylon, owing to the reluctance of the people of Ceylon to undertake these jobs. They work hard and contribute much to the convenience and health of the people of Ceylon. But the majority of the Indian traders, especially the petty traders, are parasites who suck the very life blood of the nation. They have no family ties or social obligations. They start business at 5 a.m. and work till 12 midnight. It is impossible for Ceylonese traders to compete with them under such conditions. They cannot start work so early, or continue so long, as they have their social and religious duties to perform. Unless the hours of work are fixed as in European business houses, no Ceylonese can hope to compete with the Indian traders. The Ceylon Moors who are descended from the Arabs are traditionally the best type of traders. They are now being ousted by the Indian. For instance, during the last 15 years in the Main Street of Pettah from the Front Street junction to the Belfry 38 Ceylonese business houses, mainly of Ceylon Moors, have failed. On the other hand, where there were only 6 foreign shops, there are now 44, mainly belonging to Indians. The same thing is happening in other towns too. The piece-goods trade of the Island, which was formerly in the hands of the Chetties is now captured by the Memon Indians from Kathiawar. These people, without any capital whatever, but through the help of Tamil Brokers of a few European firms, obtain all their goods on credit and give similar credit facilities to small traders all over the Island. When they fail, it is extremely difficult to trace their connections in India.



They have ruined the Ceylonese who carry on a legitimate trade under approved business methods. Their place of business and dwelling house is the same in the Pettah.

There is also a growing colony of Chinese peddlers and hawkers.

3. Why these immigrants thrive when the Ceylonese are compelled to suffer is worth inquiring into. Practically all these immigrants come from such parts in India as are subject to extremely difficult conditions of living. They are accustomed to a very low standard of life. They live in chummeries and clubs when they come to Ceylon. They are free from all social obligations and local ties. In the case of the Ceylonese, the conditions are entirely different. They have to maintain families, educate children and meet various social obligations and keep up a standard of living to which they have been accustomed for generations. Thus there is no fair competition as between the Ceylonese and foreign labourer. When it is a question of living within the means of a small income conditions are all in favour of the Indian labourer who can even manage to save some portion of his wages and remit it to his own people at home. The Indian merchants never employ local men in their establishments, while the European firms invariably employ local men as clerks and labourers. The Coast Moors and the Moplabs are engaged in the retail trade and are scattered throughout the Island. The Nadars are an Indian community of petty traders who visit every part of the Island. They start by collecting gunny bags, bottles, tins, old books, etc. They also carry on trade as hawkers of toys, beads, cheap wearing apparel and fancy articles. In some places they have settled down as permanent boutique-keepers. The Malayalees and Cochins get employment as clerks, teachers, accountants, office peons, watchers, motor-car drivers, waiters in hotels and domestic servants. Some of these people who migrate to villages get work as tappers, watchers and small boutique-keepers.



The large and growing community of Afghans and Baluchis carries on business as petty money-lenders and suppliers of cloth and wearing apparel on a system of deferred payment. Their rates of interest are exorbitant ranging from 100 to 300 per cent. More than 60 per cent of the clerks, both government and mercantile, are indebted to them.

The Chinese peddlers and hawkers are also to be found in all parts of the country, and they are arriving in increasing numbers. Some of them have set themselves up as dental mechanics to the detriment of the work of the fully qualified dentists.

There is another matter which has a close bearing on the immigration problem. It has been long recognised that such diseases as plague and small-pox follow in the wake of the Indian immigrants. A new danger has now arisen in the shape of virulent types of venereal diseases which the immigrants bring over with them. Another undesirable feature of the Indian problem is that certain Indian races in Ceylon lead a kind of life which is considered immoral according to civilised standards. They have no home life, and they poison the life of the country. One method that they adopt to undercut the Ceylon trader and labourer is for ten or twenty to get together and have one woman. The masculinity figures for the island amply demonstrates the truth of this assertion. The figures for Colombo in 1931 per 1,000 of the population is as follows :—

**Permanent Population :**

Low-Country Singhalese	..	..	541
Ceylon Tamils	..	..	591
Ceylon Moors	..	..	541
Burghers	..	..	480
Malays	..	..	524

**Foreigners :**

Europeans	..	..	557
Indian Tamils	..	..	775
Indian Moors	..	..	809



Thus the Ceylonese and Europeans have an almost equal number of men and women. In the case of the Indian Moors and other races exclusive of Indian Tamils in Colombo there were 30,720 men and only 4,254 women, that is one female for 7 males. In the case of the Malayalees alone the proportion is 1 woman to 26 men. The Island figures for 1931 are not available. But the situation must be much worse now. No civilised state should tolerate such a state of affairs.

4. Recommendations: (a) Legislation should be immediately introduced to restrict immigration.

(b) The influx of miscellaneous immigrants should be so regulated by the imposition of a system of quotas as to prevent the elimination of local men from trade, domestic services and as labourers.

(c) To ease the present critical situation the recent arrivals should be requested to return to their own countries.

(d) Such big businessmen as the Parsees, Borah and other foreigners engaged in trade on a large scale should be requested to give a certain proportion of employment to the Ceylonese. The hours of work of their employees should also be regulated.

(e) It is also desirable that some form of registration of immigrants should be introduced to enable the local authorities to collect necessary statistics as regards their employments, wages and movements.

Joint Hony. Secretaries,  
Ceylon National Congress.

20, Queen Street,  
Colombo.



184: B. J. R. JAYEWARDENE'S "MEMORANDUM ON INDO-CEYLON RELATIONS," 19 OCTOBER 1940<sup>1</sup>

There are two main problems that we must consider as between India and Ceylon. One is our economic position with India, and the other, our political relationship with India. Trade between the two countries, and the position of Indians in Ceylon, would be part of the economic problem.

*Trade.*—The balance of trade is entirely in favour of India. In 1938, Ceylon bought from India goods to the value of Rs. 51,000,000. India bought only Rs. 9,000,000 worth of goods from us. The duty paid is also entirely in favour of India. Ceylon paid 3½ million rupees for the nine million rupees worth of goods she sent. India paid only Rs. 5,000,000 for the Rs. 51,000,000 worth of goods she sent here.

It must, however, be remembered that over 90 per cent of the goods we buy from India consist of eatables, such as rice and curzystuffs, etc. Once Ceylon is self-supporting in these products, these imports from India will dwindle to almost nothing. India cannot complain if by tariffs and prohibition or restriction of imports, we seek to make Ceylon self-supporting with regard to food.

*Indians in Ceylon.*—There are about 800,000 Indians in Ceylon. This is really a serious problem to a small people like the Sinhalese, whose population is only 3½ million. The Indians in Ceylon fall into three categories: labourers on the estates is the first. The labourer, skilled or unskilled, in the government, municipal or other employ is the second, and the Indian trader is the third.

1. From a typescript in the J. R. Jayewardene MSS (See C. N. A., 60/381). The title and the date are taken from the manuscript. A note suggests that it was presented to the Congress "Working Committee" but reference to the minutes does not support this suggestion. Reference should, however, be made to the minutes of the 26th June 1941, *supra*, pp. 654-55. Another typescript of this document could be found among the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS. It is entitled "Memorandum on Indo-Ceylon Relations to Ceylon National Congress Working Committee" and carries no date and no signature. See C. N. A., 25. 20/10.



*Estate Labourer.*—The Indian labourers on the estates number about 700,000 men, women and children. The main problem that arises with regard to them is the question of franchise. He, as we know, is specially recruited for the purpose of working on organised estates, over 90 per cent of which are owned by Europeans; he is brought to the Island and cared for on his journey free of charge to himself by a very elaborate organisation established and supervised under the law of India and under the law of Ceylon.

The same organisations give him special facilities for his return. His movements are subject to close government control and his wages and living conditions are a special concern of the government of India as well as the government of Ceylon. "He has" says Sir Edward Jackson in his Report on Immigration, published in 1938, "a special position under the law of Ceylon and he is expressly excluded from the operation of the only Ceylon law which controls other immigrations, namely, the Destitute Immigrants' Ordinance of 1907."

*Franchise.*—The Ceylon National Congress position with regard to franchise is that the privilege of voting should be confined to those who have an abiding interest in the country, or who may be regarded as permanently settled in the island. Sir Herbert Stanley, Governor, promised that domicile should be made the test for inclusion in the first adult franchise electoral list of 1931. The Elections Order-in-Council and the Rules and Regulations framed thereunder have practically removed all restrictions of domicile which the authorities undertook to impose on those that were not to be regarded as forming part of the permanent population of the Island. The Congress wanted the franchise to be restricted, to such Indian labourers as are able to produce a certificate of permanent settlement as a condition precedent to registration. The Congress Memorandum on Reforms submitted to Sir Andrew Caldecott says, "This was one of the main reasons that influenced the people of



this country to give the constitution a trial. Whilst there has been a faithful adherence by the people to their part of the undertaking, the Governor and the Secretary of State for the Colonies have signally failed to keep faith with them. The result has been disastrous to the hopes and ambitions of the sections of the permanent population resident in the planting districts."

However, it is possible to enter into discussion with India and mutually decide on a definition of Ceylon domicile. Our policy, in very general terms, is to allow non-Ceylonese immigrants now in Ceylon, either the option of remaining behind, acquiring a Ceylon domicile and full citizenship rights or of going away.

*Other Labourers.*—The second category of Indian Labourers, such as labourers skilled or unskilled, are employed in Government, municipal and other employ. This class comes of its own initiative and at its own expense. Their number today would be about two lakhs, and the goal of about 40 per cent of this class is Colombo, where there is already acute scarcity of housing. It is not necessary for us to give details of the percentage of this class employed in the government service for most of the facts are available in Sir Edward Jackson's Report. It was with regard to steps taken by the Ceylon government to repatriate certain sections of this class of labourer employed under government that Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru visited Ceylon in August 1939. The full facts connected with those accounts of the government are reported in a sessional paper, published in September 1940. The Indian Congress view of this repatriation scheme is put thus in their official Report 1939-40. "The Working Committee recognises the right of the people of Ceylon to give preference to nationals in State service or otherwise in their country, but surely the Indians who had settled there and made Ceylon their home—etc., had secured the right to be considered on a par with the other inhabitants of the island. Steps taken to adjust relationship should not be taken unilaterally."



It is also worth while noting that the Ceylon Congress deputation to Pandit Nehru pointed out in 1939, that there were 800 males to every twenty females per thousand among this class. In the case of the Malayali Community, there were 16,500 males to 628 females. The presence of non-nationals in such large numbers without any family ties, and congregating sometimes as many as fifty to sixty in one house create serious economic problems to the disadvantage of the Ceylonese workers, who have in many instances their dependent families to maintain and for that purpose live in separate houses. The policy of the Ceylon Congress therefore, is to introduce legislation for the complete restriction of immigration whenever foreign labour competes with Ceylon labour in any trade or profession. Until such legislation is introduced in Ceylon, we welcome the prohibition of immigration by the Indian government.

*Traders and Capitalists.*—The third category of Indians in Ceylon is even more dangerous to the economic lives of the poorer Ceylonese. The third category consists of Indian capitalists, big and small, trader and money-lender. He is an exploiter pure and simple. It is only necessary to give figures to show the extent of the damage he has caused to our lives. The Pettah area of Colombo is the chief business centre of the people of Ceylon. A few years ago, it was preeminently a Ceylonese business quarter. Now non-Ceylonese, a large majority of whom, about 98%, are Indians, completely dominate the position. For instance, in the Main Street, out of a total of 150 business houses, 118 belong to non-Ceylonese and only 32 to Ceylonese. In the Second Cross Street there are 14 Ceylonese houses as against 180 non-Ceylonese. And further, most of the employees in the non-Ceylonese houses were non-Ceylonese. In the estate areas, a similar problem arose. Out of a total of 1,102 boutiques which served certain estates, no less than 41% were run or controlled by Indians. In certain areas, almost all the boutiques were run by Indian kanganies or their sons.



If the position with her trade was so serious, the wholesale passing of land in recent times from the hands of Ceylonese to non-Ceylonese, chiefly Indians, created a most serious problem. Figures of execution sales at the instance of court show that in 1937, 88 per cent of the land were [*sic*] bought by non-Ceylonese. In 1936 in Badulla 44 per cent went out of Ceylonese hands, rising to 51 per cent in 1937 and 55 per cent in 1938 passing out of non-Ceylonese hands. Kurunegala and Puttalam in 1936 show the following figures: 43 and 47½. The most arresting figure is that of Nuwara Eliya. In 1936, 90 per cent of the total sales, in 1937 95½ per cent of the total sales transferred lands from Ceylonese to non-Ceylonese. The situation in regard to coconut land, which is the main agricultural industry of Ceylon, was worse. The Banking Commission, presided over by Sir Poohanawela, reported in 1934, on figures supplied by the Indian Chettiar community itself, that no less than 75 per cent of an aggregate of 1,100,000 acres were under mortgage, carrying no less than 15 per cent interest. One-third of this total acreage had already passed or was passing into the hands of creditors, mostly Chettiars.

In addition to the facts we have mentioned, we may show the extreme poverty in which the majority of the Ceylonese live. The Economic Survey conducted in 1936 showed that the average monthly income of a rural family of four to five persons was less than Rs. 25. Half these families were landless, 75 per cent were in debt; and the debt per indebted family amounted to Rs. 175. In the town of Colombo, 20,000 were unemployed. Over 75 per cent of our export trade, tea and rubber, belong to Europeans. 95 per cent of the trade of the country, both imports and exports, is in the hands of non-Ceylonese; and except for the recent establishment of the State Aided Bank, 100 per cent of the banking is also in non-Ceylonese hands.

We recommend, therefore, that Ceylon and India should discuss:

- (1) Complete prohibition of immigration into Ceylon of non-Ceylonese, where such immigration interferes with Ceylon trade or labour.



(2) A. Legislation by Ceylon to prevent non-Ceylonese from carrying on certain trades or professions.

B. Legislation by Ceylon controlling trade and traders to ensure that Ceylonese have a proper share in trade.

C. Legislation by Ceylon compelling established non-Ceylonese business houses to employ Ceylonese labour and preventing the future employing [sic] of non-Ceylonese.

(3) Legislation by Ceylon to prevent Ceylonese lands passing into non-Ceylonese hands.

(4) Legislation by Ceylon to reacquire lands transferred to non-Ceylonese.

(5) Legislation by Ceylon defining Ceylon domicile ; and the franchise, legislative and local, to be restricted to those who come within this definition.

(6) An agreed scheme of repatriation of non-domiciled non-Ceylonese.

*Political.*—We should also discuss with the Indian Congress (1) Common methods and means of struggling for freedom. (2) Our relationship with India, when India and Ceylon are free.

J. R. Jayewardene,

17.10.40.

184 : C. PUBLIC MEETING SPONSORED BY CONGRESS ON THE IMMIGRATION PROBLEM, 14 FEBRUARY 1941<sup>1</sup>

Two resolutions, one calling upon the State Council to pass legislation immediately restricting immigration, and the other condemning the attitude of the Governor in regard to the Indian question were unanimously adopted yesterday

1. *CDN*, 15 February 1941.



afternoon at a crowded meeting held under the auspices of the Ceylon National Congress at Ananda College; "I do not want to deprive the Indians of any of their rights, but I want to safeguard the rights of the people of this country," declared Mr. D. S. Senanayake, speaking with great feeling.

"I do not think it a great credit to the British Government to deprive us of the power that has been given to us," continued Mr. Senanayake.

"It is because we trusted England and followed her that an attempt is now made to trample down our rights."

### Two Resolutions

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, President of the Ceylon National Congress, presided and said that they had met to consider one of the gravest situations that had arisen in recent times. He proposed the two following resolutions:—

The people assembled at this meeting call upon the State Council immediately to pass legislation restricting immigration and defining Ceylon citizenship, and further pledge themselves to support any action in furtherance of this object.

This meeting strongly protests against the Governor's attitude which seeks to deny to the people of this country, the elementary right of determining the composition of its own population, and condemns this attitude as an attempt to sacrifice the rights of the indigenous population for the benefit of British vested interests.

Mr. Wijeyeratne said that Indian estate labourers were first brought to Ceylon after the Uva Rebellion of 1848 to cultivate the up-country lands confiscated from the people. Armies of labourers had been brought by the British planters to impoverish the people of the country from that time that had become one of the island's major problems. The situation today would not have arisen if the recommendations of the Donoughmore commission had been carried out in their entirety.



### Landless and Unemployed

During the last malaria epidemic Mr. F. C. Gimson, the then Assistant Government Agent at Kegalle, had reported that there were 3,000 landless Sinhalese families in that district alone. The position today was worse. There were 40,000 unemployed in Colombo according to the statistics collected by the Municipality. The trade of the island was in the hands of non-Ceylonese. When conditions were such it became patent that if the interests of the people of this country were to be protected there should be immediate restriction of immigration. That was an elementary right granted to a country. Sir G. S. Bajpai, the leader of the Indian delegation, had told Mr. Senanayake that although they could not arrive at a settlement at Delhi they should realise that it was a matter they could settle among themselves. But a third party had now interfered and they should express their deep resentment at that. That resentment they would carry to their homes in every part of the country and register their protest.

### Raj Intransigence

Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, speaking next, said that India and Ceylon should come to some agreement to alter the existing conditions. Their delegation had dealt not with representatives of Nationalist India but with representatives of the British Raj. If a National Government had been functioning in Delhi there would have been no difficulty in arriving at a solution of that problem and there would not have been that distant academic attitude of Sir G. S. Bajpai and party. If tomorrow India and Ceylon were free it would not take them twenty-four hours to settle the problem.

It was obvious that they were in agreement with regard to about 75 per cent of the points at issue. The effect of the message of the Governor would be to strengthen the bureaucratic, authoritarian Government of India. It amounted to telling Sir Bajpai and his party: "You stick to what you want and if there is no agreement the status quo will be



maintained for all time." Whatever instructions the Governor might have received it was very inopportune for him to have issued such a statement at the present juncture.

### " A British Question "

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene said that the problem that faced them was not a Ceylon-Indian question but a British question. It was the British Government in Ceylon that had given those " so-called " undertakings to the British Government in India.

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva said that the Indian leaders always felt for Ceylon and they had told him that if any misfortune were to happen to Ceylon they would come to her rescue. It was perfectly possible for representative Indian nationalist leaders and the Ceylon leaders to arrive at a solution of that problem without the interference of a third party.

Mr. A. M. Brodie of Jaffna said that the people of Jaffna were not opposed to the Ministers in their fight against the dictatorial attitude of the Governor.

### Mr. Senanayake on the Situation

Mr. D. S. Senanayake, speaking next, said that it was a matter of great regret to him that they had not been able to come to some agreement at the Delhi Conference. Every Ceylonese had a love and respect for India, and it was all the more regrettable that they were ~~not~~ able to come to some understanding. He only wanted to safeguard the rights and the interests of the permanent inhabitants of Ceylon, and if they failed to do anything in that matter it was because in their own country they could not do as they wanted. It was not a great credit to the British Government to deprive them of their rights. By trying to trample down those rights the British Government showed that it had no respect for them. When Poland was being devastated it was England that had raised the cry that they must go to the rescue of a small nation. Was it because they trusted the British that the rights granted to them were being trampled



down ? If the great British nation had treated them in that way he would ask Mr. Jayewardene to imagine in what way a free India would treat them ! The freedom of Ceylon lay not with other nations but with her own sons. They should work out their own salvation instead of hoping to accept it as a gift from Britain or India.

### Elementary Principle

It was an elementary principle, continued Mr. Senanayake, that every nation had the right to decide who should be regarded as its own nationals. It was because of that right given to South Africa and Australia that coloured people were not allowed to settle down in those countries. According to the law of India, Indians and Britishers enjoyed the same political rights. Mr. H. M. Desai, who considered himself a great lawyer, had said that that was only for purposes of registration. They knew how when Ceylonese wanted to go to India for training to join the Air Force they were told that they could not be accepted unless their great-grandfather had an Indian domicile !

Ceylonese wanted to get the trade of their country into their own hands but they were told that if they wanted to do that they should accept the ten lakhs of Indians in Ceylon as part of the permanent population. If they did that what would the next generation of Ceylonese be ? It was a very serious problem they faced, and he would ask them to consider it calmly and dispassionately.

Mr. N. D. H. Abdul Wahab said that the Muslims, who were also permanent residents of Ceylon, would work unitedly with the others in that matter.

### Ancient Document

Mr. Siripala Samarakkody said that he had an ancient document in which it was stated that the Indians were brought to Ceylon for several reasons after the Uva Rebellion of 1848. One reason was that the standard of living of those labourers was low and they could be paid low salaries.



The ancient spirit of the Sinhalese had been destroyed by the British Government in various ways, one method being by the present system of education.

Mr. G. K. W. Perera said that the Governor knew for a long time the weapon he was going to use, but he had laid it by till they had agreed to vote a large sum of money to help England. That blow from the Governor had come only after that. England required greater help from India than from Ceylon and that, perhaps, was the reason for the attitude.

The two resolutions were carried enthusiastically and proceedings ended.

184: D. E. A. P. WIJEYERATNE'S MEMORANDUM ON THE INDO-CEYLON PROBLEM, MARCH 1941<sup>1</sup>

When the Executive Committee last met on the 1st of March 1941, several members wished to have an authoritative statement from the Congress as to the various steps which the Congress should take to deal with the problem of immigrants and the status of non-Ceylonese.

I gave an undertaking that a report of the Working Committee would be placed at to-day's meeting dealing with this question.

The Working Committee had in fact met on more than three different occasions, and I have besides had consultations with several other members of the Congress. It is generally agreed by the Working Committee that the immigration question is a vital one, and that every effort should

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1. From an unsigned and undated typescript in the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS. (C. N. A., 25.20/10). The dating is based on the minutes. The memorandum was discussed in the Working Committee on the 31st March 1941. (See *supra*, p. 637). While the singular form makes it clear that the President, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, was the author, the task of preparing the memorandum was assigned to the President and Messrs. J. R. Jayewardene and Dudley Senanayake. J. R. Jayewardene presented another memorandum subsequently on 26th June 1941.



be made to secure the passage of the two bills now before the Council. The Working Committee further recommends that steps should be taken immediately to introduce legislation dealing with Ceylonese citizenship and domicile as well as the control of trade and business belonging to non-Ceylonese. In answer to the questions I have been asked as to what further steps should be advocated to carry out effectively the wishes of the Congress in these matters, I can only advise that we should use our best endeavour to strengthen the position of the Congress during the coming months in every district in the island. The question of boycott, by picketing and otherwise of selected non-Ceylonese shops, and the boycott of all war funds were raised, but it was felt by the Committee that any decision in advance would be premature.

I believe you will agree with me that it would be beneath the dignity and the high purpose of an association such as the Congress to indulge in mere talk of threats of boycott and I ask that the Executive Committee will await developments even with greater watchfulness and determine the necessary steps from time to time and from stage to stage until the various questions of immigration as well as employment and business activities of non-Ceylonese are satisfactorily dealt with.

I have however to report an important divergence of views between two sections of the Working Committee in relation to the steps to be taken regarding our freedom movement and the struggle against imperialistic domination. I am personally of the view that the attitude of the Governor and his evident desire to protect the wishes of British vested interests at the expense of Ceylon indicate that the questions connected with immigration as well as all other similar questions of importance are intimately connected with the question of British Imperialism.

A number of members of the Working Committee desire that the Congress should immediately face this issue and direct our attention primarily to the latter question. They



urge that, because of this our present control and domination, our future will be as fruitful of political crises as the past and therefore urge immediate action to launch a freedom movement to remove entirely the root causes of the existing defects.

These members wish to implement the first resolution passed at the December sessions at Mirigama, and to start a movement whereby Ceylon should cease to be governed by the British Parliament through its Secretary of State. Knowing that such a right will not lightly be granted, these members propose certain steps to be put into force immediately, including the refusal to attend imperial functions and the acceptance of imperial or local titles, honours and ranks. They contemplate that once the movement is launched, there should be no halt by the mere adjustment of the out-standing issues on immigration, but that the freedom movement will have to be carried on till such freedom is achieved.

