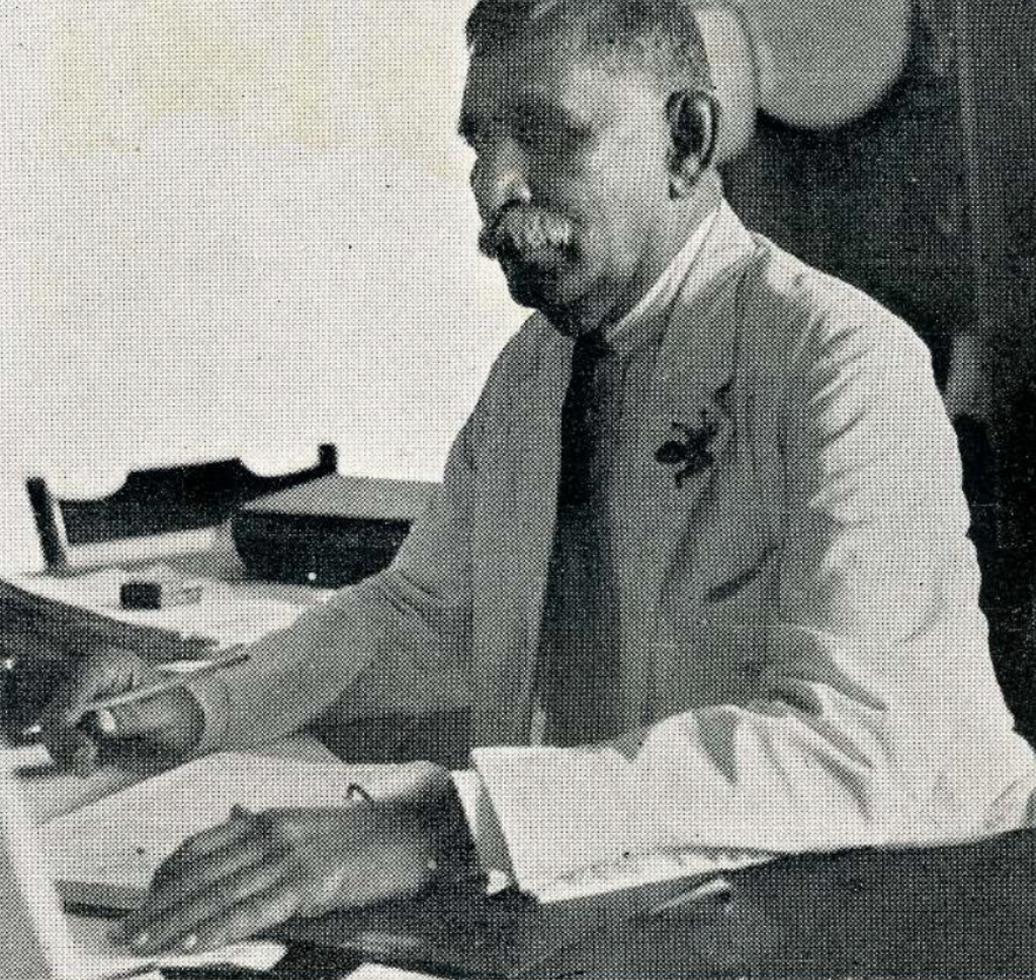


# PROGRESS through DEMOCRACY







The Rt. Hon. D. S. Senanayake, Ceylon's first Prime Minister



# PROGRESS through DEMOCRACY

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TWENTY-ONE years is a sizable slice of anybody's life. To those who are still young a good part of the years that have rolled by since 1931 have been mercifully free from anxiety and stress. Others have spent the past quarter of a century busy living, with little time to take note of events in their lives. A good reason why they did not do so is perhaps because there was so little in their lives which could be called eventful. One year seemed so much like another, during this period. Every year faithfully brought its more or less scheduled quota of troubles and joys.

But while many thousands lived their humdrum lives during the past two decades, many important events occurred, which, even if they did not appear to have a direct and immediate impact on their lives, did nevertheless influence very considerably not only the pattern of their lives, but also the lives of many thousands still unborn.

The events of the past twenty-one years which may be said to have had a lasting influence on this and generations to come, were those events which occurred in the political and economic spheres.

Let us then take a glimpse of the overall effect of the general progress made for the country and people as a whole : for today we do not, and very properly too, leave the fashioning of our governments and the economic policies they pursue exclusively to the politician and the economist.



The House of Representatives, Ceylon

# In the Political and Economic Fields

The emphasis, in fact, was precisely in that order, for those who were at the helm of affairs in this country were realistic enough to recognize that we could make little headway in our economic development, unless we first obtained our political independence. With this objective in view many of our statesmen sought, by constitutional means, to obtain in increasing measure political independence for the people. This was partially achieved when the Ceylon State Council was inaugurated, but the limitations placed in respect of the exercise of power over the "country's purse" by the representatives of the people, was a handicap which prevented the diversion of the country's revenue towards the development of her national resources. And so the agitation for further political reforms continued with unabated vigour.

Many political personalities figure in the struggle for emancipation by constitutional means. It still stands to the

credit of our leaders and our people that political freedom was sought and achieved by constitutional means, without bitterness or violence. If our leaders achieved these methods they did not, at the same time, lack in political sagacity and the capacity to turn every opportunity to advantage. If one may sum up the technique adopted in our struggle for political freedom, it may be said that we always "took what we were given by Whitehall and always asked for more".

Our leaders did not stop asking until this country had eventually been granted her political independence. And that climax of many decades of agitation in which many patriots played their part, was in the fitness of things (and with due acknowledgment to those who had begun and carried on the struggle before him and also those who worked with him) the crowning achievement of our Prime Minister, the Right Honourable D. S. Senanayake.

That is but a glimpse of the political evolution in this country

during the past twenty-one years, which resulted in the granting of Independence to Ceylon in 1948 by His Majesty's Government in Great Britain. It was the ringing down of the curtain on 133 years of British rule in this country and nearly 400 years of foreign domination.

We were at last politically free again. Free to bring back to our people all those amenities of life which centuries of foreign rule either denied them or, at best, gave in small and niggardly measure; free to wipe out the widespread poverty and hardship in the country, particularly among our neglected peasantry. In other words, free to use an instrument placed in our possession to attain "the greatest happiness for the greatest number".

