

THE
MILITARY
HISTORY
OF CEYLON
-an outline

ANTON MUTTUKUMARU

Foreword

President J.R. Jayewardene

THE MILITARY HISTORY OF CEYLON — An Outline

By
Major General Anton ~~Muttukumar~~
OBE ED ADC
BA(OXON) BAR-AT-LAW (GRAY'S INN) idc

Foreword

President J.R. Jayewardene



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Dedication

**This book is dedicated to the Officers and Men who
served with me in the Ceylon Defence Force
and in the Regular Force of the
Sri Lanka Army**

and

**To the memory of our colleagues who fought for peace
in their life time and have now
found their eternal peace.**



President of Sri Lanka

16th January 1986.

I have known Major General Anton Muttukumaru, the author of this book, as a lawyer, soldier, diplomat and friend. Now I have the pleasure of knowing him as a historian. He modestly makes no claim to be recognised as a historian. In outlining our military history over a period of 2500 years he however has earned that distinction.

Perhaps the outstanding value of this work lies in its pioneering character. There are many works, some of which I have read, which deal with aspects of our military past. What the author has done is to produce a comprehensive work covering our entire military history which no one has hitherto attempted. This is in itself an achievement.

This work is valuable also for its statement of the modern period since Independence in 1948. There is no one I know who is better qualified to cover this period than the author because of his personal association with the affairs of that period, to some of which he has himself contributed as Chief of Staff and Commander of the Army.

The thanks of the public interested in our military history are due to the author for his public spiritedness in undertaking this work. He expresses the hope that his example will be followed by others. I sincerely hope so.

J. R. Jayewardene
PRESIDENT OF SRI LANKA

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Prologue

The need for a properly researched history of military affairs in Sri Lanka was brought home forcefully to my mind when I assumed duties as Chief of Staff of the Army of Independent Ceylon. I was disappointed to find that there was no recorded military history. I was also disappointed to note that, even in his monumental work entitled "Ceylon-an account of the Island: physical, historical and topographical" which provides a vast amount of information on Ceylon valuable to scholars, Sir Emerson Tennent makes but casual and incidental reference to military matters.

I thought that this should be remedied, because there is need to ascertain whether the soldier in Ceylon history makes any worthwhile contribution to that history and whether there is a reason-unlike in India, where the warrior is recognised as constituting a defined class in Indian society-for the Ceylonese soldier to be relegated to the background. I therefore decided that there would be merit in my undertaking a study of our military history in order to ascertain the place of the soldier in that history. I certainly wished to investigate whether there is any element in our military history which could contribute to the traditions, organisation and handling of the Army being created in Sri Lanka.

So far as the pre-colonial period was concerned, I noted with pleasure that the Mahawamsa and Culuwamsa, even though devoted to the history of Ceylon with a pronounced Buddhist slant, have recorded material which would be valuable to the student of military affairs in Ceylon.

For the Colonial period, I felt that, whilst there are publications which would provide excellent source material, it would be profitable to visit Portugal, Holland and the United Kingdom, so as to ascertain what assistance could be obtained in those countries from military historians, archivists, geographers, cartographers and scholars in general. Mr. SWRD Bandarnaike, who was Prime Minister and Minister of Defence when I was Army Commander, with whom I discussed my ideas, saw merit in them. Accordingly, When I undertook my next visit to the UK to attend the annual conference organised by the British Chief of the Imperial General Staff, I visited Portugal under arrangements made by the Portuguese Charge d'Affaires in Ceylon and Holland under arrangements made by our Ambassador at the Hague, himself a distinguished archivist. In the UK, I made my own arrangements. I was delighted with the degree of assistance that would be forthcoming.

So far as the post-colonial period was concerned, I felt that my military experience which had commenced in 1934, coupled with my intimate connection with post-independence military development, would stand me in good stead in rounding off what had preceded it.

I was too involved in the running of a developing Army and in dealing with matters of security which kept cropping up to find the time to devote to my history, while I was still in command of the Army I returned to the project however when I was "enposte" in Pakistan, where I was happy to find that the local representative of the Asia Foundation was interested in assisting me. What I needed was books, though the matter of secretarial assistance and even publication was discussed. My friend was, however, unable to assist me unless the Government of Ceylon approved the project. My Government, I discovered, was unwilling to countenance an arrangement for Foundation assistance being given to an Ambassador and indeed, my Ministry even indicated its intention to move the Treasury to terminate Government interest in my work. Partly owing to this but largely owing to preoccupation with my work abroad, I did not therefore proceed with my project, so long as I was in the foreign service.

Since my retirement from the public service, I have been faced with many constraints, illness for sure but also others in various spheres of activity in community life. Recently however, I have become aware of interest in our military past and I decided to resume my work before I forget even the little I remember now.

I realise that any undertaking having the scope of what I planned thirty years ago would be beyond my capacity at the current stage of my life. I feel that a much less ambitious venture would be possible. This will cover the same historical sweep as I had planned, suitably abridged by treatment only of selected events. Quite obviously, what will be beyond me is the extent of research needed for a serious study. The project will not therefore merit the description of "history" and accounts for its being described as an "outline".

I am hoping that the undertaking, modest though it is, will be of assistance to real scholars in producing a properly researched Military History of Sri Lanka.

Part I
THE INDIAN PERIOD

1

Peaceful Relations with India

Given the fact that India and Ceylon are neighbours, the establishment of relations between them would be predictable. What could not be predicted was the nature of such relations which, as it happens, were chequered. The first phase of these relations was however peaceful.

It is customary to commence our history with the arrival in Ceylon of Prince Wijaya from India. I think, however, there is merit in referring to the pre-Wijayan period to which Dr. Paul Peiris has drawn our attention in his 'Nagadipa and Buddhist remains in Jaffna'. He points to the elementary fact that people living on Indian soil noting the proximity of Lanka merely waited for a capacity to sail before making contact with the opposite shore. There is also the more substantial fact to which Dr. Peiris refers as follows: "Long before the arrival of Wijaya, there have been in Lanka five recognised iswarams of Siva which claimed and received the adoration of all India. They were Tiruketeeswaram near Mahatittha; Muneeswaram dominating Salawatta and the Pearl fishery; Tondeswaram near Mantota; Tirukoneswaram near the great bay of Kottiyar and Naguleswaram near Kankesanthurai. The situation (of these iswarams) close to these ports cannot be the result of accident or caprice and was probably determined by the concern of a wealthy mercantile population whose religions called for attention." RAS-CB. XXVIII-No.12. XXV-No.70. The foregoing is evidence of the good cultural relations which existed between the peoples of India and Ceylon at this stage of our history.

Quite obviously, the expeditions at the level of King and noble mixed the Indian and the Ceylonese and additionally served to mix the strains of what has developed. The initial reference to Prince Wijaya by Tennent is what he refers to as the "conquest" of Ceylon. There is no eviden-

ce, however, of his landing having been opposed. The accoutrement of "sword, bow, battle-axe, spear and shield" to which the Mahawamsa refers was not therefore necessary at this stage. It was probably necessary at a later stage when Wijaya discovered that this followers had been spirited away by the Queen of the local "Rakshas", Kuweni, who was forced by Wijaya, on pain of death, to restore his men after which he and his followers despatched the followers of Kuweni, obviously utilising the weapons of warfare that they carried. This must count as the first "military" engagement in our history and perhaps justifies the user of the word "conquest" by Tennent in describing the manner in which Wijaya overcame his adversaries.

The landing of Wijaya is followed by an event which emphasises the cordial relations between him and the rulers of South India. After he had settled his people in the environs of Anuradhapura, he was invited by his followers to be consecrated King. This he refused until a suitable spouse had been found to share his princely rank and status. Quite obviously, Kuweni with whom he had cohabited, was not a suitable person for this purpose even though she was the Queen of the local inhabitants. The Mahawamsa records the despatch of a mission to the Pandyan King in Madurai seeking the hand of his daughter for the Lankan Prince and the response of the King that, not only would he send his daughter as Wijaya's consort, but that she would also be accompanied by ladies of noble rank. Fr. Gnanapragaser, in his "The Beginning of Tamil Rule in Ceylon" says that the total number sent by the Pandyan King was six hundred and ninety-nine ladies of noble rank in addition to the Princess who would espouse Wijaya. They would be supported by persons of inferior rank to minister to their needs in Ceylon. These would include personal servants, horsekeepers, elephant keepers, charioteers, tradesmen and slaves. No soldiers are mentioned.

The bonds between India and Ceylon were thus being strengthened. Quite obviously, the espousals at the level of King and Noble mixed the Indian and the Ceylonese strains and additionally served to mix the strains of what has developed as the Sinhala and Tamil people. They served to demonstrate that both India and Ceylon wanted good relations between them

to subsist, to the degree that even families were bound together matrimonially, while collectively, they would form the nucleus of a new community in Ceylon.

Tennent tells us that Wijaya was proving himself to be an able administrator with, however, an agricultural bias. This he achieved by dividing his domain into settlements to which he posted his chieftains who would be responsible for organising agricultural development. Agriculture is recognisable as the basis for the production of food and therefore was a basic priority. There is some evidence of petty and predictable rivalries between the chieftains, which resulted in a degree of fighting but the skirmishes (and they were nothing more serious) were neither extensive nor intensive. The era which followed was therefore largely peaceful and provided no material for special mention in the present study.

Devanampiya Tissa (BC 307)

I pass on to the reign of Devanampiya Tissa which marks the most momentous part of Ceylon's history, certainly her Buddhist history. The evidence of the chroniclers is that Mahinda, the son of the great Mauryan Emperor Asoka, was divinely directed in a vision to "depart on a mission for the conversion of Lanka". There is the romantic sequel of Mahinda taking the form of an elk on arrival in the Kingdom of Devanampiya Tissa and leading the King who was out elk hunting to the top of the mountain at Mihintale, and just when the King took aim to release his arrow at the elk, transforming himself from elk to human. Mahinda then discoursed on the teachings of the Buddha to which the King listened intently and decided to embrace the faith preached by Mahinda. There followed the request by the King for a sapling from the Bo Tree at Magadha under which the Buddha sat in meditation. The request was conveyed to the Emperor Asoka who arranged in due course for the sapling to be brought to Lanka by his daughter Sanghamitta, from whom it was received by Devanampiya Tissa and transported with due veneration to the capital Anuradhapura. There it was planted and has continued to grow into maturity and to become over the centuries not only an object of veneration by Buddhists in Lanka and abroad but also a source of wonder that it has survived sufficiently to be treated as the world's oldest authenticated tree. The King

had by now established his reputation for Buddhist piety and earned for himself the name by which posterity acclaims him "Beloved of the Gods". (*Mahawamsa Ch. 3*).

Devanampiya Tissa will unquestionably be remembered for his initiative in setting up Dagobas in Sri Lanka. The first was the Thuparama in Anuradhapura erected over a relic of the Buddha brought by Mahinda. The two other major Dagobas erected by the King were in Mihintale, on the site of the King's meeting with Mahinda and in Mahiyangana, over the collar bone of the Buddha, which commemorates the first visit of the Buddha to Lanka. There is no doubt that the erection of Dagobas by Devanampiya Tissa has resulted in the tradition followed by his successors, one of whom alone built five hundred. This is a tradition which will come in for study as we progress into future history.

I recognise that there can conceivably be some criticism of the fact that I have devoted as much space as I have done to the reigns of Wijaya and Devanampiya Tissa which would have no apparent relevance in a study of military affairs, whatsoever their relevance in a general history of Ceylon. I have done so advisedly, however, because their reigns were characteristic of peaceful relations which continued with India till the first invasion - a period of at least four hundred and fifty years. Their reigns are important also as providing the setting for the arrival in this country of the Sinhalese people which took place under Wijaya and for the introduction and spread of Buddhism among the Sinhalese people which took place under Devanampiya Tissa. In a study which is designed to examine the military affairs connected with the Sinhalese people, I judged that these events should not be ignored.

There is, however, a residual aspect which has relevance in the military sphere. Quite obviously, the people of the country were engaged in the execution of policies outlined by the sovereign in the performance, that is, of "rajakariya". This in the case of Wijaya would involve work on the settlements which he created and would include the setting up of boundaries between the territory of rival chieftains, agricultural work within them, development of water resources and so

on. In the case of Devanampiya Tissa, what would be involved would lie in the service of religion which included the building of dagobas, preaching halls and dwelling places for priests. The priorities thus assigned to the people in carrying out such cultural and agricultural duties must have left them with little time to devote to military activities and display any latent talent for warlike capabilities. In discussing this matter, Tennent carries it further by adding the comment that there was the "ascertained inaptitude of the Sinhalese to bear arms" which led the Sinhalese Kings of the period to take into their pay a body of Malabars (or Damilos as the Mahawamsa calls them) in order to protect the coast and the interior. (*Tennent in Vol I, Ch.8*).

I have been intrigued by the user of the word "ascertained" by Tennent who gives no reason for his conclusion nor evidence justifying it. One can only, therefore, speculate whether the Sinhalese were actually tried out for military activity by participation in the skirmishes between rival chieftains and found wanting. Or alternatively, whether the rulers found that their people were so suited to employment as farmers in the fields or as builders on construction sites that it would be preferable to leave them out of military service. Perhaps, as this study progresses, it may be possible to examine further the conclusion of Tennent that there was an "ascertained inaptitude" on the part of the Sinhalese for military service.

It appears clear however that, in the phase of Indo-Ceylon relations which I am examining, reliance was being placed by the Sinhalese rulers on mercenaries for the performance of such military duties as had to be undertaken, whatever the conclusion they had arrived at independently, regarding the suitability of the Sinhalese for such duties. The trust placed in such mercenaries proved worthless because, in the reign of Suratissa, two leaders of the mercenaries, Sena and Guttika, rose against him, killed him and assumed sovereignty.

The peaceful relations between Ceylon and India had thus come to an end. The stage had been set for the commencement of a new phase in Indo-Ceylon relations which regrettably were hostile.

2

Dutugemunu

The hostile relations which I now propose examining took the form of repeated incursions into Ceylon territory undertaken by inhabitants of Southern India whose "restless and energetic character" prompted them to undertake such incursions. It is interesting to note that these incursions did not come from Northern India where the great warrior races, Sikhs, Rajputs, Pathans are located who might have descended on Lanka as Wijaya had done from Orissa. The proximity of Ceylon to India, to which Dr. Paul Peiris has referred, played a predictable part, whilst there are other contributory factors which are worth mentioning.

According to the "Advanced History of India" compiled by three distinguished historians led by Professor Majumdar, Vice Chancellor of the University of Dacca, "South India was parcelled out among many states, the most important of which were Chola, Pandya and Kerala. The Cholas (who) occupied the Tanjore and Trichnopoly districts showed great military activity in the Second Century BC. A Chola Prince, Elara, conquered Ceylon and many anecdotes have been preserved which testify to his strong sense of justice. The Pandyan (who) excelled in trade and learning, occupied the districts of Madurai and Tinnevely.....To the north and west of the Pandyan lay the Kerala country embracing Malabar, Cochin and North Travancore..."

The initial engagement in the long history of hostile relations between India and Ceylon centres round Dutugemunu of Ceylon and Elara of India and provides us with the most colourful episode in our Military history.

Elara the Chola Prince referred to above, gave evidence of his military prowess by commanding and conducting the first invasion of Ceylon from India. He thereafter established himself as an able ruler for forty-four years. Quite apart from his prowess as a soldier and his ability as a ruler, Elara proved himself as a dispenser of justice in which largeness of heart played a predominant role. What is characteristic of Elara was that man and beast received equal justice at his hands. There is for instance the story of his punishing a snake which had swallowed the young of a bird. He is credited in the chronicles with having had a bell poised over his bed, which a suppliant could pull in order to attract his attention. The story is told of a cow seeking justice at his hands by activating the bell and complaining to the King of the action of his son in killing the calf of the suppliant cow, by running his chariot wheel over the calf. Retribution was swift and the King ordered his son's head to be severed by the same wheel that had killed the calf. The Mahawamsa refers to his "administering justice impartially to friend or foe" even though he was an infidel and a usurper.

The Rajavaliya, by contrast, represents him as a desecrator of monuments and overthrower of temples, as narrated by Tennent in Vol.1. The Mahawamsa gives us a different slant and describes the manner in which he, by accident, damages a portion of a Thupa he was visiting, the yoke of his waggon doing the damage. On this being brought to his notice, Elara said "Sever my head also (from the trunk) with the wheel," whereupon he was invited merely to restore the damaged Thupa. This he readily agreed to do, by spending fifteen thousand "kahapanas" to replace the fifteen stones that he had displaced. Tennent seems to prefer the superior accuracy of the Mahawamsa in an estimation of Elara's character. In Persian history there is reference to a great Persian monarch, Khosrow I, who had the same reputation as Elara for accessibility to man and beast and earned the encomium of "Naushirvan the Just". History has similarly bestowed on Elara the accolade "Elara the Just".

Dutugemunu (BC 161)

Having said this about Elara, I think it is appropriate to say that it is Dutugemunu who holds the predominant place in this phase of our military history. I say this, not necessarily because he represents the Ceylonese component in that phase but because of the intrinsic value of his contribution to its importance.