I wish to say that there is a strong section in the Working Committee who think that the only issue before us, namely, the restriction of immigration, should not be linked up with an anti-imperial issue ; that in terms of the attitude adopted at the last annual sessions, and in terms of the policy hitherto accepted by the Congress, it is our duty to implement the resolution passed at Mirigama and prepare a memorandum introducing the form of the constitution we require for this country. They urge further that such a constitution should be accepted at a special sessions and that efforts should be made to get the support of as many of the permanent inhabitants as possible. Their view is that any steps savouring of noncooperation, or refusing to negotiate with the authorities, should not and cannot be taken unless sanctioned by a special sessions of the Congress.

Under the circumstances, and in view of the different view-points amongst the members of the Working Committee, it is my desire that the Executive Committee should



decide what the attitude of the Congress should be and, for that purpose, authorise me to summon a special sessions. In view of the fact that I have not been able to present either a report or concrete proposals before you, it would in my opinion be best not to take up this matter for discussion at to-day's meeting.

**185. SOME MEMORANDA BY MARTIN D. A. WIJESINGHE, 1940-1941**

**185 : A. "A CASE FOR NATIONAL REFORM AND ALL-PARTIES CONFERENCE": A PAMPHLET-MEMORANDUM BY M. D. A. WIJESINGHE, 26 MARCH 1940<sup>1</sup>**

It has often been said that most of our national and political ills are due to lack of proper statesmanship, and correct leadership. There can be no doubt that to a very large extent this is true; but necessity and opportunity often produce the right type of leader, as has been the case in more progressive countries. Our duty therefore is not to fold our hands, and weep in despair, but to demonstrate to our countrymen their present position, and in our own way to suggest ways and means to better our conditions. We may succeed or we may fail; but, as every action has its reaction, our survey of the present economic condition will assuredly open our eyes to the most pitiable condition of our being slaves in our own country, while the foreigner fattens on our soil. Look at the position of the country to-day!

Trade: Though there is the cry from all quarters, from the Governor downwards, back to the land, no one has yet thought of crying "Back to Trade." Trade, the backbone of the country, is completely neglected. Ceylonese—Sinhalese, Tamils and Muslims—who were once traders have given up trade owing to the present system of education that does not give regard and respect for trade. Hence the mudalali generation is fast disappearing. Sons of mudalalies flock to already crowded professions or take to quill-driving.

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1. Located among the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS : C.N.A., 25.20/14.



The cream of the intellect of the land go abroad and after years of labour qualify themselves as civil servants, doctors or lawyers, but seldom in commerce. When they return and think of matrimony, they always eye the dowry of the despised mudalali, who has hoarded his wealth in trade. Once married, the carrer of the mudalali ends along with his wealth, the children of the new couple too will be brought up to follow the footsteps of the father but not that of the mudalali. When these young ones reach their marriageable age they in turn marry with the dowry of some mudalali and here too the children give up their trade and the mudalali generation will be no more, and thus the sad tale will repeat itself.

Non-Ceylonese take advantage of the situation and flock in large number to take the grain of rice, silly to say bread, out of the mouth of the unfortunate Ceylonese. Coast Moors have ousted Ceylon Moors who were once traders. In addition a wave of Nadars has already swept over the whole country. In every town and village the Nadar, who started life by selling gram, coffee or collecting bottles or gunny bags, is now a big Mudalali, in some cases owing a fleet of lorries.

In a go-ahead place like Ambalangoda, where one stumbles upon a London graduate at every turn, we find today a Nadar monopolising all the business. As a gunny bag collector he started life about 12 years ago. He had his place of business just at the turn to the railway station and many of the properties in the neighbourhood, including his huge business establishments, belong to him. Ambalangoda is a hot-bed of politicians and there are hundreds aspiring either to get into the State Council or to the Urban District Council there. They all bow their heads to this Nadar as their guide, philosopher and friend! He has amassed so much of wealth that he is the richest man in the district. The question is chronic in almost every town and village.

Two brothers,, non-Ceylonese, who started a pawn-brokers business with a capital of Rs. 5,000 in Matale five years ago have now executed a deed of transfer for Rs. 80,000 as each



partner's share. The Ceylonese proctor notary who executed this deed is full satisfied in having these two as his clients! He admits that he has been a notary for the last twenty years and is not worth Rs. 5,000 today. All the plums in the trade are in the hands of non-Ceylonese. Our education is such that we are satisfied if we can serve them. That is our idea of dignity!

A young man, just out of school, who started a vegetable depot at my request in the Edinburgh Market, Pettah now complains that non-Ceylonese are harassing him and are determined to kill his business. They under cut him so much that he cannot compete with them. This state of affairs exists in every town and village of Mother Lanka. Where can her sons go to earn an honest living? In every walk of life the sons of Mother Lanka are ousted by the foreigner with a low standard of living. We cannot go beyond our shores. Those who have gone are driven back. We wait with folded arms and discuss the glories of Parakrama Bahu and Dutugemunu!

When Pandit Nehru visited Ceylon the Ceylon National Congress submitted to him a census of the trading houses in all important streets in Pettah. The census disclosed astounding figures showing that over 90 per cent of the trade in Colombo is in the hands of the non-Ceylonese; but these figures are true not only for Colombo but even for outstations. There ended all thoughts of this question and so will it be until a similar occasion arises to discuss the same. There has been no practical suggestions for improvement and meanwhile the whole trade is being captured by the non-Ceylonese.

Another menace that deserves serious attention is the Chinese hawker, now found in groups in every street corner, with a bundle of cloths, half his height, tied to a cycle. He has penetrated even into the remotest parts and wildest recesses of the country. It is extremely necessary to arrest this new menace.



Free licences should be issued to hawkers. These licences should be given only to the Ceylonese. All business houses should be registered. No application for registration of business should be entertained from non-Ceylonese not domiciled in Ceylon or register [sic] with a heavy tax to prevent unfair competition. The Ceylonese always find it difficult to compete with the Nadar or the Coast Moor with a low standard of living. This system will eliminate the undesirable element.

In this connection let us study and note how other countries protect their nationals. Take South Africa which is a much bigger and richer country than Ceylon. No business, trade or profession for gain is allowed to be carried on in that country without a licence from government and the licence is granted only to their nationals or people domiciled in that country. Our Business Registration Ordinance and its provisions should cover and extend only to Ceylonese.

A co-operative society or limited liability company, should be formed in every school to own a depot. It need not be a tuck shop or a book depot. It should stock rice, curry stuffs, oilman stores and other necessaries of life. All teachers and parents of school children who could conveniently patronize the school stores should do so. It may be argued that the school children have no money to start co-operative societies. It can be pointed out that they have money to pursue studies in the Law College, Medical College or spend money in England for a number of years.

If schools take up this question seriously it will solve a number of problems. The profiteer will disappear. The profit will come back to the boys or parents who patronize the school co-operative stores. Schoolboys once they learn to manage the school co-operative stores, when they leave school, will have got sufficient experience to manage successfully a business establishment of their own. They will learn how to get profits by way of dividends. They will be



trade-minded, creating once more a generation of traders. Sons of Mudalalies will then go back to their father's trade instead of flocking to clerical service. Thus the educated unemployment problem will automatically be solved to a certain extent. This propaganda could be carried out by a series of lecturers organised according to a programme in schools as well as from other public platforms. Scholarships should be offered to students to be trained as apprentices in recognised trading houses.

**Industry :** Most of our industries are staggering for want of support, not financial but moral. A Swadeshi movement should be started to patronise local industries instead of condemning them as it is done now. A list of existing industries should be made with a view to localize them and group them. An industrial exhibition should be held and circulars distributed to popularize them. Pledges should be taken, not before any symbolic altar but before the altar of one's conscience, by members of the Swadeshi movement to patronize the Swadeshi articles. If there is any defect in the article, instead of condemning it, suggestions should be made to improve it. They should be used in the spirit of, "Good, Swadeshi; bad, Swadeshi; we are Swadeshi. They are Swadeshi."

**State Protection :** A few years back the match industry was in a state of paralysis and the manufacturers sought state protection. By a special ordinance the number of manufacturers was limited and a quota was assigned to each manufacturer.

It is strange to reflect that out of the seven factories only one belongs to the Ceylonese, with a 20% shares of another, all the rest being owned, controlled and managed by non-Ceylonese. It is most atrocious to think even the sale and distribution of safety matches produced by all the factories had been entrusted to a non-Ceylonese firm so that nearly



85% of all the profit is snatched away from the Ceylonese and appropriated by a non-Ceylonese firm. The nett result of State protection has been the "protection" of non-Ceylonese interest by the State Council.

Health : The question of health should be foremost in every attempt to build a nation. It is admitted that owing to the absence of a balanced diet that the Ceylonese nation is physically degenerating [sic]. We condemn polished rice but continue to eat it when country rice is available. Recently it was pointed out that white bread does not contain any of the vitamins A, B, C, D and E and is no food at all, but we continue to eat this "no food." A grain of wheat contains 70 per cent starch and that, that alone, in the process of milling, is taken for white flour that goes to make white bread. No attempt is made even by the Bakers' Association to give the public an improved bread.

Sweet potatoes, jak or breadfruit, though excellent food, are not sufficiently popular to be taken instead of polished rice. Rice eating mentality is so much ingrained in us that to eat anything but rice is supposed to be below the dignity of one who can afford to pay for a measure of rice. No visitor is ever entertained in a principal meal to anything but rice. The villager, however much kurakkan, sweet potatoes, jak or breadfruit he may have, will not be satisfied unless the visitor is served with rice. No wedding house or any other function ever serves any of these excellent foods, sweet potatoes, breadfruit or jak. The condemned polished rice is always preferred. Anything but rice is poonac to the average man.

Old model rotti or hoppers, made from condemned polished raw rice, is the only rotti or hoppers known to us. No serious attempt is made to introduce the new model rotti "chapathi," the North Indian diet made from wholemeal atta flour. Australian white wheat flour, which is only starch, is popular while the wholemeal atta flour, so highly rich in vitamin, containing about 15% protein, has not



become sufficiently popular. Ordinary rotti or hoppers taken in the morning and pancakes taken in the evening made from wholemeal atta flour are excellent, soft and tasty, though most of us have not tried them.

A glass of gotukola juice though a rejuvenator taken in the morning is not even known to us. Though niviti, regularly taken, improves eye-sight it is not sufficiently popular. An expensive glass of sanatozen or ovaltine is preferred when an easily obtainable and inexpensive and invigorating glass of young coconut, where it is said all vitamins known and unknown are found, is available. Systematic propaganda by a series of lectures, judicious distribution of health bulletins and cooked food exhibitions is necessary to educate the general public.

Customs and Habits: Reform of customs and habits is another subject that deserves serious attention. Of these an expensive custom is the usual one of having pompous weddings. This is a criminal wastage of money. Most young men have not the courage to set this custom at naught. A bereavement in the family is regarded as the only reason, sometimes an excuse, to have a quiet wedding. The custom of having pompous weddings, whether the bride and bridegroom can afford to pay for such or not, is so deep-rooted that it is regarded scandalous to have a quiet wedding. This custom as we all know awaits [sic] in most cases in their trail endless misery for the newly married couple, for fat bills outstanding for years swallow up the better part of the dowry.

An instance is green in the writer's memory of one who still continues to pay the liquor bill of a wedding that occurred ten years ago. There is another instance, of an old lady who borrowed money five years ago to celebrate her daughter's wedding and is still paying the interest while the capital is yet untouched. Such instances are legion. And that is the custom that nobody dares challenge! Marriage is only a personal matter affecting two individuals or two



families at the most. There is no reason why a personal matters should be an occasion to extend an invitation to put other people into inconvenience. This is only one instance of expensive customs. There are several other customs and habits that deserve serious attention. Let meaningless age long customs be changed. Let money wasted in pomp be used for a better cause.

The question of reform of customs and habits could be solved through a powerful organisation with members in every town and village. For instance in the case of wedding reform when the engagement is announced in the press or in the local registry an authorised member should get at the parties concerned and prevail on them to have an inexpensive and quiet wedding. If we carry this propoganda for six months we would certainly achieve our aim.

Is it not desirable to have a National Reform League constituted by delegates from the existing parties and movements of the day such as Ceylon National Congress, Labour Union, Sinhala Maha Sabha, Sama Samaja Union, Y. M. B. A., Y. M. C. A., Ceylon Muslim League, Tamil Unions, Burgher Union, where all Ceylonese could unite with even Buddhist and Christian clergy for the up-lift of Mother Lanka ? A conference of such a representative body should be held to devise ways and means to draw up a programme to undertake this noble task.

Most people might differ in their views on politics, but it is not possible to differ or disagree in the views herein expressed. A meeting of the delegates properly constituted with the sole object of national reform will be a great and wonderful platform where all can do national service with the greatest harmony. Let us have a band of volunteers drawn from the younger generation in the spirit of a National Salvation Army devoted entirely and exclusively for the salvation of Mother Lanka.



I invite those interested to communicate with me their views on this war to be waged against social evils until it is carried to a successful end. In the 2nd issue I hope to collect, and publish concrete cases of facts and figures showing the extent to which the foreign trading and business element has usurped the commercial pursuits of the Ceylonese. Concrete cases brought to my notice will be most gratefully accepted and published.

M. D. A. Wijesinghe.

761, Maradana Road,  
Colombo,  
26.3.40.

**185 : B.** M. D. A. WIJESINGHE'S " DRAFT MEMORANDUM ON A NATIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE," 1 DECEMBER 1940<sup>1</sup>

The Ceylon National Congress appointed on 11th June, 1940 a Standing Committee called the " Social Reform Committee," to carry into effect the Five Point Social Code accepted by the Congress.

The Social Reform Committee was appointed as the first step to carry out one of the five recommendations of the Sub-Committee of the Ceylon National Congress appointed to report on my memorandum, " A Case for National Reform." A start in this direction has been made and a good deal of interest has been created among the public.

The Congress should be thankful to the press for giving this movement considerable support.

I feel that the Congress has yet to tackle in earnest the more important problems that face the nation at the present moment. Social reform activities will take considerable time to adjust themselves. Meanwhile the Congress must make a

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1. From the H. A. Koattegoda MSS collection. The memorandum is contained in a pamphlet which includes Wijesinghe's " Suggestions for a Village Improvement Competition ."



start with the other subjects covered by the sub-committee report, viz., Ceylonese Trade and Commerce, Ceylonese Industry, Health and Nutrition of the People.

The present is an opportune time to start new industries and to develop various lines of our commerce. The present war has upset the old order of things and we should utilize this opportunity to make this country self supporting as far as possible. If by chance the shipping facilities are further curtailed we will again be reduced to the same circumstances that faced us during the last crisis.

India affords us an example of how quickly she has adapted herself to the new situation. Various new industries have sprung up there and the Government of India has assured these new industries ample protection against foreign competition even after the war is over. In view of the present world condition we have to take such steps as to make ourselves self-supporting by exploiting our natural resources to the utmost.

Therefore, I submit that it is time for the Congress to deal with the entire problem from a national point of view. In view of the Congress sessions to be held next month a resolution appointing a "National Planning Committee" to draw up a ten-year programme should be brought up. A resolution to this effect should be placed on the agenda for discussion. This Committee could co-opt even non-congress experts and technicians available.

The functions of the National Planning Committee above referred to will be comprehensive and varied. Therefore, I suggest that it should have five sub-committees, namely, Trade Committee, Industrial Committee, Agricultural Committee, Health and Nutrition Committee and Educational Committee, in addition to the Social Reform Committee that is already functioning. The National Planning Committee should have a chairman and a secretary elected by the Congress. The various sub-committees should have separate



chairmen with full time secretaries. The functions of these Committees will not be clear at a glance and may be indicated as follows :—

*Trade Committee.*—The functions of this Committee will be to report on ways and means of obtaining a larger share of the country's trade and commerce both internal and external, for the Ceylonese. This sub-committee should collect suitable data to find out what lines of external and internal trade can be successfully attempted by those interested. This Committee should take the initiative to carry into effect the recommendations of the National Reform Committee.

To organise either through the Ceylon Government or interested individuals to take steps to float a powerful company called "The Ceylon National Trading Corporation" with a capital, say, of three million rupees. The money should be raised by issue of shares and by the Government subscribing a part of the capital. It is also suggested that the Government should create a National Mercantile Marine, and for this purpose early steps should be taken to purchase a few ships, as soon as they are available, to trade between India, Burma, and Ceylon. Legislation should be introduced to control and regulate all trades by the enforcement of a licence system so that the establishment of new trading concerns by non-Ceylonese could be under licence, subject to such conditions as to capital, employment of labour, etc., as may be imposed. This licensing system should be extended to hawkers. Steps should be taken by the Government to provide a full course of commercial education. Provision should be made for commercial scholarships not only for further studies, but also for travel.

It is necessary to bring to the notice of the educated classes the dignity of trade. A start should be made through schools by having at least co-operative stores in all secondary schools. It is possible for this committee to point out to parents of some of our children that instead of wasting thousands of rupees on a higher education of those children who are not fit for the purpose they could profitably be



trained to take up a line of trade. A definite step should be taken to check the flow of the cream of intellect in this country to the government services and to the legal and other professions. The estate left behind by the greatest luminary of the legal profession within living memory is hardly one and half lakhs (Rs. 141,446.99). There are traders who have given this amount for charity! There is one trader who is getting Rs. 80,000 as house rent per month. What could be his worth? There are yet others who are getting Rs. 50,000, Rs. 60,000 a month as house rent. The son of a certain trader once told me, "My father buys a property in Colombo for Rs. 10,000 and the day after he makes up that amount by raising the price of sugar or flour by 10 cents a bag!"

Our intelligent young men who flock to the Law College could do very well in trade if they serve as apprentices in a business house, the six months they serve in a proctor's office. These young men should study the plan of the Colombo Municipality twenty-five years ago and the present plan and place those facts and figures before the public to show how much of the Colombo property is in the hands of traders whom they perhaps despise. According to the present rate what fraction of property within the Colombo Municipality will be left for non-traders including those intelligent young men, 25 years hence!

This Committee could take steps to organise a string of co-operative stores or limited liability companies in all important towns to carry on trade. Intelligent young men could be trained in business in these centres.

Panadura has given a lead in this direction by already establishing a limited liability company for Rs. 50,000 to carry on trade. The management of these companies should give necessary security to the company for proper conducting of the business to the satisfaction of shareholders. This precaution is a guarantee against mis-management or dishonesty and will safeguard the interests of the company.



*Industrial Committee.*—The functions of the Industrial Committee are to prepare a list of swadeshi cottage industries. This Committee may consist of industrial experts and it may be possible for this Committee to start various industrial undertakings and to make a report on same to the Minister of Industries or to those interested. This Committee can also bring into effect the following recommendations of the National Reform Committee :—

“ With regard to industries, we recommend the early establishment of an “Industrial Corporation” with a capital of say, five million rupees, subscribed for by the public and the Government. An industrial survey has been made and research in certain directions has demonstrated the possibility of profitably establishing a number of medium scale industries. In addition to this there are many cottage industries which can be undertaken profitably. The Government has already obtained the services of experts whose assistance is available. We further recommend that the system of education be altered by the adoption of a method whereby children at an early age, after preliminary general education, could be diverted into industrial education and training. We also suggest that industrial scholarships be offered for the purpose of training young men in different branches of industry. We also consider it essential that all industries should be licensed so that it may be possible to prevent industries being established by foreigners, or to control and regulate such industries, by imposing such conditions as may be necessary regarding capital and employment.

For the establishment of industries in particular, it is necessary to establish suitable marketing facilities. We suggest the floatation of a private or public limited company. If this is not feasible, we suggest that the Government should take up the marketing of industrial products. Connected with this is the question of production, and we suggest that especially at the early stages, all local industrial products should be adequately protected against imported products of a similar kind.”



This Committee can induce those interested to make a start in the sugar industry which has hitherto not been attempted on a commercial scale. Vast tracts of land that are now abandoned as subject to floods are ideally suited to cultivate sugar cane. People are not interested in this industry as they are ignorant of the profits that they could get by the cultivation of sugar cane.

*Agricultural Committee.*—The functions of this Committee should be to carry on systematic propaganda to co-operate with the Government to clear existing elas, canals, and channels, to prevent floods and to bring to the notice of Government the necessity of dredging river beds that are exposed.

The following passage from the "Free India" of 3rd Nov., 1940, under the heading "Villagers construct a Big Dam" is interesting :—

*Triumph of Self-Reliance. How the residents of Tehsil joined together and solved the problem of water scarcity in the entire Tehsil is reported from Gorakhpur.*

*Due to the general scarcity of rains in the district the problem of water for the crops became acute. This state of affairs led 5,000 villagers to construct a dam on the Rohin River. The work involved no expenses as the villagers worked free of charge.*

*It is estimated that the water thus procured will irrigate 10,000 acres of land.*

With the co-operation of the Minister of Agriculture it may be possible for this Committee to organise expansion of villages, to create villages or colonies in vast tracts of land that are yet to be brought under cultivation. There are 15 million acres of land in Ceylon, out of which only 3½ million are under cultivation. Average population per square mile in the North-Central Province is 24, in the Eastern Province it is 56, and in Uva Province, 96, whereas in the Western Province alone it is 1,012. A solution to this uneven



distribution of the population will help to bring relief to the chronic problem of unemployment. With so many acres of land undeveloped and with an unemployed population floating about Government's doling out poor relief brings no permanent relief to the country at all.

It is clear that the world war is due to the desire of Germany to expand her empire to gain colonies ; and so are the Japanese aims. We have ample room to develop our colonies without any bloodshed with regiments armed with axes and pickaxes. Malaria could be overcome by planting eucalyptus as was done by the Italians when they developed the marshes of Abyssinia. We can plant in addition to eucalyptus, "walhabarala" a cure for malaria. Prisoners could be classified and made use of to open up colonies.

Agriculture in a land cannot be improved without the breeding of cattle. It may be possible to make Village Committees keep pedigree stud bulls to serve the village cattle free of charge. The importance of farm manure to the cultivator should be impressed instead of using imported varieties of manure.

This Committee should organise a systematic island-wide campaign to grow jak, papaw and other fruit trees.

*Educational Committee.*—The functions of this Committee are to bring about a complete change in the policy of the educational system of the Government. The policy now followed by the Government in fixing the scale of salaries of teachers compel Government to pay enormous sums of money to educational institutions. This sum is soaring up every year with no corresponding benefit to the country. The cost of education in this country is comparatively high and the average citizen finds it practically impossible to give his children a satisfactory education. It should be our aim to make education cheaper, more effective and suitable to our requirements.



It may be possible to make a large number of our schools self-supporting. The Committee should inquire into this subject and make a report. The Government could make a start by giving notice to a number of schools that five years hence no grant will be given excepting a nominal grant that would be given as a mark of recognition for educational purposes. It may be of interest to note that in India no approved scales for teachers as in Ceylon are prescribed. It is left to the manager to appoint the teachers on any salary he likes. Government could call for reports from each school devising ways and means to make it self-supporting. It may be possible for the Government to give a lump sum to cover the grant for five years to a Board of Trustees, with the necessary security to enable it to be self-supporting.

The soaring figures of expenditure for feeding school children could also be stopped on the same basis.

*Health Committee.*—This Committee can carry into effect the recommendations of the “National Reform Committee.”

The question of a balanced diet is of the utmost importance. The Congress should start intensive propaganda in this direction. Investigations should be made to substitute a more wholesome kind of bread for the white bread that is consumed. We would also suggest that the Congress should take up this question with the Executive Committee of Health.

This Committee should carry on propaganda to educate the people to eat more curries and less of rice. The British Government have decided that all white bread on sale to consumers should contain a certain proportion of two important vitamins, one of which is vitamin “D” necessary for bone development. The flour reinforced by the reinstoring [*sic*] nutritious element that have been lost in the process of milling. It has been said that two modern enemies of mankind are white bread and white sugar, denuded as they are of their life-giving elements.