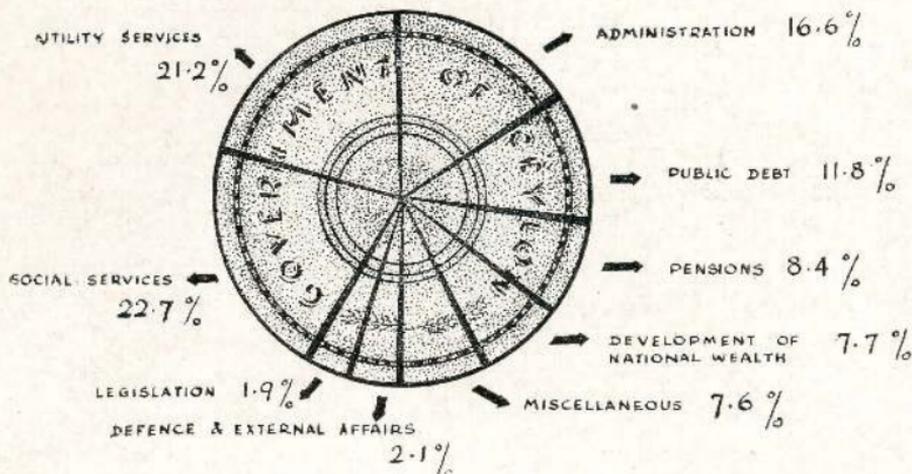
How did we set about doing this? It is here that we cross over from the political to the economic sphere, for the Government that took office as the first people's government of a free Ceylon under the leadership of Mr. D. S. Senanayake, realized only too well that our political freedom would be dead sea fruit unless we used this freedom to

achieve as speedily as possible our economic emancipation as well.

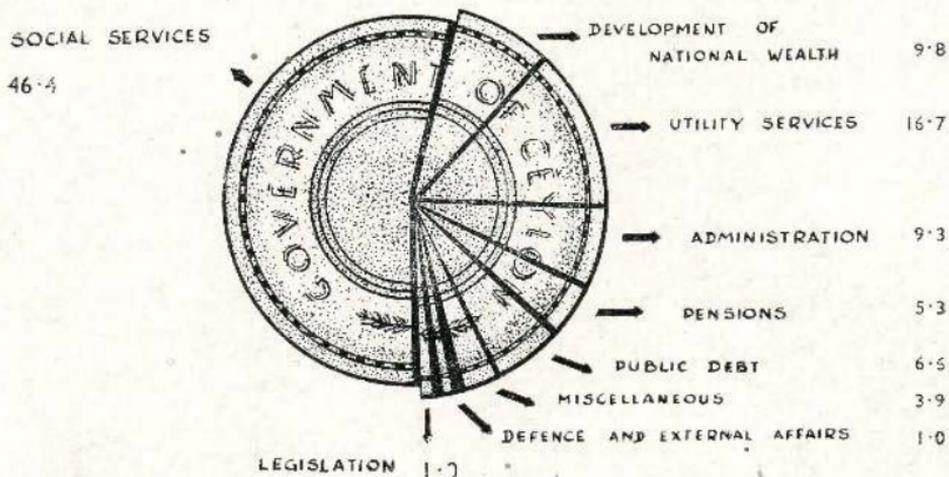
The Government had to decide on first things first. In making its decisions on priorities, the Government was in the very nature of things, vulnerable to the charge of preferences, but at no time did the Government flinch from its ultimate objective, namely, that its duty was to serve the people and in doing so, serve in such a manner as to ensure the greatest happiness to the greatest number—the yardstick by which all governments are judged.

The story of how Lanka survived the severe food shortage of the war years is fairly well niched in our minds; to recall—here are some features of that story—the endurance of the people and their uncomplaining self adjustment to meagre rations, the change in the nation's diet at the war's worst crisis, the patriotic and great-hearted efforts of her farmers to grow more food and thereby reduce an almost total dependence on supplies from abroad—the rationing system that never failed those several years to deliver the rice ration, however slender this

## DISTRIBUTION OF GOVT. EXPENDITURE 1930-31

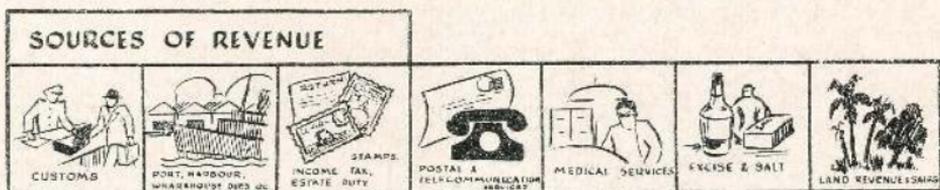


## DISTRIBUTION OF GOVT. EXPENDITURE 1949-50



might have been at times, the fact—itself a tribute to the excellence of rationing—that no human being of this land died of hunger in all those years while

people perished of famine in countless numbers on the neighbouring continent. For all this, Lanka can justly be proud of her people and her administration.



# National Wealth

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In setting about the task of increasing the national wealth, the Government did not allow a false sense of narrow nationalism to impede progress. Ceylon's main money crops—tea, rubber and coconut—were still the life blood of her economy, even as it was the tidy reward of her colonial rulers. These assets were nursed and appropriate measures adopted by legislation and other means, so that they were not frittered away or allowed to diminish. New replanting schemes and pest control projects have been set in motion for increasing the production of these money crops, which bring wealth to the country and revenue to the Government.

The amelioration of a much neglected peasantry also figured high on the Government's list of priorities. Land for the landless was the slogan that was effectively translated into practice in many areas. The Government's colonisation schemes settled on farms and in homesteads many thousands of landless peasants. The colonisation schemes bestow-