I open with preliminary matters connected with Gamani's family-it is as well to recognise that this was his name when it all started. Firstly, we have the account of King Tissa of Kalyani, Gamani's grand-father, discovering evidence of his wife's intrigue with his brother, through the latter's messenger dropping a letter meant for the Queen which the King intercepted, and of the King ordering the culprits to be cast into the sea. The account continues by disclosing that the sea gods intervened by causing the sea to overflow the King's land. (*Mahawamsa Ch. 22*).

We then have the romantic sequel of the King, consumed with terror that his beautiful daughter, Devi, would be involved, causing her to be placed in a golden vessel bearing the inscription "a King's daughter", which he launched on the sea. In due course the vessel came to rest near a vihare in the land of King Kakawansa who fell in love with her and married her, bestowing on her the name Viharadevi. In due course, their son, Gamani, was born, of whom the soothsayers said "...when he (the Queen's son) has vanquished the Damilos, and built up a united kingdom, he will make the doctrine to shine forthrightly..."

There is the equally romantic story of how, on the day of Gamani's birth, apart from gifts arriving in seven ships, an elephant of the "six tusked race" brought its calf to the palace and left it unattended, until a fisherman called Kandula brought it to the King. The King ordered the baby elephant to be taken to his stables, there to be reared. The baby was named "Kandula" after the man who brought it to the King. The *Mahawamsa* relates how in due course it developed into being "...foremost in strength, beauty, shape and the qualities of courage and swiftness and of mighty size". The



**SOLDIER OF
ANURADHAPURA PERIOD**

elephant became Gamani's own mount which he trained and handled. We shall hear more of Kandula in the future.

(Mahawamsa Ch.23)

As Gamani grew to manhood he felt the constricting nature of his environment so much, that when his mother saw him in his bed with his knees drawn up and asked why he did not stretch out his limbs, he replied "...Over there beyond the Ganga, are the Damilas-here on this side is the Gotha-Ocean. How can I lie with outstretched limbs?" This is evidence that, even in adolescence, Gamani felt the ignominy of an alien ruling on the land he called his own.

(Mahawamsa Ch.22).

I now pass on to that phase in Gamai's life which centres on the manner in which he dealt with the ignominy which was consuming him. This falls into three identifiable parts:

The levying of the forces to overcome the enemy;
The march to Elara's stronghold;
The ensuing campaign between the opposing forces.

I take each of these in turn.

The Levying of the Warriors

The Mahawamsa gives detailed information regarding the manner in which the ten warriors, round whom the main force would be created, were chosen.

Nandimitta had the strength of ten elephants and was capable of putting his foot on the leg of an adversary and tearing the other leg of his victim.

Suranimala had the strength of ten elephants.

Mahasona was known to tear up young palms when he was seven years old, and great palm trees when he was ten.

- Gothaimbura* though of dwarfish stature, was as strong as ten elephants. Stung by the banter of his six elder brothers, he razed to the ground a forest of Imbara trees. He also subdued a Yakka called Jayasena.
- Theraputtabaya* could hurl stones when he was twelve which four men could not lift and when he was sixteen, he felled palms with a club made for him by his father, which was thirty inches round and sixteen cubits long. He was credited with strength superior to that of Gothaimbura.
- Bharana* killed hares as an infant and when grown to manhood, could kill antelopes, elks and bears by dashing them to the ground.
- Velusumana* was able to tame a Sindhu horse which would let no other man mount him.
- Khanjadeva* would grapple big buffaloes by the leg, and whirl them round and hurl them to the ground.
- Phussadeva* had excellent lungs for blowing the conch shell but it is as an archer that he is renowned. His arrow would hit its mark guided by sound or by the light of lightning or hit a hair. His arrow would pierce a wagon loaded with sand and hundred skins bound together, or a slab of asana or udumbara wood eight to sixteen inches thick or a slab of iron or copper two to four inches thick.
- Labhiyavasabha* was endowed with such strength that he would perform the work of ten in working on a tank.

When each of these warriors submitted to the King, Gamani's father, he appointed them to the service of Gamani. And when all of them had been assembled, he charged them with

bringing ten others each and when that number had been assembled, the King ordered the hundred to bring others in like manner. And when they brought a thousand, he commanded them to levy other warriors till eleven thousand one hundred and ten warriors had been levied.

The Mahawamsa also refers to the fact that Gamani was skilled in (guiding) elephants and horses, in (bearing) the sword and also was versed in archery. (*Mahawamsa Ch.24*). This, of course, covers his own, personal military training. It does not cover the organisation and training of the troops that had been assembled to do service under him. It stands to reason that such organisation and training must have been a major undertaking by Gamani to make his force battleworthy. One visualises, for instance, the training of archers under Phussadeva and riders under Velusumana. Gamani must doubtless have found ways of utilising the special talents of his ten warriors in training the men in the handling of offensive weapons - spears, swords, clubs; of defensive equipment like shields and of chariots and animals. It is a pity that the chroniclers who have given such extensive details of the capabilities of the ten warriors are silent on the vital aspects of gearing Gamani's other troops for the tasks that lay ahead.

Sooner or later, Gamani must have felt equal to the task he had set himself, namely to fight Elara, because he is reported to have approached his father with the intention of "giving battle to the Damilos". The King's reply was terse and to the effect that "the region on this side of the river is enough". Gamani's rejoinder and actions were hotheaded and perhaps unfilial, because not only did he say that "if my father were a man, he would not speak thus" but also sent him "woman's apparel" to clothe himself with. His state of anger was also so deep that he left his father's palace and took up residence in Mayarata. His demeanour led to his being called "Duttagamani i.e. 'wicked' or even 'disobedient' Gamani". And this is how history knows him from now onwards.

There is no evidence that Duttagamani had any intention of defying the King and even if he had, it would have been frustrated by the death of the King. Duttagamani now returned from his self-imposed exile to the capital, where he was

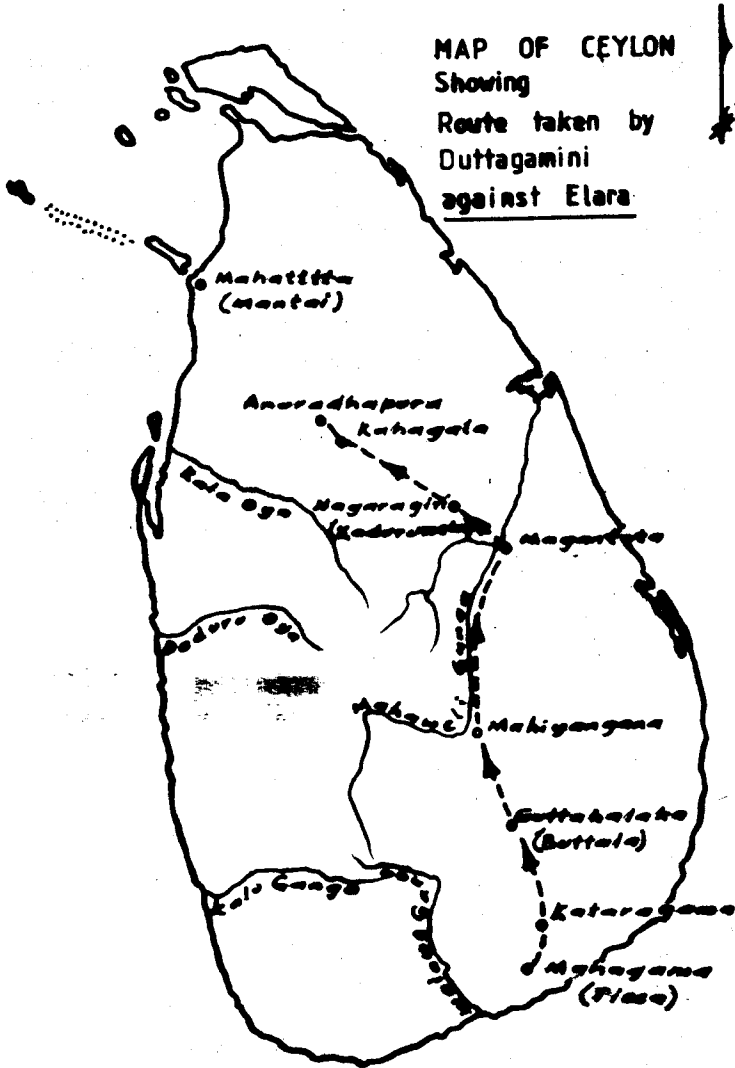
crowned King. Any intention of moving against the Tamils even at this stage was prevented by Duttagamani's involvement in a war against his brother, Sadhatissa, who, having left the capital with his mother the Queen and Kandula, refused to return to the capital. The war, as it happened, came to an end eventually, resulting in a reconciliation between the brothers. (*Mahawamsa Ch.24*).

The reconciliation enabled Duttagamani to press on with his plans for attacking Elara. His brother was not to accompany Duttagamani but was required to stay behind and attend to what would today be described as the logistic support of Duttagamani's attacking forces - the "work of the harvest" as the Mahawamsa puts it, being the foremost duty. The chronicles give little detail of this aspect of Duttagamani's undertaking but it stands to reason that the logistic support of as large a force of eleven thousand needed a great deal of attention. There is no evidence that the attacking force moved fast. On the other hand, the pace was leisurely, partly because there was no apparent need for speed and partly, one concludes, for the need for supplies en route to supplement what would be prepared and despatched from Sadhatissa's base area. These would include food, medical supplies and other administrative needs, whilst on the operational side, attention would be paid to supplies of fighting equipment - bows and arrows, battle axes, spears and shields, without a supply of which it is inconceivable that a man of Duttagamani's obvious military acumen would have undertaken the tedious march from Ruhunu Rata to Raja Rata where Elara ruled.

The March to Elara's Stronghold

The stage was now set for what is recognised as the historic march from the Southern to the Northern region of Ceylon. Duttagamani put a relic into his spear which would serve as a royal standard and set forth with a beat of drums followed by his "chariots, troops and beasts for riders". (*Mahawamsa Ch. 25*). He first went to Tissamaharama where he announced to the "brotherhood" that his mission was, *inter alia*, "to bring glory to the doctrine". Having said this, he made the request "to give us, that we may treat with honour, bikkhus who shall go with us, since the sight of bikkhus is blessing and protection for us". The request has a twofold

MAP OF CEYLON
Showing
Route taken by
Duttagamini
against Elara



significance - blessing which he would obviously want for such a crucial undertaking and protection, which has been taken to mean the expectation that Buddhists who were part of Elara's forces would be reluctant to fight against a force which included bikkhus. If this interpretation is correct, it discloses an element of what in modern military parlance would pass as psychological warfare. Duttagamani's request had the result of providing him with five hundred bikkhus.

The move from Tissamaharama northward lay through thick jungle and Duttagamani therefore "caused the route in Malaya to be made ready", obviously to enable his force, particularly his chariots (probably palanquins for commanders) to move without difficulty. He was passing through Veddah country whose inhabitants probably were detailed to carry out this task. Veddahs would obviously be able to provide the scouts who would exploit their knowledge of the jungle in keeping direction, till their objective was reached. Predictably enough, Maiyangana was the next objective because of its renown, hallowed by Devanampiya Tissa's dagoba, erected to commemorate the first visit of the Buddha to Ceylon. Here, the troops rested and reconnoitred future moves and possible places defended by Elara's forces, whilst Duttagamani carried out the structural additions to the dagoba which has been mentioned.

The Campaign between the Opposing Forces

It is from Maiyangana onwards that the actual fighting between the forces of Duttagamani and Elara commenced. The first engagement was in the Maiyangana region in which the force commanded by the Damilo general, Chatta, was defeated. The next engagement was against Titthamba which lasted four months and which ended by "cunning" - Gamani promising to his adversary marriage with his mother and with it the expectation of government. Duttagamani now followed the line of the Mahaveli Ganga and conquered "seven mighty Damilos" in one day. He therefore continued in this victorious manner overcoming all Elara's outposts until all Elara's survivors retreated to a place called Vijithapura, a well-defended fortress across the river.

The precise point at which Duttagamani actually crossed the Mahaveli is obscure. It is unlikely that he would have crossed both the main river and the Amban Oya and he is, therefore, likely to have selected a point further downstream, in line with Kalawewa as suggested by Codrington. (*Codrington Short History of Ceylon. Ch.2*). Kaduruwela is probably the current name for Vijithapura or Vijithanagara, which was Duttagamani's objective. He probably looked for a ford and Magantota which is marked in a map reproduced in Dr. G.C. Mendis' "Early History of Ceylon", suggests itself. Duttagamani also probably waited for the dry season before he crossed, always using his archers to cover the actual crossing.

The fortress at Vijithapura had a rampart round it with four gates giving access through the rampart. Nandimitta and Suranimala were detailed to assault the South gate whilst Mahasona, Gotha and Theraputta attacked at the other three gates. Kandula, the King's elephant was with Nandimitta and attacked the South gate but had to retreat when the defenders hurled redhot balls of fire and molten pitch on the animal. The elephant's physician removed the pitch and put balm on the elephant's hide, after which Kandula was fitted with a seven times folded buffalo hide. He now returned to the fray whilst Nandimitta, Suranimala, Gotha and Sona pressed forward into the attack. The weapons used in the attack as described in the Mahawamsa are interesting. Kandula seized a cartwheel, Mitta a wagon frame, Gotha a cocoapalm, Nimala his good sword, Mahasona a palmyra palm, Theraputta his great club. Armed with these weapons, the attackers rushed into the streets and overcame the Damilos within.

After the assault against Vijithapura, which took four months to complete, Duttagamani marched towards Anuradhapura, slaying the Damilo Giriya at Girilaka (probably today's Giritale) (*Codrington Ch. 25*) and the commander at Mahela - the latter, however, only after an engagement of four months which came to a successful end after a cunningly planned battle described by Tennent as having been executed by "diplomatic means". Duttagamani was now at Kahagala near Anuradhapura where he decided to pitch his camp in open ground in preparation for his final engagement with Elara.

In the meantime, Elara, who obviously had reliable information about Duttagamani's prowess as a warrior and that of his warriors, summoned a Council of War, during which his ministers and generals, led by Dighajantu, decided on attacking Duttagamani. For his part Duttagamani decided on the strategy of setting up thirtytwo bodies of his troops, each with an effigy of himself with the royal parasol in the hands of a bearer, in order to confuse the enemy as to his whereabouts. He himself took his place with the inner-most body of his troops, so rounding off as cunning a deception plan as had hitherto been devised.

Elara himself mounted on his elephant Mahapabbata, sallied forth with his "chariots, soldiers and beasts for riders". Dighajantu using his sword and shield, attacked the first body of the thirty-two set up by Duttagamani and having dispersed them destroyed the effigy of the King. He continued victoriously until he had destroyed all the bodies except that with the King in it. Suranimala sprang to the defense of his King and, in the duel that ensued, killed Dighajantu. At this stage Phussadeva, probably to rally his troops, blew the conch, on hearing which, however, the forces of Elara scattered. Elara then turned to rally his troops and Duttagamani followed in hot pursuit, uttering simultaneously with a beat of drums the admonition "None but myself shall slay Elara". Outside the South gate, Elara turned his elephant to confront his adversary. He hurled his dart which Duttagamani evaded. Duttagamani now urged his mount Kandula to pierce Elara's mount with his tusks, at the same time hurling his dart at Elara. Warrior and beast succeeded in their onslaught and Elara and his mount sank to the ground in mute defeat.

It is at that stage that Duttagamani, having marched with his "chariots, troops and beasts for riders" in the proclamation of his victory over Elara, arranged for the people to join in the funeral rites for King Elara. "On this spot where his body had fallen" says the Mahawamsa, "there did he build a monument and ordain worship. And even to this day, the princes of Lanka, when they draw near to this place, are wont to silence their music because of this worship". Tennent adds that even a Kandyan Prince, fleeing from defeat and tired though he was, obeyed the behest of Duttagamani when passing the tomb of Elara. It is small wonder that the magnanimity of

Duttagamani towards a fallen foe has received the unstinted approbation of all who have chronicled the encounter between him and Elara. Churchill, who called for "resolution in war, defiance in defeat, magnanimity in victory and goodwill in peace", would have probably added his own approbation of Duttagamani's action.

So ends what will unquestionably go down in our military history as its most outstanding offensive operation. It was conceived in a consuming patriotic fervour with inevitably idealistic overtones. It was, however, executed with a realistic assessment of what had to be done. It is this realism that enabled the military concept to be successful—the levying of the fighters; the administrative support of the troops, which totalled eleven thousand; the determination to overcome obstacles which included a tedious march of some hundred and fifty miles over mountain; through jungle and across turbulent rivers; the deliberate rate of movement so that troops would not be unduly fatigued; the measured attention to deception plans so as to confuse the enemy and the quality of leadership which would draw out the latent heroism in the soldiers. If the chivalry of the victor in triumph was not part of the original concept, all honour to the man who thought of it on the battlefield.

Duttagamani's military campaigns did not end with his defeat of Elara. The Mahawamsa speaks of his overpowering thirtytwo Damilo kings before assuming full sovereignty over Lanka. Raghavan in his "Tamil Culture in Ceylon" comes to the conclusion after studying the views of authorities like Dr. Paranavitana, that "the thirtytwo kings whom Duttagamani had to vanquish after he overcame Elara were the residue of the Tamil Khastriyas who lingered on in the isolated and secluded regions of South Ceylon". (Raghavan Ch. 4).