Just as the Government discourages use and sale of intoxicating liquors and dangerous drugs so ought it to discourage the sale of the pernicious white foods robbed of their nutritious elements. This Committee could take steps to ban white foods robbed of their nutritious elements. This Committee could take steps to ban white bread and suggest to substitute a more wholesome kind of bread with says 10% of kurakkan flour or whole meal flour introduced into white flour.

This Committee can educate the public by systematic propoganda to build the health of the nation and also study various health problems and help the Health Committee of the State. For instance the Health Committee votes 14 million Rupees to promote the health of a five and half million population of which say, a lakh and half are really in need of medical aid. This is a stereotyped vote without making any attempt to reduce the cost. There are heaps of drugs that are imported at very high cost though they could be procured locally at little expense.

The moment you speak of ginger that becomes ayurveda and is banned by the Western Doctor. If you speak of tincture zingerbris, extract of ginger, that come within the pharmacopea of allopathic doctor. Essence of ginger contains 80% alcohol in rectified spirits. It does not matter as it is imported and called by a name that is not intelligible to the ordinary layman! Take the essence of ginger prepared locally in .....?..... 50% alcohol in toddy spirits immediately it becomes "Arrack in disguise." Ginger and various other drugs prescribed by the western doctor in the extract form could be procured locally if only the Government makes an attempt. The Minister of Health has so far made no attempt to reduce the medical bill by procuring local drugs in the extract form. Food and Drugs Ordinance legalizing the food, healthy or unhealthy for the public, was brought up in the Council some time back. What has been its fate ?

This Committee can take up with the Government the question as to why ayurvedic dispensaries and hospitals are not opened in various parts of the island to bring down the



increasing medical vote. Marvels of ayurveda have often been brought home to the Government. Cases given up by allopathic doctors have often been cured by ayurvedic doctors. Why not have an Ayurvedic Medical Department controlled by the Government, as is done in various states in India. This will be a boon to the country. The indigenous population very often prefer to have ayurvedic treatment where available. Before the advent of the western doctor, when the population of Ceylon was several times more than the present population, Ceylon had a network of ayurvedic hospitals and dispensaries where indigenous medicine was available to the indigenous population.

*Social Reform Committee.*—This Committee could carry out propaganda in connection with the five Point Code accepted by the Congress. In addition there are other kindred subjects that could be taken up by this Committee. For instance it may be possible to devise ways and means of reducing the crime wave in this country. The Inspector-General of Police has stated that a certain percentage of crime is due to sudden provocation. Provocation is regarded inevitable and even law makes provisions for same. Provocation leads to loss of temper. It is possible to train the control of temper through schools by introducing a text-book dealing with the subject. Practical lessons could be given on control of temper so that temper may not be lost with any one under any circumstances. It may add to the dignity of the Police force if they give a lead in practical lessons on control of temper.

The instance of that well-known person who died recently as a result of loss of temper, may be taken into account. This person lost his temper completely over a certain incident of his mischievous son. He created an uproar in the house and the day after he had a nervous break-down that brought his end the week after.

By personal experience I state that I have controlled my temper for six months and now I find that even if I attempt



to lose my temper it is not possible for me to do so. Control of temper is also a very good blood purifier that costs nothing.

*National Fund.*—For the activities of this Committee it is necessary to create a National Fund. The Government of India has subsidised “The Indian National Planning Committee.” There will be no dearth of funds once we put the shoulder to the wheel.

The main idea under-lying the National Planning Committee is to create a Central Committee to develop the country according to a systematic plan by co-ordinating activities of various bodies and assigning duties to each body to avoid over-lapping as it often happens.

Some of the points raised by me are only thought stimulating suggestions and I hope they will lead to some useful results.

M. D. A. Wijesinghe.

185 : C. M. D. A. WIJESINGHE'S “SUGGESTIONS FOR A VILLAGE IMPROVEMENT COMPETITION,” 16 FEBRUARY 1941<sup>1</sup>

#### Suggestions for a Village Improvement Competition

The Mirigama Congress Sessions passed a resolution sanctioning the appointment of a National Planning Committee. This planning, if undertaken, will be for a future Lanka. Meanwhile in view of the present serious economic and social condition of the country it has become necessary to place before the public a constructive programme for its development by undertaking a scheme that will appeal to the people. It may be possible if this scheme is adopted, to build the nation by developing Ceylonese trade, industry

1. From the H. A. Koattegoda MSS.



and agriculture. Therefore I place the following suggestions, before the Ceylon National Congress Executive Committee, for a village improvement competition :—

- (1) That the Ceylon National Congress do organize and hold a competition among villages and offer monetary prizes to the most successful village or villages.
- (2) That the details of such a scheme be drafted by a special committee of the Ceylon National Congress Executive Committee.

A tentative scheme for such a competition is submitted herewith for consideration :

- (i) That every village within a Village Committee area is entitled to enter the competition.
- (ii) That the village showing the greatest progress in all or as many as possible of the following points be considered the winner :—
  - (a) Agriculture, (b) Industries, (c) Trade, (d) Co-operative movements, (e) Health, (f) Economic conditions, (g) Suppression of litigation and crime, (h) Utility works.

(a) *Agriculture* :

An attempt should be made to produce the village needs in rice wherever there are irrigable lands. Fruits and vegetables should also be grown to satisfy the village demands. Uncultivated land should be cultivated. The assistance of the departmental officers could be called in.

(b) *Industries* :

A list of swadeshi industries should be prepared and developed. Other industries suited to local conditions should also be developed. The Department of Industries may be consulted.

(c) *Trade* :

The village trade should be in the hands of a co-operative supply service. Failing that, the trade



should be in the hands of the villagers themselves, or even in the hands of Ceylonese. There should be a channel through which village produce may be sold to the best advantage of the producer. The assistance of the Marketing Department could be called in.

(d) *Co-operative Movements :*

For the purpose of relieving indebtedness by eliminating the usurious money lenders it is essential to introduce co-operative facilities to the villages. Therefore, there should be a co-operative movement wherever possible.

(f) *Economic Conditions :*

With the progress of agriculture and industries economic conditions should improve. (1) Every person should make an attempt to make a saving from his earnings, however small it may be, and deposit it in the co-operative society. (2) Every person in his spare time should be engaged in some cottage industry and thereby help to relieve the un-employment problem. (3) All money borrowed by the villagers for productive work should be from village co-operative societies ; where such a society does not exist one should be organised for the purpose. (4) Social functions such as weddings, funerals, etc. should be as simple as possible according to the means of the parties concerned.

(g) *Litigation and Crime :*

There should be some decisive attempt made to reduce litigation. Any existing society should have a Conciliatory Board to arbitrate in cases of disputes.

(h) *Utility Works :*

The villagers should supply themselves with the village needs like roads, tanks, bathing wells, etc. Pressure should be brought on the Village Committees to carry out a part of this work.



*Health :*

The village should make an attempt to lead a more sanitary life that will reduce ill health. The help of the Sanitary Assistant could be called in. He should be regarded more as a friend than as an officer to be dreaded.

- (2) & (3) That the villages be given six months time to enter the competition. Along with the entry statistics of the village on all the above points should be supplied.
- (4) The period of development is three years, and at the end of each year a report of the progress should be made by each entrant village. Ceylon National Congress representatives may visit the villages to verify the information supplied and to get further information needed.
- (5) The first report may be sent with a fee of Rs. 2 and the other reports with a fee of Re. 1.
- (6) The 1st prize will be offered to the village that shows the best progress in all the above points and the other prizes will be given to villages that come next in order.

First prize Rs. 1,000, second prize Rs. 500, third prize Rs. 250, fourth prize Rs. 100, fifth, sixth and seventh Rs. 50 each. It may sometimes be possible to offer more than one first prize based on electoral areas, if an exceptionally large number of villages enter the competition.

- (7) Each entry should be made on behalf of a village by a representative village society.
- (8) The Ceylon National Congress branch associations throughout the island should go round and enthuse the villages to enter the competition.



- (9) The prize money will be given by the Ceylon National Congress to the winner to be devoted to a non-sectarian purpose or public utility as decided by the society through which the application was sent and approved by the Ceylon National Congress.
- (10) The prize money amounting to Rs. 2,000 may be guaranteed by individual members of the Ceylon National Congress or even by non-Congress well-wishers of the movement.

M. D. A. Wijesinghe.

761, Maradana Road,  
Colombo, 15.2.41.

185 : D. M. D. A. WIJESINGHE'S PROPOSALS FOR A SWADESHI  
MOVEMENT, 19 JULY 1941<sup>1</sup>

761, Maradana Road,  
Colombo, 19th July 1941.

M. D. A. Wijesinghe,  
Phone 9511.

Dear Friend,

It is proposed to inaugurate a Swadeshi Sabha with a view to promote the following points :—

- (1) To support swadeshi traders who give the same courteous attention and fair dealings as one gets from non-swadeshi traders.
- (2) To use swadeshi goods whenever they are available at a price at which non-swadeshi goods of equal quality are offered.
- (3) To live within one's means.

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1. From a typescript in the J. R. Jayewardene MSS. See C. N. A., 60/355.



- (4) To prevent extravagance at weddings, funerals and other social and domestic functions.
- (5) To control one's temper under all circumstances.

You will realise the urgent necessity for such a movement to raise the social and economic conditions of our people.

It is our intention to summon conferences of swadeshi traders, swadeshi industrialists as well as social workers and harness the co-operation of the government industrial, agricultural and co-operative departments before launching the movement.

This movement will not be connected with politics or political parties.

An informal conference of swadeshi traders will be held on August, 1941, at ..... to consider what steps, if any, should be taken to make the country economically independent as far as trade is concerned.

I am placing before you (see annexure) a brief analysis of the obstacles that stand in the way of the development of swadeshi trade. As an outstanding business man, who had been carrying on your trade in the face of many obstacles and as a public spirited person, who is interested in the practical economical problems of the country, you are kindly requested to attend the conference and give it the benefit of your valuable experience. Further, if you will be good enough to communicate to me beforehand your views and any suggestions which you might wish to be placed before the conference it will greatly facilitate [sic] to make the conference a practical success.

Mr. G. C. S. Corea will preside.

Yours fraternally,



*A Brief Analysis of Obstacles to the Development of Swadeshi Trade*

1. Internal Causes :

The national character of the Ceylonese (particularly Sinhalese) seems to be not conducive to successful trading. This is evidenced in :

- (i) Our preference to invest any capital we possess in land rather than in trade as a rule. Even capital earned in trade is usually invested in land.
- (ii) Lack of foresight to create a reserve to ensure a safe passage for the business during hard times.
- (iii) The usual discourteous or unenthusiastic methods of salesmanship.
- (iv) Lack of trust in others which prevent the formation of Joint Stock Companies.
- (v) The national characteristic of hasty temper.
- (vi) Absence of commercial education (not a mere knowledge of Shorthand & Book-keeping which makes one a slave to foreign trade) in its broadest sense dealing with the intricacies of internal and external trade.
- (vii) Lack of facilities for apprentices in commercial houses (except as quill-drivers), preventing a knowledge of the internal side of trade.
- (viii) Scope for non-Ceylonese capitalists to carry on any number of trades (a multiplicity of trades).

2. External Causes :

- (i) The stranglehold of non-Ceylonese on the import, export and internal trades.



(ii) The cut-throat competition offered by the non-Ceylonese affecting the Ceylonese trade adversely in three ways :

- (a) The facilities that non-Ceylonese have in the import and export business are infinitely better than those offered to the Ceylonese business man, due to—
- (1) The non-Ceylonese having had longer connections with the trade.
  - (2) Absence of sufficiently rich Ceylonese traders to do large external business.
  - (3) Absence of large Ceylonese Joint Stock Companies to carry on such business.
- (b) The importers being chiefly non-Ceylonese offer better terms and facilities to their countrymen than to the Ceylonese.
- (c) The usual standard of living of the non-Ceylonese being lower than that of the Ceylonese of the same status in trade, he is able to offer very keen competition to the Ceylonese trader.

## 186. FOOD AND SELF-HELP, 1940-1942<sup>1</sup>

186 : A. GILBERT PERERA'S DRAFT OF A PROSPECTUS ON VILLAGE INDUSTRIES, 27 October n.d.<sup>2</sup>

One of the most pressing problems of today in Ceylon is the economic one.

There is not the least doubt that the conditions under which the villager lives are most deplorable. His standard of living is notoriously low, the result being that crime has increased.

1. Also see the items 185 : C and 185 : D.

2. From a typescript in the J. R. Jayewardene MSS (C.N.A., 60/356). A note on the typescript reads : " Dick, Herewith a rough draft. Gilbert, 27/X/." This item is now available at the Archives as 60/356.



At the same time there is no early prospect of Ceylon becoming so industrialized as to increase the standard of living of the poor by that means. Even if that was possible, it is doubtful whether that is desirable, as it will bring with it all the evils connected with large industries.

So that it would appear that some organisation must be formed which will, whilst not disrupting the normal village life, so benefit the village community that the standard of living will be raised. To this end it is desirable that cottage and local industries should be encouraged. The skill and raw material obtainable in the villages should be economically developed to this end.

This is a difficult problem because it involves not only the question of capital but also that of competition from manufactured articles which are usually cheap.

So that any enterprise to benefit the villager in this direction will require a good deal of capital, through organisation and expert technical knowledge in production and sale.

The best way to attain this end would be to run the concern as a Limited Liability Company under the Companies Law, but not for profit.

It is suggested that a Company be floated with a capital of one lakh of rupees, of which Rs. 25,000 should be immediately subscribed and paid up. With experience and as occasion arises, it will be possible to call up as much capital as it required.

The present circumstances afford an ideal opportunity to foster cottage and local industries in view of the difficulty in obtaining imported articles.



186 : B. "HOW TO IMPROVE RURAL ECONOMIC CONDITIONS ?  
ESTABLISHMENT OF CO-OPERATIVE TRADING STORES," A SCHEME  
PRESENTED BY K. B. DISSANAYAKE, June 1941<sup>1</sup>

In the first instance a general meeting of the villagers must be held at a public place in the village. The facts must be explained to them at this meeting. Thereafter, they must be allowed to choose according to their wishes one or more from among the village leaders as the organizers (*muli-kayan*). The number of families permanently resident in the village who are nationals must then be ascertained and the capital needed for the establishment of a Co-operative Trade Stores in the village, which would cater to the needs of the villagers, must then be estimated. Thereafter, in order to collect this capital, the total capital should be divided into shares in such a way that even the poorest in the village could contribute and become a shareholder. Therefore a share must be valued at Re. 1 and distributed among the villagers until the stock of shares is fully subscribed. If the returns from the sale of shares is not equivalent to the intended investment in the trade store, arrangements must be made to get a loan from the Bank of Ceylon to fill the balance. Once the capital is found a trade store must be started at a suitable and central spot in the village. The store can employ, on security, a few individuals (nationals) who are experienced in trade and who bear testimonials from recognized leaders. At least every three months accounts must be examined by auditors recognised by the state.

The Services these Village Co-operative Trade Stores  
could render to the Country

The owners (*aithikarayo*) of the trade store established in this manner (at a central spot in the village) will be the

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1. From a leaflet in Sinhalese in C. N. A., 25.2115, which was translated for the editor by Mr. Gamage. The leaflet was addressed to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee by the Secretary of the Talatu Oya branch of the Ceylon National Congress, viz. Mr. K. B. Dissanayake; and was printed at the Situmina Press, Kandy.



villagers themselves. Hence the residents of villages will not find it necessary to buy their requirements from any other shop. Moreover as the store will not give the highest priority to the profit motive villagers will be able to buy provisions at moderate prices. Also if there is a profit at the end of the year, by virtue of being a shareholder everyone will be entitled to a share of the net profits. In consequence, it cannot be suggested that anyone has made undue profits.

All the items collected here for sale will be local products. If at all there is any foreign-made article here, it should be an indispensable item that is not produced locally. Accordingly there will be a great deal of publicity for local goods, publicity of the type which one can never expect from foreign traders. Also we would easily be able to extend the wider usage of local goods among nationals without using any compulsion.

#### Reasons for the Lack of Publicity for Local Goods

The lack of due publicity as yet for Ceylon's local goods (*badu*) and the failures in advancing themselves which have attended all local industries and businesses that have been launched have so far been due to the fact that publicity was given in charge to and publicity was taken in charge by those foreign traders who were hostile to local goods. No publicity for local goods will ever come from foreign traders. They seek to import products from their own countries as much as possible and to popularize them and by that means develop their own industries, thereby making room for more and more unemployed in their countries to find employment. Another point which should be made is that nobody except the importer knows the price of the imported goods. Hence he can earn a large profit by the sale of those goods. The value of the local goods is known to virtually everyone. Hence it is not easy to make profits by trading in local goods. This is another reason why there is no publicity forthcoming for local goods from these foreign traders whose sole aim is the accumulation of vast wealth.



## Collection of Empties (Tins, Bottles and Gunnies) from Villages

The majority of foreigners who come here start their business life with the collection of empty tins, bottles, and gunnies, and with the sale of coconut oil, gram, et cetera in the course of itinerant journeys from village to village. They derive a considerable profit from these activities. Our leaders proclaim that these trades could be taken over by our unemployed. We too accept this view. But they (the unemployed) lack the capital and the means of finding capital so as to engage in such trades. According to the new trading system, the village unemployed could do what the foreigners do as well as any other sort of job with the assistance from the village co-operative trade stores. (This could be achieved by the same means as that followed by the foreigners today). Everyday in the morning the village trade stores could provide a certain sum of money to these persons and they could roam about in the villages and collect whatever they can and hand them over in the evening to the stores where this collection could be valued and the collectors paid the sums to their credit after deducting what was given in the morning.

Loans of money must be done on the security provided through a head of a householder or a shareholder.

### New Industries in the Village

The net profits which these village co-operative stores have accumulated over a period of time could be utilized to open up a new industry which could be of use to the villagers. This would ease the unemployment problem of the village to a little extent at least.

### Textile Weaving Industry

A small textile centre could be opened in the first instance and handed over to an instructor fully qualified in textile work; so that it could employ a limited number of unemployed boys and girls for training and so that their



products could be popularized among the villages through the village co-operative trade store. This can easily be arranged. If a profit could be made from these special industries that too can be used for the betterment of the village.

This scheme would help to foster unity in the villages. Local products would be popularized.. Industrial centres owned by nationals would improve. New industries will spring up in villages. The village unemployed would find employment. Ceylonese will be trained in the habit of using Ceylonese products. Strength of unity will be crystallized. Every villager would associate himself enthusiastically as a member of the Ceylon National Congress. Moreover, the foreign traders in the villages would return to their motherlands on their own without being compelled by anybody and without being pressurized by new laws.

186 : C. "ALL ABOUT YAMS" A HANDBOOK PUT OUT BY CONGRESS IN CONNECTION WITH THE COLOMBO FOOD DRIVE EXHIBITION, February 1942<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Introductory Note by A. M. Clement Dias

"Mizpah,"  
Alfred Place,  
Colombo,  
12th February 1942.

The rationing of rice for the second time in the History of Ceylon was started on the 2nd of February, 1942. We have so far failed to co-operate with the village cultivators in producing more paddy from our one million acres of paddy land and making Ceylon self-supporting with regard to rice.

Therefore, we are obliged to grow short-term food crops such as yams and cereals, at the present crisis. Ceylon produces about 700 lbs. of rice per acre, though the average

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1. The handbook was printed by M. D. Gunasena & Co., Colombo and has 29 pages. A copy is in the editor's possession.



in other countries is about 1,500 lbs. In Ceylon we produce about 25,000 lbs. of yams per acre. By planting 60,000 acres with yams, we can produce the weight of 18 million bushels of rice which we now import yearly. Every one must do his or her share of work and plant yams.

We should start this Food Drive with the slogan : "Grow more food to eat more food." The members of the Ceylon National Congress have taken the lead in organising this Food Drive in Colombo.

The co-operation of everyone in Ceylon is required in this important campaign which we are now launching.

We record our grateful thanks to the Director of Agriculture and the Propaganda Officer for helping us to organise this exhibition and for allowing us to re-print this hand-book.

A. M. Clement Dias.

## 2. Managing Committee and Organisers of the Exhibition

Managing Committee : G. C. S. Corea

J. N. Jinendradasa

J. R. Jayewardene

Organisers : A. M. Clement Dias

Dudley Senanayake.

## 3. Contents of Handbook<sup>1</sup>

Dr. A. W. R. Joachim .. Analyses of Tubers, Yams  
and Root Products

Cecil N. E. J. de Mel .. Dioscorea Yams

C. Charavanaparan .. Food Preparations from  
Yams

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1. While no purpose was served by reproducing the handbook in its entirety this list of contents is included so that a rough indication of the subject matter can be gathered. It will be seen that the organisers had persuaded several specialists (then a scarce resource) to write short essays for them.



- Dr. W. R. C. Paul .. The Sweet Potato  
 Extract from a U. S. Dept. of Agri. Farmers' Bulletin .. Storage of Sweet Potatoes
- Dr. W. R. C. Paul .. Turmeric Growing in Ceylon  
 Dept. of Agri. Madras, Leaflet .. Preparation of Turmeric for Market
- Mrs. W. J. P. Amarasinghe .. Eat More Yams—Try These Recipes!
- A. M. Clement Dias<sup>1</sup> .. Planting Calendar for Food Crops (yams, cereals, vegetables, etc.) in Low Country.

**186 : D. CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN E. A. P. WIJEYERATNE AND L. M. GOONERATNE, January-March 1942<sup>2</sup>**

**1. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to L. M. Gooneratne, 25 January 1942**

Savanti,  
 Gower Street,  
 Havelock Town,  
 25th January 1942.

L. M. Gooneratne Esqr.,  
 Mutwal Street,  
 Colombo.

My dear L. M.,

I am in receipt of your letter dated 9th instant. Owing to my constant travelling I have had no time to sit at my desk. Hence the delay in replying. I am grieved to find that you

1. This item was not part of the handbook but printed separately in a leaflet dated 12th February 1942.

2. From the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS. See C. N. A., 25.20/10. Some letters are missing. This correspondence is connected with the sub-committee which was appointed by the Congress to examine various matters connected with the rice control scheme. See *infra*, 186 : E and *supra*, pp. 711-12.



are worried in mind re your continued association with the Congress. You seem to be having doubts as to whether any good can be done through this organisation, and whether the men whom we are having in the forefront of its activities can be relied on to guide its destinies safely. All I can ask you is to bear up with patience, for the time will soon come when all of us will have to get into the field and work. I foresee very troublesome times ahead and the hundreds of thousands of the urban and rural labourers will have to be saved from misery and starvation. Do not, therefore, act hastily. I shall seek an opportunity of having a chat with you early.

Sincerely Yours,

2. L. M. Gooneratne to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 7 March 1942

Mutwal Street,  
Colombo,  
7th March, 1942.

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne Esq.,  
Bar-at-Law,  
Kegalle.

Dear Mr. Wijeyeratne,

It is not that I wish to disobey you but on the other hand you can rest assured that I shall always strive my best not only to be sincere and loyal to you, but also to serve you as well in any capacity; and would appeal to you to guide us in our activities often. To convince you of that I think it is my duty to indicate how mean and personal Mr. Jayewardene has been towards me.

In 1940 when Mr. Corea included me in the Working Committee he deleted [*sic*] my name and recorded the minutes to suit him. But however at the subsequent meeting Hon. Mr. Corea did make [*sic*] the necessary correction—he may have not liked it.



2. When the President was in India he had his own way and betrayed my cause to help a rich and quite unknown to the Congress, and since then his choice has proved that his attachment to the Congress is not at all quite sincere. However, I subordinated my personal interests and worked for the cause of the Congress even at his bidding; but it must be noted that he always tried to deprive me of my due rights.