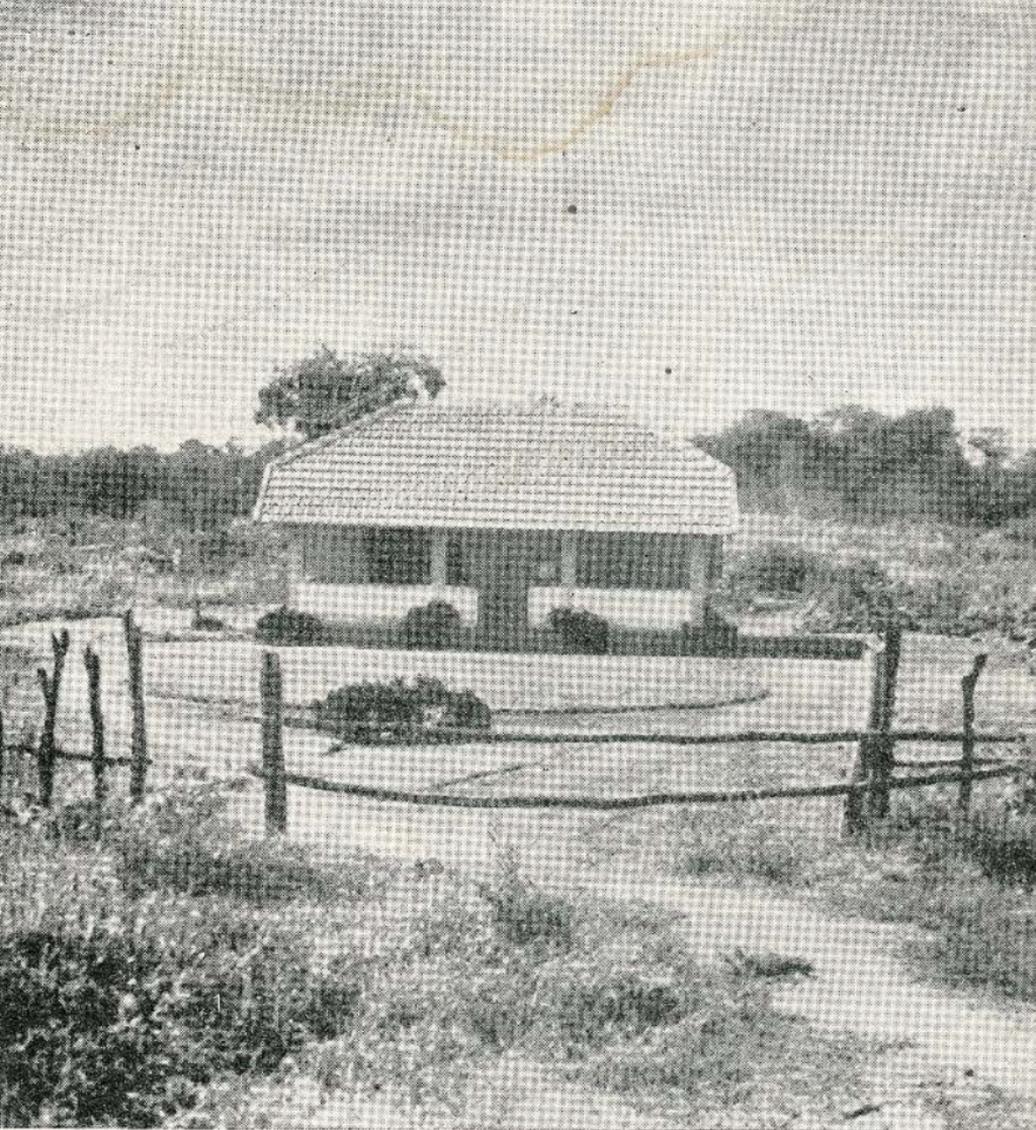
ed benefits to peasant as well as middle-class allottees. That was the way the Government met the short-term demands of an impoverished peasantry, who had suffered much under a long colonial regime.

But the Government had also to plan for the prosperity not only of the peasantry, but the people as a whole, by launching agricultural projects that would in their fruition wipe away many of the ills of our peasantry and also provide food for the national larder. Against the background of an increasing population, measures had to be taken to ensure that the food production projects would provide for coming generations as well to meet the long-term food problem, the major multi-purpose projects at Gal Oya and Walawe, were planned and launched.

The population of Ceylon is at present about 7.7 millions. It has reached its present figures after nearly 80 years of rapid growth, involving a three-fold increase.



Agriculture—Old methods of farming (top) and the modern mechanized methods



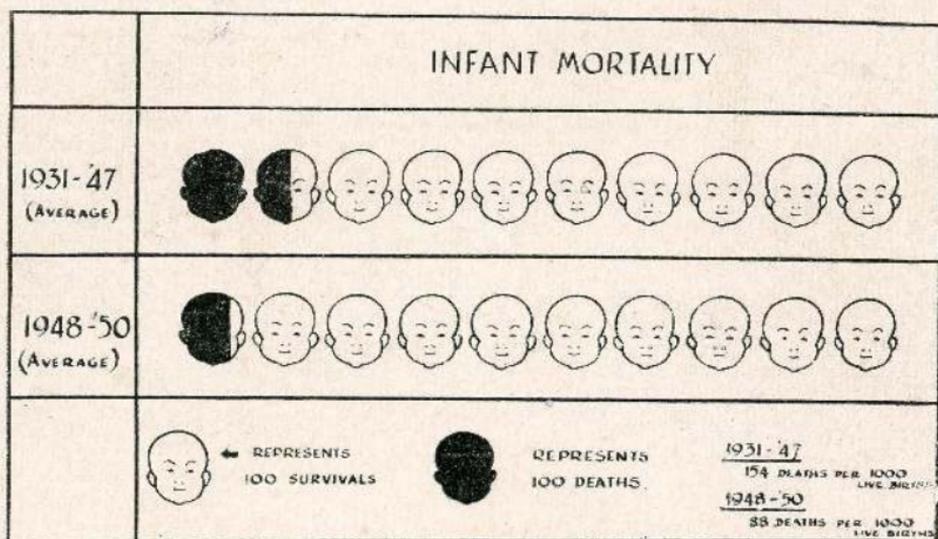
• A colonist's home in North-Central Province

The estimated mid-year population in 1926 was 4,928,000. From 1926-30. the population increased, at the average annual rate of 1.6 per cent. per annum and the average population during

the period was 5,091,000. Within the next 16 years the population passed through a period of many eventful phases. The first major event was the malaria epidemic in 1935 which sent the death

rate up to 36.6 per thousand and consequently the birth rate dropped to 34.1 in the next year. The other major event was the phenomenal drop in the death rate from 20.3 in 1946 to 14.3 in 1947. This was partly due to the eradication of malaria and other insect-borne diseases by the uses of D. D. T. and partly due to the general improvement in the standard of living of the masses. The last three

years witnessed an extremely low death rate (average 12.8) which compares favourably with European countries. The birth rate still remains at the 40 level. The population is now increasing at the alarmingly high annual rate of about 3 per cent.—a rate which has rarely been experienced in any part of the world. If this rate continues, we may expect a population of 10,000,000 in 1960 and 14,000,000 in 1970.



You are one of 7.7 million with a life to live in Ceylon in this year 1951. You are certainly a consumer. You may be an urban dweller. The urban

dweller has no field or plot of land to cultivate and sell his crops at guaranteed prices to the Government. His sole stake in life is his wage or salary. The

rising cost of living in Ceylon, a phenomenon which is evident in worse forms in other countries, also received the attention of Government.

Over three-fourths of your food this year will be imported. Food and other requirements we import have to be paid for from the proceeds of the goods we

## IMPORTS AND EXPORTS FROM STERLING AREAS AND OTHER COUNTRIES

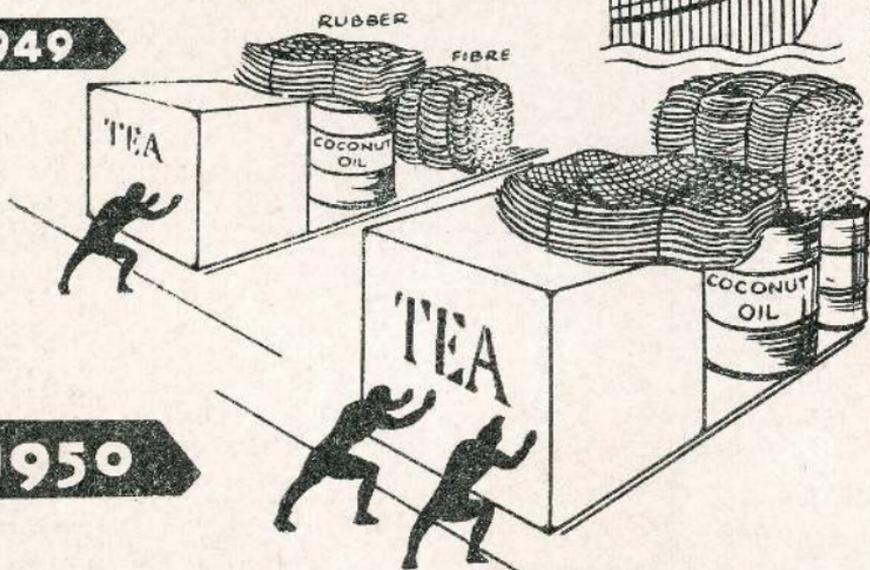


export, or in other words, we cannot buy unless we sell, and the limit of what we can spend on imports is fixed by the value of our exports.