Duttagamani was now master of all Ceylon and was able to detach himself from military pursuits and devote himself to religious affairs. History records his construction of the Mirissavatiya Dagoba — in expiation of his offence in eating a chilly before offering it to a bikkhu and of the magnificent Lokapasada or Brazen Palace, nine stories high, standing on sixteen hundred monolithic columns and providing a thousand chambers for the use of bikkhus. History also records his

commencement of the construction of that exquisite Dagoba which he has not fated to finish - the Ruvanvelisaya. There is something poignant about his insistence on viewing his unfinished master-piece from his death bed and in his words of farewell to his one time comrade in arms, Theraputtabaya, who had in the meantime embraced the priesthood. "In times past, supported by my ten warriors, I engaged in battles; now, singlehanded, I commence my last conflict - with death, and it is not permitted to me to overcome my enemy." It is only when his priestly associate comforted him by reference to his exploits in war, that he accepted his peace through inevitable death.

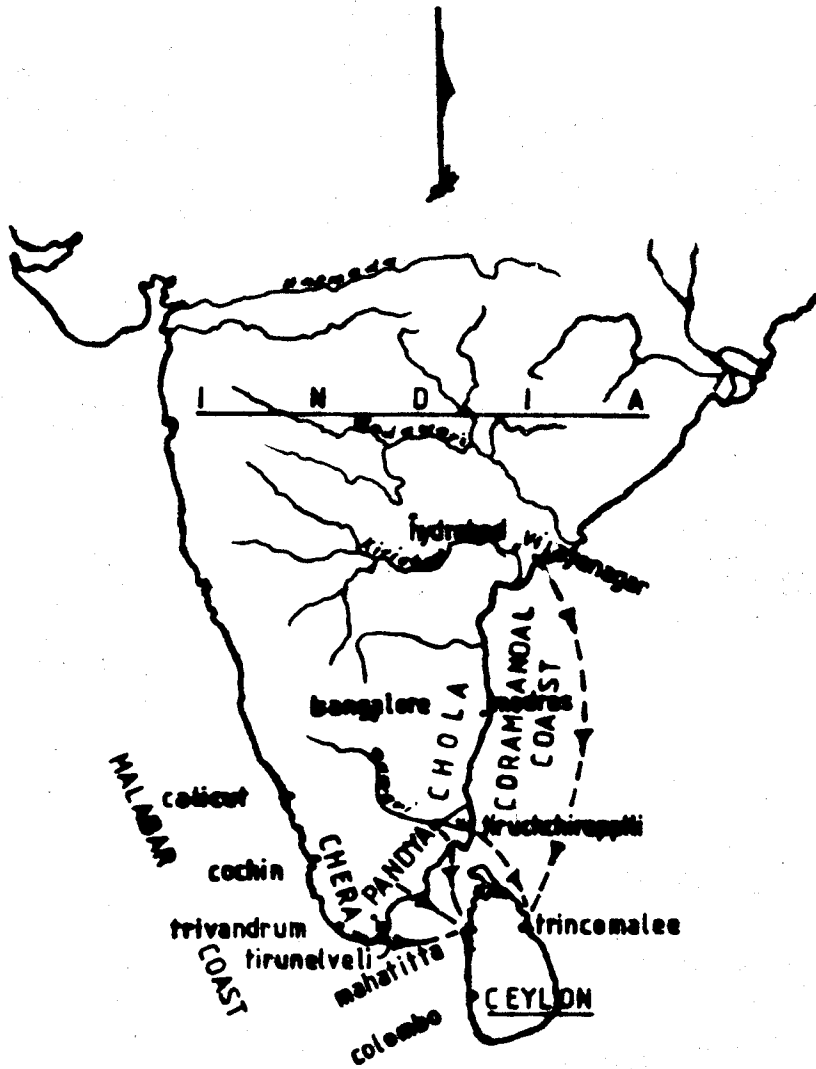
A great warrior had thus died - a warrior who bears some resemblance to Alexander the great who set out to conquer the world but stayed his hand when he was left with nothing he wished to conquer. Like Alexander, who decreed that the defeated Darius be buried with royal honours, Duttagamani buried Elara with obsequies appropriate to a King - Both had mounts which they immortalised - Alexander's Bucephalus and Duttagamini's Kandula - A tireless worker for his faith had also died, bringing to an end a devotion to religion which fittingly is perpetuated in eloquent stone.

3

The Second, Third and Fifth Invasions

With the hindsight that one possesses, it is possible to assert that the first invasion of Ceylon under Elara, had a three fold significance for Ceylon. Firstly, it was clear that South Indians could invade Ceylon without difficulty, overthrow the sovereign, spread the new regime throughout the country and hold power for fifty years. Secondly, if the exploits of Duttagamani are anything to go by, it is clear that Ceylon had the capacity to marshal sufficient troops with whom to confront the intruder, undertake an arduous march of a hundred and fifty miles through difficult terrain, subdue the alien forces and regain control over the entire country. Thirdly, it is clear that, between the first invasion in BC 205 and the second in BC 103 - that is to say, during a period of hundred years, the Sinhalese sovereigns had the time to organise, equip, train and deploy the troops needed to contain fresh invasions.

The evidence, however, is that the Sinhalese kings did not take any of these steps and, therefore, had to suffer the ignominy of more than one invasion commencing a century after Duttagamani. What is even more unsatisfactory is that, certainly according to Tennent, these "invasions partook less of the character of invasions than forays... without meeting any effectual resistance from the unwarlike Sinhalese". Whether the description of the Sinhalese who had in fact defeated Elara's forces as unwarlike is arguable. It would appear, however, that the forces put into battle after Duttagamani's victory were incapable of resisting the invaders and, if they were Sinhalese, Tennent's comment is not unjustified. If,



MAP OF SOUTH INDIA
SHOWING
INVASION ROUTES TO CEYLON

however, the forces detailed to oppose the invaders were, in spite of the perfidy of Sena and Guttika mercenaries, the comment is unjustified.

The Second Invasion - Walagambahu (Wattagamani) (BC 104)

The second invasion took place during the undistinguished reign of Walagambahu (or Wattagamani as he is also known) who was forced into exile into the mountain region of Malaya whilst five Tamil kings usurped the throne. It is to his credit, however, that he regained his throne from the last of them, with the support of the mountaineers.

The Third Invasion - Gajabahu (AD 113)

The third invasion is described by Tennent as having been more predatory than the second. Certainly, during this invasion, the Tamil king leading it took away twelve thousand Sinhalese to the Soli (Chola) country. The accounts of the sequel are interesting. According to Tennent, the Sinhalese king Gajabahu, sailed to India with an expedition to bring back his captured subjects. According to the Rajavalli, however, Gajabahu went to India accompanied only by a giant named Nila, whom he presented to the Soli king when asked where his army was. On the Soli king being unimpressed, Gajabahu squeezed water from sand and from the mace which he carried in an exhibition of his power. The Soli king is now sufficiently impressed by this action, not only to release the twelve thousand captives but also to permit twelve thousand of his own subjects to accompany Gajabahu to Ceylon, presumably in reparation. He also allowed Gajabahu to take with him the jewelled anklets of the Goddess Pattini, insignia of the gods of the four devalas and the bowl relic which had been seized during an earlier invasion. (See *Codrington's Short History*).

Tennent, in a note to his reference to Gajabahu's visit to the Soli king, says that the Mahawamsa makes no reference to such visit nor have I been able to find any. According to Raghavan, "...the Sinhalese tradition of counter invasion by Gajabahu of the Chola country is not generally accepted by South Indian historians".

What is generally accepted is the attendance by Gajabahu at the inauguration of the temple to the Goddess Kannaki by the Ceran king Sengottavan. It is possible that Gajabahu visited the Chola king on this occasion and brought back his men and the treasures mentioned above connected with the Goddess Pattini. The involvement of Gajabahu in South Indian religious matters certainly enriches the religio-cultural relations between the two countries which I have mentioned earlier in this study.

The End of the Mahawamsa

I wish to pause at this stage to refer to the fact that the chronicle of the Mahawamsa (or Great Dynasty) comes to an end with the reign of Mahasen. His reign marks no major military event worthy of record. It coincides with a schism in Buddhism which induced him to destroy buildings of Buddhist value, including the Brazen Palace. Later, however, he became convinced of his errors and, in expiation, constructed the renowned Jetavanarama Dagoba. He is also credited with forming the tank at Minneriya. His chequered life draws the final observation in the "Mahawamsa" - "he gathered much merit and much guilt". (Chapter 37)

With the termination of the Mahawamsa, the chronicle of the Culuwamsa (or lower Dynasty) begins. The Culuwamsa (or Suluwamsa as Tennent refers to it, using the Sinhalese as opposed to the Pali version) provides me henceforth with the authority provided me up to now by the Mahawamsa.

The early period of the Culuwamsa is free of information regarding invasions. It records events of a peaceful character notably activities in medicine and surgery (under Buddhadasa) and to poetry (under Kumaradasa). Diplomatic relations were fostered through envoys being sent to Rome whilst political relations were also developed with China during the reign of Mahanama. It was during this reign that the celebrated Fa Hian visited Ceylon.

The Fourth Invasion-Dhatysena and his Sons-Sigiriya (AD 43

What has been described as the fourth invasion took place in AD 433 when the Sinhalese capital came under the control of

the Malabars (or Damilos) who not only occupied the city for twenty-seven years but also consolidated their position outside the city by erecting forts in areas controlled by them. Their success in repeated expeditions in the region led Chola kings to claim that they had triumphed over "Madura, Izham, Caruwar and the crowned head of Pandyan"-Izham being the Tamil name for Ceylon (Ilam). Tennent quotes this reference from Downes on the "Chera Kingdom of India".

During the twenty-seven year period of the occupation of Ceylon by the invaders, Dhatusena, the King of Ceylon at the time, went into retirement, during which he organised an army and when this was ready for action against the invaders, he emerged from his retirement, overcame the Malabars and took possession of the forts they had constructed. He also created a naval force for the protection of the coast from invasion. Dhatusena strikes me as having had the vision to take stock of a potential military situation and the organising ability to create the instruments which could be used against the victorious invaders. I cannot help making the point that, had his predecessors indulged in the sort of military and naval build-up which has characterised the later stages of his reign, - without necessarily jettisoning the medical, cultural, diplomatic and political pursuits in which they indulged - they may have been able to check the triumphant progress of the Cholas which led to the fourth invasion.

Whether Dhatusena would have been able to develop his vigorous military policy must remain obscure because, by a cruel quirk of fate, he lost his life through one of the most gruesome outrages in our history, perpetrated by his own son, Kasyapa. Kasyapa, who was born to the king by an inferior wife, was jealous of his elder brother, Moggalana, because he thought that the king would prefer the brother, as a prince of superior birth, for the throne and for the King's treasures. Kasyapa endeavoured to find out from the King where his treasures lay. Dhatusena replied cryptically by pointing to the waters of the Kalawewa, which he himself had created, as being his treasure. This enraged Kasyapa who had the king chained, incarcerated and eventually walled to death. Kasyapa would have a place in our history if only for this shameful, parricidal act. There is however another reason for such a place, this time in our military history.

Kasyapa, having killed his father, now made arrangements to kill his brother also, so that there would be no rival claimant for the throne of his father. The brother, Moggalana, realising the danger to himself, fled to India where he made plans to return to Lanka in order to avenge his father's death and secure the throne.

Sigiriya

Kasyapa, now tormented by fear of his brother's wrath, found for himself a retreat in a gigantic, granite rock, four hundred feet high with overhanging sides which rose sheer from the ground. Its name was Sigiriya, and designed to provide a palace for his court and a fortress for his security. In its development as a Palace, Sigiriya became the wonder of engineers who have marvelled at the skill of workmen who bore the king's treasures to the summit where he set up his throne, public chambers for his court and private apartments for his family and personal entourage. Artists have raved over the paintings of ladies which adorn the walls of a special chamber, which match the treasures of Ajanta in India.

But it is the military aspects of the sky-hugging fortress that arrests one's attention in a study of this nature. Quite obviously the height of the rock and its forbidding sides, making it awesome in ascent, have endowed the rock with a strategic value which is arresting. Kasyapa saw to it that guards were placed in the caves set in the rock surface to deal with attackers by showering arrows and molten pitch as they attempted ascent, as well as lookouts who would scan the surrounding countryside so as to give early warning to the guards of the approach of an attacker. He cleared the jungle round the fortress to help the process of scanning the area around. Around the rock, he established the city which should provide barracks for his troops and amenities for his citizens. Round the city he erected a massive rampart sited behind a moat, which would serve as an obstacle to the attacker. The layout for defence was therefore outstanding and, given supplies to outlast a protracted siege, he could resist any attempts of an intruder to dislodge him.

Eighteen years elapsed before Moggalana returned from India to retake his patrimony and throne. He had with him

some Malabar soldiers, in addition to local troops he had collected on arrival in Ceylon. Kasyapa, on hearing of his brother's advance, moved out forward of his fortress in order to give battle to his brother. He did so in the teeth of the advice of his soothsayers that his mission would be "impossible". He certainly made the mistake of not sending one of his generals to take on the initial battle, leaving it to him to take charge of the fortress area, which was vital to his defence. In moving forward, Kasyapa was confronted with a swamp and, when he turned his elephant to seek a firmer route, his men, thinking that their leader had turned to flee, broke up in disorder and presented an easy target for the forces of Moggalana, belying the early promise of a pitched battle, as the Culuwamsa describes, "of the two seas falling on each other having burst their bonds, like the God Sujampati who faced forth to fight the demons". Moggalana himself had the satisfaction of slitting his brother's throat with a dagger, although there are claims that Kasyapa committed suicide and so denied his brother the satisfaction of being his executioner.

This brought to an end a remarkable episode in our history. The defence of Sigiriya must assume a place of importance as the outstanding feat of defence planning and strategy in our military history, perhaps matching the feat of offensive planning and strategy by Duttagamani against Elara. It is a thousand pities that such a superb feat of military acumen in defence should emerge from as monstrous an attack on a defenceless parent by his own son as history records. Quite predictably, it is the latter's parricidal deed, gruesome as it is, that gives Kasyapa his place in history.

The years following the reign of Moggalana did not produce any great military event worthy of record. Instead, as Codrington points out, the affairs of the Sinhalese kings in the 6th, 7th and 8th centuries (a period of three hundred years), only disclose a succession of "murders, rebellions and civil wars" which do nothing to enrich our history. Tennent adds that, between 523 AD and 648 AD, a space of hundred & twenty-five years, fourteen kings were murdered by their successors. There was the more traumatic development that, following the incessant rain of attacks by invading Damilos, the kings found it necessary to move the capital from

Anuradhapura to Polonnaruwa. Inevitably, the move led to a flurry of building activity in the form of palaces, dagobas, and creating tanks around the new capital. Equally inevitably, the focus (if focus there was, except under Duttagamani, Dhatusena and Kasyapa) was not on military activity and the quality of soldiering in Ceylon declined.

There was, however, an interesting interlude in military activity namely, the despatch of Sinhalese troops to India to come to the aid of two Pandyan kings. Within the space of a century, this happened twice. This phase, however, did not last long because we now have evidence of a fresh invasion which pressed south to Ruhunu, where however, they were repulsed by the mountaineers who were traditionally hostile to invaders.

The Fifth Invasion - Vijayabahu (AD 1001)

At the turn of the century, which coincided with the end of the millennium, the then ruler, Mahinda V, faced a mutiny of his mercenaries whom he could not pay and was forced to retreat to Ruhunu. This opportunity was seized by the great Chola Emperor, Rajarajah I (ably supported by his son who succeeded him as Emperor Rajendra I) to swoop down on Ceylon, seize control of most of the country and capture the king. Rajarajah then established his Viceroy at Polonnaruwa which he possessed for thirty-eight years, protected by Tamil soldiers from South India. Dr. G.C. Mendis, in his "Early History of Ceylon" in dealing with this invasion of Ceylon, asserts that "...in 1017, for the first time, Ceylon ceased to be an independent kingdom and became a unit of the mighty Chola Empire." Efforts made to expel the invaders failed, because of abortive risings among the Sinhalese, alternating with repression by the Cholas.

The picture changed however with the advent of Vijayabahu I who was able to dislodge the invaders. The Culuwamsa gives the following account of Vijayabahu's plan of attack. "...placing numbers of his followers in befitting positions, applying the four methods of warriors for the destruction of the Cholas who were ravaging Rajarata, he took up abode in Ruhunu. (The four methods used by warriors for success were "bheda" or division of the enemy, "danda" or offensive war,

"sama" or friendly negotiation and "danam" or gifts, bribes etc.). Initially, Vijayabahu encountered many reverses but achieved ultimate success, by adopting the following tactical plan. He sent two columns, one to attack Anuradhapura from the west and the other to attack Polonnaruwa from the east, whilst he himself led a third column through Mahiyangana. The combined assault was successful, enabling him to recapture the capital occupied by the Viceroy. The capital was now renamed "Vijayarajapura". He ruled for forty two years, during which there were no Indian invasions. (*Culuwamsa Ch. 58*).