3. When Mr. Amarasuriya suggested my name to a sub-committee he had the audacity to state that things of confidential nature would have to be tackled and suggested another name. Before prejudicing the minds of others he should, if he is a gentleman, have proved any charge against me rather than drawing up [sic] on his imagination.

4. The members were informed in 1940 to inform the Secretaries of their ability to attend meetings for propaganda purpose. I furnished a list of places that I could conveniently attend and went for the 1st meeting as indicated earlier to find that it had been cancelled. He was duly informed of it and he assured me that I would be informed of the dates when finally the dates are fixed on. But never kept up to his promise. Such was his policy when there was a sub-committee appointed for propaganda purpose of which I was a member. He neither informed the W. C. of which I was a member but only informed his friends denying us our due rights.

5. At Mirigama you were so good as to invite me to serve on your Working Committee and you were very keen in insisting on it. But however it did not materialise and I have good reasons to believe that he may have been instrumental to keep [sic] me out of it.

6. Last year you entrusted the work of the Labour Sub-committee to me. Though he in his original letter stressed that the sub-committee should be in touch with the labour organisations, he ignored that sub-committee no sooner I was appointed its secretary, and refused to extend any help



or co-operation whenever he was appealed to do so. The success achieved was entirely due to you and Mr. Dudley Senanayake for which I am grateful. If not for his various artful devices that sub-committee could have produced better results.

7. Even the organisation of Labour Branch at Badulla was not disclosed to the sub-committee. He thought he should support Mr. Gauthamadasa in preference to the members of the sub-committees. It was for that reason that I did not wish to accept your suggestion to go up to Badulla to work for the Congress candidates.

8. Last April a sub-committee was appointed to prepare a memorandum regarding the Municipal Ordinance and the Wards. I have respectfully requested for a map of Colombo, and a list of voters which up to date he has not complied with for me to cope up with that work.

9. Last August I made representations to him against Mr. Gauthamadasa. Verbally he promised me that he would take action but never did so with a view of setting up the staff against us. The result was that being encouraged Mr. Perera went up to his own house and threatened him. There are various other incidents that I could detail but for want of time I shall not dwell on them. Apart from it [*sic*], he was instrumental in issuing false statements against our accepted policy to gain a footing when he came forward to contest the municipal ward. He exercised his presence in Congress to help his friends at the expense of more deserving Congressmen and to pay off grudges to those with whom he differed, making the Congress an instrument. As far back as last April, when I found that verbal suggestions were ineffective I wrote to him several letters which had no effect. Yet I must state that I never disclose his failings to any individual or cliques. Last December he tried to reject my amendments to the motions which were acceptable to the sessions. He denied me the right to place



some amendments to the rules which was highly unconstitutional. He entertained that chap who had the spunk to insult our members in our own camp last December. *I have written to him over half a dozen times requesting for those of my letters*, which he has failed to take action. If he act contrary to that [*sic*] of a gentleman you would grant me Sir that I am justified to treat him in the manner I am doing now. Last letter of yours, I have not received yet. I am enclosing herewith the reply of the P. N. E. With best respects allow me to remain,

Yours most sincerely,  
L. M. Gooneratne.

**3. L. M. Gooneratne to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 13 March 1942<sup>1</sup>**

Lanka Maha-Jana Sabha

“Old Crown,”  
Hulftsdorf,  
Colombo,  
13 March, 1942.

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne Esqr.,  
Bar-at-law,  
Colombo.

Dear Mr. Wijeyeratne,

Hon. Mr. Corea was indisposed and did not attend the office yesterday. I rang him up twice to find that he was resting. This morning I spoke to him to find that he is much better; and he would be attending office today. But he appears to be exhausted and desires that it would be better if we would call on him next Monday or any day in the

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1. This letter is written on the notehead of the Lanka Mahajana Sabha. The letterheads indicate that H. W. Amarasuriya was President, P. D. S. Jayasekera (proctor S.C. & notary) Hony. Secretary, P. D. Liyanage (author and journalist) Assistant Secretary, and B. Don Alais of (of “Dreamthorp,” Alston Place) Hony. Treasurer.



week. I informed him that I would see you personally and would let him know the day in next week, when you would be able to extend your able guidance to us please. May I request that you be so good as to fix up a date direct with him (to save much of time) and to drop in a p. c. so that I may inform others please.

With best respects and regards,  
allow me to remain yours sincerely,

L. M. Gooneratne.

**4. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to L. M. Gooneratne, 16 March 1942**

Circular Road,  
Kegalla,  
16th March, 1942.

L. M. Gooneratne Esq.,

My dear L. M.,

I am receipt of your letters dated 7th and 13th instant. With regard to the letter I have already arranged with you that the two of us and Mr. Clement Dias should see the Minister on Wednesday afternoon at 3.30 p.m. I take it that you will if possible come to the Law Library and go with me. If you are unable to come do not worry. In that case I shall leave the library after 3 p.m. and meet you both at the Minister's office at 3.30 p.m. Will you kindly get in touch with Mr. Clement Dias.

Regarding your letter of the 7th instant I wish to make one preliminary observation. I want you to believe me that my feelings towards you have in no way undergone a change. I still have the same kindly feelings towards you and hope the good understanding between us to continue.

I am personally satisfied that your motives are sincere and that you are one of the few men with whom I have been associated with in public work who spend your time in



rendering service to the best of your ability. Nevertheless, there is one observation which I wish to make and I want you not to misunderstand me when I say so frankly. I believe that you spend too much of your otherwise useful time in criticisms and in showing your resentment against those whom you do not like. Your constant attacks on J. R. Jayewardene and in a smaller degree your contemptuous reference to Gauthamadasa have created a wrong impression in the minds of several members of the Executive Committee. They feel that your criticisms interfere with the normal work of committees. My own opinion is that you are apt to lose the respect and the good opinion of others when you attempt so frequently to ventilate your grievances.

Is it not possible that you and J. R. Jayewardene should meet and have a frank and free talk and adjust any difference you may be having. Do not forget that J. R. Jayewardene is himself one who is rendering a most distinct service by the expenditure of his time as well as his money in the cause dear to us all. It will be a thousand pities if as a result of too much criticism he himself withdraws from active participation in committee work. You should realise that you are no longer an enthusiastic youth. You are now a sober man and as such you should try to win the respect and regard of your associates for the sake of the common work which still lies ahead of us. It is essential that we should all pull our weight together and be more charitable towards the shortcomings of others. I trust that my request to you shall not be in vain.

I am sending you the office copy of the letter which appears to have gone astray. Kindly return it after perusal. I am also sending you the form and the letter which you received from the postal authorities.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely.



5. L. M. Gooneratne to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 23 March 1942

Mutwal Street,  
Colombo,  
23rd Mar. 1942.

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne Esq.,  
Advocate,  
Colombo.

Dear Mr. Wijeyeratne,

Let me thank you, most gratefully, for the kind and valuable advice given me in your last letter, which I received last Tuesday. But owing to the fact that I was somewhat busy with the work connected with our deputation, I regret much that I could not reply yours earlier.

Do please forgive me for I do not propose to discuss matters with Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, for I have done so repeatedly in 1940 and 1941; and I am confident that it would not serve any useful purpose. Further I made representations to him against the conduct of his favourite Mr. Gauthamadasa and in spite of the verbal assurances given to me he purposely side-tracked the issue. Under such circumstances it is not possible to place any trust on [*sic*] his words; and it is foolish to expect him to act honourably. Owing to my respects to you, as you were the President, I thought of closing up the question; and repeatedly requested him to return my letters in question. As there was no response, finally, I forwarded him a stamped envelope to enable him to return the letters, which he failed to take action as Secretary. Instead of so doing, he was so mean as to enjoy a hearty laugh with his friends in relating the incident and they in turn conveyed the news to me. Such behaviour on his part would never entitle him to be treated as a gent.

I do not care much for the opinion of those committee members who are quite indifferent towards the activities of the Congress; and at the same time *I shall slave* for those,



irrespective of their age, whom I feel are making some sacrifice in their effort to contribute for [*sic*] the progress of the association which is dear to us ; and still more for their services to lead us, the inexperienced ones, to make us more efficient in our task and to train us to be capable of coping up with greater responsibilities in time to come. Therefore let me assure you that I shall honour your request ; and as a proof of it you will note a complete change in my future treatment towards Mr. J. R. It must be confessed that the change in my policy is not the outcome of the change of my conviction [*sic*] in him ; but entirely it is to convince you that I am prepared to abide by your wishes and to indicate to you the high esteem in which I hold you. I am extremely grateful to those who are quite sincere ; and it is for that reason I respect Mr. A. J. P. de Alwis—teacher of Mr. Jinenradasa's night school, Proctor Mr. M. B. Abeykoon of Kandy, Rev. Bro. James of St. Benedicts, Revd. Fathers le Jeune and le Goc (my old teachers), and a few of my colleagues such as Dr. Sam Senanayake, Messrs. James T. Rutnam, A. W. H. Abeyesundere, P. D. S. Jayasekera, *Mudlr.* N. Wickremaratne, Messrs. Amaratunga, Gnanaprakasam, Mr. Dudley Senanayake. To be successful in my decision I pray to God that I be spared of any unnecessary provocation at the hands of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene.

My mother and others left Mutwal early this month ; and it is with the view of contributing some service to the Congress and of proving myself useful to the public that I decided on [*sic*] to stay back in Mutwal, incurring additional expense. At the end of this month I intend putting up at a more central spot so that I could make better use of my time. I am ever ready to make any sacrifice for the Congress provided it steers [*sic*] a course of action decided on by the Committee with the approval of the elders, who with their experience are in a position to guide its destinies successfully. It is for that reason when Mr. Givendrasinghe inquired of me last Thursday whether I would support him, that I



informed him that I would act only in accordance with the decision of the Congress ; and for the sake of one that I am not prepared to sever my connections from a body with which I have been associated for the last 6 years. In short that is my attitude towards the Congress.

I am enclosing herewith your file copy of your letter dated the 25th January addressed to me which appears to have gone astray. In conclusion let me assure you that I shall make every effort to honour your request ; and, with divine grace, I trust I would be successful in my resolution whereby I would be able to grant you some satisfaction.

With best regards.

Allow me to remain,

Yours Sincerely,

L. M. Gooneratne.

**186 : E. CONGRESS LOBBYING ON THE QUESTIONS OF FOOD CONTROL AND FOOD PRODUCTION, MARCH 1942<sup>1</sup>**

**1. Circular to Sub-Committee on Anomalies in the Rice-Control Scheme, 10 March 1942<sup>a</sup>**

The Ceylon National Congress,  
Borella Flats,  
Colombo, 10th March, 1942.

Dear Friend,

At a meeting of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee held on the 7th instant the following sub-committee was appoint-

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1. Both the letters and the typed memoranda are from the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS, (C. N. A., 25.20/10). Subsequent to a letter sent by F. P. J. Edirisuriya, Hony. Secretary of the Dandagamuwa Congress Association, a sub-committee was appointed to examine the anomalies in the rice-control scheme, (*supra*, pp. 710).

2. This sub-committee should not be confused with the "Study Circle Committee re various economic questions connected with the welfare of the village population of Ceylon" or the "Committee on the Local Food Supply," (see *supra*, pp. 167).



ed to make representations to Government regarding various matters arising from rice control :—

Messrs. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, W. R. Wijemanne, A. M. Clement Dias and L. M. Gooneratne.

Yours truly,  
Dudley Senanayake,  
J. R. Jayewardene,  
Jt. Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.

**2. A. M. Clement Dias to E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 19 March 1942**

8, Selbourne Road,  
Colpetty,  
19.3.1942.

To E. A. P. Wijeyeratne,

Today we saw Mr. Corea for a few minutes. He gave an appointment to see us on Saturday the 21st inst. at 10 a.m. Hope you will come at that time.

Please correct this<sup>1</sup> and send it to me or leave it at the club.

A. M. Clement Dias.

**3. Memorandum submitted by the Congress Deputation to the Minister for Labour, Industry and Commerce, n. d.**

Ceylon National Congress Deputation  
to  
The Hon'ble the Minister for Labour,  
Commerce and Industries

Rice: (1) Originally each grade has a separate price namely, the price of samba was higher than that of milchard. But today the price of samba and milchard is the

1. Item 186 : E. 3 below.



same. It is a dangerous policy, for the poor who are accustomed to consume milchard are made to pay more and still more they get accustomed to use an extravagant variety.

Remedy : To fix different prices for different varieties in consideration of the actual cost and plight of the variety. Even a few cents less would be great measure of help to the poor. Therefore we would even suggest that the consumers of muttu-samba be made to pay more and price of milchard be reduced reasonably for the benefit of the poor.

(2) Quota of quality of rice is limited by law but in actual practice the labourer on estates gets more than the ordinary citizen. It is said that in some estates a male labourer gets 6 measures, a female labourer 4 measures and a child 2 measures per week. It is possible because the estates were requested to stock sufficient quantity of rice, and this excess is met from the reserve on the estates. This could be verified from the Estate Proprietors' Association. If it is so there is no reason as to why those who employ small gangs of labour should not be given the same concession and those who own paddy lands and possess paddy be required to give up their coupon books.

(3) We must not forget that it costs the villager about Rs. 2.50 to produce a bushel of paddy. He deserves not only every encouragement but also should be adequately compensated for his labour. Therefore we suggest that the fixing up of the maximum price for paddy is a danger and suggest that there should only be a minimum price for paddy.

(4) The practice now is for a trader to purchase his necessaries along with some other commodity which he does not require. Otherwise he would not be able to purchase his necessaries from the wholesale importer. For instance a trader who requires a bag of chillies will be compelled to buy a bag of poonac as well in the event if [sic] he desires to purchase chillies at the control price. Immediately he sells the bag of poonac for which he has no necessity at a loss thereby paying more for the necessary commodity, the price of which is controlled.



(5) Hopper women who were maintaining those dependent on them with their trade should be given extra raw rice to continue in their trade. As in the case of proprietors of bakeries being given some facility to obtain a limited quantity of flour for their trade.

(6) We wish to stress the necessity of increasing the rationed quantity of rice of the labourer and reduce the rations of those who do not require so much for their consumption. For instance there are Ceylonese who consume very little rice and depend mostly on meat, fish and vegetables.

(7) The retail price fixed for any commodity is not reasonable when compared with the wholesale price. The traders find it impossible to continue their trade with even a small margin of profit. It must be borne in mind that they not only cater for the needs of the public but also provide employment for many. It is for this oversight that the traders abstain from selling chillies and salt.

(8) We understand that the Food Controller makes every effort to consult the wholesale importers before fixing up the prices. We suggest that a similar policy should exist to consult the retail traders as well and we may mention that we are prepared to offer all assistance to achieve that object.

(9) We further wish that some concession be made to the proprietors of tea kiosks who have been in the habit of getting their necessary food baked in registered bakeries on a payment of monthly rent. The controlled price of flour is Rs. 27.50 but it could only be purchased at that price by those who obtain a permit for a limited quantity. Others obtain their necessary quantity of flour on payment of about Rs. 45 per bag.

(10) A bag of imported rice flour is obtainable at Rs. 40. This is excessive when compared with the price of raw rice. We suggest that the controlled price of rice flour too is fixed.



(11) Today most of the Indian traders and Ceylonese are closing their establishments and evacuating themselves to their homes or distant places, as they cannot do their trade with even a small margin of profit. If this unsatisfactory state of affairs continues many more would close down their establishments and will cause great unemployment in the country, in addition to the great inconvenience to the general public for purchase of their necessary commodities.

(12) In this instance we wish to point out that on our representations on 19th December 1941, you caused a satisfactory system by which the rice traders could obtain a permit from the Controller for the necessary quantity; and on presentation of that permit he could get the required quantity of rice from the wholesale importers of rice in Pettah. A similar system, with improvement, as a result of experience gained, could be authorised for the traders to obtain a permit for the necessary quantity of food commodities required by the petty traders from the Controller; and on presentation of that to obtain their supplies from the wholesale importers in this market. This would help to relieve the existing hardships immensely, vindicate the existing evils, and to cater for the needs of the general public more satisfactorily.

(13) Any person leaving his residence to [sic] any rural or urban area for a short stay of a few days should be able to obtain the rationed quantity of rice in signifying [sic] a statement detailing the nature of his stay. The ration book may be endorsed by some authorized person (police or headman) to that effect.

(14) We feel that much of the prevalent malpractice is greatly due to the indifference of the Police in Colombo. They do not take any action when facts are disclosed to them or when the public is prepared to furnish necessary information with regard to the tactics of the wholesale importers as indicated clearly in the complaints made of to that effect by Messrs. W. R. Wijemanne and A. M. C. Dias.



186 : F. MEMORANDUM ON FOOD PRODUCTION AND VILLAGE SETTLEMENT AT DIYATALAWA, n.d.<sup>1</sup>

While land is given for food production during the exigencies of war on a short-term permit, we must not lose sight of the long range view of land development which is the forward policy of the Department of Agriculture. It is necessary that we should plan ahead in order to meet the economic consequences of the war. It may be that the aftermath of the war will render the need for food production more intense and the problem of unemployment more acute.

It is, therefore, imperative that there should be some planning ahead to meet these contingencies. How may the temporary expedient of the war be employed to subserve the permanent needs of the community and the State is the problem? It is with that object in view that these suggestions are put forward.

The environs of Diyatalawa and its outlying villages afford a fertile and compact area to put them into practical operation. In a semi-circle running roughly between the Viharakelle Buddhist temple and the Ella temple there are four villages Haputalagama, Alutvela, Galedena and Ella with a number of hamlets between them. Around this semi-circle there are nearly 200 acres of Crown land consisting of deniya and high land suitable for cultivation.

I am for the moment excluding the so called military reservation with regard to which I have addressed a letter to the Minister of Agriculture last month.

The need for village expansion in this area is growing space. It may be judged from the fact that at the last land kachcheri held at Diyatalawa 52 villagers were given one acre each of land, while there were over 300 applicants. The land hunger of the villager cannot be satisfied with a mere emotional content. Such satisfaction must be followed by practical advantages to be of enduring value.

1. From C. N. A., 25.20/10, a typescript that is not signed or dated.



I have seen the allotments of land given three months ago. They are all high land without access to water and suitable only for growing yams, sweet potatoes, etc. The yield is hardly sufficient to satisfy the barest needs of the owner, after an expenditure of toil and sweat quite out of proportion to the yield. Under these circumstances the food production campaign will be barren of result. The recipient of land must be given access to water and sufficient timber to build a habitation. Thus only can the villager be made a self respecting and independent unit of the country who will be able to make his contribution to the productive capacity of the nation. Otherwise, with all the benevolent intentions of the government and the untiring efforts of the villager food production is bound to be a failure.

The sentimental attachment of the villager to the land must be exploited for the benefit of the State before it is too late. It would be far more profitable to prevent him from leaving the land by making it a more attractive proposition rather than resort to the doubtful expedient of inducing the unemployed in the city to return to the land after they have lost all attachment to the soil. That is what the government is virtually attempting to do in establishing farm colonies for the unemployed.

Let us now return to the practical suggestions which arise for consideration from the above stand-point.

1. Tenure of land : The grant of land on a two year permit is too exiguous a tenure to offer any inducement to the villager to give of his best to its cultivation. As a matter of fact a land cannot be brought into a fertile condition until it is brought under cultivation more or less for a couple of years. To expect a villager to accept land on such terms and give it up just when it is about to yield a proper return is to impose a cruel test upon ordinary human nature. There is no reason why land which is given under the present emergency should not be brought within the ambit of the long term lease so long as there is sufficient time to prepare



the necessary documents and provided, of course, in the meanwhile the allottee has exercised reasonable care and diligence in bringing the land into a proper state of cultivation. Surely it is not the policy of the government to take back land from the villager after he has expended the best efforts of his industry. If that is so, there should be an unequivocal declaration upon the matter. The present state of uncertainty is not conducive to the best interests of the villager or the food production campaign.

2. Buildings: The prospect of a habitation and a home in the land given is the surest guarantee that the villager will stick to it despite the uncertain returns caused by the vagaries of the weather and the failure of the crops. The possession of a dwelling house will make his attachment to the soil a living thing. It will give him self respect and independence. The lethargy and the apathy of the rural population in this part of the country is evident to any casual observer. Despite the salubrious climate, the outlook of the villager is depressing. State aid in the shape of timber given free from Crown land or by purchase will lift him from his present position and give him fresh sources of strength. The housing conditions in this rural area are appalling. It is a common thing for a man to live in the same hut with his son and his son's wife and his daughter and her husband. This congestion may be relieved in the manner indicated by inducing the younger members of the family to go on to fresh pastures.

3. Water: That a proper supply of water is essential to the cultivator is a self evident maxim. Water is necessary for personal sanitary requirements of the villager as well as for those which arise from the needs of cultivation. It is a vital need which would ensure him good health and a proper physical condition to meet the exacting needs of toil. While lakhs are spent on the water supply of towns the government appears to grudge any expenditure at all on rural water supply. The clamant [*sic*] needs of the town are preferred to those of the village committee which are less



insistent. A water supply to rural areas can be obtained by the expenditure of a few hundred of rupees where the town requires a few thousands. High land given on cultivation may in most cases be supplied with water from a neighbouring stream for an outlay which is quite out of proportion to the benefit which it will bring to the cultivator. Such, I understand, is the case with the land recently given at Diyatalawa. Besides, the villager may be able to undertake fruit cultivation for which the fertile land in the Province of Uva is so favourable. At present it is noticeable that there is no sustained effort at the cultivation of fruits in this part of the country. Fruit cultivation is an essential part of the food production campaign.

4. Development Officer : I would suggest the employment of a Development Officer for every area of 200 acres or more to work immediately under the A. G. A. Emergency. He should be selected from students who have passed out of the School of Agriculture and employed on a temporary basis. Those chosen should be men who by reason of their character and training will take a genuine interest in the welfare of the villager. He will be expected to give scientific advice on the cultivation of crops and fruits, the selection of seedlings, etc. But the Development Officer should be much more than this. He should be a Rural Reconstruction Officer as well. A good deal of rural reconstruction has been talked of but little has been done. He must keep a record of the activities of the villager on the land allotted to him, so that when the time comes for the extension of his tenure to a longer lease the transition may be effected with ease and without unfairness to the tenant. He should teach the value of co-operative societies. I have seen the villagers help each other in the cultivation of their fields on a basis of co-operation. The team spirit is still there but it should be diverted to more profitable channels. A welfare centre for children and playground for boys should come within the scope of his activities. I have seen young boys roam about with nothing to do and who in the absence of an employment would generally drift to towns. The outlook of



villagers worn out by disease and malnutrition is far from hopeful. The presence of such an officer should give fresh enthusiasm and generate fresh energy among them. In short, he could generally create an atmosphere of hope in the rural population and improve their outlook on life.

In conclusion I would make one final observation. If the technique of modern warfare involves destruction of towns by bombs, the toll of life taken must be made good by the emergence of a sturdy rural population. Therefore, a liberal and enlightened land policy should be launched at once as part of a scheme of national re-construction. It would not be prudent to wait upon events. We should rather anticipate them and provide for all contingencies that may arise. The village settlement scheme which we owe to the foresight of the Minister of Agriculture may be made the instrument for the creation of a better and nobler standard of life for the people.

### 187. SELECTIONS FROM THE J. R. JAYEWARDENE CORRESPONDENCE, 1941-1945<sup>1</sup>

187: 1. The Secretary, Kelaniya National Congress to  
J. R. Jayewardene, 9th April 1941<sup>2</sup>

J. R. Jayewardene Esq.,  
Advocate

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

While thanking you for the donation of Rs. 50 you have so kindly promised to give us for the building fund of the weaving school at Kelaniya, we have to request you to please send a cheque for the amount.

1. Originally retained in the hands of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, this material is now with the Archives and has been docketed with the other Congress MSS in lot 60—as 60/338-80.