The Ceylon Government has been expending large sums on subsidy. Up to September 30, 1947, the total sum so expended was Rs. 97 million. In 1947-48,

# EXPORTS

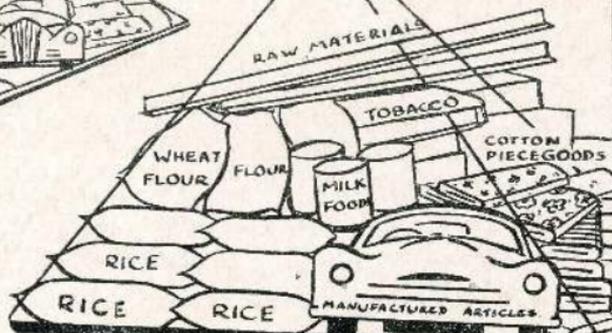
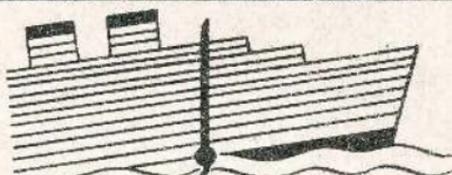
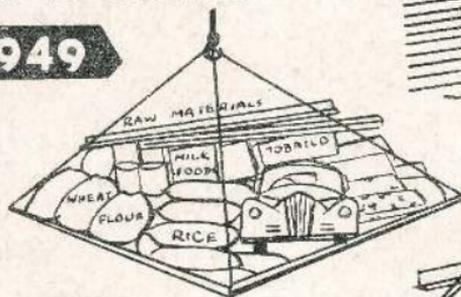
1949



1950

# IMPORTS

1949



1950



Food Imports

1948-49 and 1949-50, the subsidy amounted to Rs. 78, Rs. 54 and Rs. 36 million respectively. During the latter half of 1950 the subsidy was further increased and it is now running at the approximate rate of Rs. 130 million per annum. This is a comparatively very large sum considering the revenue of the Government, and there has been much criticism on this score. One of the chief drawbacks of subsidization of consumption goods is the adverse effect it has on the balance of payments.

Subsidies have been offered mainly through reduced prices of rice and flour which were subject to a proper rationing system. The Government also attempted at various times during the war to subsidize other items

which were not subject to full rationing. In general, such attempts have not been very successful.

In order to keep down the cost of living, Government found that it was necessary to sell to consumers the more important foods at fixed prices considerably below those which it paid to suppliers abroad. The cost of rice now to the Government is 87 cents a measure—to give it in turn to you at 25 cents a measure, a reduction of 11 cents was made from December, 1950. Your pound of flour costs the Government 29 1/2 cents but you get it at 23 cents. The entire food subsidy for 1951-52 is in the region of Rs. 200 million. This has greatly solved the cost of living problem in Ceylon.

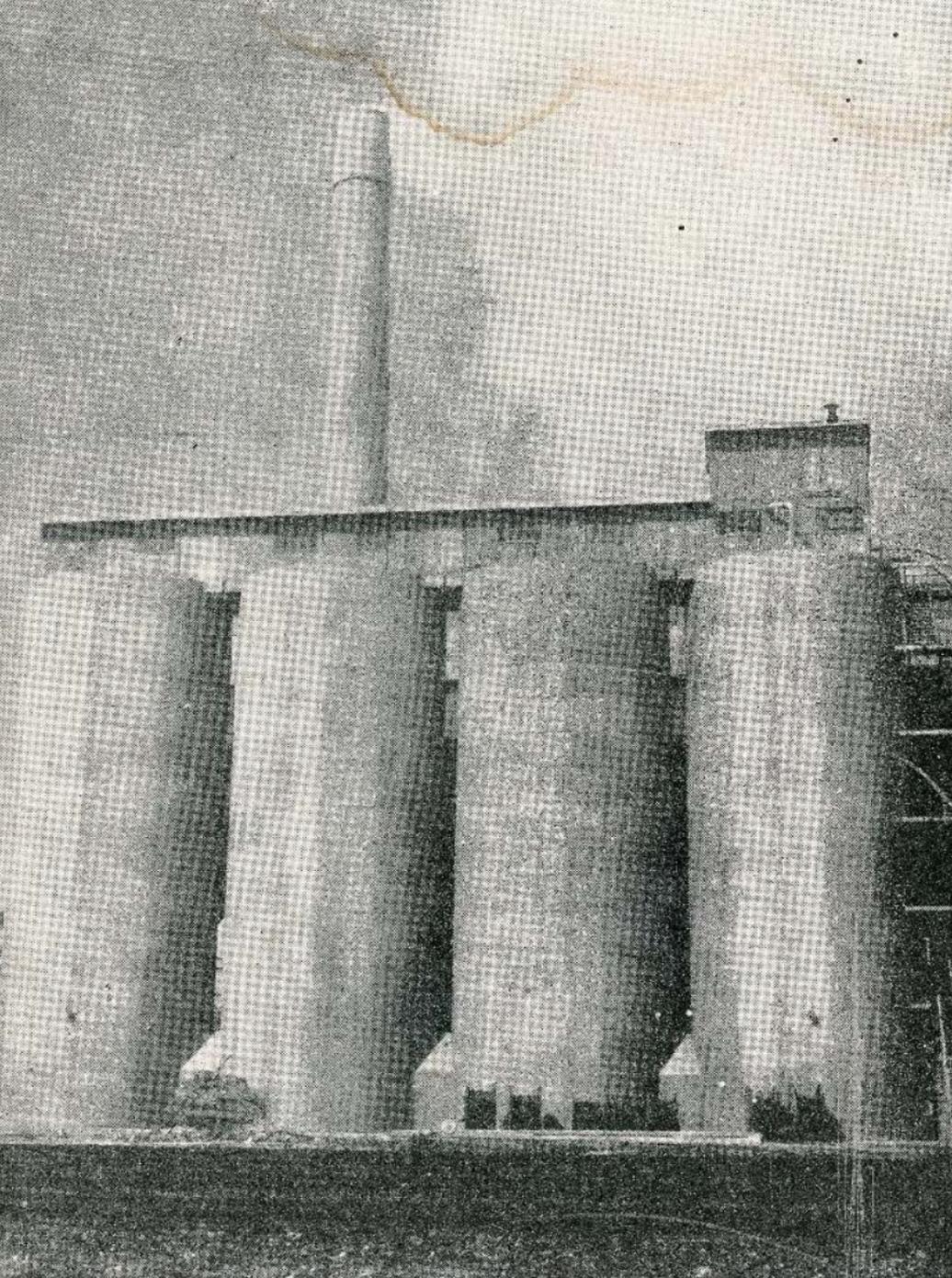
# Standard of Living

The standard of living in Ceylon was considerably depressed during the last war, the lowest point was in 1942 when we felt the full blast of the Jap war.