Vijayabahu now master of all Ceylon, was crowned in Anuradhapura. He preferred, however, to treat Polonnaruwa not only as his official residence but also as his administrative and military capital. The choice of Polonnaruwa as the military capital is attributed to more than one factor - its proximity to the agricultural areas and its central position in the country, from where it would be possible to deal with invaders from the north and rebels from the south. Vijayabahu certainly had to deal with more than one rebellion. One of the last was a revolt of his Dravidian mercenaries, the "Velakaran", who declined to participate in his plans, occasioned by Chola ill-treatment of his ambassador, to invade the Chola domain, where the "Velakaram" would be faced with the prospect of fighting their own kinsfolk. This revolt is evidence of the strong position in Ceylon's affairs which by now the mercenaries had created for themselves. Mudaliyar Rasanayagam in a publication of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society says that the mercenaries claimed the right to protect the King's person which they vowed to ensure by killing themselves if evil beset him. (*Vide CB RAS Ch. 20*).

Vijayabahu's death brought about problems of succession to the throne which were not settled by the emergence of any single contender being able to subdue the others. In the result, sovereignty was shared by the parcelling out of the country between them. Vijayabahu's son Vickramabahu, took Rajarata and of his three nephews, Manabharana took Malayarata and the other two, Sri Megha and Sri Vallaba, shared Ruhunu between them. The stage was set for anarchy or a strong ruler to appear and history recognises Parakrama Bahu as that ruler.

Dr. A.L. Basham of the University of London comments as follows in his monograph entitled "The background to the rise of Parakrama Bahu I" which was published in the Anniversary volume "The Polonnaruwa Period" by the Ceylon Historical Journal: - "Thus, it was in a country divided against itself, mismanaged and oppressed, that the son of the old warlord Manabharana (Parakrama Bahu's father) by intense energy, brilliant leadership and we must admit, often by unscrupulousness reminiscent of the legendary Kautiliya, succeeded in bringing peace and security to Ceylon, after a century and half of invasion, tyranny and anarchy". (*Ceylon Historical Journal Vol IV 1954 and 1955*).

Before I pass on to Parakrama Bahu, I wish to refer to a comment on the period discussed above, which is made in the Rajaratnavacari and which Tennent quotes, (*Tennent Vol.I Ch.10*), reading as follows: "Throughout the reign of nineteen kings, extending over eighty six years, the Malabars kept up a continual war with the Sinhalese till they filled by degrees every village in the land...". I think this has two elements which are worth examining. The first is reference to what I consider to be a characteristic of the reigns of Sinhalese kings, namely their shortness. The figures of nineteen kings in a space of eighty six years work out to an average only of four and a half years per reign - in fact, there are instances of reigns that have lasted only one year or less. One finds that, even over a longer period of eight hundred forty-nine years, from the commencement of the lower dynasty in AD 304 to the reign of Parakrama Bahu I in AD 1153, there have been seventy eight kings; which works out to an average of only just over ten years per reign. This is significant in the context of Ceylon History, which seems to rest on the efficiency and ability of the ruler and not on the efficiency and ability of the people. It follows that, if a sovereign does not last long, the impact he makes is reduced and that, if there are frequent changes of sovereign, they would adversely affect the order of things, be they military or civil. History so far provides evidence of such adverse effects on the military order. What the Rajaratnavacari asserts is evidence of such impact on the civil order and constitutes the second element of my reading of what the Rajaratnavacari wishes to highlight. The description of the Malabars "filling by degrees every village of the land" suggests that they had infil-

trated the entire administrative structure in the country, involving the filling of many posts, including senior ones, in the administration.

Tennent's own comment on the events in our early history onwards is as interesting as it is distressing. On the one hand, he contrasts the contribution of the North Indians (he calls them Gangetic) as "enriching and adorning" with that of the South Indians (he calls them Malabars) as "impoverishing and defacing". On the other hand, he highlights the weakness of the Ceylonese authorities who, apparently "fascinated by the military pomp of the invaders", lapsed into subjection.

The foregoing helps to explain to some degree the continuing weakness of the Ceylonese soldier who was pitted against the superior capability of his Indian adversary, without the support of his sovereign in extracting any latent talent he may possess.

Parakrama Bahu The Great (AD 1153)

Parakrama Bahu is the only one of the sovereigns of Ceylon to whom the description "Great" has been accorded and as one surveys the scene he bestrode, one understands the reason for the accolade.

The Culuwamsa records the joy which Parakrama Bahu's birth brought to his father, Manabharana, and the king's invitation to his priestly advisers to give him an assessment of the future of the young prince. "Apart from the Island of Lanka, he is able to unite under one umbrella and to rule even the whole of Jambudipa" was their view. Having regard to the heroic strength of his "foe-crushing arm", he was given the name of Parakrama Bahu, which means "arm of courage".

The Culuwamsa has the following reference to the preparation for his royal duties, "... with the help of his lightning like intelligence, he learned easily and quickly from his teachers, the various accomplishments. In the numerous books of the victor (the Boddha), in the works on politics as in that of Kotalla (the famous minister of Chandragupta, who was called Kautiliya and credited with authorship of the 'Artha Sastra', a text on war and politics) and others; in dance and song; in the art of driving the elephant and so forth; and above all, in the manipulation of the bow, the sword and other weapons, he was past master...". Kautiliya is the Indian equivalent of Machiavilli.

His education served to instil in him a desire to break out from his parental environment and seek fulfilment of the "soaring plans" which his extraordinary greatness" would render possible. These plans were to achieve what had eluded the kings in his family - namely, the sole control of Lanka under



**SOLDIER OF
POLONNARUWA PERIOD**

one umbrella. The manner in which he could achieve his ambition was to organise and train an army capable of subjugating the contenders for the throne.

Composition, Organisation and Training of the Army

The Ceylon Historical Journal has sponsored a publication entitled "The Polonnaruwa Period" in commemoration of the 800th anniversary of Parakrama Bahu's accession. I have earlier in this study quoted from a monograph by Dr. A.L. Basham on the background to Parakrama Bahu contributed to this publication. Professor Geiger has also contributed a monograph entitled "Army and War in mediaeval Ceylon" which helps us to assess Parakrama Bahu's military policy.

The two main components of the Army were the mercenaries and the militia. The mercenaries, so named because they obtained payment for their service from a king outside their country, were from South India - Damilos, Keralas and Karnatas. They were a warlike community whose efficiency was such that they played an important part in Ceylon affairs. For instance, they rebelled against Vijaya Bahu as mentioned earlier in this study and even revolted against Parakrama Bahu himself. He, however, saw in them a useful element in his Army.

Perhaps the reason why he found them reliable was the relative unsuitability of the militia which was taken from persons dwelling in the country. "These persons were really agriculturists", says Geiger, "who were tilling and watering their fields and waiting for the harvest, in perpetual fear of demons who might annihilate the whole work; the Sinhalese were not a warlike people" he says, adding "the militia was, therefore, of no great military value." Geiger quotes both from Cordiner who finds the Sinhalese unable to adapt to military discipline and from the Mahawamsa, which gives instances of soldiers running away when exposed to an unexpected danger.

Strength

So far as the strength of Parakrama Bahu's army is concerned, I found the Mahawamsa more precise in setting out the

strength of Dutugemunu's army than the Culuwamsa is, in setting out the strength of Parakrama Bahu's army. Thus, Dutugemunu's army is described as being a very precise 11,110, whereas Parakrama Bahu's army is described in imprecise terms, as the following figures show:

Damil soldiers in the Districts of Rattakara	Many	1000's
1000 men each from 5 respected chiefs of selected clans in Morya and Lambakanna.		5000
Allocated to officials of frontier districts from Dakkinadesa to Rajarata.	Many	1000's
Two thousand men each allotted to twelve districts in the interior		24000
1000 men each allotted to 84 officers, already "tested by victory".		84000
Soldiers selected for their "tall and strong" physique.	Several	1000's
Foreign soldiers such as Keralas.	Several	1000's
Vyaddas (Veddahs) to whom were issued waht was "fitting"-spears (for fighters), drums (for others) etc.	Many	1000's
Work people who were ordered to do work appropriate to them-probably by caste, vocation or guild.	Several	1000's

(Culuwamsa Ch. 69)

One concludes that the precise numbers totalled 113000 (i.e. 5000 plus 24000 plus 84000), whilst the remainder involved "several" or "many" thousands, the total of which cannot

be stated in precise terms. At a guess, this could reach 150000, although one notes the possibility of exaggeration.

Organisation

It is reasonable to say that foreign troops (mercenaries) were chosen because of their fighting qualities, whilst the local troops (militia) were allocated duties according to their clan or guild. This is particularly important in the selection of persons for work involving the manufacture of weapons, bows, arrows, spears, battle axes, shields and so on.

There has been speculation whether these were organised into the four main elements of the traditional army in India - elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers. Geiger agrees with Codrington that, having regard to the wooded nature of the country, elephants were unlikely to be used in large numbers, except in the case of the king who rode an elephant in battle. Similarly, the use of the horse was limited and generals and perhaps senior commanders travelled in palanquins. The army of Parakrama Bahu, one concludes, was organised into bodies of skilled foot soldiers, supplemented by select corps such as the "moonlight archers". These were supported by the persons allocated to the baggage train handled by local levies who carried stores on their backs or on the backs of beasts of burden in their charge.

Training

Parakrama Bahu placed great emphasis on the training of his troops for battle. Potential riders of elephants and horses were encouraged to carry out their training as a part of their sporting programmes. They were also trained in the handling of the sword which they might be called upon to use in battle. Swords were of two kinds the Sinhala and the Jambudipa. Parakrama Bahu himself seemed to prefer the Sinhala sword, as being the more "terrible" weapon.

Others were trained in the handling of such weapons as they might be called upon to utilise in battle - the spear or lance, bow and arrow, battle axe, club and shield. Training would be individual or collective which would take place in selected training areas. The "moonlight archers" were given

specialised training. Following training, unsuitable persons would be weeded out.

The utilisation of weapons would be determined by the tactical situation. At close quarters, officers and soldiers equipped with sword, battle axe or club would be deployed. In close support would be those equipped with spear and lance. Further back would come the archers with bow and arrow. Where necessary troops would be issued with buffalo hide shields for protection, whilst leather doublets were issued to the "moon-light archers" an elite element in the Army.

A word is necessary to mention the place of the conch, drum and flag. All these have significance because of the part they play in inter-communication and control. The conch and the drum would be utilised in wooded country. Apart from their use for control in movement and inter-communication, the conch and the drum had their special function on the battle-field, for instance, in rallying troops that have got into disarray or in forming them prior to a charge or assault. The flag, rather like the colours or guidons in British military usage, was used as a rallying point on the battle-field. In this setting, the umbrella of the king or general, as the case may be, had a special significance because the capture of the flag was taken as an admission of defeat. The umbrella bearer had a special role in a situation of this sort. At the end of a battle, the conch and drum would be used to signal victory whilst the conch, drum and flag became used extensively in the victory march of the triumphant leader into the capital of the vanquished foe.

Preparing for War - Logistics

When war was imminent, Parakrama Bahu made special arrangements for supplies to be made available, whether of food, armaments, medical requirements and money, for the army or the civilian population at large. The medical arrangements mentioned by Geiger for the campaign in Ramanna, are interesting. They included not only physicians and serving women (nurses) but also medicines particularly against poisoned arrows carried in a cow horns, remedies for curing the poison of infected water in swampy areas and iron pincers for extracting arrow heads which had pierced deeply and proved difficult

to extract, particularly when the arrow shaft had broken. It stands to reason that suitable medical arrangements would have been made, not only for special expeditions like that to Ramanna, but also for all military expeditions. So far as the civilian population was concerned, Parakrama Bahu made sure that the cultivable areas would be adequate, by enlargement if necessary, to provide the grain needed by the troops and by the civilians. (*Culuwamsa Ch.76*).

Parakrama Bahu superimposed on the foregoing arrangements two Chief Ministers—one, a Minister of War and the other, a Minister of Civil Administration, who were responsible to him for the coordination of the logistic effort for the Army and civilians.

Preparing for War - Espionage

Geiger describes the manner in which Parakrama Bahu set about ascertaining the military power of a hostile king and of the political and financial situation in that country. This he did by espionage. Geiger discounts the claim in the *Culuwamsa* that Parakrama Bahu himself practised espionage at the court of Gajabahu where he was staying, on the ground that such action would be too risky. What the author of the *Culuwamsa* meant was that Parakrama Bahu used his position in the court to spy out what he could.

Parakrama Bahu certainly deployed a number of "clever and astute" agents in the outlying districts using various disguises for their work. They would operate as sorcerers and fortune tellers, poisoners and as itinerant vendors. Specially chosen agents would operate among the king's dignitaries to ascertain how they could be won over by reason of their being ambitious, or of their nursing a grudge or of being in fear or of being avaricious. These groups correspond to those enumerated by Kautiliya whose work was used as a guide.

The Conduct of War

The "four means of success" that are mentioned in the *Culuwamsa* are also mentioned, *inter alia*, in the 'Mahabharata' and the 'Artha Sastra' of Kautiliya. These, which have been mentioned earlier in this study, comprise the following:

- Bheda - division of the enemy
- Danda - offensive warfare
- Sama - friendly negotiations
- Danam - gifts or bribes

Together they form part of an overall strategy, in which one or other is used. (*Culuwamsa Ch.58*).

The tactical picture, as painted by Geiger, has its independent salient points. In the war against Rajarata, Parakrama Bahu worked out a plan of campaign suited to the locality and time, which was modelled on Kautiliya's text. This plan was written down and handed out to the officers with the strict order not to swerve by a hair's breadth from the king's instructions. (*Culuwamsa Ch.70*). This corresponds to the modern issue of order to subordinate commanders who have to conform strictly to the orders so as not to compromise the operation of which they are part.

Again, in the (second) campaign against Ruhunu, Parakrama Bahu is faced with the determined resistance of the local forces who proclaimed their guerilla intentions by exploiting the mountain wilderness in which the operation lay "by throwing up many entrenchments making all known highways impassable and laying down many robbers paths", so as to halt the enemy and "open battle" against him. One recognises the importance of the tactics described when considering the suitability of the Ceylon jungle for guerilla war.

Geiger illustrates the use of the ambushade by references in the *Culuwamsa* (*Ch. 66 and 73*) and the outflanking of an enemy (*Ch.75*).

Geiger also makes mention of defended areas. The most important is, of course, the fortification of cities like Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, with moat, wall and rampart, into which are let turrets and bastions. A second is the fortification of suitable rock sites which could be developed for defence. The best known, of course, is Sigiriya which has been mentioned above in this study. There are others like Vakirigala and Yapahuwa. A third is the temporary fortress which is constructed when an army reaches a position favourable for defence against sudden attacks, which could also serve

as a base for future operations. This is mentioned in the Culuwamsa (Ch.72). The fortress takes its outline in a line of stakes made like spear points driven into the ground. Outside this would be driven another line of stakes of larger size, strong enough to withstand an elephant's charge. Between the two rows of stakes a trench would be dug, into which were let pitfalls laced with thorns and sharpened sticks. Outside the palisade, tree logs from the surrounding jungle would be strewn around the area two or three bow shots in extent. Any tracks in the vicinity would be covered with thorns and would have pitfalls let into them which would be covered by arrow fire. In the centre of the fortress a four storey structure would be erected from which archers would rain arrows at an attacker, whilst burning sharp pointed bamboo rods would be hurled from engines. Codrington also mentions fire darts and reeds fired and thrown at the enemy.

The foregoing gives some insight into Parakrama Bahu's tactics in the conduct of war. He is reputed to have made a close study of the military theses in the Mahabharata and the texts of Kautiliya, from which he fashioned his own ideas of how to outwit his enemies. Strategists and tacticians through history have learned from others as Parakrama Bahu learned from his researches into Kautiliya's texts. Before him, Alexander learned from his tutelage under Aristotle. After him, Napoleon learned from the campaigns of Frederick the Great and from Alexander's own strategies. And in modern times, the German general staff benefited from the writings of Clausewitz. Unquestionably, Parakrama Bahu did not undertake his military campaigns untutored and unprepared. This would perhaps account for his overall strategic acumen, his adaptability when faced with a tactical difficulty and his generalship which enabled him to secure ultimate victory over his adversaries.