2. The letterhead indicates that the following were office-bearers of the Kelaniya National Congress: D. V. Algama, (Chairman); R. S. de Alwis and G. J. H. Wijesinghe (Vice-Chairmen); G. A. Samarakoon and U. M. Perera (Honorary Secretaries); T. D. Piyadasa (Treasurer). A note on the letter in J. R. Jayewardene's hand indicates that he complied with the request.



We are compelled to request you to send this money as the weather conditions have changed and the roof has to be completed immediately.

Thanking you,

I remain,  
Yours faithfully,  
G. A. Samarakoon,  
Hony. Secretary.

187 : 2. V. de Silva to J. R. Jayewardene, 8 May 1941

The Walauwa,  
Mattacooly Church Road,  
8th May, 1941.

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

As I returned home on Tuesday I saw your postcard and replied that I would call over this morning. It was written with every good intention but regret I am unable to keep my word. The fact is that I returned with a bad leg, result of an accident and the doctor would not allow me to move. I doubt being able to do so for a fortnight at least.

I am enclosing papers I got ready for perusal. Those interested might also go into the matter. It is only an outline and might be altered.

The working of this business largely depends on our securing an acre of ground in MacCullum Road. The Port Commission has control of land here. The latest to get [sic] is, I believe, Mr. C. H. Fernando on the other side.

If it is convenient for you to come here, I shall be ever so pleased.

Yours sincerely,  
V. de Silva.







1. This Association is formed for the purpose of supplying foodstuffs, manufactured goods required for household use, oilman stores, liquor etc., at wholesale and retail prices, and agency business.
2. The authorised capital is Rs. 500,000 divided into 45,000 preferential shares of Rs. 10 each and 25,000 ordinary shares of Rs. 2 each. The preferential shares will carry interest at 5 per cent per annum.
3. It is proposed that the present issue shall consist of 25,000 preferential shares of Rs. 10 each and 15,000 shares of Rs. 2 each. The Capital obtained by issue of these shares will be appropriated to provide funds for the purpose of not only purchasing provisions and other articles and commodities of personal and household use and consumption and generally of all manufactured goods material and produce but also of acquiring land and buildings, suitable shops and stores and offices.
4. No individual shareholder shall be entitled to hold more than 200 shares either preferential or ordinary.
5. The qualifications of a Director shall be the holding of shares to the value of Rs. 1,000 or more. The Association in General Meeting may alter the qualifications from time to time.
6. The Directors other than the Managing Director shall work the Association without any remuneration during the first two years of the establishment of the Association but shall be [sic] entitled to out of pocket expenses incurred during these two years subject to the approval of the Board of Directors. Thereafter remuneration shall be paid to the Directors as the association in General Meeting shall determine from time to time and the Directors shall, subject to



the approval of the Board of Directors, be entitled to all travelling expenses from and to their usual places of residence and hotel expenses reasonably incurred in Ceylon or outside Ceylon in the performance of their duties as Directors. Remuneration to Managing Director shall be fixed by the Board of Directors.

7. Of the annual profit on working the Directors may with the authority of the Assn. in General Meeting place any sum or sums they deem fit as reserve and divide the balance profit available pro rata among the shareholders in accordance with the total value of goods purchased by each preferential and ordinary shareholder during the year.

8. The Directors may proceed to allotment although the whole of the proposed issue of shares may not have been subscribed fully.

9. Should however the Directors not proceed to allotment cash deposited for shares will be refunded without interest thereof. If the number of shares allotted is less than the number applied for, the surplus money will be credited in reduction of amount payable on allotment and any amount found in excess will be refunded without interest.

10. Applications for shares should be made on the enclosed form and sent together with remittance due on application to the Association's Bankers. The.....

11. Failure to pay within 15 days the balance due on allotment will render the sum paid on application to forfeiture.

12. Copies of this prospectus with forms of application for shares can be obtained from the office of the Assn. Bankers, Sharebrokers, or Solicitors.

13. List will be closed as soon as the shares offered have been subscribed but not later than.....



187:4. J. R. Jayewardene to P. B. Bulankulama, 11 July 1941

11th July, 1941.

P. B. Bulankulama Esq.,  
R. M.,  
Anuradhapura.

Dear Mr. Bulankulama,

A Congress propaganda meeting is being arranged for Saturday the 19th July, at Anuradhapura. Raja Asoka the Daily News Correspondent who is staying at the Burmese Rest is arranging the meeting, and Mr. D. S. Senanayake and Mr. Siripala Samarakkody are to speak at the meeting.

Could you kindly let me know whether the arrangements are being adequately looked to, and whether there will be a sufficiently large audience.

If you think that the meeting will not be a success, I would advise that the meeting be cancelled.

With best wishes,  
Yours truly,

187:5 The Secretary, Kalutara - Paiyagala - Maggona National Congress Branch Association to J. R. Jayewardene, 23 September 1941<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

This is to inform you that I am instructed by the Working Committee of our association to make arrangements to hold meetings in different villages to explain our ideas and to

1. The letterhead, in English and Sinhalese, shows that the following were office-bearers in the above-mentioned association: S. D. P. Nanayakara (President); D. A. P. Weeraratne (Vice-President); B. E. Amarasinghe and G. P. Cooray (Joint Secretaries); and D. P. Meegoda (Treasurer). A note on this letter by J. R. Jayewardene indicates that he sent a reply, dated 29th September, indicating that Mr. Gauthamadasa could come on the 19th October and he himself could come on the 26th and that he would be obliged if B. E. Amarasinghe could contact him sometime if he came to Colombo.



get members to our association. Therefore during the month of October I can arrange to hold 3 meetings on Sundays. So I want two to attend from Colombo to explain about Congress. Therefore I like to know the names of the gentlemen who can come on these days. The meetings are to be arranged as follows :—

12th October : at 4 p.m. at Polkotuwa.

19th October : at 4 p.m. at Magalkanda.

26th October : at 3.30 p.m. at Munhena (?).

I am very glad to see that almost all the V. C. members of Kalutara-Paiyagala-Maggona and Alutgama-Hettimulla-Malawana are members of our associations.

Yours sincerely,  
B. E. Amarasinghe,  
Secretary.

187 : 6. Victor C. Perera to J. R. Jayewardene, 3 October 1941<sup>1</sup>

My dear Dick,

Kindly sign this subscription form and return it to me at your earliest. It will greatly help me in collecting the money if you will do this for me. You see, I am no more Secretary of Congress, and I must have some authority to collect this money. Kindly put down your subscription as Rs. 100.00. Even though you are getting it back, let it be put down as a subscription, as the support will be greater, if you do so. After all, as you are advancing the money, I do not see why it should not be put down on paper.

Thanking you,  
Victor C. Perera,  
Yours sincerely.

1. Victor C. Perera's letters are typed on notepaper which indicates that he was a proctor of the Supreme Court. His address is stated to be "227 Hultsdorf [*sic*] and 35 Queen Street, Fort." By March 1942 he had become a member of the firm Perera and Perera, proctors and notaries. J. R. Jayewardene's letters are carbon copies.



187 : 7. **Victor C. Perera to J. R. Jayewardene, 28 October 1941**

My dear Dick,

I thank you most sincerely for consenting to deposit the Rs. 100.00 on my behalf. Kindly send a cheque for that amount to the Government Agent, Western Province, with the annexed covering letter. Nomination Day is the 6th November. So the money must be deposited before that. At the Working Committee, it was decided to help me individually, rather than officially. I need about Rs. 250.00 for expenses. I think this will be more than enough, as voters will have to walk to the poll. Owing to petrol rationing, no cars will be available. There are 1,300 voters in my ward, of whom 845 are women. So I am asking for a second polling station from the Government Agent. As regards the Rs. 250.00, I trust you will be able to collect it among yourselves, and let me have it on or about the 15th November, as I will have to get the printing of posters etc. done soon. The election is on the 21st of November.

If it is my good fortune to be elected, I propose to form a Congress Party in the Council, and also to get a Congress Association started in Kotte in January 1942. Seeing that you have started a Congress Party in the Municipal Council, it would not be a bad idea to have a Congress Party in the Council nearest to the City.

Yours sincerely,

Victor C. Perera.

187 : 8. **J. R. Jayewardene to Victor C. Perera, 29 October 1941**

My dear Victor,

I have this day sent Rs. 100 to the Government Agent, Western Province on your behalf. The receipt will be sent to me.



I am sorry, I cannot be responsible for collecting the other money. You will have to see about the collection yourself.

With best wishes,

Yours truly,

**187 : 9. Victor C. Perera to J. R. Jayewardene, 30 October 1941**

My dear Dick,

My sincerest thanks for your letter. It is indeed very sporting of you to have done this for me.

As regards the collection of the other money, it will facilitate my task if you will give me a letter to the effect that the Working Committee decided to support me individually, although not officially. You might state in the letter that I am a candidate for election to Ward No. 6 Pagoda-Mirihana of the Kotte U. C.

Thanking you,

Sincerely yours

Victor C. Perera.

**187 : 10. Victor C. Perera to J. R. Jayewardene, 11 November 1941**

My dear Dick,

You would have no doubt heard by this time that I won the election unopposed. The people in this area are strongly Pro-Congress. So please arrange for a public meeting at Kotte early in January to form a Congress Association.

You can now withdraw the Rs. 100.00. It will be gracious act on your part if you can send me at least Rs. 50.00 out



of it, as I have had to incur heavy expenses in entertaining the voters who called at my house after the election. I leave it to you to do what you think is right.

Sincerely yours,  
Victor C. Perera.

*P.S.*—I may say that I am in the running for the Chairmanship, and there is early chance of my getting it. Thus we can have a Congress party in the Council even before we start the Congress Association.

V. C. P.

187 : 11. J. R. Jayewardene to G. A., Western Province,  
13 November 1941

Colombo, 13th Nov. 1941.

The Government Agent,  
Western Province,  
Colombo.

Kotte U. C. Election  
Ward No. 6, Pagoda-Mirihana

Sir,

As Mr. Victor C. Perera has been returned unopposed I shall be obliged if you will refund to me Rs. 100 which I deposited on his behalf.<sup>1</sup>

Yours truly,

187 : 12. Victor C. Perera to J. R. Jayewardene, 18 March  
1942

My dear Dick,

I do trust you will not press one for this money. I paid some small debts with it that I incurred on election day. After all, this is the only contribution that I got from a

<sup>1</sup> Other notes on the same lines indicate that several reminders were sent to the G. A., W. P. in January, 1942.



Congress leader for my election. I am sure you will admit, that it is only proper for Congress to recognise in this small way even, my services to that body. Now that I have rejoined it, will you not start the proposed Congress Association at Kotte ?

Yours sincerely,  
Victor C. Perera.

**187 : 13. Dudley Senanayake to J. R. Jayewardene,  
4 October 1941**

"Woodlands,"  
Kanatte Road,  
Colombo, 4th Oct. 1941.

My dear Dick,

The bearer J. A. Perera who is a worker at the Ratmalana Unemployment Scheme and who has done some very enthusiastic and useful work in connection with Congress wishes to consult you about a Trade Union he wishes to form in order to further the activities of Congress in that direction. I hope you will listen to him and give him the necessary advice.

Yours sincerely,  
Dudley.

**187 : 14. Jermyn G. Fernando to J. R. Jayewardene,  
28 October 1941**

"Carolinton,"  
Moratuwa,  
28.10.1941.

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

Mr. A. E. P. de Mel and I met a few people and finally decided to hold the first meeting on November 4th at 5.30 p.m. at the Moratuwa Town Hall. So you will please



come with a friend or two prepared to answer any likely questions that may arise. We have sent out printed notices but at this stage we cannot expect much support. I personally believe that a few who are sincere in their professions will give greater strength to the Congress movement than having many who are lukewarm. There's however, sufficient time to contact more people before the second meeting to be held on the 29th November.

Yours sincerely,

J. G. Fernando.

187 : 15. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to J. R. Jayewardene,  
3 November 1941

Savanti,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
3rd November, 1941.

J. R. Jayewardene Esqr.,  
Braemar,  
Ward Place,  
Cinnamon Gardens.

My dear J. R.,

I have sent today a sum of Rs. 425 to Dr. Sara with a letter, copy of which is annexed for your information. The delay was due to the fact that I aimed at collecting even Rs. 500. I shall try to get together another Rs. 75.

Thanking you for your contribution.

I am,

Yours Sincerely,

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne.



187 : 16. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to Dr. R. Saravanamuttu,  
3 November 1941<sup>1</sup>

Savanti,  
Gower Street,  
Havelock Town,  
3rd November, 1941.

*Personal*

My dear Doctor,

I am sending you five cheques amounting to Rs. 425 as a small contribution towards the election petition inquiry. The money has been collected by me from a few of the members of the Congress. We send, in addition, our best wishes.

I shall be glad if you will accept this as a token of our regard and comradeship.

Yours Sincerely,

<i>Amount referred to</i>		<i>Rs.</i>	<i>c.</i>
Hon'ble Mr. D. S. Senanayake	.. cheque ..	75	0
Mr. R. A. de Mel	.. cheque ..	75	0
Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya	.. cheque ..	75	0
Mr. J. R. Jayewardene	.. cheque ..	50	0
Mr. George E. de Silva	.. cash ..	50	0
Mr. Dudley Senanayake	.. cash ..	50	0
Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne	.. cash ..	50	0
	Total ..	425	0

P.S.—You will find my cheque for Rs. 150 to represent the last three items.

1. See C. N. A., 60/377.



187:17. D. J. M. Mahipala to J. R. Jayewardene,  
8 November 1941<sup>1</sup>

The Ceylon National Congress,  
Badulla Branch,  
Badulla, 8.11.1941.

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

Events here indicate that the efforts and money spent on our movement so far would bring very satisfactory results. Yet, as our struggle is against the capitalist class the obstacle pointed out by Mr. Dharmagunaratne, the Town Counciller, does exist.

If you can intervene in this matter, we can be hopeful of a historic victory and hence earnestly request of you to consider this.

Whatever it may be I too would intervene.

Faithfully,  
D. J. M. Mahipala,  
Notary.

Please note that this is a personal letter  
Mahipala.

187:18. D. J. M. Mahipala to J. R. Jayewardene,  
18 November 1941<sup>2</sup>

Badulla,  
18.11.41.

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

I am writing this in my personal capacity and not in the capacity of the secretary of the society. We are now at the last phase of the fight while having so far acted to retain

1. The letter was in Sinhalese while the letterhead was in English. It has been translated for the editor by Mr. E. G. Gamage.

2. The letter was in Sinhalese while the letterhead was in English. It has been translated for the editor by Mr. E. G. Gamage.



the esteem of the National Congress. You would have realised this yourself on your several visits. If you do expect the progress of our branch as well as the fulfilment of its wishes, and have personal confidence in me, I shall make the final moves if you could send from your personal a/c a sum not exceeding Rs. 200 by wire.

I shall return that money within a convenient period of time. Assuming that this reaches you by the 19th and as the election is to be on the 21st and 22nd please note that if at all money is sent it should be sent by wire.

All the success to our Congress.

Truly,  
D. J. M. Mahipala,  
Notary Public,  
Badulla.

187 : 19. D. P. Amarasinha to J. R. Jayewardene,  
20 December 1941<sup>1</sup>

Veyangoda,  
Nittambuwa,  
20th Dec. 41.

J. R. Jayewardene Esqr.,  
Ward Place,  
No. 61. Colombo.

Sir,

I most respectfully beg to inform you that the chairs provided for the reading room must return to those owners as early as possible and we are left with only 3 chairs and a table and also we have 2 Sinhalese books. It is a shame for

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1. A note on this letter in J. R. Jayewardene's hand indicates that a letter was sent to "D. R. I." on the 23rd December suggesting that the matter could be discussed if he came for the Congress sessions.



us if you are not supplying some Sinhalese books at your earliest convenience. The papers also too troublesome to get; not in a proper order.

Therefore I hope you will see to these things without delay. We have to propose somethings about the poor people regarding this war and to propose this we must have the chairman; he has gone somewhere; can't find him these days.

Hope you will see to this without delay.

Yours obedient servant,  
D. P. Amarasinha,  
Person in Charge of the  
Reading Room,  
Nittambuwa.

187:20. The Keeper of the Congress Reading Room,  
Veyangoda to J. R. Jayewardene, 20 May 1942<sup>1</sup>

20.5.1942,  
Veyangoda,

Hon. Sir,

I would like to inform you that I have not so far received the salary for the month of April due to me for being in charge of the Reading Room at Veyangoda. Work on the newspaper stand has not been started either.

Further please note that a bench is a dire need in the reading room.

Truly,  
Keeper of the Reading Room.

1. The letter was in Sinhalese while the letterhead was in English. It has been translated for the editor by Mr. E. G. Gamage.



187 : 21. The Secretary, Veyangoda Congress Association  
to J. R. Jayewardene, 15 January 1942<sup>1</sup>

15. 1. 1942,  
Nittambuwa,

Hon. Sir,

I am in receipt of your cheque for Rs. 41.70. It would be utilized for the . . . . . (?) activities. I'll let you know when the benches are ready.

Faithfully,  
G. Attapattu,  
Secretary,  
Veyangoda Branch of the  
National Congress.

187 : 22. The Construction Engineer, Gampaha to J. R.  
Jayewardene, 12 February 1942

No. ATTA/MAH—9.  
Construction Engineer's Office,  
Gampaha, 12. 2. 42.

J. R. Jayewardene Esqr.,  
Advocate,  
Kumbaloluwe Estate, near Veyangoda.

Attanagala Oya Works  
Maha Amuna Anicut Scheme

Sir,

With reference to the above and our interview of 8.2.42 I have the honour to inform you that the general plan showing the Attanagala Oya Scheme received by you from the higher authorities has by an oversight been brought to my

1. The letter was in Sinhalese while the letterhead was in English. It has been translated for the editor by Mr. E. G. Gamage.



office. The oversight is regretted. Please let me know whether the same is needed any longer by you. If not I propose to return it back to the Director of Irrigation, Colombo.

I am, Sir,  
Your Obedient Servant,  
L. V. C.  
C. E. Gampaha.

187 : 23. Daly Jayawardena to J. R. Jayewardene,  
12 February 1942<sup>1</sup>

Mottunna,  
Veyangoda,  
12. 2. 42.

Dear Dickie,

With reference to the meeting held here regarding the construction of the amuna at Mottunna the Committee elected at the meeting went into the question fully and is summoning a meeting of field-owners and peasants to further consult their requirements.

The Committee consists of the following:—The Revd. M. Indasana Nayaka Thero; H. P. Perera Wijesekera, Retired Vidana Aratchi of Galgomuwa Peruwa; The Vel Vidane of Mottunna; D. D. Ranasinghe, Secretary of the Congress Branch; R. Nissanka (representing Mrs. Gregory) and myself. We have co-opted R. Goonetilaka, ex-Headman of Mottunna.

The Committee will submit its report to the Congress Branch. Till then the following facts may be considered.

At the inaugural meeting of the Congress Branch the Chairman, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, stated that the Congress would see to the completion of this amuna before the end

1. See C. N. A., 60/370.



of 1942. Following upon this we gave a promise to the peasants that the work would be started after the meeting on 8th February. The meeting, however, could not come to a decision. The irrigation engineer's presence did not help matters. He only repeated what had been said by irrigation engineers before this meeting. The peasants are tired of looking at maps and plans and hearing about the grandiose schemes of the government. For the last 10 years the Chairman V. C. had carried on an intensive agitation for the construction of this amuna. The government had put off the work under various pretences. It is a fact that Banda himself tried to move the Irrigation Department to start this work. The Irrigation Department replied with maps and plans and discourses on the benefits of scientific methods. The present amuna was constructed by the V. C. Chairman in the teeth of opposition from irrigation officers. Though not satisfactory, it serves the purpose of the cultivators for one season in the year. If the advice of the irrigation officers had been followed and the order of the government obeyed the people in this area would now be starving. Along the Diella Oya, from Galgomuwa to Bemmulla, there are six amunas—Galgomuwa, Kottala, Mottunna, Alugollapitiya, Pattalagedera and Heendeniya. Every one of these amunas had been constructed by the villagers or by other agencies against the advice of irrigation officers and in the teeth of opposition from the government. If the villagers did not do this there would be no paddy cultivation in Galgomuwa and Bemmulla Peruwas. This policy of unhelpfulness and even of obstruction is still maintained, though there is now a benevolent Ministry of Agriculture. There is something radically wrong somewhere in the scheme of rural administration. Banda's indictment against the Ministry of Agriculture regarding the neglect of village irrigation works under cover of grandiose schemes of future prosperity is not entirely without foundation. It is only now that I, too, understand the position clearly. I hear that the Chairman V. C. has with him a heap of correspondence relating to these matters and the culpability of the Irrigation Department is well proven in



their correspondence. I am now convinced that the Diella Oya Scheme as shown by the Irrigation Engineer is utterly unpractical; and even if it can be completed, say in ten years, it would not be so beneficial to cultivators in this district as the Irrigation Engineers tried to make out. The Engineer was talking drivel when he said that the scheme could be completed in two years. According to his plans there will be canals running for miles from the Galgomuwa Maha Amuna through private lands and hundreds of dwelling houses will have to be demolished to construct these canals. Land acquisition will be a serious problem and the settlement of this question alone will take many years. This is a thickly populated area and the inhabitants will not easily part with their residential plots for the doubtful blessing of a theoretical irrigation scheme. Three out of the six amunas on Diella Oya are well-built, and one can be dispensed with if the Mottunna Amuna is well constructed. There will then remain only the Heendeniya Amuna down the Oya near Bemmulla. Even if the Maha Amuna at Galgomuwa is completed in spite of the above-mentioned difficulties there would not be sufficient water to irrigate the area served by the six amunas which will be abandoned after the completion of the scheme. It is a pity that the Ministry of Agriculture does not see these facts. He is undoubtedly concerned with the well-being of the peasants, but he is guided by his technical advisers who seem to live in a world of their own.

If the Congress and its local branch cannot undertake the construction of the Mottunna Ammuna immediately the peasants must be informed of this fact. This is a matter affecting the food supply of nearly two hundred families and if the Congress Branch cannot move in the matter some other organization must be set up to undertake it. The Nayaka Thero suggests a Union of Field-owners. The Village Committee and its chairman will, it appears, cooperate with such an organization. In the event of a Field-owners' Union starting the project, will the government give a grant towards the expenses? If the government is unwilling to help with a grant will it at least give the



necessary permission for the construction of the amuna? Owing to the threatened food shortage the people here feel that their salvation lies in the construction of this amuna. Yam cultivation is not going to solve the food problem, however much the non-yam-eating folk from Colombo may preach to the bewildered villagers the nutritious value of yams.

A meeting of field-owners and peasants will be held here next Sunday afternoon. It would be very useful if you can be present.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

Daly Jayawardena.

**187 : 24. Anonymous Letter from a Well-Wisher, August 1942<sup>1</sup>**

Dehiwala,  
August, 1942.

Dear Sir,

As a well-wisher of the Ceylon National Congress and as one who pinned great faith in its success when younger members joined it recently with the avowed intention of resuscitating its lost prestige and power, I write this to acquaint you of the serious misgivings which people at large now entertain with regard to the working of the Congress. I am not exaggerating when I state that perhaps at no time in its history has the prestige of the Congress gone so low as during the last few months. I need hardly tell you that the immediate cause of this is the widespread rumour regarding the alleged unforgivable lapse of the Congress President in connexion with his rice-deals. It is true that no charge has yet been proved; it is true that scandal-mongers sometimes damn the most honourable, but if anyone says that these particular rumours lack any subs-

1. Derived from an unsigned carbon copy of a typescript. See C. N. A., 60/360.



tance or foundation I must say that it would be a case of very badly underestimating the perspicacity of the Ceylon public. You must be aware that disquieting rumours started circulating during his visit to Burma and it was alleged that something more than practical difficulties had a hand in making a failure of the attempt to take the import of rice into Government hands. The recent scandal is known by everyone in Ceylon. Would to Providence it were false. But should not the President of the National Congress be above suspicion. Should he not, while under this dark cloud, resign his position and spare the Congress of all the incalculable harm he has already done. If he does not do his duty what is the duty of those who are known to be sincerely working for the furtherance of the country's good. It is plainly (necessary) to request him to resign and thus purge our public life of corruption. If such a step were not taken people will lose all confidence in the Congress and all what it stands for and will understand the weakness of character of those who are its main pillars. It cannot be denied that the Congress was harmed more by its own members than by outsiders. Mr. Henry Amarasuriya's and Mr. Susanta de Fonseka's recent defection is a case in point. It is a matter for congratulation that in this matter at least proper action is reported by the papers to be under consideration. Nothing will be lost by expelling members who obviously only want to further their personal ambitions through the Congress whilst disdaining it where its decisions happen to go against their interests. Unprincipled time servers will never do good to any organization and bereft of these clay-feet gods the Congress, even though weakened, will at least command some respect in the country. Those who have come forward to serve the country have a high mission to fulfil. Theirs is the sacrifice and not the fruits thereof. No considerations of influence or friendship should deflect them from following the straight path of rectitude and purifying public life of corruption. The measure of success of the younger members of the Congress to act straight in this crisis is the measure of their ability to lead the country later on.