The recovery has been gradual and it has consistently remained below the 1938 level until 1947. However, since 1947 we have reached the 1938 standard of living in spite of the high prices of imports and the exceptional increase of population. The 1950 figure of 106.6 has reached the 1928 level, which was one of the most prosperous years of the century. This does not mean that the standard of living of everyone in this Island has improved. It is no doubt quite true of the lower income groups; otherwise, the magnitude of the figures would not have been affected. It is certainly not true of the middle classes with fixed incomes whose incomes have not kept pace with prices. However, the numbers affected are relatively small and, in any case, the

disparity between the pre-war standard of living of the working classes and the middle classes was too great to be economically justifiable.

The estimated revenue in the 1931-32 budget was Rs. 83 million, of which revenue from customs produced almost Rs. 40 million. There was hardly any revenue from direct taxation for there were no income or profits taxes. Today our revenue is almost a billion rupees, of which 25 per cent. comes from direct taxation. In 1931-32, Rs. 11 million was spent on health and Rs. 9 million on agriculture and lands. Twenty years ago the education bill cost the Government Rs. 14 million. Today the Government spends Rs. 96 million on health, Rs. 79 million on agriculture and lands, and Rs. 140 million on education from current revenue alone. This is exclusive of expenditure from loan funds on these items.



The Government Cement Factory at Kankasanturai

# Agriculture

Of the total area of about  $16\frac{1}{4}$  million acres, approximately  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million are under cultivation. Of the remainder, it is estimated that about  $1\frac{1}{4}$  million acres are occupied by roads, streams, tanks, towns and villages; about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million acres by forests (including national reserves and sanctuaries); rocky and steep land as well as land above 5,000 ft. in height occupy about  $4\frac{3}{4}$  million acres, and the total cultivated extent is now about  $3\frac{1}{2}$  million acres. About  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million acres of this are devoted to the three major plantation industries—tea, rubber and coconut—and the remainder is under various food crops.

## Paddy

The extent of land cultivated with paddy in 1926 was estimated to be 834,300 acres. The census of agriculture carried out in conjunction with the census of population in 1946, revealed that the total extent of asweddumized

paddy lands (exclusive of land within estates) was 899,971 acres and paddy lands in 'A' estates was 13,270 acres making a total of 913,241 acres. The cultivation of paddy on estates was more or less a new feature introduced by the State Council order in 1942. The extent of land under paddy cultivation now, is about 890,000 with a further extent of about 11,500 acres on estates giving a total cultivable extent of 901,500 acres.

Large extents of land have been alienated for colonization schemes. Prior to 1939, 6,861 acres of paddy and highland (4,290 acres of estimated paddy lands) were alienated, while in 1949 an extent of 20,846 acres of paddy and highland (13,000 acres estimated paddy) were alienated for colonization schemes. The total extent from 1939–1950 so alienated has been 60,016 acres paddy and highland (37,530 acres paddy).

Under the village expansion scheme to peasants and to middle class Ceylonese, the acreage alienated was as follows :—

Year	To Peasants	To middle class Ceylonese	Total
1939	13,853	8,015	21,868
1940	16,362	2,176	18,538
1941	12,366	6,710	19,076
1942	4,655	1,168	5,823
1943	2,986	10,451	13,437
1944	3,602	2,581	6,183
1945	4,906	1,033	5,939
1946	9,199	1,404	10,603
1947	12,274	1,647	13,921
1948	27,306	5,868	33,174
1949	27,836	1,354	29,190
1950	39,484	1,942	41,426
Total 1939-1950	174,829	44,349	219,178

The industrial development of the country, which operates side by side with our agricultural expansion, is offering more employment, better wages, housing for workers and other amenities which our labour laws (described as the most advanced in this part of the world) confer by right on the worker.

The hand-in-hand progress of industrial and agricultural

development under the Government's Six Year Plan is contributing very materially towards the betterment of the people. Let us cite a few examples. The State Textile Factory will mean that new areas will be brought under cultivation in cotton, for the Government's policy is not to depend on raw materials from sources outside this country. Our sugar factory will mean opening

up of large areas for the cultivation of sugar cane. Apart from the production of sugar, we will produce by-products such as plastics and celotex.

The opening up of these new areas for cultivation and development will also mean new roads and the provision of all those amenities such as postal

and telegraph facilities, new transport services, schools, and generally speaking, the transformation of hitherto isolated and neglected outposts into busy and productive centres.

One of the major industrial projects is the establishment of the Cement Factory at Kankesan-turai.



Public Assistance by Local Bodies ; monthly allowances given to the needy

# Social Services

The first systematic and centrally organized efforts to deal with social distress in Ceylon date back to not more than 20 years. Until then the only instrument of aid lay in public charity, private alms, government grants, and free medical assistance. In the early 1930s, the years of the economic depression, there was created, here as elsewhere, the problem of mass unemployment, and prevailing distress pushed into prominence the question of poor relief. The inadequacy of the then social services to meet the problem saw the appointment of a Commission in 1944 to inquire into ways and means of improving, extending and co-ordinating social assistance and allied services, and in 1947 the creation of a new Ministry of Labour and Social Services, and a separate department of Social Services was established the following year, which dealt with poor relief, workmen's compensation, charitable institutions, relief of distress and social insurance, previously administered by the Department

of Labour. The most important piece of social legislation enacted for rendering public assistance to the poor was the Poor Law Ordinance, No. 30 of 1939.

Although the Ordinance contains provisions for extending its operations to all urban and rural areas, it has in fact not extended beyond the Municipalities.

In areas outside the Municipalities the full responsibility for administering relief is borne by the Central Government and the following schemes are administered through the Revenue Officers who are assisted by District Advisory Committees and Local Committees :—

- (a) public assistance ;
- (b) relief of distress caused by floods ; and
- (c) relief of widespread distress due to failure of crops, epidemics and other exceptional causes.

Assistance in the form of monthly allowances is given in

necessitous cases to the sick, the aged, the infirm, the physically and mentally defective ; widows and destitute widows. The 1946 scale of assistance, namely, Rs. 5 per mensem for an individual and Rs. 10 for a person with dependants continued to operate till April, 1948, when the scale was increased to maxima of Rs. 10 and Rs. 20 respectively.