The Subjugation of Contenders for the Crown

As stated earlier in this study, Parakrama Bahu's immediate royal predecessors were unable to subjugate other contenders for the crown of Ceylon and Ceylon was parcelled out among them. Thus, his maternal uncle, Vickrama Bahu, was King of Rajarata. His father Manabharana, was ruler of Malaya Rata, whilst Ruhunu Rata was shared between his paternal

uncles, Sri Megha (in the eastern sector) and Sri Vallaba (in the southern sector). I found the accompanying genealogical table, based on that in Rasanayagam's "Ancient Jaffna" and in Dr. G.C Mendis' "Early History of Ceylon" to be of help in placing Parakrama Bahu's opponents in his quest for power:-

Vijayabahu = Tilleksundari Mitta = a Pandyan Prince Jayabahu
 (a Kalinga Princess)

Vickremabahu Ratnavali = Manabharana Sri Megha Sri Vallaba = Sugala

Gajabahu Parakrama Bahu Manabharana

Vallaba

The Culuwamsa relates how Parakrama Bahu "in his zeal to (unite and thereby) make Lanka happy under one umbrella", reflects on the fact that Lanka being "the home of the hair, collarbone, neckbone, tooth and alms bowl relics as well as the token of the footprint of the master and of his sacred Bo-tree... the Island although not large has always counted for something special." He also reflects that his three fathers (his own father and his father's brothers) and his mother's brother were not able to unite it under one umbrella. He concluded that, as the son of kings, he should avoid human frailties and "must even pay heed to that which is worthy of aspiration and is abiding, namely fame." And again, in a later passage, the Culuwamsa quotes Parakrama Bahu as saying "If my extraordinary power should be the cause of the furthering of the Laity and the Order by the Union of Lanka under one umbrella, then even at the beginning of the enterprise, one sees (in anticipation) its fulfilment." The foregoing must be taken as a statement of Parakrama Bahu's political philosophy and intention. (*Culuwamsa Ch.64*).

The Acquisition of Maya Rata

The death of Manabharana during his youth did not advance Parakrama Bahu's claims for the principality of Mayarata, because Manabharana's brothers, Kirthi Sri Megha and Sri Vallaba, acquired it. Parakrama Bahu's energies were, there-

fore, directed to the acquisition of that territory for himself. With this in mind he moved from the court of his uncle Sri Vallaba in Ruhunu where he had been staying, to the court of Sri Megha. Here he indulged himself in "spying out" the land for his attack on Sri Megha's territory. He now took charge of his troops and opened his account by killing his uncle's general and evading capture by his uncle's forces sent to capture him. He then joined forces with his cousin, Gajabahu, who was his uncle's enemy.

Whilst Parakrama Bahu stayed with Gajabahu in Polonnaruwa, which he would have to attack in order to take Rajarata, he intrigued against Gajabahu by "spying out" the land for information which would aid him in the campaign to come.

Gajabahu came to suspect his intentions and Parakrama Bahu fearing the wrath of Gajabahu, fled to Mayarata, taking with him some of Gajabahu's followers. At first, Sri Megha was unwilling to receive Parakrama Bahu but on the intercession of his mother, Sri Megha agreed to let him stay. In due course, Sri Megha died and, Sri Vallaba having died in the meantime, he succeeded to the throne of Mayarata.

The foregoing which is based on the narratives of the historians particularly Dr. G.C. Mendis, gives more than one example of the "unscrupulousness" commented on by Dr. Basham in the monograph I have referred to above. It is not evidence of outstanding military skill but is of adaptability to circumstances and resilience which are valuable ingredients in the make up of the strategist.

The Capture of Raja Rata

Parakrama Bahu did not let his success in the acquisition of Mayarata go to his head and to undertake an expedition against Gajabahu without careful preparation. He knew that his uncles Sri Megha and Sri Vallaba had attacked Gajabahu in an effort to capture Rajarata and had failed because of the superior military resources at Gajabahu's disposal. He also knew that the acquisition of Mayarata by him did not test his military prowess so as to be certain of victory without further preparation. He, therefore, addressed himself to the

strengthening of his army, on the lines I have already described above. He also gave attention to the "improvement of his kingdom" by creating lakes for the storage of water and improving irrigation to fields which were far from the storage he created, so as to ensure water for the crops that would sustain his forces and his people. Once he had completed these preparations, he moved in against his enemy.

In his plan of attack, Parakrama Bahu was circumspect and ordered one of his generals to protect his flank by occupying the mountainous country of Malaya. His main force would attack both from the South and the West. Gajabahu deployed his troops to deal with the advance from the West and was repulsed. As the move from the South advanced, Gajabahu introduced fresh troops but was again repulsed. Parakrama Bahu's forces from the West and from the South now made contact and their combined strength brought about the defeat of Gajabahu who was made prisoner at Polonnaruwa, where Parakrama Bahu was crowned.

Gajabahu's supporters now sought the assistance of Manabharana, the cousin of both Parakrama Bahu and Gajabahu himself. Manabharana was ruler of Ruhunu and had an alliance with Parakrama Bahu. This did not deter him, however, from making common cause with Gajabahu, because he judged that Parakrama Bahu who could overcome Gajabahu could easily defeat him for the throne of Ruhunu. He therefore, moved to Polonnaruwa ostensibly to assist Gajabahu but actually to seize both the city and Gajabahu. This he did and Gajabahu was cast ignominiously into a dungeon, and Manabharana thus made himself ruler of Rajarata.

Gajabahu now made overtures to Parakrama Bahu for his assistance. This was forthcoming, subject to certain conditions which were that Gajabahu should make Parakrama Bahu his heir and desist from waging war on him. Gajabahu kept his side of the bargain and resisted all requests by Manabharana to aid him in his campaign for the control of Rajarata.

Parakrama Bahu had now to deal with Manabharana who had in the meantime fled towards Ruhunu. Parakrama Bahu blocked all attempts by Manabharana to cross the Mahaveli Ganga which he sought to force. He soon found, however, that containment

of Manabharana was not conquest. He, therefore, had to think up a new strategy. Parakrama Bahu's plan now was to divide his force into two parts, one of which would move from the North-west of Ruhunu and attack from the rear, whilst he would attack frontally, with the remainder of the force. Manabharana sent part of his force to deal with the diversion on his flank but before Parakrama Bahu could exploit the partial separation of Manabharana's forces, he was forced to deal with a rebellion by his general, Narayana, in Anuradhapura. Manabharana followed up this advantage to him, by sending a force to Giritale from where he planned to attack Anuradhapura by a pincer movement from the North-east and East. This plan failed as his North-east army was defeated and enabled Parakrama Bahu to close-in on his enemy and defeat his troops. Manabharana fled to Ruhunu. Parakrama Bahu captured his son Sri Vallaba. He was thereafter crowned king a second time.

The Subjugation of Ruhunu

The acquisition of Mayarata and the conquest of Rajarata made Parakrama Bahu the most powerful ruler in Ceylon. Manabharana had also died in the meantime and this enhanced Parakrama Bahu's position. It transpired however that these factors had not ended the resistance of the people of Ruhunu and yield allegiance to Parakrama Bahu.

What the people of Ruhunu did was to flock to the banner of Sugala, the mother of Manabharana, under whom they rose in rebellion and retreated to the fastness of the mountains from where they proposed to defy Parakrama Bahu in guerilla fighting. Earlier in this study, I have given details of the guerilla fighting in Ruhunu.

Parakrama Bahu made plans to capture Udundora, the seat of Sugala. Before the plan could materialise, however, Parakrama Bahu was confronted with a rebellion of his troops which included his mercenaries (Velakaras, Keralas and Sinhalese). Their subjugation involved some fighting, after which he was able to subdue the rebels. This left Parakrama Bahu free to deal with Sugala. He moved against her, taking care, as usual, to protect his flank and joined battle with Sugala's troops. In due course the detachment on his flank

was able to join the main force and Sugala's troops were subdued. It was not possible to claim complete victory, however, because Sugala fled into the hills with the Tooth and Bowl relics, whose capture was necessary to seal victory.

His progress was impeded by the actions of the guerilla fighters and Parakrama Bahu was forced to adopt a new strategy. He decided to create a diversion by sending a detachment to attack the guerillas from the west while he continued with his main force along the more direct southward route. After much fighting in the hilly country of Ruhunu, the two parts of his force joined up and were able jointly to subdue Sugala's troops, capture the capital Udundora and secure possession of the relics. With the defeat of Sugala's forces, Parakrama Bahu became the ruler not only of Ruhunu but also of the entire country. There were no challenges to his authority except for sundry rebellions which he had no difficulty in quelling and Parakrama Bahu achieved the ambition which he had set for himself, namely, undisputed control over the Island, whether from his own countrymen or from invaders sent by South Indian sovereigns.

The campaigns for the control of Rajarata and Ruhunu are different in character and intensity from the campaign for Mayarata on which I have already commented. In the Rajarata campaign, Parakrama Bahu was confronted by two able adversaries. Gajabahu had already demonstrated his capacity and the resources he controlled by resisting efforts made by his uncles, Sri Megha and Sri Vallaba to subdue him. Manabharana was clearly a wily operator, as he showed in his dealings with Parakrama Bahu and Gajabahu. Parakrama Bahu, however, has shown that, in diplomacy, he was more than a match for Manabharana. So far as fighting was concerned, Manabharana showed that he was both a skilful and determined opponent to Parakrama Bahu whose generalship, however, enabled him to overcome Manabharana in a superior defensive and offensive strategy conducted largely in open country.

The campaign for Ruhunu was characterised by guerilla operations which of course are different from the fighting that took place in the Rajarata country. His opponents demonstrated very early on in the campaign that they were determined to exploit to the full the advantages they possessed in

operating in mountainous, wooded country. The fighting was also bitter because it was undertaken by Parakrama Bahu's aunt, Sugala, to avenge the defeat of her son, Manabharana, by Parakrama Bahu. Her troops also had the experience of fighting for successive Sinhalese kings, overrun by Damilo invaders, who had mobilised them in order to overcome the Damilos. Parakrama Bahu was evidently not deterred by the quality of the troops ranged against him and was able to display sufficient skill and toughness, apart from superior generalship, to overcome them.

A characteristic of Parakrama Bahu on the battlefield was that he did not position himself in the forefront of his fighting troops but preferred to station himself behind the forward troops. In this way, he was better able to judge how the campaign was going and to deploy (and redeploy, if necessary) his forces in order to regain an advantage he had lost temporarily.

It is as a strategist that he strikes one when assessing his approach to the alternatives he wishes to employ at the commencement of an operation. Having said this, it is as well to recognise that he also had full control of the tactical situation. This is evident from the manner in which he was able to alter his dispositions on the battlefield, so as to confuse and outwit his adversary.

Foreign Engagements

Parakrama Bahu's military exploits did not end with domestic successes. The Culuwamsa relates how the ruler of Burma, himself powerful, interfered with the elephant trade being indulged in, by endeavouring to make it a Burmese monopoly. In the quarrel that ensued, Sinhalese ambassadors were ill-treated and even a Sinhalese princess, en route to Cambodia, was captured. Lanka was now rid of the Chola menace and involvement with Burma would not mean having to fight on two fronts. Parakrama Bahu was also all powerful in Lanka and he was not, therefore, disposed to take the Burmese insults lying down. He accordingly assembled a mixed military cum naval force for the purpose of attacking Burma. The ships designed by him took five months to complete. These were supplied with the needs of the troops committed to the Burma expedition -

provisions meant to last for a year at least, weapons of war and medicines. In the section above, dealing with war preparations, I have given details of these logistic arrangements. The armada set sail from Trincomalee in the South-west monsoon but lost some ships en route. The remainder reached Ramanna in due course where the Ceylonese general, Nagaragiri, inflicted several casualties, slew the king and enforced peace between the two countries, during which the Burmese authorities sent elephants as tribute.

Geiger in his notes on this expedition says that the Burmese chronicles do not bear out the claims made by the Culuwamsa regarding the losses inflicted on the Burmese by Nagaragiri. I think he mentions this to counter any exaggeration by the Culuwamsa on the exploits of Parakrama Bahu. The note, however, goes on to say that, according to a rock inscription found in Kurunegala, the campaign against Aramana (Ramanna) and the grant of land in view of his exploits to Nagaragiri, have been recorded. It is clear that the inscription would not have been undertaken unless there had been a grant of land to Nagaragiri in recognition of his exploits.

The second of Parakrama Bahu's foreign engagements took place in South India where the right of a Pandyan King, Parakkama, to the throne of Madurai was contested by another Pandyan King, Kulasekera of Tinneveli. Parakkama appealed to Parakrama Bahu for help to which the latter's response is interesting. "If", he declared, "the distress of him who has placed himself under my protection be not removed, how could my name of Parakrama be fitting?"- the reference being to the meaning of his name, "arm of courage" or "possessed of courageous arms".

Parakrama Bahu now ordered his general, Lankapura, to take charge of a campaign in South India. He succeeded in overpowering opposition to his landing and in subduing forces sent against him by Kulasekera who had in the meantime killed his enemy, Parakkama. Lankapura continued his victorious progress, during which he erected a fortress in the neighbourhood of Ramnad which he named Parakramapura. He also succeeded in restoring Parakrama's kingdom by placing his son, Vira Pandya on the throne. Lankapura's successes did not, however, continue unabated because he had to ask for reinforcements

from Parakrama Bahu, who sent another general, Jagatvijaya, and additional troops, in order to assist Lankapura. The two generals joined forces and proceeded to further victory which Parakrama Bahu commemorated by founding the "splendid village Panduvijaya".

The narrative in the Culuwamsa comes to an abrupt end at this stage, inducing Geiger to pose questions as to the future of the campaign, the fate of Kulasekera and of Lankapura, and of other South Indian princes. His comment on this situation is interesting. "It is curious" says Geiger, "that his (Lankapura's) return to Ceylon is not mentioned and that there is no record of the distinctions bestowed on him by Parakrama Bahu. It is pretty clear that the chronicler has concealed the failure of the expedition after its initial success. The ideal figure of Parakrama Bahu which he has in mind must not be dimmed by association with misfortune."

The answers to Geiger's questions are available in South Indian inscriptions which are referred to in a monograph entitled "Parakrama Bahu and South India" by Professor Nilakanta Sastri, which is published in the 800th Anniversary Volume which I have referred to earlier. The inscriptions record that Kulasekera appealed to the then Chola ruler, Rajadirajah for help, who ordered the capture of Lankapura by his soldiers and for the impaling of his head on the railing of the city gate of Madura. According to Codrington and Mendis, this was done.

Parakrama Bahu unwilling to accept the reverses to his plans in South India, now collected forces for a fresh attack. Rajadirajah, on hearing of these plans, decided to counter them by marshalling his own troops and placing at their head Sri Vallaba, the son of Manabharana, who had been taken captive at the end of the Ruhunu campaign but had escaped and taken refuge in South India. According to Dr. G.C. Mendis, Sri Vallaba destroyed the fleet that Parakrama Bahu had assembled and so frustrated his plans. Parakrama Bahu now acquiesced in the situation and took no further action which would have involved civil war in which Sri Vallaba would certainly have been ranged against him.

The conclusion drawn from this by Professor Nilakanta Sastri is that "though he attained no shining or stable success in his Pandyan policy, (Parakrama Bahu) was able to keep within strict limits the repercussions of that policy on the internal economy of Ceylon and this clear knowledge of limits and his capacity to keep within them, without straining his resources unduly, is not the least of his claims to be counted among the great rulers of Lanka." (*800th Anniversary Publication C. Hist. J.*).

One is inclined to agree with the assessment, because it is only the truly great that can accept the failure of their plans without endeavouring to restore a situation which has failed, by undertaking further action which might in itself result in failure. If failure there was, it was the failure of his generals who had ultimately to deal, whatever their earlier success, with the combined might of Chola and Pandya power, even though much of the latter had weakened. Parakrama Bahu's own reputation remains unsullied as one who had the organising genius to mount a combined naval and military expedition against the very countries whose troops had for decades been the scourge of the forces of Lanka.

Religious and National Undertakings

I pass on to mention briefly some of the many religious and national undertakings attributed to Parakrama Bahu.

On the religious side, considering the schisms and heresies that had undermined belief during the troublous days before his reign, Parakrama Bahu weeded out perverted sects and created a Council for the resolution of "debatable points". In the erection of Dagobas which traditionally was the responsibility of his predecessors, Parakrama Bahu's name is not associated with the creation of spectacular dagobas. Instead, he created numberless dagobas, statues of the Buddha, bana-halls, residences for the priesthood throughout the length and breadth of his domain. Having said this, however, I would not avoid reference to that incomparable group of stone statues in Polonnaruwa, in which the principal statue is that of the Buddha in a lying position bearing an expression of ineffable peace in his countenance and in which the supportive statue is that of his disciple, Ananda, bearing now an

expression of indescribable sorrow, that his Master has passed away. How the sculptor captured the expressions in the crude stone that was his medium must remain a mystery. One wonders whether this group was meant to commemorate the peace that had descended on the country after the turmoil with which the reign has started.

As if to complement his work for religion, Parakrama Bahu paid much attention to national monuments. He paid special attention to his capital, Polonnaruwa, which he surrounded with ramparts and within which he erected a fortress. For himself, he built a four thousand room palace suitably embellished and adorned. For his people, he founded schools and libraries, built halls for music and dancing, formed public baths and scattered parks and gardens through the city.

Outside the city, he developed agriculture on a gigantic scale to ensure the food requirements of a vast population. His policy for water conservation is stated as follows in the Culuwamsa: "In the realm that is subject to me, there are, apart from many strips of country where the harvest flourishes mainly by rain water, but few fields which are dependent on rivers with permanent flow or on great reservoirs. Also by many mountains, by thick jungle, or by widespread swamps, my kingdom is much straitened. Truly, in such a country, not even a little water that comes from the rain must flow into the ocean without being made useful to man." Bearing this in mind, Parakrama Bahu constructed an astonishing mosaic of reservoirs served by dams, lakes and tanks connected to channels which, by skilful gradient, took precious water to the distant fields where the peasant waited patiently. Today, it is not merely the Parakrama Samudra that we marvel at, but also the bewildering network of reservoir and channel which made Parakrama Bahu's contribution to his nation's development. It is small wonder that the contribution of Parakrama Bahu to agriculture has served as the model for engineers from neighbouring India.