This is the least the people of Ceylon can expect of the National Congress because the public only know too well that the Congress has failed badly in almost all the fundamental requirements of a National movement.

- (a) The Congress has failed to create a national-consciousness which in a highly denationalized country like ours in [*sic*] the primary essential of any freedom movement. Far from doing anything positive in this direction it has with amazing political ineptitude allowed the use in schools of Ceylon History books written by notorious sectarians which cannot but have a denationalistic effect. It is in the teaching of history of ones country that the minds of the future citizens are moulded for good or ill and the first and fundamental matter that should have been done was to have commissioned the preparation of a series of History text-books for schools which would have instilled a burning love for our motherland in the growing generations.

The result of this serious omission is to be seen in generation after generation of Sinhalese growing up quite unconcerned as to the fate of the country. The great British administrator of early times who in his Secret Despatch to the Secretary of State outlined the method of keeping the Sinhalese in subjection has stated that nationalistic education must be destroyed. This gives the clue as to the secret of the decline of our once warlike race. With this document "giving the game away" it is ridiculous that our leaders have not grasped its significance.

- (b) The Congress has failed to create a cultural revival which is indispensable for a national revival. Ample material was on hand. It was the opinion of those who have heard the late Rambukwella Sidhartha Thero's rendering of ancient Sinhalese songs that they were better than the Santiniketan Songs. But



those who know that a national revival resulted in the spread of Tagore's songs in Bengal and other parts of India appreciate what wonders could have been done if the learned Thero's remarkable talents were taken advantage of for a cultural revival. There is also the Kelaniya artist whom many foreign artists have pronounced to be a world master in the making. If he were given a commission to do some frescoe work at the new University our future cultural centre would be a feast of beauty inspiring generations to come. One of the greatest olives our race can be proud of is the Mahavansa. If the most inspiring events of our nation's story could be put in glowing colours at the new University by this artist, as only he can, what an imperishable asset will it be. It will be as great a work as the writing of the Mahavansa.

(c) Apart from the fact that the Congress adopted a recognised national dress it has done nothing to do some propaganda against the disgusting habit of our so called leaders speaking to each other in English whenever they meet. How far we have degenerated can be gauged by the oft heard remark made by the troops now in Ceylon that the Sinhalese are the most "English" people they have met outside England. Even the younger members of the Congress have not realized how utterly against their self respect it is to use a foreign tongue as a medium of conversation. Are we a race without a culture or a literature that we should be such slaves of a foreign language? How many of our leaders can talk fluently in their mother-tongue? It is time that they learnt to make Sinhalese the medium of conversation and cease to be national anachronisms.

(d) The Congress failed to take advantage of the depression times of 1930 to get the Government to buy up some of the Tea Estates Upcountry which



could have been bought for a song then. That opportunity was lost and the most salubrious parts of our island are owned by foreigners and occupied by South Indians yet.

- (e) The Congress has so far failed to take advantage of the bombing raids and the consequent exodus of Indians. The Emergency Labour Corps which is now doing the work in the Harbour formerly done by Indians and reported all these days to be only capable of being done by Indians, show the way how to make full use of the present scare to solve the immigration problem a long way. With a little imagination the Emergency Labour Corps can be expanded into a peace time unit to do all the work now monopolised by foreigners.

The real test of statesmanship is never to miss opportunities that a country may get once in a century or so and in such matters the Congress has not given the country the sought for lead but the people still have some faith in the sincerity of its younger members and we expect them to take honest action now unhampered by fear or favour.

Yours faithfully,

187 : 25. Circular from A. Vaidialingam, 11 October 1942<sup>1</sup>

124, Shorts Road,  
Slave Island,  
11th Oct., 42.

J. R. Jayewardene Esq.

Dear Friend,

1. In view of the grave danger threatening our motherland, we are writing to you to find out whether you will be prepared to co-operate with us in building a National Alliance of patriots in order to lead the people who are now awakening to political consciousness. We believe that

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1. See C. N. A., 60/374-76.



such a national alliance must not be merely anti-imperialist ; it must also be anti-fascist because the whole of progressive humanity is to-day engaged in a life and death struggle against the forces of Fascist reaction ; because the choice to-day before us is between fascist enslavement and freedom.

We further believe that such a National Alliance must base its activities on at least the following points :—

- (1) NATIONAL RESISTANCE : i.e., defending our motherland against Jap. aggression with all the strength at our disposal ;
- (2) NATIONAL UNITY : i.e., unity of all patriots to organise national resistance ;
- (3) NATIONAL FREEDOM : i.e., winning a national government based on national unity to organise national resistance ;
- (4) CO-OPERATION IN DEFENCE : i.e., supporting and strengthening every war effort directed against the fascist aggressors. Co-operation in defence to-day does not strengthen, but weakens, British imperialism. It also means protecting and winning elementary democratic rights, restoration of civil liberties, withdrawal of restriction on meetings, dearness allowance to workers, fighting profiteering etc. The elementary demands of the people must be satisfied in order to rally them against the common Fascist foe ;
- (5) UNITY WITH INDIAN PATRIOTS : This means to-day carrying on agitation here in support of ending the Indian deadlock, the release of the Congress leaders and a free responsible National Government ;
- (6) UNITY WITH THE UNITED NATIONS in the common war against the Fascist aggressors.

If you feel that a general agreement on the lines suggested above is possible, we are prepared to discuss this matter further in detail.



11. We are also anxious to know whether you are prepared to organise joint meetings with us on the following subjects :—

- (1) Withdrawal of restrictions on meetings ;
- (2) Anti-profiteering ;
- (3) The Indian deadlock.

Please also suggest the resolutions which we should move at these meetings. Thanking you for an early reply.

Yours fraternally,  
A. Vaidialingam,  
Organising Committee of the  
Ceylon Anti-Jap. Propaganda  
Centre.

187 : 26. D. A. P. Kahawita to J. R. Jayewardene,  
6 December 1942<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

A general meeting of the Chilaw branch of the Mahajana Sabha Sammelanaya will be held at the Marawila English school on Saturday the 12th instant at 10 a.m. under the chairmanship of Hon. Minister Mr. Corea. This meeting has been necessitated to discuss and take a unanimous decision on the proposal for full autonomy (swaraj) instead of the proposal for Dominion system of Govt. scheduled to be presented at the forthcoming (General Assembly of the) Ceylon National Congress to be held at Kelaniya. This meeting will be attended by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene the Secretary of the Ceylon National Congress as well. We earnestly look forward to your presence at this meeting to seek solutions to the important problems so vital to the future of our country.

6.12.1942,  
Marawila.

D. A. P. Kahawita,  
Secretary.

1. The letter was in Sinhalese while the letterhead was in English. It has been translated for the editor by Mr. E. G. Gamage.



187 : 27. J. A. L. Cooray to J. R. Jayewardene, 16 February 1943

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Colombo,  
16th Feby. 1943.

J. R. Jayewardene Esq.,  
66, Ward Place,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

The All-Ceylon Congress Committee has requested me to send you a copy of a letter received from Mr. J. L. Kotelawala and to inquire from you to what extent you agree with the statements contained therein.

Yours truly,

Jt. Hony. Secretary, C. N. C.

187 : 28. J. L. Kotelawala to The Secretary, Ceylon National Congress, 11 February 1943<sup>1</sup>

"St. Hilary,"  
Maharagama,  
Pannipitiya,  
11.2.43.

The Secretary,  
Ceylon National Congress,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

On Tuesday the 9th instant it was brought to my notice the Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Secretary of the Ceylon National Congress, who incidentally had been advertised as the Congress nominee for the Kelaniya seat, had on several occasions called on the President of the Sinhala Maha

1. C. N. A., 60/345.



Sabha Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and begged for his support in his election and appealed to him to preside at one of his election meetings.

This was stated to me by a quondam Secretary Mr. Dudley Senanayake who had himself verified the statement from Mr. Bandaranaike.

I write to ask you if Mr. Jayewardene's action is not contrary to the rules and policy edumbeated [sic] by the Ceylon National Congress.

The Congress purged itself of members belonging to other political bodies by disallowing them to hold office.

It was only a few months ago that members of long-standing and great financial assistance were expelled from its ranks for the purpose of maintaining discipline. Whilst this action of Congress—viz., expelling members who worked against its nominees—prevents members inclined to support Mr. Jayewardene's rival from doing so, how does it permit the nominee himself to woo other rival political parties in support of his own candidature?

I am of opinion that the action of Mr. Jayewardene is deserving of immediate expulsion from the Congress.

The Ceylon National Congress should not tolerate its platform being used as a spring-board for political beach-combers who aspire to seats in the Legislature.

Please be good enough to bring this matter before the Congress Committee in order that Mr. Jayewardene's nomination as its candidate be cancelled.

In view of the fact that the election will be held in the near future immediate action should be taken.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake himself agreed with me that there are many people including himself who are supporting Mr. Jayewardene solely and simply because he is the Congress nominee and for no other qualification or reason whatsoever.



I shall thank you to let me know the decision of the Committee, as I may have to release this correspondence to the public to explain my attitude in the matter.

Yours faithfully,

J. L. Kotelawala.

**187 : 29. J. R. Jayewardene to the Hony. Secretary, Ceylon National Congress, 1 March 1943<sup>1</sup>**

66, "Braemar,"  
Ward Place,  
1st March 1943.

The Honorary Secretary,  
Ceylon National Congress,  
Borella, Colombo.

Dear Sir,

Your letter of the 16th February, the enclosure and the discussion of the All-Ceylon Committee make it necessary that I should send a written statement to the Congress with regard to my visit to Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike.

On Thursday the 28th January I met Mr. Kularatne early in the morning and I heard from him that Mr. Bandaranaike intended to be neutral in the Kelaniya bye-election. On visiting the electorate that same day I conveyed this information to some of my supporters who were arranging a public meeting for Sunday the 31st January, at which meeting Mr. D. S. Senanayake had consented to preside. My supporters thought that it would be helpful if Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike also spoke at the meeting. I agreed to this. After fixing up an appointment with Mr. Bandaranaike over the telephone from Ragama I came back to Colombo with some of my supporters and met him at his bungalow at 1.30 p.m. that very day. Messrs. A. Ratnayake and Harris Ratwatte, Members of the State Council, were also present.

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1. C. N. A., 60/345.



Mr. Bandaranaike wished to know whether I wanted to speak to him in private. I replied that I welcomed the presence of the other gentlemen, and all our discussions took place in their presence.

We discussed the question of Congress amending its rules to admit members of other political parties into the Executive, for the purpose of making a united effort to obtain freedom. I further told Mr. Bandaranaike that I was seeking the support of the Kelaniya electors, as a Congress candidate on the issue of independence as opposed to reforms. I asked Mr. Bandaranaike whether he would speak at the meeting to be held on Sunday.

I made it quite clear that I wanted him to speak on behalf of the Congress candidate. Mr. Bandaranaike had a prior engagement on that day and was unable to accept the invitation.

I also mentioned that I intended to ask the Congress to call upon other parties which accepted the goal of political independence to co-operate with the Congress in the Kelaniya bye-election.

Yours truly,

187 : 30. J. R. Jayewardene to P. P. Siriwardena,  
21 August 1944<sup>1</sup>

21st August 1944.

P. P. Siriwardena Esq.,  
Kalagedihena,  
Veyangoda.

My dear P. P.,

I am sorry I cannot meet you personally, and therefore writing to you my views on the Congress resolution to be placed before the sessions, so that you may explain to your

1. See C. N. A., 60/379. also see 60/378 (late entry: not printed here).



delegates, who, I understand from Ebert are meeting on the 30th. Firstly, the proposed commission is contrary to the original declaration of the Secretary of State, in that instead of examining only the Ministers' draft it will take evidence from the public and prepare its own constitution, which may be worse than the Donoughmore constitution, and contain communal representation and a withdrawal of universal franchise.

Secondly, it is derogatory to the self-respect of a nation to go before a foreign commission and ask for reforms, when it is her inherent right to be free. The Congress last August agreed to support the Ministers' draft constitution, because this is the first time under British Rule we were given the power to draft our own constitution. Now that that power has been taken away, we should free ourselves from last year's decision to support the Ministers' draft constitution.

Thirdly, not only should we boycott the commission, we should by public meeting, propaganda, and even through satyagraha prevent all patriotic citizens from going before the commission. If this is effectively done, it will strengthen the Congress and rouse the masses.

Fourthly, apart from the boycott, after the resolutions are passed on September 2nd, the Congress will be free to summon a round table conference, or to move for a select committee of the State Council, consisting of all parties and races, and draft a free constitution acceptable to all.

I think, we can secure agreement from most of the minorities on the basis of representation according to population. Please explain these points to the delegates and try and secure a unanimous passing of the resolutions, as we cannot take any step forward until this is done. I hope you are enjoying your new work.

With best wishes,

Yours truly,



187 : 31. **J. R. Jayewardene to Dr. R. W. Crossette Thambiah, 27 March 1945<sup>1</sup>**

66, Ward Place,  
Colombo, 27.3.45.

Dr. R. W. Crossette Thambiah,  
Divisional M. O. H.,  
Central Division,  
Kandy.

Dear Dr. Thambiah,

You may remember speaking to me a few years ago about devoting your whole time to political work. I could not then give you any assurance that the Ceylon National Congress provided the best opportunity for you to serve the people. Now however, with the reorganisation of the Congress, and the acceptance of independence as its goal, large numbers of educated young men and the working classes are being attracted to Congress work. If you still feel that you can devote your whole time for public work and wish to do so through the Congress, I shall be happy to discuss the question with you whenever you wish to do so.

Yours sincerely,

187 : 32. **Dr. R. W. Crossette Thambiah to J. R. Jayewardene, 8 April 1945**

Confidential

Kandy, 8. 4.

Dear Mr. Jayewardene,

Your letter of 27th March, which reached me 2 days ago.

Since speaking to you two years ago, I have been pondering a good deal over the matter. In fact, last year I took three months leave, preparatory to retirement, as I then thought. I spent that time (July to Sept.) consulting political opinion both in North and South Ceylon, to see if I could be of use in influencing thought which would enable progressive opinion to put up a united front to the Soulbury

1. See C. N. A., 60/380. Crossette Thambiah may be familiar to readers as the author of *Stranger in his hand*, Colombo : 1974.



Commission. I was chiefly in touch with the Jaffna Youth Congress and the National Congress. The Y. C. was enthusiastic about having me but they had been hibernating so long that I was not hopeful about their achieving anything positive before the Commission arrived. With regard to the C. N. C., I called on Messrs. Dudley Senanayake, P. de S. Kularatne, and Susanta de Fonseka, (you were ill with diphtheria and could not be seen, I was told), who all appeared to be rather perturbed about my intentions. In the face of all this discouragement, as I felt that I could do nothing definite in time to unite progressive opinion in North and South Ceylon before the Commission arrived, I decided to defer retirement till conditions became more favourable.

I am not recounting all this with a view to blaming anybody or finding excuses for my own failure. In such big decisions of one's life, one must stand alone and take the full responsibility on oneself. I was too weak to go ahead, in spite of discouragement. My own domestic arrangements were not satisfactory. I had sent my wife and children to Jaffna, in anticipation of my retirement. I found that arrangement raising unexpected difficulties. I am not a rich man and the spectre of thrusting want on my children in these hard days, when little is possible without influence, haunted me into submission.

But I have not given up hope. I am trying to get a shift to Colombo. If I can come there, I will keep in touch with you and others, who are serious about the emancipation of our island, and retire as soon as I can. Your letter has heartened me a lot. I thought my offer may not have been appreciated. I am also glad to know that fresh blood is being infused into the C. N. C. The country is rather tired of the present High Command which, for example, denounces the Soulbury Commission in public but feasts them in private. Nobody can help this country till the people of this country get together and try to better themselves. And once we get together, nobody can stop us. For that to happen we need a band of men and women who are prepared to work every day, without asking for any-



thing in return, except the privilege to work. The C. N. C. is, historically and politically, the only body which can nurse this band. That is why my heart has always been in the C. N. C., though its leaders, in these latter days, have not added lustre to its name. The political situation in this country is deteriorating steadily and reactionary forces, under patronage, are gathering strength. The responsibility of the C. N. C., at this juncture is supreme. May it find the strength to take its rightful place in the country's councils, which it will do only when the country is convinced that its leaders are dis-interested and have only one purpose—unite for Independence.

Yours sincerely,  
R. W. C. Thambiah.

**188. CORRESPONDENCE AND PAPERS CONNECTED WITH THE SINHALESE NEWSPAPER, THE "PERAMUNA," 1943-1946<sup>1</sup>**

**188 : 1. Letter to the Secretary of Peramuna Ltd. from the Registrar of Companies, 4 February 1943**

Department of Commerce and Industries,  
No. Pv. S. 145,  
Office of the Registrar of Companies,  
P. O. Box 556,  
Colombo, 4 February, 1943.

Sir,

Companies Ordinance, No. 51 of 1933

The undermentioned documents have been registered :—

<i>Document</i>	<i>Form No.</i>	<i>Date of Receipt</i>	<i>Date of Regn.</i>	<i>Regn. Fee</i>	<i>Regd. No.</i>
(1) Notice of situation of Registered Office	36	.. 22.11.43..	22.11.43..	Rs.5	.. Pv. S. 145
(2) Particulars of	.. 48	.. 22.11.43..	22.11.43..	Rs. 5	.. Pv. S. 145

Yours faithfully,

Signature,

Registrar of Companies.

<sup>1</sup> From the Gilbert Perera MSS. See C. N. A., 25.21/3 and 25.21/6.



**188 : 2. Letter to D. W. F. Jayasekera from the Registrar of Companies, 8 November 1943**

Department of Commerce and Industries,  
Office of the Registrar of Companies,  
Colombo, 8th November, 1943.

Dear Sir,

I return the Memorandum and Articles of Association of Peramuna Limited, and draw your attention to the corrections noted in red ink on the drafts.

2. The following notes are added in explanation thereof :—

- (a) Clause 1 of the Memorandum must specify the name of the Company without leaving it to be inferred indirectly.
- (b) The same clause should not use abbreviations: the word "Limited" must be spelt in full—(1912) 106 L. J. 544.
- (c) The words "to be" in clause 3 of the Memorandum are redundant. The Company is already established by the Memorandum. The words referred to suggest some future date, which is not so.
- (d) Whenever reference is intended to Peramuna Limited as the word "Company," the word should be spelt with the capital "C;" when reference is made to some other company, the word may be spelt with the simple "C."
- (e) The concluding sentence of clause 3 (33) of the Memo appears to be illegal. The question whether any act done by the Company is incidental to the objects previously enumerated is one of law. It would not be correct to make any act so done conclusive on the decision of an extraordinary meeting of the Company, as it would still be open to members to challenge its legality by action in Court. The words enclosed in red brackets may therefore be omitted.



(f) The number of shares subscribed by each member must be written : i.e., spelt in words. The address of each subscriber must also be disclosed.

(g) In the Articles, reference is made as "articles;" sometimes as "regulations;" and sometimes as "clauses." Some examples have been underlined in red for your information.

3. In the interests of conservation of paper the slight corrections shown may be amended by the printer and each alteration initialled.

4. The amended documents should be tendered for registration with a declaration on Companies Form 5 (cream), obtainable at this office at 10 cts. a copy.

5. The following fees (stamps not acceptable) are due :—

On Memorandum	..	..	Rs. 100
On Articles	..	..	Rs. 5
On Form 5 (cream)	..	..	Rs. 5

In addition, uncanceled stamps of Rs. 50 and Rs. 10 should be affixed to the Memorandum and Articles respectively.

6. Your attention is drawn to the provisions of sections 91 and 142 which require the registration of the address of the Company and the appointment of its directors within 28 and 14 days respectively. These notifications must be made on forms prescribed for the purpose. All forms are obtainable at this office.

Yours faithfully,

E. Paul,

Registrar of Companies.



**188 : 3. D. W. F. Jayasekera to J. R. Jayewardene,  
17 November 1943**

Peramuna, Ltd.  
215, 1st Division, Maradana,  
Colombo, November 17, 1943.

Telephone 2 5 8 4

Dear Sir,

At a meeting of the Board of Directors held on 13th November, 1943, it was decided that 5,000 fully paid up shares be issued, full payment to be received with application. Applications close on the 30th instant.

Please let us have a cheque for the Shares you wish to purchase. Copies of Memorandum and Articles of Association are enclosed.

Yours faithfully,  
D. W. J.  
Secretary.

**188 : 4. Gilbert Perera to The Secretary, Peramuna Ltd.,  
18 November 1943**

No. 17, Gower Street,  
Bambalapitiya,  
November 18, 1943.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 17th instant, I have pleasure in applying for 500 shares of the Company.

A cheque will be sent in due course.

Yours faithfully,  
Gilbert Perera.



188 : 5. **K. A. Albert Perera to The Secretary, Peramuna Ltd., 18 November 1943**

14/22, 67th Lane,  
Wellawatte,  
Colombo, November 18, 1943.

Dear Sir,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th instant, and I am enclosing a cheque for Rs. 1,000 for 100 Shares of the Company.

Please acknowledge receipt.

Yours faithfully,  
K. A. Albert Perera.

188 : 6. **C. V. D. S. Corea to The Secretary, Peramuna Ltd., 25 November 1943**

"Sharon,"  
17th Lane A,  
Bambalapitiya,  
Colombo,  
25th November, 1943.

Dear Sir,

*Shares : Peramuna Ltd.*

Thank you for your letter of the 17th instant.

I want 500 shares for which I am enclosing a cheque for Rs. 5,000.

Kindly acknowledge receipt.

Yours faithfully,  
C. V. D. S. Corea.



188 : 7. The Secretary, Peramuna to The Manager, The Eastern Bank Ltd., 14 December 1943<sup>1</sup>

14/12/3

Dear Sir,

I have pleasure in enclosing an application to open an account in your Bank for the said Company.

The Directors for the time being are, Messrs. J. R. Jayewardene, Siripala Samarakkody, P. de S. Kularatne, Gilbert Perera and D. W. F. Jayasekera.

Specimen signatures of 4 of them are enclosed, and the other one will be sent in due course.

Yours faithfully,

D. W. F. J.

188 : 8. Gilbert Perera to Messrs. Peramuna Ltd.,  
16 December 1943

No. 17, Gower Street,  
Bambalapitiya,  
16th December, 1943.

Dear Sirs,

Please find enclosed cheque for Rs. 2,000 for 100 Shares each to be allotted to Mrs. Cissy Jayasinghe and Miss K. A. Mallika Perera.

Yours faithfully,

Gilbert Perera.

Encl.—Chq. No. B 879773.

1. Correspondence with the Bank of Ceylon reveals that the Company sought banking facilities at that institution initially but found that the Bank was not accepting any new accounts.



**188 : 9. The Secretary, Peramuna to The Manager, Ceylon Daily News, 23 December 1943**

23/12/3.