In 1947-1948, a sum of Rs. 3,200,000 was spent in relieving about 42,700 persons by the grant of monthly allowances ; in the following year, a sum of Rs. 5,800,000 was spent in relieving about 45,000, and in 1949, a sum of Rs. 5,500,000 for 60,000 persons.

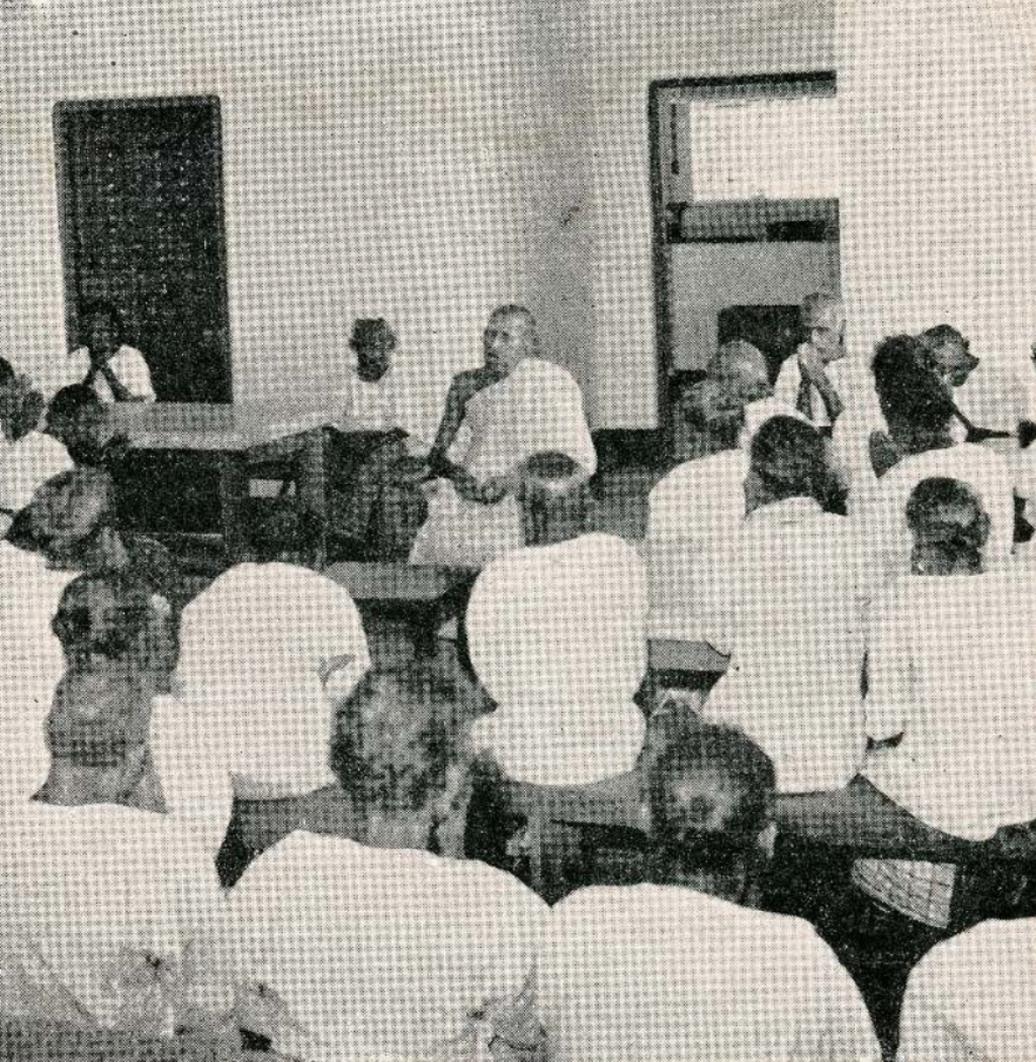
Casual relief grants for the relief of acute distress resulting from accidents or " Acts of God " affecting individuals in isolated cases or in small groups, amounted to Rs. 142,000 in 1948-49 and Rs. 117,000 the next year.

## **Voluntary Agencies**

There are many voluntary charitable agencies carrying out social service. They include Homes for the Aged, Friend-in-need Societies, Social Service Leagues, &c. Although these agencies continued

to perform a very necessary and useful service, the paucity of funds generally makes their efforts inadequate in relation to the large numbers seeking assistance. Government grants are therefore given to them in amounts usually proportionate to the support they receive from the public.

During the year 1949-1950, Rs. 135,800 of assistance was given to forty-seven such voluntary agencies and institutions as against thirty-eight agencies which received Rs. 106,540 in the previous year. Government's policy in regard to Homes for the Aged hitherto has been to assist, by means of grants, existing homes which are financed by private subscriptions and some by voluntary agencies. But owing to the fact that voluntary agencies are unable to cope with the demand for institutional relief, the Government has decided to establish State Homes for the Aged. One has already been established at Koggala in the Southern Province and action is being taken to establish State Homes in other provinces as well.



The establishment of State Homes for the Aged forms an important part in the Scheme of Social Services provided by the State

The principle that the after-care of the deaf and blind persons is the responsibility of the State has been accepted. In the estimates for 1949-1950 a sum of Rs. 402,400 was provided for the

establishment of sheltered workshops for the deaf and blind.

### **Relief of Distress**

Relief is also extended in cases of abnormal distress caused by floods, storms, epidemics, failure

of crops, damage to houses and personal property by fires and the like. Persons who are eligible for grants are those who are dependent solely or partly on daily-paid labour for their maintenance, villagers who cannot be expected to repair the damage caused, and minor salaried employees. Thus a sum of Rs. 923,541 was expended in 1949-1950 as against Rs. 1,626,054 in 1948-1949.

The claim has been put forward, not unjustifiably, that Ceylon could well be called a social service state. The percentage of expenditure on social services in Ceylon by the State has highly impressed most financial observers from abroad. It stands out in distinct contrast with other countries in South-East Asia. The Government has rightly assumed that the man-power of the country is its greatest asset, and, therefore, that the development of its man-power should be the foremost task of the Government. On this principle, the present

Government and its forerunners under the Donoughmore Constitution have put aside the maximum possible sums for social services, principally for the improvement of the health and education of the people. In the first period from 1925-26-1929-30, approximately 16.4 per cent. of the Government on current account was spent on social services. In the next period the figure was 26.4 per cent. Under the present Government for the years 1947-48 and 1948-49 the corresponding figures are 56.1 per cent. and 47.5 per cent., respectively. The expenditure of nearly 50 per cent. on social services is remarkable. The dividends on the major part of this expenditure will not be immediate. They will not be realized even when the fruits of the expenditure on long-term national development plans appear. But the future generation will be fully equipped in education and health to be able to face the competition of the outside world.