Traditionally, the sovereigns of Lanka followed a pattern of devotion to religion which served their spiritual needs and attention to agriculture which served their material needs. Parakrama Bahu did all this in full measure. He, however, did more, because he created the military instrument that enabled

the country to pass from strife to peace, without which he could not achieve his nonmilitary successes. The peace he brought was felt both domestically, with no challenge to his authority, and abroad, where his domestic military reputation, coupled with the reputation created by his troops in Burma and South India, served to halt South Indian invasions during his reign.

His greatness is recognised not merely by the appellation by which history knows him but also by the assessment of the chroniclers, one of whom, the author of the Mahawamsa, is worth quoting:

"...thus was the Island of Lanka improved and beautified by this King, whose majesty is famous in the annals of good deeds, who was faithful to the religion of Buddha and whose fame extended abroad as the light of the moon..."

Tennent also quotes the following poetic reference from the Rajavali:

"...Having departed this life, he was found on a silver rock in the wilderness of the Himalayas, where are eightyfour thousand mountains of gold and where he will reign as a King as long as the world endures..."

We certainly have cause to remember Parakrama Bahu the Great, destined to turbulence during the early part of his life, as surely as he earned tranquillity through the performance of pious and patriotic deeds during his later life, before passing finally into his haven of peace.

5

The Decline

History demonstrates that a period of power is followed by a period of decline. The history of this country after the glory of Parakrama Bahu's reign certainly records a decline in the power and prestige of her sovereigns.

This decline is attributable to more than one factor. The first and basic factor was the internecine rivalry, (caused perhaps by the fact that Parakrama Bahu left no son to whom the succession would go), between his heirs. The second was the attitude of his generals, each powerful in some way or another, who projected their power in support of one or other of the contenders, even though the chief of them was Parakrama Bahu's widow. A third factor was the incidence of invasions, which had abated in Parakrama Bahu's reign, but now began to be manifest. A fourth was something which had lain dormant, namely the power of the Tamil kings in the North who now seemed desirous of projecting that power.

The first of the foreign invasions after the reign of Parakrama Bahu was launched by Magha which came, not as heretofore from a Chola or Pandya source, but from a more northerly source, namely Kalinga. Kalinga is geographically a region within what is known as the Vijayanagar Empire which was demonstrating its power in the region which, as it happens, included Ceylon. According to Tennent, Magha's force was some twenty-four thousand strong which took possession of Rajarata, Ruhunu and the Jaffna region. The occupation was violent and fraught with much trauma, particularly for the Sinhalese, who witnessed the destruction of Buddhist images and much of the irrigation work done by Parakrama Bahu. The effect of this invasion and the pressure from the Tamils in the north which was beginning to be felt resulted in the Sinhalese kings giving thought to the security of the existing

capital Polonnaruwa and the desirability of moving the capital. Parakrama Bahu II, who was a strong ruler and had been engaged in the effort to push the Tamils out of his territory, always considered the possibility of foreign invasion. He, therefore, fortified Polonnaruwa but significantly also decided to set up the capital at *Dambadeniya*.

In 1244, Lanka was subjected to an invasion from a new source, namely by Malay troops under a Malay, Chandrabahu, from Malaya. (In parenthesis, Mudaliyar Rasanayagam appears to argue that this invasion was really from India, the "Malay" being a corruption of "Malabar"). It was an invasion nevertheless and, even though it was no great success, the problem of security recurred and it was a matter of time before the capital was removed to *Yapahuwa* under Bhuvankanaikebahu, and when he was defeated by Pandu troops under Arya Chakravarti, moved back to *Dambadeniya*.

Pandu control over Ceylon at this stage lasted twenty years, after which Parakrama Bahu III regained control and ruled from *Kurunegala* as capital, till 1325. A series of weak kings followed, during whose reigns a period of civil commotion has been recorded. The last of them was Parakrama Bahu V who ruled from *Gampola* though *Codrington* also describes him as having ruled from *Kegalle*.

Dr. G.C. Mendis, in his "Early History of Ceylon" makes the comment that it is probably at this time that the Tamils began to occupy the coastal towns in west Lanka. There had been Tamil occupation in the north from the time of the second Indian invasion (BC 101) but the people were kept in check by Sinhalese kings in the south certainly until Parakrama Bahu I. The invasion of Magha referred to above in which the south was occupied, left the Tamils feeling stronger, because the power of the Sinhalese kings in the south was waning. Mudaliyar Rasanayagam, in his "Ancient Jaffna" refers to the escort provided by Arya Chakravarti, the King of Jaffna, which was not challenged by any King of Ceylon, to Ibn Batuta, the celebrated Arab traveller on his visit to Adam's Peak. It is a matter of interest that, whilst discussing this matter, he draws attention to the reference by Marco Polo (in 1284) to a Sandemain as the then King of Ceylon. Rasanayagam points out that Sandemain has not been identified as a King of Ceylon and

concludes that, in all probability, he was a King of Jaffna. One concludes that Rasanayagam wishes to draw attention to the possibility of the kings of Jaffna being known abroad.

Dr. Mendis draws attention to the fact that Arya Chakravarti was strong enough to send two forces, one naval and the other military, to engage the forces of the then king, Vickramabahu III. The King ordered his Commander-in-Chief who was also a Minister, Alegakonar, to deal with these threats to his security. The C-in-C carried out this mission successfully. Tamil power declined thereafter.

But the Sinhalese monarchy faced a new threat at this stage namely, from China, whose ruler demanded the "Dalada". Vira Alegeswara, who was the Sinhalese ruler at the time, declined to accede to the Chinese demand, whereupon he, his queen and officers were captured and unceremoniously removed to China, although released in due course. This incident reflects the degree to which the capacity of Sinhalese kings had been reduced.

It was left to Parakrama Bahu VI to arrest the decline. He ruled from Kotte which now became the capital. The new king was powerful and ruled the entire country, including the north, which he controlled by installing his adopted son, Sapumal Kumaraya, as his Viceroy. The selection of Kotte as capital had a twofold purpose. On the one hand, it commanded strategic routes to the north across the Kelani Ganga, on the other, it was close to the cinnamon growing area in Ceylon. Cinnamon had by now become a major element in the economy of the country. The income from the development of agriculture which Parakrama Bahu had set in motion had dwindled both from depredations by invaders and from the move away from the cultivated areas by the kings who succeeded Parakrama Bahu. In fact, the impact on income by expenditure by Parakrama Bahu in giving effect to his policies was also being felt. Cinnamon, therefore, was being exploited to ensure the economic stability of the country. Its importance was demonstrated when Parakrama Bahu VI sent an expedition to retaliate against the seizure of a Ceylon ship laden with cinnamon by a Vijayanagar chief.

Parakrama Bahu continued master in Ceylon notwithstanding rebellions against him which, however, he subdued without difficulty. There is no evidence that his successors on the throne contributed much to the development of Ceylon's power and the decline that had set in continued till the Portuguese set themselves up in a new bid to propagate foreign power in Lanka. This phase is examined in the next chapter of this study.

The decline I have mentioned above is indicative of many things. The first is the obvious descent from the heights of Parakrama Bahu's powers, which could not be maintained in the hands of his puny successors. The second is the less obvious but no less significant deterioration in the economic capacity of the successive regimes. The third is the incapacity of the kings to safeguard their capitals which had to be relocated with a noticeable inexorability, which, as I have said earlier had an impact on the order of things. Having said this, however, I recognise that, with marginal exceptions, the kings moved their capitals, not because they were captured but because they wished to prevent capture. This may, I grant, be judged as a distinction without a difference. The difference, however, lies in the fact that a move for the latter reason leaves the "amour propre" of the king intact - it is a melancholy fact that defeat in battle seldom takes "amour propre" into account. The fourth is the loss of Rajarata. In the division of Lanka into regions, there were traditionally three - Ruhunu, Maya and Pihiti. The last in due course became known as the Rajarata that is, the country of the kings, when the sovereign's prestige came to be identified with the region. With the move away from the area where the kings traditionally had their capitals, the significance of the term Rajarata would inevitably decline. Our history regrettably demonstrates that the kings in power at the crucial time were unable to prevent this development nor did they provide evidence of the initiative which alone could reverse the downward process which indicated an inevitability which was disastrous.

The Indian Period in Retrospect

I have now come to the end of what I have described as the Indian period in our history. The scourge of invasion that characterised it commenced in BC 161 and ended in AD 1505

- a period, therefore, of one thousand six hundred and sixty-six years. During that period, one hundred and sixty-five sovereigns passed through our history. I can, however, single out only six of them as having made any worthwhile contribution to the development of military affairs. They are Duttagamani, Gajabahu, Dhatusena, Vijayabahu I, Parakrama Bahu the Great and Parakrama Bahu VI, all of whom contributed in some way or another to the creation of martial traditions which might have been passed on to posterity. The others have been content to leave military initiatives to the invader, without taking steps to create in the country the instrument which might, as the decades passed, terminate the tragedy and humiliation of defeat at the hands of the alien. Our history shows that it is the sovereign that takes first place. This is perhaps in the fitness of things, because he takes upon himself the burden of national development. With success, the encomium is his, but with failure, opprobrium is, equally relentlessly, his.

I am inclined to think that it was in the aftermath of Duttagamani that the failure commenced. When he decided that the Damilo invaders should be exterminated, he had no military tradition or military resources to back him. And yet, he had the vision, notwithstanding the advice of his father, to create an army, the strength of purpose to undertake an arduous march through difficult terrain across the country and the heroic quality of facing the enemy with only determination to vanquish him. What he achieved may not have been repeated by a single sovereign because history has a place only for one Duttagamani. But it was possible for successive kings to emulate his feat by cumulative action over the decades.

Various chroniclers have referred repeatedly to the "inaptitude" of the Sinhalese soldier and the "unwarlike" character of the Sinhalese people. I find it difficult to accept these assessments as being universally applicable. Admittedly, where persons were engaged in the fields as farmers or on building sites as artisans, they would not have the freedom to enlist as soldiers and indeed, depending on their skill and usefulness in the national work in which they were engaged, military service would not be available to them. It is conceivable that such persons would be found "unsuitable" for such service. Having said this, one finds that, particu-

larly in Ruhunu, there were persons who were suitable for military service. Duttagamani's troops were practically drawn from Ruhunu and Rajarata. Similarly, Dhatusena recruited his men for action against the Indian invader from the region in which he had taken refuge namely, the mountain region. Parakrama Bahu himself found use for the people of Ruhunu and Malaya in the ranks of his militia which included fighting soldiers, guides and scouts from the Veddah region and others from the technical guilds, with the skill for fashioning his weapons. We also know from the description of the fighting that the people of Ruhunu were doughty fighters in guerilla type operations. It cannot be said, therefore, that the people of Ceylon were universally unsuited for military service. I am fortified in coming to this conclusion by the following statement by Geiger in the "Introduction to the Culuwamsa". "The Sinhalese are perhaps not naturally a war-like race, but they can hardly be so cowardly, so senselessly cowardly, as they are here depicted (i.e. by Dhammakitti, the author of the Culuwamsa). Against the Portuguese, they gave proof of a death despising courage. In Parakrama Bahu's times, they were not mere cravens..." I think that the basic material was there and only needed to be developed so as to overcome whatever "natural" aptitude for soldiering they may have lacked. And this is what the kings failed to do.

There must be some reason for this. Perhaps one reason is that rulers did not last long enough to undertake military organisation and training. I have discussed above the shortness of the reigns of Sinhalese kings which permitted the handling of no long-term project such as the creation of an army except the traditional work on religious sites and agriculture. Again, given the incidence of murders of rulers, rebellions against them and the like, rulers were probably prone to safeguard their own personal safety rather than that of the state and even their own personal safety has not been carried out with outstanding success.

Turning to the security of the state, if one goes by the history of our capitals, its handling demonstrates an almost culpable indifference. Early on, there was the move from Anuradhapura to Polonnaruwa and the development of Polonnaruwa and its environs suggested that there would be a lasting quality about Polonnaruwa. Even Polonnaruwa was, however,

found unsuitable from a security standpoint and we have the melancholy succession of moves from Polonnaruwa to Dambadeniya, thence to Yapahuwa, thence to Kurunegala, thence to Gampola and finally from Gampola to Kotte. All these moves over a period of three hundred sixteen years, (from AD 1189 at the end of Parakrama Bahu's reign to AD 1505 when the Portuguese arrived in Ceylon), could not have had anything but an unsettling effect on the community, particularly as regards security. Clearly security arrangements had been indifferent and the community probably, speculated at what stage security could be taken for granted.

It has been said that the rulers of Ceylon tended to follow precedent and were unwilling to pursue an unknown initiative. One can scarcely fault the rulers for their loyalty to known precedents - religion and agriculture, because they served spiritual and material needs. But what I find difficult to justify is their adherence to a third precedent, namely, hiring mercenaries to meet the security needs of the country, without considering the desirability of utilising domestic availability for this purpose. One notes that, even mercenaries were not able to subdue invading forces at all times. If such inability was really attributable to unwillingness to fight their own countrymen from India (and we have had more than one major example of such unwillingness), the reliance on them is inexcusable, because of the factor of divided loyalty. On that count alone, the choice should have been on Ceylonese soldiers whose loyalty would not be in question. On the question of suitability, we have evidence that, whatever preference he might have had for mercenaries, Parakrama Bahu did utilise the services of his own people as part of his militia.

Having said this, one should add that one of the causes for hiring mercenaries may have been the reduction in availability of the Sinhalese people for military service, caused by the decrease in population in the post-Parakrama Bahu period as a result of disease and other factors. Such decrease would have made it all the more imperative for able-bodied persons to be available for work on the fields and create a corresponding non-availability for military service.

I have speculated whether Sinhalese rulers were influenced by what seems to be an inevitability about the fate of their regimes. Given their devotion to Buddhist precepts, the rulers may have concluded that this inevitability may have been the result of some culpability in a previous birth which was now being visited on them. I fully realise that I am not as well informed on the matter I am raising as is desirable and that I may be misreading the situation, but I cannot escape the feeling that Buddhist beliefs that were involved may have induced Sinhalese rulers to accept the inevitable in the form of successive defeats.

I have asked myself whether, in making the foregoing criticism of Sinhalese rulers, I am not being unduly influenced by modern attitudes to security which dictate the creation of an army or other force to deal with an emergency which is to come and not wait for an emergency to occur before setting up the force to deal with it. We are aware of the fact that, when the First World War came to an end, strategists took upon themselves the responsibility of preparing for the Second World War. Security is an imperative whose dictates are immutable and have been known through the ages and certainly, therefore, known and understood by our ancestors. The existence of palace guards, known throughout history, is an indication that the security of the sovereign is paramount because, if it is compromised, then, not only is his personal future jeopardised, but the stability of the national order affected. Personal security is thus assigned to palace guards who are after all only part of the security organisation of the state. If one projects this thought into the sphere of national security, the conclusion is that the state must have the wherewithal to protect itself. The requirement is almost axiomatic and 20th Century thinking only serves to establish the validity of the requirement.

In the foregoing recital, I have contrasted the early peaceful relations with India which were experienced up to the reign of Devanampiya Tissa with subsequent relations which I have characterised as "hostile". In identifying the source of hostile incursions into Ceylon, I have made it clear that the incursions were not from North India - that is, the region described by Tennent as "Gangetic". I have, however, stated that they came from South India which is composed of Chola,

Pandya and Chera (which includes Malabar, Cochin and Travancore) - that is the region described by Tennent as the land of the "Malabars". It is possible that an impression has been created that hostile relations occurred consistently with South Indian states without cessation. I wish to correct that impression. History records that Sinhalese kings turned to South Indian kings for the mercenaries they wished to employ in Ceylon. It is obvious that, for this to happen, the relations between the kings seeking mercenaries and the kings supplying them had to be good, certainly not hostile. History records that in the 10th Century, more than one Ceylonese military expedition went to South India to assist a king of that region. History also records that Parakrama Bahu the Great sent a military force to assist Parakkama, a Pandyan king, in his confrontation with Kulasekera, another Pandyan King. It follows that, whilst this period in our history was characterised by hostile relations coinciding with the incursions that took place from time to time, there were periods of tranquillity when the kings of Ceylon had normal relations with their counterparts in South India.

Part 2
THE COLONIAL PERIOD

The Portuguese (AD 1500-1658)

If it is true to say, as Dr. Paul Peiris asserts, that the people of South India were merely waiting for a capacity to sail before they made physical contact with the people of Ceylon, it is equally true to say that it was the development of sea power that facilitated the movement of European people to this part of the world. The most important outcome of that development from our point of view was the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope by Vasco da Gama in the 15th Century. Thereafter Portuguese ships entered the Indian Ocean in search of trade. Trade in the region at the time was partly in the hands of the traditional enemies of the Portuguese, the Muslims, from whom the Portuguese were anxious to wrest that trade. In 1505, a Portuguese fleet under Don Lourenco de Almeida was operating in our waters in pursuit of Muslim ships laden with cargo for the Persian Gulf, en route to the Mediterranean and Portugal. The fleet was caught in a storm, during which it was tossed on the Ceylon coast near Galle. Learning that they had landed in Ceylon where they desired to explore the possibility of entering into trade negotiations for elephants, spices and gems, they coasted to Colombo in search of the Capital.