Dear Sir,

With reference to our enquiry regarding Contract for space in the Daily News, Observer, Dinamina and Silumina, we shall be obliged if you could send us a reply at an early date.

Yours faithfully,  
D. W. F. J.  
Secretary.

**188 : 10. The Secretary, Peramuna to P. de S. Kularatne, 23 December 1943**

23.12.3.

Dear Mr. Kularatne,

Please send per bearer cheque for Rs. 2,500 in payment of the shares allotted to you.

Yours sincerely,

P. D. S. Kularatne Esq.,  
The National Theatre,  
Colombo.

**188 : 11. The Secretary, Peramuna to T. F. Jayawardena, 30 December 1943<sup>1</sup>**

30.12.3

T. F. Jayawardena, Esq.,  
"Vasanti,"  
Turret Road, Colombo.

Dear Sir,

At the request of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene I have pleasure in enclosing copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of this Company. I shall be obliged if you will send

1. A note on the draft indicates that a cheque for Rs. 1,000 was received on the 12th January, 1944.



us your cheque by return if you desire to take some shares, as we are about to go in for allotments.

Yours faithfully,  
for Secretary.

**188 : 12. The Secretary, Peramuna to P. C. W. Peiris,  
30 December 1943**

30/12 3.

P. C. W. Peiris, Esq.,  
Colombo.  
Barnes Place,

Dear Sir,

At the request of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene I have pleasure in enclosing copies of the Memorandum and Articles of Association of this Company. I shall be obliged if you will send us your cheque by return if you desire to take some shares, as we are about to go in for allotments.

Yours faithfully,  
for Secretary.

**188 : 13. The Secretary, Peramuna to Carlton S. Corea,  
30 December 1943**

30/12 3

Carlton S. Corea, Esq.,  
"Sharon,"  
17th Lane A,  
Bambalapitiya.

Dear Sir,

I have pleasure in informing you that at the last meeting of the Board of Directors 500 Shares have been allotted to you.

Yours faithfully,  
for Secretary.



188 : 14. List of Prospective Shareholders (?), n. d.<sup>1</sup>

J. R. Jayewardene	..	
Carlton Corea	..	18/11
G. C. S. Corea	..	18/11
Geo. E. de Silva	..	18/11
R. D. Jayawardene <sup>2</sup>	..	handed over to him personally 18/11
Gilbert Perera	..	18/11
Albert Perera	..	18/11
D. W. F. Jayasekera	..	18/11
P. D. S. Jayasekera	..	18/11
P. de S. Kularatne	..	18/11
Dudley Senanayake	..	18/11
R. A. de Mel	..	18/11
S. Samarakkody	..	18/11
D. H. A. Kottegoda [ <i>sic</i> ]	..	26/11
E. A. P. Wijeratne [ <i>sic</i> ]	..	18/11
Mrs. D. J. Jayasinghe	..	29/11
Miss Mallika Perera	..	29/11

## 188 : 15. List of Prospective Shareholders and Number of Shares Each (?), n. d.

Carl Corea	..	500	?	..	100
J. R. J.	..	500	R. A.	..	500
P. D. S.	..	100	Claude	..	
D. W. F.	..	400	E. A. P.		
George E.	..	100	D. S.		
Gilbert	..	500			
Albert	..	500			
Dudley	..	100			
Siripala	..	200			
Chula (!)	..	250			
		<u>2,950<sup>3</sup></u>			

1. From a sheet of paper with the names written in hand.

2. R. Daly Jayawardena.

3. The addition is wrong (3,150—correct total) because D. W. F. had 200 shares written against his name initially.



**188 : 16. List of Shareholders and their Shares, 16 December 1943**

		Meeting held on 16th December, 1943	
J. R. J.	.. 500	P. D. S. Jayasekera	.. 200
G. P.	.. 500	Albert, P.	.. 100
Carlton Corea	.. 500	Mallika, P.	.. 100
D. W. F. J.	.. 500	Cicy, J.	.. 100
Siripala, S.	.. 300	T. F. Jayawardena	.. 100
Richard, P.	.. 500	P. C. W. Peries	.. 250
P. de S. K.	.. 250		
			3,900

**188 : 17. Letter from The Secretary, Peramuna to Siripala Samarakkody, 3 January 1944**

3/1. 4.

Siripala Samarakkody, Esq.,  
McCarthy Road,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

We shall be obliged if you will kindly send us per return a cheque for Rs. 3,000 for the 300 shares allotted to you.

Yours faithfully.  
for Secretary.

**188 : 18. Letter from P. C. W. Peries to Gilbert Perera, 8 January 1944**

42, Barnes Place,  
Colombo, 8th January, 1944.

Gilbert Perera, Esq.,  
Director,  
Peramuna Ltd.,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 30th ultimo, I have pleasure in informing you that I desire to purchase 250 shares (value Rs. 2,500) in Peramuna Ltd.



Kindly let me know when the allotment is made and in the meantime I enclose cheque for Rs. 1,000 in part payment.

Please own receipt.

Yours faithfully,  
P. C. W. Peries.

**188 : 19. Letter from The Secretary, Peramuna to J. R. Jayewardene, 26 January 1944**

26th January, 4.

J. R. Jayewardene, Esq.,  
"Braemar,"  
Ward Place,  
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

We have pleasure in enclosing a cheque for Rs. 1,000 in payment for the goodwill and other rights of the newspaper now published by you under the name and title of Peramuna, as already arranged.

Please acknowledge receipt.

Yours faithfully,  
D. W. F. J.  
Secretary.

**188 : 20. Receipt from P. de S. Kularatne, 14 February 1944**

Gangasiri,  
Panadura,  
14th February, 1944.

Received from the Managing Director Mr. Gilbert Perera, of the Peramuna Ltd., the sum of Rs. 15,000 (Rupees Fifteen thousand only) in payment of the Printing Machinery and other stock belonging to Messrs. Ceylon Stationers Ltd., and other goodwill of the Firm.

P. de S. Kularatne.



**188 : 21. Note from P. C. W. Peries, 23 February 1944**

42, Barnes Place,  
Colombo, 23rd February, 1944.

The Agent & Secretary,  
Peramuna Ltd.,  
Maradana.

Dear Sir,

Please find enclosed further cheque for Rs. 1,500 being balance payment for the 250 shares to be allotted to me.

Kindly acknowledge receipt and forward Share Certificate at your convenience.

Yours faithfully,  
P. C. W. Peries.

**188 : 22. The Secretary, Peramuna to T. F. Jayawardena,  
28 February 1944**

28th February, 4.

Dear Sir,

I have pleasure in informing you that at the last meeting of the Board of Directors you have been elected as a member of this Board.

I shall be glad to know whether you will be pleased to accept same.

Yours faithfully,  
D. W. F. J.  
Secretary.

T. F. Jayawardena, Esq.  
Melbourne Avenue,  
Colombo.



**188 : 23. Letter from The Registrar of Companies to The Secretary, Peramuna, 17 March 1944**

Department of Commerce and Industries,  
No. Pv. S. 145.

Office of the Registrar of Companies,  
(P. O. Box 556)

Colombo, 17 March, 1944.

Sir,

Companies Ordinance, No. 51 of 1938

The undermentioned document has been registered :—

Document	Form No.	Date of Receipt	Date of Regn.	Regn. Fee	Regd No.
1. Return of Allotments	.. 7	.. 15.1.44	.. 15.1.44	Rs. 5/-	.. Pv.S. 145/6

Yours faithfully,

Registrar of Companies.

**188 : 24. Memorandum by the Managing Director of Peramuna Limited on Remuneration of Working Directors, n. d. [early 1945]**

I was appointed Managing Director of the company from its very inception, Mr. D. W. F. Jayasekera, Bar-at-law, was appointed Manager & Secy. on the 13th of November, 1943, and Mr. S. N. B. Wijeyekoon was acting as Working Director from March 1943. He is in complete charge of distribution, advertisements and publications, etc. But, owing to our inability to see how much the company would bear, the question of remuneration was left undecided. However, I took an allowance of Rs. 100 per month. Mr. Jayasekera was paid a sum of Rs. 250 per month, and Mr. Neville Wijeyekoon a sum of Rs. 100 per month, purely the Board's decision.



I think the time has now arrived when this question should be decided upon. In doing so I would draw the attention of the Board to the financial position of the company. From the draft Balance Sheet that has been prepared by the Auditors for the period ending 31st December, 1944, that is for nearly 15 months, the nett loss has been Rs. 3,575.56. On this basis the loss for 12 months will be Rs. 2,860. The gross turnover for the period under review had been Rs. 32,611.82. In this connection it must be remembered that actual business was done from about March, 1944, that is to say, this is the turn over for about 9 months only. Even here it must be remembered that business done for a few months after March was very little.

With all these limitations we have been able to keep our losses at this low level owing to the self-sacrificing nature of the work of the Working Directors. The most important point to be noted for our present purposes is the ratio of the gross profit to gross turnover which is roughly 55 per cent of the gross turnover. The overhead expenses have amounted to Rs. 21,911.77 for the 15 months. That is to say, the overhead expenses for 12 months will be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 17,500. As against the turnover of Rs. 33,000 as shown in the last balance sheet the turnover for the year 1945 will be at least 150,000.

We have up-to-date Job Orders to the value of Rs. 79,000, paper sales and advertisements up to the end of June is in the neighbourhood of Rs. 19,000. So that up-to-date we have an assured turnover of Rs. 98,000. If we add to this another Rs. 19,000 from paper sales and advertisements for the next 6 months the amount will be Rs. 117,000, and I won't be too far wrong if I surmise that for the next 5 months we will get job work for over Rs. 30,000, thus making in all a minimum of Rs. 150,000.

Working on the basis of the Trading Account of 1944 we would make on this turnover at least 75,000, or to put it still lower about Rs. 70,000. Presuming that the overhead



expenses will be double for this year our overhead expenses will be in the neighbourhood of Rs. 30,000. So that if the Working Directors are paid as today the company still makes a nett profit of about Rs. 40,000. This shows clearly that the company is now in the happy position of making adequate remuneration for the Working Directors, who have been more or less working for a pittance.

I would, therefore, suggest that the Managing Director be paid a salary of Rs. 600 and a travelling allowance of Rs. 100 per month, that the Manager be paid Rs. 500 a month and that Mr. Wijeyekoon be paid Rs. 300 a month. All these to be with retrospective affect from the beginning of this year. In addition to this remuneration I would suggest that the Managing Director be paid  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent and the 2 other Working Directors  $7\frac{1}{2}$  per cent of the nett profits of the company, less reserve for income tax. In this connection it must be noted that the policy of the Board in allocating shares should be revised. It may also be noted that the company will have to pay excess profits duty on all profits over Rs. 9,000 or ? ? ?. I propose to address a further communication to the Board with a request for permanent remuneration.

As regards 1945 I may mention that the business is very much better and shareholders will be in a position to get some return for their shares. As regards the future, if sufficient capital is forthcoming, I do not see any reason why your company should not take a very honourable place in the printing trade of this country.

The Weekly: As I have already indicated we had considerable difficulties in getting the paper published, and when published in obtaining the necessary quantity of paper. In September last year the Paper Control Department increased our quota of paper to 6,000 copies per week. I am very glad to state that the demand for our paper has been very great and we have a large number of agents, who have not been satisfied. It is to be hoped that with the conclusion of the war the Paper Control Department will cease



to exist, and we will be in a position to obtain all the necessary paper for our use without official influence. There is not the least doubt that our paper has established itself as one of the best weeklies in Sinhalese in the country.

Personally I have been very fortunate in obtaining the assistance of my co-directors, Messrs. Jayasekera and Wijeyekoon. If not for their ungrudging assistance I do not think it would have been possible to have brought this company into this position today. I owe also a debt of gratitude for the minor staff. We have been very fortunate in having a very conscientious Foreman, and it is a compliment for the management that at a time of paucity of labour, we have been able to find all the labour necessary. Our minor staff now stands at about 40.

Before submitting the Report and Profit & Loss Account and the Balance Sheet for the year ending 31st December 1944, for your acceptance, I would like to make a few remarks as regards the working of the Company during that period.

We began by having a paid-up capital of Rs. 50,000 of which shares to the value of Rs. 47,000 were issued by the end of last year. The balance Rs. 3,000 has been subscribed this year. As you are aware the Directors found it necessary to increase the paid-up share capital by another Rs. 11,250. This has been fully subscribed. I need hardly mention that this capital is not at all sufficient for our purposes. In the first place our Directors are anxious to convert our weekly into a daily, and this will require a much larger capital. Furthermore, it is the intention of your Directors to have a fully developed publication section. This again will require additional capital. If we are to successfully compete with our rivals it will be absolutely necessary for us to obtain the most improved machinery available, and if we are to do so it will be necessary at a very early date to increase our share capital.



I am afraid that no new developments can be undertaken in these premises. I am almost sure that the shareholders must be rather disappointed with the appearance of these premises, which is due to the fact that these are . . . . . land, and as it often happens it is very difficult to get landlords to improve such premises. Moreover there is the legal difficulty of the life tenants being not in a position to give a lease for more than 2 years. Even if some satisfactory arrangement can be entered into with regard to these premises themselves, yet the space available here will not at all be sufficient. It will be a great mistake to instal any new machinery in a building of this nature.

**188: 25. Letter from the Commissioner of Stamps to The Managing Director, Peramuna Ltd., 16 May 1945**

Stamp Office,  
Colombo, May 16, 1945.

Stamp Duty on Share Certificates

Dear Sir,

With reference to my letter No. SF-366 of the 3rd instant I have to inform you that the Hon'ble the Financial Secretary has, under the authority delegated to him by His Excellency the Governor, authorized Peramuna Ltd. to compound for the payment of stamp duty on share certificates, specified in Schedule A to the Stamp Ordinance, on the conditions set out in section 3 sub-sections 1 (c) (ii), (iii) and (iv) of the said Ordinance.

2. Composition duty Rs. 250 has already been paid by you on 5,000 shares to the total face value of Rs. 50,000.

3. If any further issue of shares is made, the fact should be reported to me and the amount of duty thereon remitted.

Yours faithfully,

For Commissioner of Stamps.



188 : 26. Translation of Letter from H. Gnanaseeha Thero  
to J. R. Jayewardene, 25 May 1945<sup>1</sup>

Sri Suman Vidyalaya,  
Mudduwa, Ratnapura,  
25.5.1945.

Sir,

We had made arrangements during the last few days to hold a meeting of Ceylon's leading bus owners under the patronage of Hon. Minister S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in aid of the "Buddhist University College." In agreement with my suggestion that at the first instance only a selected few should be invited, a letter signed by Mr. Kuruppu, M. S. C., was sent out to those bus owners. The original of that letter too was prepared by me.

While publishing a copy of that letter in its Friday May 4th issue, the Peramuna paper published a harsh letter giving the people the impression that this meeting was politically motivated. As this article has aimed a severe attack on the Minister of Local Government, a letter giving out the true facts and enclosing copies of the earlier letters sent out by Minister Bandaranaike to schoolmasters and village councillors was sent to the Peramuna paper. That was sent under the name of the Secretary of the Committee. We sent with it stamps as well to get back the copies of our earlier letters. That letter which should have been published in any impartial paper was never published nor were copies of our letters sent back. We were at first highly impressed by the impartial attitude of the Peramuna paper but are now thoroughly disgusted as a result of this issue and hence thought of informing you about this.

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1. J. R. Jayewardene sent the letter to Gilbert Perera with a request that he should attend to it. The letterhead on the notepaper used by Gnanaseeha Thero is in English. The letter has been translated for the editor by Mr. E. G. Gamage.



I need not note that it should be the principle of a paper to provide room, on a controversial matter like this, for both sides to express their views.

I may not toil any further as you would be able to verify the truth of this by going through those letters. Please note that it is our sincere hope that your intervention will ensure that justice will be done.

Faithfully,

Henpitigedara Gnanaseeha Stavira.

*Note on letter.*—Dear Gilbert, please attend to this.

J. R. J. 29.5.45.

**188 : 27. Letter from J. R. Jayewardene to Gilbert Perera,  
20 July 1945**

Braemar,  
65, Ward Place,  
Colombo,  
20th July 1945.

My Dear Gilbert,

It was not possible for me to send an earlier reply to your letter of the 18th, as I received it very late, last night.

I did not allege that your family was attempting to control Peramuna Ltd.; and I do not think so, either. I thought it not advisable, that Peramuna Ltd., should have too many shareholders from any one family, and I said so. You expressed similar views, some time ago, when I suggested, that Will Subasinghe should be employed by us.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene



**188 : 28. Letter from Gilbert Perera to J. R. Jayewardene,  
23 July 1945**

23rd July, 5.

My Dear Dick,

The contents of your letter of the 20th instant has somewhat baffled me. You obviously came to the meeting with your mind made up as to some attempt about my controlling the Company. Otherwise what necessity was there for you to preface your remarks with the observation that you wanted to be quite frank? What was the provocation for all this? My family was specially mentioned. What is your definition of a family? Does it mean only brothers and sisters? Do you include cousins as well? Should two cousins be on the Board?

I am sorry that Will Subasinghe's name should have come up in this connection. He had nothing to [do] with the control question. His case was not considered merely because experience has shown that it is irksome to control friends.

Yours sincerely,

**188 : 29. Letter from D. W. F. Jayasekera to The Chilaw District Mahajana Sabha Sammelanaya, 1 October 1945**

1st October, 5.

The Hony. General Secretary,  
Chilaw District Mahajana Sabha Sammelanaya,  
Marawila.

Dear Sir,

We are in receipt of your letter (undated) and the enclosed cheque for Rs. 214.56. A receipt for this amount is annexed herewith. We regret to note the deduction you have made upon the bill sent. It should be noted that this



work had to be completed hurriedly for which we have had to incur overtime cost. Under the circumstances it would be difficult for us to make any reduction and shall thank you to be good enough to send us the balance in due course.

Yours faithfully,

D. W. F. J.

**188 : 30. Letter from Gilbert Perera to The Minister for Labour, Industry and Commerce, 3 October 1945**

3rd October, 5.

Dear Sir,

We understand that the Soulbury Commission's report will be published by the time our next issue comes out. In view of the importance of the report we wish to issue a special supplement of 2 pages S/demy. We shall be obliged if you will kindly give us permission to print this supplement and the permit for 6 reams of D/demy News-print.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

G. P.

Managing Director.

**188 : 31. Letter from Gilbert Perera to P. de S. Kularatne, 5 October 1945**

5th October, 5.

**Parakrama Reader**

Dear Sir,

We have pleasure in enclosing cheque for Rs. 1,500 being royalty on 15,000 copies of the Parakrama Reader.



We regret very much that we were not in a position to send this at an earlier date.

We are also sending you under separate cover 3 copies of the Parakrama Reader with our compliments.

We shall be pleased to know whether we should take immediate steps to print at least 3,000 copies in view of the change of medium of instructions in schools.

Thanking you for an early reply,

Yours faithfully,  
Managing Director.

188 : 32. Letter from Colvin R. de Silva and Leslie Goonewardene to The Editor, Peramuna, 15 October 1945

Bombay,  
15.10.45.

Sir,

We would be obliged if you will publish this letter as we owe it to the party to which we belong to make clear to the public our position in regard to the split away of Messrs. N. M. Perera and Philip Gunawardena together with a small group of their followers from the Lanka Samasamaja Party, Ceylon unit of the Bolshevik-Leninist Party of India, Section of the Fourth International. We wish to make it clear that we unhesitatingly stand on the side of the party, and within it, as opposed to this group which has split, and which, moreover, is falsely claiming to be the Lanka Samasamaja Party.

It is our opinion that if Messrs. N. M. Perera and Philip Gunawardena had any differences, real or imaginary, it was their duty to raise the question *within* the party and loyally abide by its verdict. This anyhow is the only course



open to serious-minded Bolsheviki. For, otherwise it is impossible to build the party which is the indispensable instrument of the working class in the revolution.

Further, even if Messrs. N. M. Perera and Philip Guna-wardena, for reasons best known to themselves, had decided to reject this course and split away, none can deny that it was still their duty to make clear to the public that they were now a distinct and separate grouping which was working independently of the L. S. S. P. and opposed to it. Instead of this, we regret to note, they have chosen to appear before the public as the L. S. S. P. itself. By doing so they are confusing and misleading the masses, thus imperilling the interests of the very movement they claim to serve.

Yours faithfully,

Colvin R. de Silva,

L. S. Goonewardene.

**188 : 33. Letter from S. N. B. Wijeyekoon to Jawaharlal Nehru, 18 October 1945**

18 October, 1945.

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,  
"Anand Bhawan,"  
Allahabad.

Dear Sir,

We thank you for your letter of the 9th instant. We shall be pleased to publish a Sinhalese translation of your book 'Letter from a Father to His Daughter' on the terms mentioned in your letter. As requested by you we shall price the book as low as possible to facilitate its use as a textbook in schools.



We shall be writing to you soon about undertaking the publication of Sinhalese translations of other books of yours.

Yours faithfully,  
S. N. B. W.  
Director.

**188:34 Letter from Gilbert Perera to Edmund Samarkody, 29 October 1945**

29th October, 1945.

My dear Edmund,

I have consulted my co-Directors in this matter and I am extremely sorry that it is not possible for me to help you. My suggestion as regards an agreement for indemnity does not seem [to] appear to be satisfactory, as it will not meet a case of sedition. Under the circumstances I hope that you will appreciate my position.

Yours sincerely,  
G. P.

**188:35. Letter from S. N. B. Wijeyekoon to Jawaharlal Nehru, 31 October 1945**

31st October, 1945.

Dear Sir,

In your letter dated 9th October in which you permitted us to publish a Sinhalese edition of your book 'Letters from a Father to His Daughter's you enquired from us whether we would like to publish in Sinhalese any other books of yours. We shall be pleased to print and publish Sinhalese editions of your Autobiography and 'Glimpses of World History.' As both these books contain a very large number of pages and as the Sinhalese translation of these books



should contain an even larger number of pages, we are writing to enquire from you whether you will permit us to publish in Sinhalese abridged editions of both these books.

Yours faithfully,

S. N.

Director.

**188 : 36. Letter from ? to D. B. Dhanapala, 17  
November 1945**

17th November, 1945.

D. B. Dhanapala Esqr.,  
Vidyalankara College,  
Kelaniya.

My dear Dhanapala,

I have been entrusted with the preparation of the Congress Handbook for the next year. I intend to do that on a somewhat biggish scale. I shall be therefore obliged if you could help me for a consideration with the Art section only. As the matter is somewhat urgent, I would like to meet you as soon as possible. If you can conveniently come here will you kindly let me know.

Yours sincerely,

**188 : 37. Letter from Gilbert Perera to The Speaker,  
Ceylon State Council, 2 February 1946**

P. O. Box 493,  
215, 1st Division,  
Maradana,  
Colombo, 2nd February, 1946.

Dear Sir,

We have the honour to request you to be good enough to grant us permission to send our representative to the meetings of the State Council.



The official circulation of Peramuna weekly is 9,000 copies. We also intend at a recent date to issue a monthly both in English and Sinhalese. We find it extremely difficult at the present time to get authentic reports of the proceedings and have to depend upon the reports of other newspapers whose versions are sometime inaccurate and coloured by their own political and personal views.

Yours faithfully,  
 Gilbert Perera,  
 Managing Director.

**188 : 38. Letter from The Clerk of the State Council to The Managing Director, Peramuna Ltd., 6 February 1946**

The Council Chamber,  
 Colombo, 6th February, 1946.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of 2nd February, 1946, it is regretted that there is no accommodation in the Press Galleries to permit the issue of a permanent annual pass.

It is possible for a representative of your paper to obtain a temporary pass for a sittings week of Council, provided accommodation is available and application is made before the sittings commence.

I am enclosing such pass to cover the sitting for February 12 to 15, 1946.

Yours faithfully,  
 Clerk of the State Council.