# Education

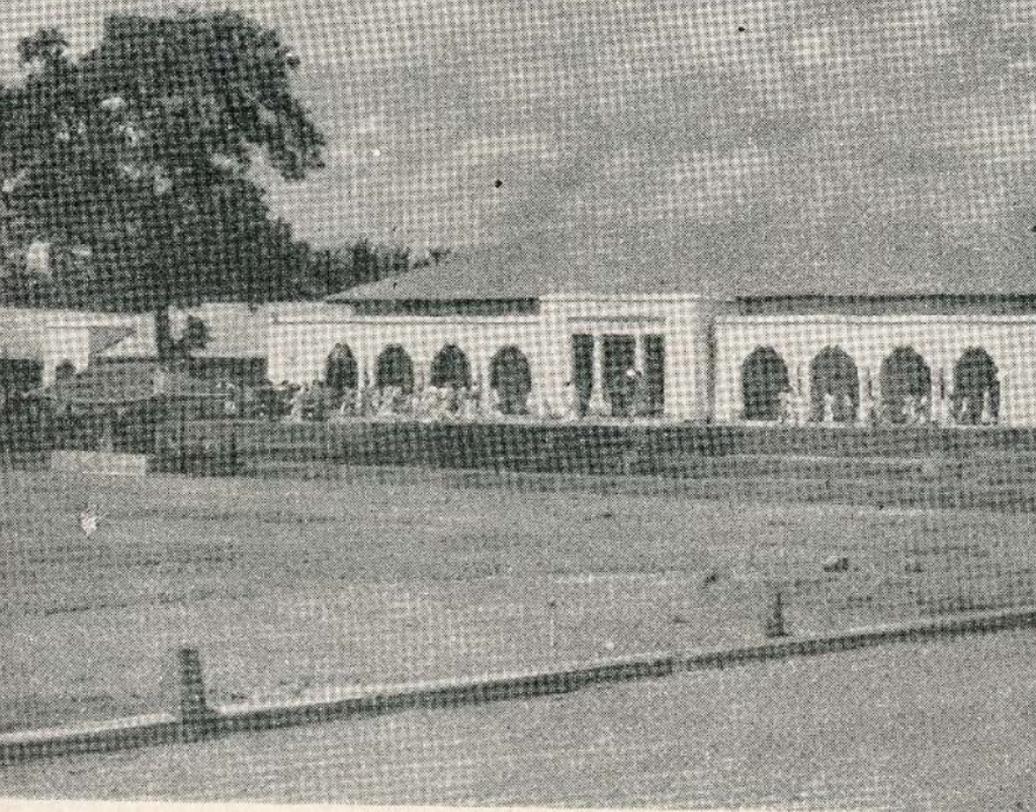
The expenditure on Education has increased from Rs. 7.8 million in 1925-26 to Rs. 106 million in 1949-50 from current revenue alone. Education is now free from the Kindergarten to the conclusion of the University stage, except for a very small number of schools. In 1949, there were 3,135 Government schools, the number of schools opened by Government that year was 55, comprising 5 English, 37 Sinhalese, and 13 Tamil schools. There were 3,257 Assisted Schools the same year. Under the free scheme, Government undertakes to pay the entire salaries of the approved staff of a school together with a maintenance and equipment grant calculated at specified rates.

A start has been made to provide new schools for primary and secondary education throughout the Island, and the first stage in the transfer of the University

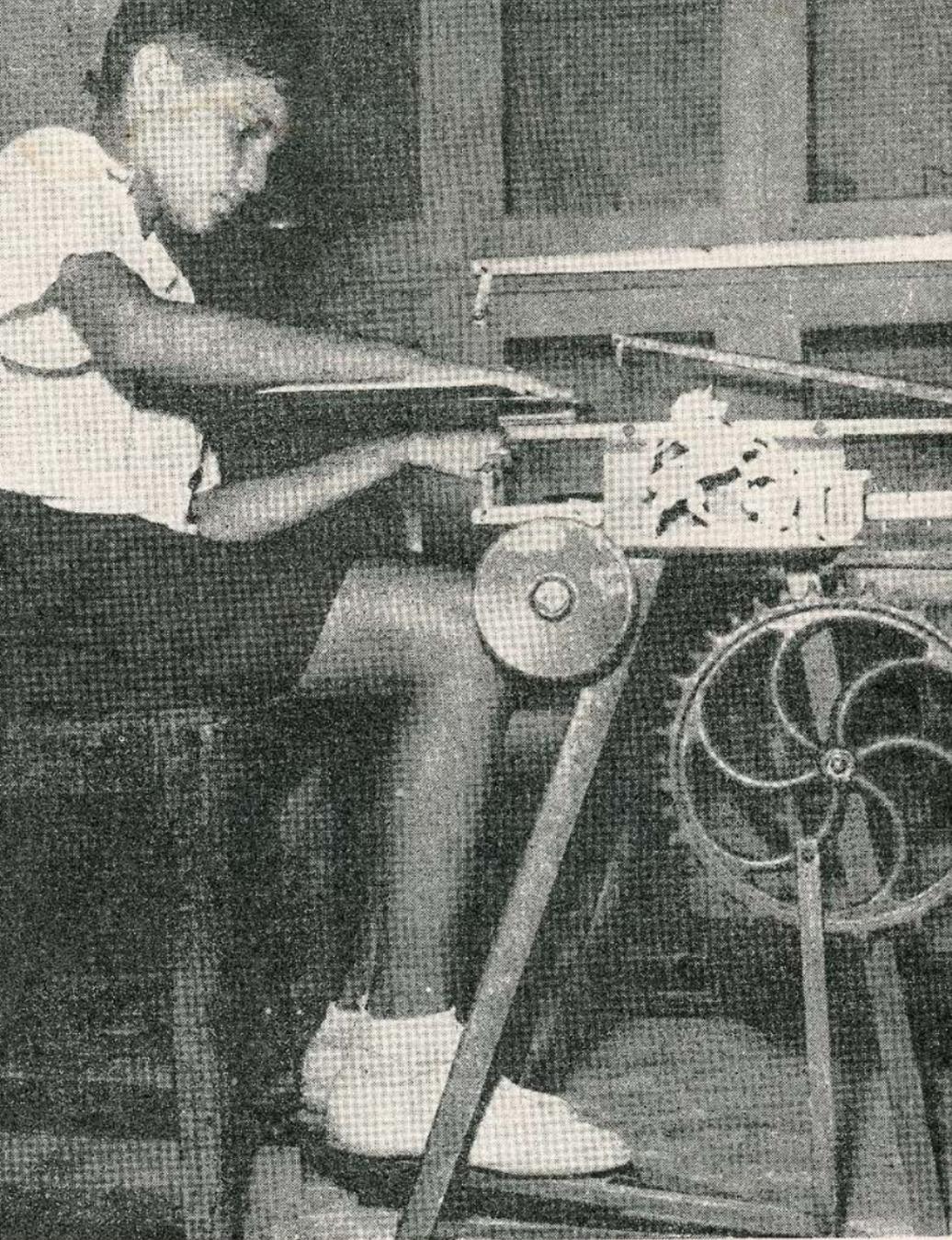
from Colombo to Peradeniya has begun.