The parties which disembarked were, on the one hand, a source of irritation to the local Muslims who had a stake in Ceylon's trade and of wonder to the local inhabitants who reported the arrival of the Portuguese in the following terms:

"There is in the harbour of Colombo, a race of people, fair of skin and comely withal. They don jackets and hats of iron. They eat hunks of stone and drink blood. They give two or three pieces of gold and silver for one fish or one lime. The

report of their cannon is louder than thunder when it bursts upon the rock Yogandhara."
(*Rajavalisa*).

This was the impression cast by the Portuguese on the unsophisticated minds of the locals who did not realise at that time that sooner or later, they would have to match their own military prowess against an enemy whose image was so intimidating.

Phase 1. Involvement of the Portuguese in the Lowlands

The reception of the Portuguese embassy which was sent to meet the King, was cordial, with the King, Parakrama Bahu, consenting to a trading settlement, or factory, being set up in Colombo. The presence of sailors in the factory nettled the Muslims who attacked the factory, which had to be abandoned. It was, however, rebuilt more substantially and artillery troops were posted to defend it. This was followed by a treaty being entered into, whereby the King undertook to pay an annual tribute of cinnamon, jewels set in rubies and ten elephants, in consideration of which the Portuguese undertook to protect his harbours and assist him against his enemies. It is in this manner that the Portuguese, having landed in Ceylon by accident, were able to secure a foothold till 1658 when they were superseded by the Dutch.

Parakrama Bahu IX was succeeded on the throne by his brother Wijayabahu VII who died without settling the question of his succession. It was settled by a convention of nobles, supported by the King of Kandy, Wickremabahu, which divided the Kingdom as follows:

The eldest son, Bhuvaneke, to get the capital, Kotte and the seaboard.

The second son, Raigam Bandara, to get Raigam Korale.

The third son, Mayadunne, to get Sita wake and adjacent lands.

The partition of the kingdom had obvious advantages for the King of Kandy, because no one person succeeded to the



**SOLDIER OF
SITAWAKA PERIOD**

entirety of the Kingdom and thus boosted his own strength. The partition also had the effect of generating internecine rivalry and of involvement of the Portuguese in support of one or other of the disputants.

Bhuvaneke, Dharmapala, Vidiya Bandara and Mayadunne

Mayadunne, the most ambitious of the three brothers, was not satisfied with the Kingdom of Sitawake which had been allotted to him, and attempted to seize Kotte the capital of Bhuvaneke who had been named emperor. Kotte, itself was a well defended town, with lakes round it which were infested with crocodiles. Four passes into the town were well-defended by troops assigned for the purpose. The inner town was protected by moats and battlements. Two attempts were made by Mayadunne to take Kotte and when a call for help from the Portuguese Viceroy was followed by the despatch of eleven ships to help Bhuvaneke, Mayadunne decided to withdraw.

In the meantime, Bhuvanekebahu, now aging, entrusted his military affairs to his son-in-law Vidiya Bandara, a daring and capable soldier, in the expectation that he would prove to be a match for the audacious Mayadunne. Mayadunne had in the interim conquered the kingdom of Raigam Korale which had been given under the partition agreement to his brother and, as a consequence, had strengthened his military capability. Nothing daunted, Vidiya Bandara sallied forth from Kotte to give battle to Mayadunne on the frontier. He had under his command his own Sinhalese soldiers and a detachment of Portuguese soldiers. Mayadunne for his part had under his command a Sinhalese force supported by elephants and reinforced by a **Malabar** force equipped with artillery. Vidiya Bandara got the **better** of the engagement and Mayadunne was forced to sue for peace which was acceded to, on his surrendering his young son, Tikiri Bandara (later to be the illustrious Rajasinghe) as a hostage. This engagement is illustrative of the fact that, while a Ceylonese ruler sought the support of the Portuguese, any opposing king would turn to the Malabar king for support.

An important event took place at this stage. Bhuvanekebahu, being anxious to secure the succession to his throne for his grandson, Dharmapala, sought the assistance of the King of Portugal in having an effigy of the grandson

"crowned" as Crown Prince, *in absentia*. This was done on the advice of the Viceroy in India who argued that this action would strengthen Bhuvaneke's position *vis-a-vis* Mayadunne who, the Viceroy felt, should be prevented from seizing the throne of Kotte. The Portuguese King now decreed that his subjects should recognise Dharmapala as Crown Prince and ensured that Franciscan missionaries entered Ceylon in order to undertake the conversion of Ceylonese to the Catholic faith. This heralded the introduction of Christianity to Ceylon which of course, was essentially a Buddhist country.

Under the Sinhalese laws of succession, Mayadunne, the surviving brother, had the right of succession to Bhuvanekebahu on his death. He was incensed by the recognition by Portugal of Dharmapala as Crown Prince. Largely as a result of Mayadunne's annoyance, there followed a period of military activity between the forces of Bhuvanekebahu and those of Mayadunne, they being supported respectively by Portuguese and Malabar troops. There was a stage when Wickremabahu, the King of Kandy, felt threatened by these activities and sought the assistance of the Portuguese.

Bhuvanekebahu died a violent death at this stage, being killed by an assassin. There is no evidence that he was a great ruler, being "weak, vacillating and feeble in character", as Fr. S.G. Perera describes him. Many of his subjects were attracted by him personally but others were displeased by his association with the Portuguese who, in turn, found his inconsistency in his dealings with them rather disconcerting.

Dharmapala now became King, with Vidiya Bandara as regent. Portuguese authorities upset the new regent by not keeping him informed of their decision to renovate the old Portuguese Fort in Colombo. The Portuguese also came to know of his harbouring thoughts of supplanting his son Dharmapala. The Viceroy therefore thought it would be prudent to arrest him. Vidiya Bandara evaded arrest and a mixed force of Sinhalese and Portuguese soldiers, under the command of Tikiri Bandara, was sent to capture him. Vidiya Bandara lost the ensuing battle and fled to Dondra and thence to Jaffna where he sought the assistance of the King of Jaffna. Before the king could assist him, however, Vidiya Bandara died accidentally. Vidiya Bandara was well endowed both in the military

sphere as a soldier of great promise, and in the political field, as the son-in-law of two kings Bhuvanekebahu and Mayadunne. He was, however, impatient for power and was not content to wait for success to come to him. He accordingly paid the penalty of those who attempt to defy fate.

Vidiya Bandara's death weakened the military stability of Dharmapala who also compromised his political stability by becoming a Catholic, assuming the name of Don Juan, as we must now call him. His subjects were disappointed and many altered their allegiance to him and crossed over to Mayadunne. Mayadunne seized the chance and laid siege to Kotte and it was only Portuguese military assistance that enabled the forces in Kotte to force Mayadunne to raise the siege.

The withdrawal of Mayadunne brought about a respite in military activity in the Kotte-Sitawake region and enabled the Portuguese to undertake an expedition to Jaffna against Sangili, who had massacred six hundred Catholics in the Mannar region in 1544. Attempts made in the intervening period to mount a punitive expedition had come to nothing, but it was hoped that the present was suitable time for this initiative. A fleet accordingly, set sail from India for Kayts where the troops on board were due to land at Columbuthurai. The leader of the expedition was, however, mortified to find that the troops at his disposal totalled only twelve hundred instead of the four thousand he expected to find under his command. So great had been the corruption, that the servants and dependants of subordinate commanders had been enrolled as soldiers drawing pay as such. The commander decided, notwithstanding this set back, to press on and he attacked Nallur, the capital of Sangili, well-defended though it was with bastions and entrenchments. The Portuguese captured the town but not the King, who had fled to Kopay. The invading force now followed him to Kopay only to find that the King had fled to India. There, Sangili sent ambassadors to the Viceroy, offering his kingdom as fief of Portugal, the payment of a tribute and permission for Portuguese missionaries to preach the Christian gospel in his kingdom. These terms were accepted, on Sangili leaving his son as hostage. In the meantime, Portuguese troops laid waste the country, whilst Portuguese clergymen attempted to convert the people. The people in turn were incensed and rose up against the Portuguese, supported by

Sangili's troops. The Portuguese now decided to withdraw to their ships but, before they set sail for India, they made for Mannar where they erected a fort, in the expectation that it would provide a base for future operations against Jaffna. (The foregoing is based on Fr. S.G. Perera's "History of Ceylon".)

Rajasinghe

This is the stage at which the son of Mayadunne, now known as Rajasinghe, the "Lion King", entered the stage in a big way. Given the attention of the Portuguese in the North against the Tamil King, Mayadunne thought the time was opportune to attack them in the South. Mayadunne led the attack on Colombo whilst Rajasinghe undertook the attack on Kotte - a plan designed to distract Portuguese attention in two directions. The initiative was unsuccessful largely because a Malabar force which had been requested was attacked off Mannar and this weakened the attack of Mayadunne.

Mayadunne, however, bided his time and when his forces were ready, he moved into the attack once again "with cavalry and elephants of war", again with Colombo and Kotte as objectives. The Portuguese countered the attack by an offensive against the Sinhalese forces, who were entrenched behind ramparts, fascines and ditches at Mulleriyawa. The ensuing initial battle was sanguinary but indecisive. Rajasinghe was nothing if not resourceful, because he mobilised fresh troops, with whom he inflicted such a crushing blow as to cause the Portuguese to retreat after suffering heavy casualties. This was a significant achievement because of the extreme youth of Rajasinghe and because of the fact that it was the first defeat of European troops by a Sinhalese general. It also demonstrated that Sinhalese soldiers were capable of fighting with telling effect against an enemy even with more up-to-date weapons than their own. One has only to contrast the unsophisticated wonder of the Sinhalese beholder, on the beach, of the Portuguese sailor who ate stone and drank blood for his sustenance, with his performance on the battlefield. Rajasinghe's own casualties at Mulleriyawa were so great that he was unable to exploit his success immediately. What he did was to regroup his forces and to move against Kotte where his attack was so vigorous that the Portuguese were desirous of retreating

but were dissuaded by the Sinhalese. The ensuing defence of Kotte did not go the way of Mayadunne and he decided to alter his plans for besieging Kotte.

The consideration of these engagements brought home to the Portuguese the futility of defending Don Juan's capital at Kotte and their own establishment in Colombo. It was accordingly decided that Don Juan should move to Colombo so as to reduce the Portuguese military responsibility. There is little doubt that his move was a moral victory for Rajasinghe who must, therefore, be credited with having been the cause of the Portuguese decision to concentrate on the defence of Colombo.

In the process, Don Juan lost the last vestige of regal power, because now he was without a capital of his own, without subjects over whom to rule and without an army to defend what territory he had. The Portuguese for their part, sought countrywide objectives because, apart from Don Juan's own incapacity, Mayadunne, who might have opposed them, was engaged in an attempt to overrun Kandyan territory because the Kandyan King had offended him by giving in marriage to Don Juan, the daughter who had been promised to his son Rajasinghe. The Portuguese, therefore, were given free rein to overrun the countryside, capture forts, destroy temples, sack towns on the seacoast and seize vessels lying offshore. Fr. S.G. Perera gives considerable detail about these depredations and adds that Chilaw, Negombo, Kalutara, Maggona, Beruwela, Alutgama, Weligama, Galle and Matara were also attacked by naval expeditions. Mayadunne attempted to stem the tide by requesting the help of naval detachments from Malabar but these allies of his were defeated en route.

Mayadunne was getting on in years. His son, born as Tikiri Bandara had, in spite of his youth, now earned the right to the name "Rajasinghe" by reason of his outstanding skill as a soldier. Mayadunne decided that Rajasinghe had earned the right to succeed him as King of Sitawake and Raigama. There would be but one step, viz., the conquest of Kotte and Kandy, in assuming complete overlordship in Ceylon.

Rajasinghe, however, correctly judged that Colombo had to be taken before he moved against Kotte and Kandy. Colombo

itself was ill-equipped. The walls were low and weak, the fortifications were crumbling from neglect and the city unprovided with war materials. The troops defending Colombo totalled only three hundred Portuguese and six hundred lascorins. *Prima facie*, therefore, an attack would be successful. But Rajasinghe's reconnaissances disclosed that the Beira Lake would prove an obstacle in the eastern sector. Rajasinghe attempted to overcome this by draining the Beira where there was marsh. This proved inadequate. Rajasinghe resourceful as ever, now conceived the idea of cutting a ditch between the high ground facing him and the outer marshes. This made movement less difficult and he exploited this by mounting a series of attacks on the defences which, however, failed. This only left Rajasinghe with the determination to wear down the defence by siege. The siege lasted two years, during which the defenders were beginning to feel its effects, particularly of the shortage of rations, which it was part of Rajasinghe's tactics to deny to the defenders. As it happens, the attacking force was also feeling the strain of continued assaults on the defending positions. The siege was brought to an end by the intervention of Portuguese troops sent from India. They fanned out in several directions and attacked Rajasinghe's forces from various angles which induced him to withdraw.

At this stage, Mayadunne died and the story got around that he had been murdered by Rajasinghe. It is difficult to accept the accuracy of this claim. For one thing, Mayadunne was already over eighty years of age and would in all probability have died of old age. For another, Rajasinghe was a favourite of his and indeed, had been given command of his armies. It seems unlikely, in these circumstances, that Rajasinghe would have killed his father.

Mayadunne had political ambitions some of which he achieved by military means. Not satisfied with the fruits of the partition of his father's possessions which gave him Sitawake, he overcame Raigama which had gone to his brother, and fought Vidiya Bandara, himself a most capable general. In the fight for the mastery of the lowlands, he had to oppose the Portuguese but he bolstered his weakness by seeking the assistance of the Raja of Calicut for Malabar troops. What he did not achieve was mastery over the highlands, even though he

worked hard for that success. His was a life of strife for success which eluded him where he yearned for it most. His death, however, saw the reincarnation of his martial spirit in the person of his brilliant son, Rajasinghe.

It was not long before the son achieved what had eluded the father, namely the subjugation of the Udarata, then ruled by Karalliadde Bandara who had taken the name of Don John, on conversion to Christianity. On his death, he left his infant daughter, Dona Catherina, in the protection of the Portuguese. Rajasinghe was, however, not satisfied with the fact that with his conquest of the Kandyan region, he now had more possessions than his predecessors. Colombo and the defeat of the Portuguese for the possession of Colombo was the central issue in his ambitions.

For his assault in Colombo, he made extensive preparations. His first priority predictably enough was to create the fighting troops, elephants and supporting weapons that would do battle for him. He put to the sword any persons who might be hostile to him and interfere with his military plans. He took steps to isolate the garrison in Colombo from assistance from outside by sacking villages that might help the Portuguese, especially by the supply of provisions. These excesses alienated the people from rallying to him and induced them to work against him, even by an attempt to poison him. Fate however favours the brave and Rajasinghe overcame all these vicissitudes and moved steadily forward till he reached the outer walls of the city in the area of Maligawatte and Maligakanda.

The defences of Colombo had suffered both from repeated assaults on the outer walls and from the effect of monsoons. The Portuguese commander, realising the threat from Rajasinghe, gave priority attention to the defences in the eastern sector of the city. These included the improvement of the Bastions of St. John, St. Stephen and St. Thomas. These bastions were fortified by the erection of gun platforms. Beyond, lay the lake which served as a natural obstacle. The strategy of Rajasinghe was to create for his troops a defensive base outside the lake area behind which he entrenched himself in case of sudden attack by the Portuguese by the use of stakes, rivetments, fortlets and trenches. He also rever-

ted to the reopening of the ditch which he had opened during the assault on Colombo mentioned earlier in this study and created a second ditch so as to drain the lake which otherwise, would be an obstacle and so facilitated his assault. Rajasinghe now ordered the city to be saturated with fire from his artillery in the use of which his troops now had some skill. Under cover of the artillery barrage the main assaults were repeatedly undertaken. His elephants were committed to demolishing the defences whilst his fighting troops rained missiles on the defenders. His own personal daring and leadership was used to the utmost in extracting the maximum response from his troops. The defences, however, held. Rajasinghe had now recourse to a flanking attack by sea. This failed, with much loss to his own Sinhalese soldiers and to the mercenaries whom he employed including kaffirs, muslims and malays. There was, however, no lessening in the grip he had on the city by the continuance of the siege.

The Portuguese, obviously in desperate straits by the pressure of the siege, now attacked sea coast towns which their ships could reach, where they plundered provisions where they could and destroyed temples where they could not. One of the worst forays resulted in the destruction of the famed Vishnu Devale in Dondra. It was only the arrival of the relief expedition from Goa that resulted in the siege being lifted. The siege of Colombo was a remarkable example of resolution and fortitude on the part of the Portuguese in the face of a pitiless assault from outside the city and of famine and plague from within. It was an equally remarkable example of skill and courage on the part of Rajasinghe's attacking forces led by his own outstanding leadership, resource and determination.