**188 : 39. Letter from The Secretary, Colombo Municipal Council to The Manager, Peramuna Ltd., 13 May 1946**

No. 01704,  
The Town Hall,  
P. O. Box No.  
Colombo, May 13, 1946.

Municipal Council Meetings

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of the 4th ultimo, I have to inform you that there is no objection to your representative attending meetings of this Council.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary,

Municipal Council Colombo.

**188 : 40. Letter from The Secretary, Peramuna Ltd., to S. N. B. Wijeyekoon, 19 July 1945**

215, 1st Division,  
Maradana,  
Colombo, 19th July, 1945.

Dear Sir,

At a meeting of the Board of Directors held on Tuesday the 17th July, 1945 it was resolved "that the capital of the company be increased by the further issue of 1,250 shares of Rs. 10 each ; the full amount to be paid on allotment ; that all shareholders be written to, asking for applications for shares to be made on or before the 25th July, 1945."

Please inform me how many shares you wish to purchase.

Yours faithfully,

Secretary,



**188 : 41. Letter from T. F. Jayawardena to The Secretary,  
Peramuna Ltd., 30 July 1946**

Mirador,  
Horton Place,  
Colombo, 30th July, 1946.

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter of th 21st July, I wish you to summon a meeting of the Board of Directors to discuss the following :—

- (1) The failure to summon meetings of the Board of Directors in accordance with a resolution accepted by the Board at a previous meeting.
- (2) The failure of the Managing Director to consult the Board of Directors regarding the policy of the paper.
- (3) To extend an invitation to Messrs. George E. de Silva and Dudley Senanayake to join the Company as members and serve as Directors.

Yours faithfully,  
T. F. Jayawardena.

**188 : 42. Notice to the Board of Directors, 30 July 1946**

30th July, 1946.

Notice

A meeting of the Board of Directors of Messrs. Peramuna Ltd., will be held at the Registered Office of the Company, No. 215, First Division, Maradana, on Friday the 9th August, 1946 at 4.30 p.m.

Agenda

- (1) Confirmation of the minutes of the last meeting.
- (2) Consider the case instituted and to ratify the fixing of the seal on the proxy.



## (3) Approval of the following expenses :—

- (a) Purchase of the Cylinder Machine from the Colombo Apothecaries Co. Ltd.
  - (b) Purchase of Austin Van.
  - (c) The installation of new Electric Motor.
  - (d) Managing Director's expenses in connection with his trip to India re paper, type and machinery.
- (4) Consider the tenancy of these premises.
- (5) Consideration of the Profit & Loss Account and the Balance Sheet.
- (6) Any other business.

**188 : 43. Proxy for S. N. B. Wijeyekoon, 12 August 1946**

I, S. N. B. Wijeyekoon, a shareholder of Peramuna Ltd. do hereby appoint Mr. Gilbert Perera as my proxy to vote for me and on my behalf at Annual General Meeting of the Company to be held on . . . . and at any adjournment thereof.

S. N. B. Wijeyekoon.

12th August, 1946.

**188 : 44. Receipt from Gilbert Perera, 9 August 1946**

Managing Director's Expenses on Trip to Madras re Type, Machinery and Paper

	<i>Rs. c.</i>
Air Passage to Madras and back ..	210 0
Hotel Expenses ..	105 0
Taxi Fare ..	50 0
	365 0



188 : 45 Letter from T. F. Jayawardena to The Secretary,  
Peramuna Ltd., 19 August 1946

Mirador,  
Horton Place,  
Colombo,  
19th August, 1946.

Dear Sir,

Please send me a copy of the register of members in accordance with section 97 of the Companies Ordinance.

I am enclosing a cheque for Rs. 10.50 being a payment to cover the cost of making a copy.

Yours faithfully,  
T. F. Jayawardena.

188 : 46. Letter from The Secretary, Peramuna Ltd., to  
T. F. Jayawardena, 20 August 1946

20th August, 1946.

Dear Sir,

As requested by you I append herewith a list of the members of the Company, together with the number of shares held by each.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene	..	..	500 shares
Mr. Gilbert Perera	..	..	500 shares
Mr. C. V. D. S. Corea	..	..	500 shares
Late Mr. Siripala Samarakkody	..	..	400 shares
Mr. D. W. F. Jayasekera	..	..	500 shares
Mr. K. A. Albert Perera	..	..	200 shares
Mrs. C. Jayasinghe	..	..	200 shares
Mr. Richard Perera	..	..	500 shares
Miss Mallika Perera	..	..	200 shares
Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera	..	..	300 shares
Mr. T. F. Jayawardena	..	..	500 shares
Mr. P. C. W. Peiris	..	..	500 shares



Mr. S. N. B. Wijeyekoon	..	..	350 shares
Mr. A. A. Jayasinghe	..	..	400 shares
Mr. H. A. Koattegoda	..	..	250 shares
Mr. D. C. de Silva	..	..	400 shares
		Total	6,200

I return herewith your cheque.

Yours faithfully,  
Secretary.

*Enclo.*—National Bank Cheque No. FS. 053237 for Rs. 10.50.

**188 : 47. [Gilbert Perera's] Report on Peramuna Ltd., n. d.**

The failure on my part to summon a meeting of the Board for nearly 1 year and 3 months and the consequent nature of the criticism levelled against me and the manner in which the balance sheet prepared by the auditors was scrutinised and the summoning of the auditors to give information which I and my co-working directors were in a position to give and the stories which certain directors are said to have heard make it imperative that I should review in some detail the working of this undertaking.

To begin at the very beginning you are aware that the Ceylon National Congress suffered from not only a lack of publicity but, also from hostile publicity. Congressmen felt that there should be some organ which would give some assistance by way of favourable publicity and comment. But, Congress organisation was impotent to do so by itself. Such being the state of affairs I accepted the invitation of some Congress-men, particularly of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene. Fortunately, a press in which Mr. Kularatne was a share-holder was available, and at Rs. 15,000.

But it must be remembered the nature of the undertaking we were launching upon. As far as Congressmen were concerned they were interested in publicity only. But, I realised



from the very beginning that a weekly paper with a limited circulation (at the beginning we were allowed only 250 copies per week) will not be a lasting proposition. It had to be supplemented by some profits made in the job section. That is to say in order to make the newspaper a success, it was absolutely necessary to make the job-section a success. The existence of the newspaper depended on the job-section.

The result is that it became absolutely necessary for me to launch upon a printing business pure and simple. At all times, and not only in this country but also in other parts of the world, printing is a highly competitive trade, made exceedingly more competitive by the presence of small men at almost every street corner, who have absolutely no sense of costing. It must also be remembered that we were commencing an absolutely new business. The difficulties inherent in such an enterprise of this nature must be obvious to any tyro in commerce. If this be so at the best of times, one can imagine the difficulties we have had at a time like this. Almost everything conceivable was under control. The Paper Control Department had by the time we began our business introduced a system whereby the requirements of various consumers were registered through particular printers. With commencement of business we inherited from the Ceylon Stationers one solitary P. C. 6 form for the requirements of the National Theater, part owned by one of our directors. Almost all goods necessary for printing, such as ink, roller composition, were difficult to obtain. The annoyance resulting from our efforts to obtain goods may be illustrated by one instance. When we applied to the Controller of Miscellaneous Articles for a hurricane lamp for our watchman we were asked after due delay how we managed before.

The machinery etc., we bought had the appearance more of salvage. They had all been dumped together on the ground-floor. With the exception of one small machine, not



one was in working order. The type, both English and Sinhalese, which were worn out for the most part were badly mixed. The inventory we were given was completely out of date and was not a true representation of the then existing stuff. There was not even a convenience for the directors. And even today there is not one. The whole building was badly in need of repairs—not a single window was in good condition. Not a single door could be properly locked. And, I do not think we can congratulate ourselves on our landlady. To make matters worse, perhaps for political reasons, we were not given advertising space by the Lake House Press. We had also considerable difficulty in ejecting the sub-tenants of the late tenant. Matters were still more difficult with regard to labour. Already there was an absolute shortage of labour and there was keen competition for the labour available. But, I am glad to state that from a mere  $\frac{1}{2}$  doz. I have been able to build up a staff of nearly 40 men.

If we were to do anything it had to be done quickly. But, no money was forthcoming even from those who suggested this scheme until the legal formalities were perfected. It was therefore, necessary for me to spend as much as Rs. 10,800 even without knowing whether the vendor will stick to his agreement to sell or the company will come into being. At this stage, I was greatly helped by Mr. Jayasekera, without whose aid it would have been impossible for me to carry on the work owing to my other activities.

*Capital.*—The present eagerness to buy shares was not so apparent at the beginning. The stoutest of Congressmen faltered when it came to a matter of investing a few rupees in the undertaking. Some of the men even in the high-command refused to buy shares. Some even informed me that many people have burned their fingers by entering into the printing trade. I had to persuade members of my family to buy shares, who bought them as a concession to my political idiosyncracies, rather than as a tribute to my business



acumen. Directorates had to be given to sell shares. However it be, the necessary capital was forthcoming. Although Rs. 50,000 was fixed as paid up capital, at the beginning only about Rs. 39,000 was collected.

*Directorate.*—I have hardly anything to mention about the directorate except to deal with 2 criticisms that have been levelled against me. It is alleged that the appointment of Mr. Wijeyekoon as a working director without the prior approval of the board was a serious misdemeanour. I do not think the board has any objection to Mr. Wijeyekoon as such. Indeed, if the board has a sense of realities it should be glad that Mr. Wijeyekoon consented to be one. As a matter of fact, it is only after a great deal of persuasion that he consented to come on the board and act as a working director on the magnificent remuneration of Rs. 100 a month. I regret to say that this criticism shows a failure to appreciate the nature of a private company as distinguished from a public one. One of the essential reasons for the formation of private companies is to do away as much as possible with formalities. So long as an act is in the best interests of the company, it is a matter of no importance whether formalities had been observed. Formalities when observed are meant to satisfy merely the requirements of the law. Another grievance appears to be the delay in issuing share-certificates. I have already explained in some measure the difficulties we had at the beginning of the undertaking. More will appear later. It was impossible to obtain a seal for the company. I even enquired from Mr. Kularatne about the seal of the Ceylon Stationers. But that company appeared to have had none. Considerable delay was experienced in getting a seal made in brass locally. I was determined to have the share-certificates printed at our own establishment. For two reasons, (a) To save every avoidable expenditure, and (b) To test whether we are in a position to undertake the printing of share-certificates. As in



the absence of such knowledge I had to reject at least 3 orders. Being a private concern I did not think I would have caused so much offence to director and shareholders by such delay. I would have avoided such criticism by spending about Rs. 40 to Rs. 50.

*Newspaper.*—The board meeting of March 18th, 1944 decided that the first issue of the paper should appear on Sinhalese New Year day. But both Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and myself had a premonition that owing to the antagonism we had raised something might happen to prevent the undertaking. We, therefore, decided (I regret that the board was not consulted) to have an issue on the 17th March. We were informed on the 15th of March by the Controller of Paper, first verbally, and subsequently by letter, that the Hon'ble the Minister of Commerce and Industry, an ex-President of Congress and a member of the Working Committee, had prohibited us from publishing the paper. Again, without consulting the board, I took upon myself the responsibility of immediately issuing the paper. And thus to defy the order of the Paper Control Department and the Minister in this connection I have to note with pleasure the great moral support given by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene who even slept in these premises on that night. On the 18th of March there appeared in the Gazette Regulations that would have made it impossible for our paper to be published in the enlarged size. I regret to mention that this episode savours of a mean trick on the part of the Paper Control authorities. The Department was prepared only to grant us only 2 reams of paper a month. That is to say no increase was made in the paper supplied to the original owner of Peramuna in spite of our enlarging the size. To print only 250 copies of a paper a week was only a ludicrous suggestion. Again, without the permission of the board I began publication with 1,000 copies a week and with increasing demand carried it to about 2,500 copies a week. This result was achieved absolutely and entirely to the kindness of Messrs. Perera & Sons and my personal friends. Except for about 10 reams obtained through the efforts of directors



Messrs. Jayewardene, Messrs. Perera & Sons gave practically at cost about 60 reams of paper whereas the market price was Rs. 85. They further supplied without any charge whatever used paper that enabled us to utilize about 20 reams of newsprint for circulation. Friends in the paper-trade came to my rescue at very short notice, and I regret very much that I have not been able to keep my word and return the paper up-to-date. If serious loss had to be avoided, not only had the circulation to be increased, but, it was necessary to have some advertisements. Here again, I had to approach my friends like Carolis Fernando & Co., M. D. Gunasena & Co., William Pedris & Co., New City Stores for advertisements which they were kind enough to give. Messrs. Perera & Sons gave a weekly advertisement that was not necessary at all. With regard to the paper I mention with gratitude the work done by Mr. Wijeyekoon in attending to the circulation and advertisements. I am glad to state, there has been no room for any complaints in the regular production of the paper and its distribution. In this connection it must be noted that necessary clerical assistance was not available. Even a clerk employed at a salary of Rs. 125 left us for a job in the Co-operative Department. I had to get even the accounts entered by clerks kindly lent us by our auditors.

*Job Printing Section.*—Here we were fortunate in obtaining the services of a foreman who, though not brilliant, was found to be satisfactory.

Labour was one of the most difficult items. To have more men than necessary was a loss, to have no men when work came in was an inconvenience. A delicate balance had to be maintained if the company was not to suffer. The type given by the vendors was not of much use. Even so there was not sufficient type. And there was no type to be bought anywhere. A press that was for sale at Dehiwela had some type but I did not want to buy the machine. Fortunately it was possible to find a man who was prepared to buy the machines alone.



**189. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE, 1945  
AND 1946<sup>1</sup>**

**189 : 1. J. R. Jayewardene to T. F. Jayawardena, 3 July  
1945**

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Colombo, 3rd July, 1945.

National Freedom Fund

Dear friend,

I am enclosing an appeal by the President to enable you to collect subscriptions for the fund.

As a guarantor for the collection of Rs. 5,000 the subscriptions collected by your efforts have been allotted to you and the names of the subscribers have been entered on the list.

Should you find it convenient to forward contributions as you receive them, please forward them to the Secretary, National Freedom Fund, Congress Office, Borella Flats Colombo, with the names and addresses of the contributors to enable this office to forward an official receipt direct.

I am, Dear Friend,  
Yours sincerely,  
J. R. Jayewardene,  
Hony. Secretary.

**189 : 2. George E. de Silva to J. R. Jayewardene, 27 June  
1945**

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Colombo, 27th June 1945.

National Freedom Fund

Dear friend,

As you are no doubt aware the Congress is endeavouring to collect a National Fund for the purpose of effectively

1. C.N.A., 60/288, 287 and 315.



carrying on the movement for freedom. In the course of the next few months it may be necessary to do propaganda on a wide scale both in Ceylon and in England. Ceylon cannot afford to be behind India and Burma in attaining freedom.

I appeal to you therefore on behalf of the Congress, Ceylon's oldest political organisation, to contribute generously to this Fund, the trustees of which are Messrs. Geo. E. de Silva, G. C. S. Corea, P. de S. Kularatne, Dudley Senanayake and Gilbert Perera.

As you are one of the ten who has guaranteed to collect a sum of Rs. 5,000 before the 1st August I shall be obliged if you could remit that sum on that date, to enable me to make a public appeal for funds, with this Rs. 50,000 as the base.

Please send all contributions to the Secretary, National Freedom Fund, Congress Office, Borella Flats, Colombo.

Yours truly,  
Geo. E. de Silva,  
President, C. N. C.

	Rs.		
J. R. Jayewardene	2,500	Pd.	
Mudaliyar R. J. Wijetunga	1,000	Pd.	



**189:3. Circular from the Honorary Secretaries, Ceylon National Congress, 13 June 1946**

Congress Office,  
Borella Flats,  
Colombo, 13.6.1946.

The Joint Hony. Secretary,  
Congress Association.

Dear friend,

This is to remind you : (1) To send us a list of the number of members in your Association before the 30th September 1946.

(2) To send one quarter (25 per cent) of the annual subscription paid by these members at 25 cts. each for the year, before the 30th September 1946.

(3) To nominate your delegates to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee at one for every 25 members with a minimum of 5 delegates. Please note that their names and addresses are essential. This too has to be sent before the 30th September 1946.

(4) To send a list of your delegates to the annual sessions at the rate of one delegate for every 10 members in your Association.

We wish also to remind you about the donation of the following prizes :—

(1) Rs. 500 to the Congress Association having the largest number of members on the 30th of September, 1946.

(2) Rs. 250 to the Congress member who enrolls the largest number of members to Congress Association between January and September 30th 1946.



(3) Rs. 100 to the Congress member who enrolls the largest number of *female members* to a Congress Association between January and September 30th 1946.

Yours truly,  
J. R. Jayewardene,  
H. A. Koattegoda,  
Jt. Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.

189:4. Letter to Ebert Abayasinghe, 31 October 1946<sup>1</sup>

31st October, 1946.

E. P. Abeysinghe [*sic*], Esq.,  
Proctor S. C.,  
Kalagedihena,  
Veyangoda.

My Dear Ebert,

I received with regret the letter from the Oyaboda Congress with regard to the Congress joining the U. N. P. As you know, the decision of the A. C. C. C. will be placed for ratification before the next Sessions. Therefore, your Resolution is really superfluous. I am placing your Motion before the Working Committee. I have noticed that the Oyaboda Congress takes decisions without consulting its Committee or Office Bearers. I am one of its office bearers, and I have complained before this about the taking up of such decisions. In the circumstances, I feel, I can no longer be a member of the Oyaboda Congress Association, and I hereby tender my resignation. I should like to explain this to the other members of the Association. Please let me know, therefore, whether the Meeting fixed for Saturday the 2nd is being held. I have received no intimation yet. Please let me know by telegram, whether I am to come, otherwise I will take it the Meeting is cancelled.

Yours truly,

1. C. N. A., 60/255. Authorship not known.



## 190. A NOTE ON SOCIALISM AND CAPITALISM, n. d.<sup>1</sup>

*Socialism* is a theory and a movement. It aims at the collective organisation of the community in the interests of the mass of the people through the common ownership and collective control of the means of production, distribution and exchange.

Its essentials are: (1) all the great industries, and (2) the land, should be publicly or collectively owned.

They should be conducted in accordance with a national economic plan, for the common good instead of private benefit.

*Capitalism* is an economic system in which private persons are permitted (under regulations laid down by the State) to undertake enterprises, providing or borrowing the necessary capital, and taking the profits, if any, after all the costs of the enterprise have been met.

Essentials are: (1) private ownership of the means of production, (2) private enterprise and profit, and unlimited acquisitiveness as a motive in individual life.

*Defects of Capitalism* (i) Results in an unjust distribution of the national wealth, i.e., in inequality of wealth, income and opportunity.

(ii) Results in insecurity also. Direct consequence of wage system, which is implicit in capitalism: (a) The wage system abstracts labour from the labourer, so that one can be bought and sold without the other. (b) Wages are paid to the wage worker only when it is profitable to the capitalist to employ his labour. (c) Depression, unemployment are the result. (d) Worker becomes a wage slave. He surrenders all control over the organization of production, and all claim upon the product of his labour. The feeling that he is able to express himself in his work is absent. (e) Price system

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1. C. N. A. , 60/200 ; an unsigned handwritten sheet of manuscript.



responds, in a capitalist economy, not to the real needs of the community but to the demand of those who have money to spend. The participation is for profit and not for use. (f) Finally those who ought to be partners in production, i.e., employers and employed, tend to be antagonists.

Socialism suggests that the defects of the social organisations arise from one root cause, private ownership of the means of production and the desire for private profit. In its place they wish to substitute common ownership and control. Recently there has been a new emphasis, viz. central planning.

Socialists all agree on the outline alone—they are not all agreed on the ideal society [*which*] they desire to see realized, or on the method of attaining it.

Two schools of socialist thought, the revolutionary and the evolutionary. The former held that revolution or direct action is the only effective method of bringing into existence the new society. The others believe that evolutionary and constitutional methods are not only possible but have more lasting effects.



**191. SOME NATIONAL SONGS, n. d.<sup>1</sup>**

**191 : A. SRI LANKA NATIONAL SONG<sup>2</sup>**

Tune : Hindustani " Jilla Lavani "

Citizens of Lanka, one and all, unite for freedom's fight and be members of the movement to achieve national independence.

Discipline yourselves in terms of non-violence, and taking control of the State. Rule your own country in conformity with the principles of right and righteousness.

Ye, sons and daughters of Lanka, awake, arise and unite and be active in the movement to secure for you the happiness of a free people.

Cast off foreign domination and protect your beloved motherland. Raise this nation to heights of glory and prosperity and let each and every one of its members share the riches and comforts in equal measure.

1. Also see item 35.E, *supra*.

2. Located among the J. R. Jayewardene MSS (see C.N.A., 60/342).



ශ්‍රී ලංකා ජාතික ගීතය

Tune : (Hindustani) " Jilla Lavani "

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ශ්‍රී සෛරී බල අත්කර ගැන්මේ  
පිරිසෙහි හටයන් වචි තොස්වී—

දන සැමා සිරි ලක්දිව සිටිනා  
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දැහැමෙන් රට කරමින්—ජනයිනි ලංකා දිපේහි

අප දිපේ මේ මාජන සැවොමා  
නැගිටිවී දූ ජේමෙන්  
නිදහස් සැපා අත්කරගත හැක්කේ  
ජාතික සමගියෙනි—ජනයිනි ලංකා දිපේහි

පරදේශින්ගේ පාලන බිඳලා  
රැක්ම කරත් ලංකා  
යස ඉසුරෙන් සිය ජාතිය නංවන්  
සමාන ආත්ම ගුණෙන්—ජනයිනි ලංකා දිපේහි



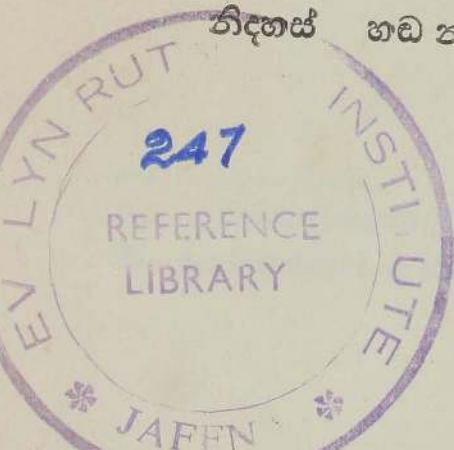
191 : B. NATIONAL SONG

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 හැර ජාති වංශ ආගම් කුල හෙද—රුදුවන් සැම අප විත්‍රා  
 සෝද ජලයෙනි මහ වැලි ගංගා ශුද්ධ කරන් ලක තුංගා  
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 තුනි වේ—තුනි වේ—ඔබ හට ජය තුනි වේ  
 සියල් සිරිත් හෙබි අප ලක් දිවයින දෙවි විමනක් විය රමණී  
 සිටියෝ රජ දරු පෙර අප නැසියෝ දුක නැතිවම සමගියෙනි  
 උතුමෙනි අද කිම සිදුවී—සමගිය අපතර නැති වී සිරිත් ධම්ම වී හංගා  
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 ඔබ දෙන නෙක සිරිද ඉවතා අපි සෙව්වෙමු අන් අය සරණා  
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 නව ජීවන රස දෙමිනි—අවධි කරන් ලක් මැණි  
 උද කරන් නව සුයභී  
 ඔබ සිහසුන හිඳ කර මැන සවනය කියන මෙ දුක් ගීතා  
 තුනිවේ—තුනිවේ—තුනිවේ ජය තුනිවේ.

191 : C. FREEDOM SONG

නිදහස්	සුවය ලබමින් සිතු නොපැකි	ල්ලේ
නිදහස්	දද සෙවන සිටියෙමු සැනසි	ල්ලේ
නිදහස්	සුව යලිදු ලබනුව සැලකි	ල්ලේ
නිදහස්	හඬ නගමු ! සමගිව එක එ	ල්ලේ

















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