Since 1939 an organized effort has been made to bring the benefits of Adult Education within the reach of the rural population. Adult centres attached to Government Training Colleges, Central and Senior Schools, are now functioning. A co-ordination of work of the Rural Development Department, the Local Government Department, and the Mahila Samiti, is aimed at in the field of Adult Education in Ceylon.

The Government has provided for free midday meals to school children which has been a great solace to the children themselves and to the poor parents who were unable to feed their children adequately. In 1936, the amount spent on free midday meals to school children was Rs. 242,000. This figure has increased gradually and in 1950-51 the Government spent Rs. 10,000,000.



The new Central Schools established throughout the principal provinces



Practical Education

## Health Services

The eradication of malaria and, generally speaking, the establishment of a high standard of health among the people, a standard that is the envy of other countries in South-East Asia, are achievements of the Government, which will spend Rs. 116 million from current revenue and from loan fund expenditure, as compared with a meagre Rs. 9 million in 1925-26. The increased facilities provided as a result of this expenditure is seen from the increased numbers of hospitals, beds, doctors, apothecaries, nurses, and attendants, during the last 25 years. The number of beds which was 8,089 in 1946 has gone up to over 20,000 in 1950, or from 1.64 beds per one thousand persons of the population to 2.70 beds per one thousand persons. But still the shortage of medical facilities is being felt acutely. But the expenditure on social services is necessarily limited by the size of the national income, and even now there is a strong body

of opinion that the Government has already exceeded this limit.

There are 256 Government hospitals in the Island, providing 19,809 beds which include 6,181 in special institutions. Besides dispensaries attached to these hospitals, there are 225 central dispensaries—13 in charge of Medical Officers, 212 in charge of Apothecaries; in addition there are 184 branch dispensaries and 551 visiting stations attached to these central dispensaries. In 1949, 741,202 patients were treated as in-patients at these hospitals, and 9,420,091 out-door cases at the dispensaries.

Maternity and child welfare work has been extremely successful. The maternal mortality rate has been reduced from 19.0 in 1926 to 6.5 in 1949, and the infantile mortality rate from 174 per 1,000 live births to 87. Maternity homes are growing in popularity; school health work, estate health work, intensified; and quarantine work, health, education, and publicity, have

largely contributed towards the health of the Nation. Indigenous medicine has been considerably helped by State aid today. In 1931 there was no provision for State aid for indigenous medicine ; and in 1940, the expenditure was Rs. 79,000. In 1951-52 provision has been made for Rs. 1 million to be spent on indigenous medicine from current revenue and Rs. 3½ lakhs from loan funds. The registration of competent ayurvedic practitioners, a uniformity of system in the practice, the establishment of a Central Ayurvedic Pharmacy to standardize the

quality of drugs, are some of the measures contemplated. Every attempt is being made to see that all that is good in ayurvedic medicine is discovered and utilized for benefit of the sick.

### **Free milk**

The supply of free milk to children and expectant mothers through Government's milk feeding centres throughout the Island cost Rs. 3.5 million in 1949-1950. The results of this policy are apparent from the significant reduction in infant and maternal mortality rates in recent years.

# Co-operative Movement

It is generally recognized that co-operation is the solution to most rural economic problems such as credit, production, marketing, &c., in under-developed countries. The development of the co-operative movement in Ceylon within the last few years is almost spectacular. In fact, today the co-operative movement in Ceylon is taken as a model and officers from South-east Asian countries visit Ceylon to study the movement at first hand. The co-operative movement in Ceylon before the war was not very impressive. The reason for its extraordinary growth within this short time is primarily due to the active support given by the Government. In very few other countries do we find the Government extending such a measure of assistance to the movement.

There is a tendency to discredit the movement because its success is due to Governmental support. For instance, the spectacular increase in the number of

consumer societies was entirely due to the Government's policy of distributing the rations through co-operatives and the marketing and production societies came into existence to take advantage of the subsidies given by Government to the farmer in the form of free manure, &c., and to sell the produce to the Government at the guaranteed price. The Government recognizes the movement in its initial stages when the villager gains experience in the principles and practices of co-operation. This experience of the people will be one of the greatest capital assets that the country is building up today.

In pre-war days the most popular type of co-operative society was the credit society. Consumer societies in the villages were not a success and the only consumer societies were to be found on estates. Even as late as 1942 there was not a single rural or urban store. Today there are over 3,500 consumer societies. There were no marketing and production societies

before the war. Their growth has been very rapid in recent years, the number of such societies being 171, 193, 309 and 459 in 1946-1947, 1947-1948, 1948-1949, and 1949-1950 respectively. The 6,767 Co-operative Societies (in 1950) and their distribution throughout the Island shows the varied and many-sided activities that the co-operative movement has undertaken in the last few decades.

## Conclusion

This review of the past twenty-one years does not claim to be a detailed account of the work done by the Government during this period, particularly by the Government that took office after the granting of independence to Ceylon. A publication of this nature cannot purport to hold within its pages a complete account of the stewardship of the events of the past two and a half decades. But this publication would have served its purpose if it has stimulated the interest of the reader to pursue the progress of the country during the period covered, and to equip himself with a full and analytical survey of the economic advancement of the country, by perusing "The Survey of the Economic and Social Development of Ceylon" published by the Department of Census and Statistics.

In the words of the Honourable Mr. J. R. Jayawardene, Minister of Finance, introducing the National Budget for 1951-52: "the people of Lanka enter upon the twenty-first year of the use of adult franchise with the knowledge that its grant has been completely justified, that the advantages they have gained have been the fruits, not of the work of particular individuals or governments, but of the people themselves. The credit must go to them for the manner in which they have chosen the majority of their representatives, and for the vigilance with which they have sought to keep them pledged to the fulfilment of progressive social and economic measures. The achievement of these twenty years is the achievement of the people, and it is in their hands not only to maintain this rate of progress, but to accelerate it in the years to come. It is also incumbent upon them to see that freedom of speech and the freedom to choose their representatives, rights which constitute some of the cherished possessions of a free and democratic nation, are preserved".

The progress made by the country in all spheres is undoubted and its benefits have reached the masses of this country, in

a marked degree, in terms of human happiness. But human nature is such that we all like to ask for more. The freedom we enjoy, based on the best tradition of democratic parliamentary institutions, not the least valuable being that of free speech, enables everybody to take advantage of our progress and at the same time ask for more. We cherish our democratic ideals so much that even those who enjoy the fruits of our freedom can, while doing so, criticize government for what it has done or undone. When that criticism is helpful, the Government is not slow to take advantage of it. To make sure that it is helpful and well-intentioned is surely what democracy means.







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