The failure to overcome the defences of Colombo, as it happened twice, now left Rajasinghe an embittered man, and he became tyrannical towards his subjects. Revolts were an inevitable consequence. The first was the revolt of Sotupala Bandara, the Prince of the tributary of the Seven Korales, over which Rajasinghe had dominion. There followed a revolt in the Kandyan region under the leadership of Mudaliyar Don Francisco who delivered the kingdom to Don Philip, now King of Portugal. Don Philip's General, Konappu Bandara who had now adopted the name of Don John of Austria, set forth to meet a

force sent by Rajasinghe to quell the rebellion and defeated it. Don Philip died at this stage leaving his son, Don Juan, still a boy, installed as King. Don John of Austria raised a revolt against Don Juan, seized the Government and routed Portuguese troops sent against him. He now proclaimed himself King and, when a force was sent by Rajasinghe, to oust the usurper, he succeeded in defeating it at Balana, a pass of strategic importance which he continued to hold thereafter. In the retreat that followed, Rajasinghe had the misfortune to be poisoned by a bamboo splinter entering his foot. This was a singularly inappropriate end to the career of an illustrious soldier. Rajasinghe himself was philosophical about the cruel fate that had befallen him because he comments on it as follows: "Since my eleventh year, I have been fighting. No leader was able to stand against me. But he who has appeared against me in the hill country this time, is a favourite of fortune. The power of my merit has declined."

In the assessment of Rajasinghe's character and prowess, I perceive two aspects. On the one hand is the guarded tribute of the Mahawamsa which gives him credit for having "brought this country under one canopy of dominion" but cannot help referring to him, as being, "verily the sinner (who) did rule with a strong arm," - the consequence, I suspect, of his apostasy in giving up the Buddhist faith and embracing Hinduism and of his persecution of the Buddhist clergy. On the other hand, there is Queros who, though a Portuguese and, therefore, hostile to Rajasinghe, finds it possible to describe him as "Rajasinghe, whom the whole of Ceylon including Jaffnapatam and the furthestmost of the highlands, obeyed" and "as the greatest enemy that the Portuguese had in the Island - the son of another of the same kind." Other Portuguese tributes have compared him to Caesar and Hannibal.

One is inclined to accept the parallel between Hannibal and Rajasinghe. Both had parents - Hamilcar and Mayadunne - who instilled in their sons a love of fatherland and a hatred of enemy. Both served in the Army from a tender age without the advantage of military learning. Both handled the elephant with telling effect in battle. Both were consumed by the achievement of a single objective -

"Rome must be destroyed" for Hannibal, to balance the edict of the Roman Senate - delenda est Carthago.

"Colombo must be captured" for Rajasinghe, in pursuing the dream of a lifetime.

In his "The People of Ceylon", N.E. Weerasooria, whom I remember as one of Ceylon's most outstanding lawyers and not as a historian, waxes lyrical in his assessment of Rajasinghe's ability. Unquestionably, Rajasinghe was unique because he, unlike any of his great military predecessors, was pitted against a European enemy whose power was based on the deadly use of cannon and gunpowder which seemed to dictate an effortless superiority over the unsophisticated resources available to Rajasinghe. He matched this, however, by an unconquerable will to win which led him to exploit the "death desponding" courage of his soldiers, as Geiger so pithily puts it. It was a triumph of human skill and courage over the soulless engines of destruction.

Phase 2. The Spread of Portuguese Power

The death of Rajasinghe left the Portuguese with no great Sinhalese king to interfere with their plans. These included an expedition against the King of Jaffna who was desirous of ridding his kingdom of the Portuguese and to that end, sought the assistance of the Raja of Calicut. The Portuguese Commander in Colombo, hearing of these moves, set forth for the North, whilst a naval force destroyed the Calicut fleet off Mannar. The land forces moved to the capital Nallur where the Tamil troops engaged the Portuguese in battle and were defeated. The Portuguese now held a convention of the local nobles who acclaimed the King of Portugal as their King. A new King, Pararasa Sekaram was installed as King of Jaffna.

The next objectives were Kotte and Sitawaka. Forces opposed to the Portuguese were defeated and Don Juan was acclaimed King of Kotte. This was followed by the subjugation of Sitawaka and Don Juan was recognised as King of Sitawaka. Don Juan, however, being a puppet of the Portuguese, his accession was nominal and the Portuguese could now claim mastery over Jaffna, Kotte and Sitawaka.

The Portuguese were now anxious to gain ascendancy over Udarata. The heiress to the throne, Dona Catherina, had been left in the protection of the Portuguese by her father Karalliadde, but the Portuguese had to fight in order to assume control over the Kingdom. The Portuguese moved to battle with the forces of Wimaladharmā, (earlier known as Konappu Bandara and also as Don John of Austria), who assumed his new name at the time Rajasinghe mounted a campaign to subjugate Udarata and was foiled by Wimaladharmā. The Portuguese forces moved to Udarata but were forced to retreat and, when they got as far as Gannoruwa, they were surrounded by Wimaladharmā's troops. In the fighting, the Portuguese found that they could not protect Dona Catherina and Wimaladharmā was able to return to Kandy in triumph, with the heiress to the throne under his protection. In due course he married her and assumed kingship both as the unconquered ruler of Kandy and as the husband of the heiress to the throne after her father Karalliyadde.

The Portuguese, now smarting under the reverses they had suffered, sent a new Governor to Ceylon. Azevedo now assumed duties and lost no time in a bid to recover lost territory and regain lost prestige. He was accompanied by Don Juan in order to bolster his image with the people. Initially, he mastered Sitawaka, the Seven Korales and the Four Korales, both provinces of importance in the lowlands. He then went further afield and set up stockades in Matara, Galle, Kalutara, Negombo and Chilaw. There were rebellions against the Portuguese, traceable to Wimaladharmā, but these were quelled without much difficulty.

It was at this stage that Don Juan died. Don Juan left no legacy of greatness behind him. He had a regal presence and great charm of manner which endeared him both to his people and to the Portuguese. He ended his days as a puppet of the Portuguese without any possessions, without any subjects and without any army which he might have used to restore his royal rights. It is, therefore, as an ineffective king that history will remember him.

There is, however, an importance attached to his death. By virtue of a deed of gift executed by him on the 12th August, 1580, renewed and ratified in 1583, the kingdom of

Kotte with all its appurtenances passed to the King of Portugal, Philip. Don Juan had himself declared that the Kingdom of Kotte consisted of the Kingdom then known as Kotte, Sitawaka, Raigama, Kandaudarata and Jaffna and of the provinces of the Seven and Four Korales, Matara, Denawaka, Velivera, Kosgama, Palugama, Batticaloa, Kottiyar, Trincomalee and Puttalam. In 1580 and in 1583, the chieftains of Kotte had met and solemnly agreed to recognise the King of Portugal as their King and to renounce the right to elect their own king.

In terms of this donation, the Portuguese Governor in Ceylon, Azevedo, proclaimed the accession of King Philip of Portugal. The nobles attending the proclamation then took oath acknowledging Philip of Portugal as their King in the following terms - "for as much as Don Juan Maha Bandara, whom God has in Heaven, left him (Philip) as his universal heir, there being no other who of right may have and can inherit his crown and realm...." The intention of Azevedo was to rule the country according to Portuguese laws and summoned a convention of nobles to assent to this procedure. The nobles, however, preferred to be governed by local laws and declared that, if the King of Portugal recognised their rights, customs and privileges, they would serve King Philip with the same loyalty they would serve their own king.

Wimaladharma, the King of Udarata and the most powerful of local rulers opposed the assumption of the Government by the Portuguese. Whilst he realised that his marriage to Dona Catherina, the lawful heiress to the throne, gave his position some legitimacy, Wimaladharma realised his military weakness in open confrontation with the Portuguese and organised a campaign of harassment and intrigues against them. He thereafter felt that a military essay against them would be successful but the Portuguese countered this by their own military action. Neither side being able to overcome the other, Wimaladharma returned to his capital.

Wimaladharma was not disposed to terminate his initiatives to subdue and oust the Portuguese. He got his chance when a Dutch Admiral Spilbergen, made overtures to him on behalf of the Prince of Orange, during which he offered Dutch help to overcome the Portuguese. The Dutch interest was the capture of the trade of Ceylon. Spilbergen was followed by

another Dutch Admiral de Weert, who came on a similar errand. Wimaladharmas suggested to him to return to Ceylon and to blockade the Portuguese forts in Ceylon while his own forces would attack them on land. News of this move came to the notice of the Portuguese who lost no time in mounting a force to remove Wimaladharmas. This initiative failed because of the desertion of Ceylonese lascorins in the pay of the Portuguese. The desertion was followed up by an assault on the Portuguese forces which might have resulted in disaster, were it not for a skilful disengagement of Portuguese forces organised and conducted by Azevedo which came to be hailed as the "Great Retreat". Other harassment of the Portuguese followed as Wimaladharmas attempted to exploit his successes against the Portuguese. He was enabled to secure the surrender of many inland forts set up by the Portuguese, while the Portuguese lost many troops, their garrisons rendered ineffective and the general himself powerless.

At this stage, Admiral de Weert returned to Batticaloa in command of six ships. Taking into consideration the weakened position of the Portuguese, Wimaladharmas suggested to de Weert to blockade Galle, whilst he himself attacked Galle by land. de Weert was, however, more intent on promoting trade and put off acting on the King's advice. Thereafter during a meeting with the King, an inebriated de Weert insulted the Royal family and was killed by the King's men. The King's comment to the Fleet Commander was as follows, "He who drinks comes to no good and God has done justice. If you desire peace, let it be peace, if war, war." There was no reconciliation thereafter and the fleet sailed away.

Wimaladharmas himself died not long after. It is his shrewdness rather than any military prowess that lives after him. He was shrewd enough to marry Dona Catherina, in spite of an age difference. He was shrewd to want to please her by running the court on Portuguese lines. He was equally shrewd in adopting Sinhalese customs including the staging of *peraheras* as was the custom in Kotte and so pleased his subjects. He compensated for his lack of military skill by the shrewdness with which he fomented sedition and revolt against the Portuguese. And finally, he demonstrated his shrewdness in conspiring with the Dutch to overthrow the Portuguese. His own initiatives in this direction did not succeed but he

showed to his successors how the cupidity of the foreigner in terms of the capture of trade could be used to serve the interests of the Ceylonese kings.

Wimaladharmasiri was succeeded by his brother (also referred to as his cousin) Senarath, who consolidated his position by marrying Dona Catherina. Before Senarath could settle himself in his kingdom, Azevedo, the Portuguese captain general, decided to put into effect the long cherished purpose of overcoming Udarata. As a preliminary to the main effort, the Portuguese sent expeditions to various parts of the country to overcome the people. Senarath, now alerted to Portuguese intentions, sought Dutch assistance and a Treaty was signed but the assistance agreed upon was slow in arriving. Azevedo now closed in on Kandy by way of Balana and Gannoruwa. Senarath sent a force to contain the Portuguese which was, however, dispersed at Getambe. Senarath had no option but to flee the capital, leaving the Portuguese free to sack the capital, raze the temples and devastate the neighbourhood before returning to Colombo, with rearguard at Balana. He sued for peace thereafter, to which Azevedo agreed because he had achieved his purpose of defeating the Udarata forces, even though he had not secured control over the kingdom. Azevedo was at this stage sent to Goa after eighteen years of service in Ceylon. He will be remembered for his part in the proclamation of the King of Portugal as King of Ceylon on the death of Don Juan.

Senarath took advantage of the departure of Azevedo from Ceylon to make a treaty with a Dutch emissary, de Bochouwer, to assist him in overcoming the Portuguese. Senarath's purpose in making the treaty was military assistance. The purpose of de Bochouwer was, however, the capture of the cinnamon trade in Ceylon and the setting up of a fort in Kottiyar which would facilitate the movement of trade in the East without necessary involvement with the Portuguese in the West. The promised assistance was slow in coming.

Azevedo's successor arrived in Ceylon with detailed instructions about the spread of Portuguese power in which Azevedo used the experience he had gained during his eighteen years in Ceylon. This plan involved the appointment of agents throughout the west - in the Seven Korales (Simon Correa), the Four Korales (Luis Pinto), Sabaragamuwa (Luis Faria) and

Matara (Domingo Cam). The plan also involved an attack on Kandy which was undertaken but failed because of action by the defending forces.

Senarat now felt that Dutch aid was imperative, because of the determined nature of Portuguese actions and went to Goa to press his case personally. The memories of the murder of Admiral de Weert were, however, too fresh and Senarat had to return empty handed. Senarat now had to deal with the actions of a rebel, Nikapitiya, who raised the standard of rebellion and amassed support throughout the country including that of local lascorins. Senarat was initially in sympathy with the rebel pretender (probably in the hope of using his services against the Portuguese) but turned against him when Nikapitiya rose above himself in seeking the hand of the daughter of Dona Catherina in marriage. Senarat decided to mend his fences with the Portuguese and the combined forces of Senarat and the Portuguese were used to subdue the pretender.

Phase 3. Portuguese Involvement with the Dutch

The Portuguese Viceroy in Goa now sent a new Governor for Ceylon, Constantin de Sa, a soldier of noble birth. de Sa found that the Portuguese in Ceylon were in disarray, with his soldiers unruly because they had not been paid and his officials corrupt. Although there was peace, the people were discontented and there was a risk of some joining the ranks of a supporter of Nikapitiya the pretender, named Bareto. de Sa set about dealing with these irritations, disciplining his soldiers and corrupt citizens, appeasing the populace and, of course, overpowering the rebel forces of Bareto.

de Sa's main concern was the growing threat from the Dutch. He was systematic in dealing with this development. His first priority was against Sangili who had replaced Pararasa Sekaram as King of Jaffna. Sangili had given evidence of involvement with the Dutch against the Portuguese. de Sa accordingly sent a force to deal with him, which teamed up with a force stationed in the fort at Mannar and the joint forces defeated Sangili's forces. de Sa now felt that his northern flank was secure. He then turned his attention to the southern area where he erected the Santa Cruz fort at Galle, where the principal feature was the rampart facing the

sea designed to protect the inner fortifications. His southern flank was thus secured.

There arose a complication for de Sa at this stage. The Dutch envoy, de Bochouver, who had failed to secure Dutch assistance for Senarat, had engineered Danish interest in Ceylon and a Danish fleet was sent to operate in Ceylon waters. Senarat, now on terms with the Portuguese, was not in need of Danish help. But Danish help was forthcoming for Bareto who had raised his head once again. de Sa pursued the rebels, killing Bareto in the process. The Danes, finding that they could not enter into a treaty with Senarat which would be favourable to them, sailed away.

de Sa was recalled to Goa at this stage, in spite of the fact that he had raised Portuguese prestige by his military exploits which helped to secure the northern and southern flanks in Ceylon. His successor, Albuquerque, was not a good administrator and things began to drift under him. The soldiers again became unruly because they were not paid and the people found him harsh in his dealings with them. He was recalled and de Sa sent back to Ceylon. Before he left Ceylon, however, Albuquerque erected a fort at Kalutara which would serve as a buffer against any force moving from the South against Colombo.

de Sa's first priority on returning to Ceylon was to strengthen his eastern flank, with the creation of a fort at Trincomalee. The site chosen for this fort was that of the renowned Hindu Temple, Tirukoneswaram, one of the five iswams dedicated to Shiva mentioned by Dr. P.E. Pieris. This, the famous "Temple of a Thousand Columns" housed the shrine which was venerated by pilgrims from Ceylon and India. It was razed to the ground in order to provide the material with which to erect the fort and what was not needed was thrown into the sea. The action of the Portuguese was a desecration of a sacred place which matched the desecration of the Vishnu Devale at Dondra which I have mentioned earlier in this study. The vandalism was of course, justified on the ground of military necessity.

The defence of the Eastern flank was not, however, complete without a fort being erected at Batticaloa. The signi-

fificance of Batticaloa was that it constituted the principal port of entry into Ceylon. The Portuguese had themselves used it when they came to the aid of Karaliyadde, the father of Dona Catherina. The Dutch had also been known to use it as a port of entry. de Sa sent a force to cover the actual erection of the fort where he feared attacks from some four thousand Muslims who had been expelled by the Portuguese and had fled to the banner of Senarat. In due course, the fort was built. de Sa placed Trincomalee and Batticaloa under the jurisdiction of the Portuguese Captain-Major stationed in Jaffna, who, therefore, had responsibility for the northern and eastern flanks of the Portuguese defences.

de Sa was now confronted with criticism in Lisbon that he had not subdued Senarat. He was stung by this into undertaking a punitive expedition to attack Kandy from its Badulla flank. The force, seven hundred strong, took Badulla, razed the temple and burnt the city. It was thereafter set upon by Senarat's forces but managed to cut their way through. They were pursued however and had to give way to the superior forces of Senarat, even though reinforced by lascorins from Matara and the Seven Korales.

Colombo was besieged at this stage but the Portuguese garrison managed to hold out and see the siege lifted. The Portuguese commander now decided to move out of Colombo and attack Kandy. Senarat's forces were overcome and Senarat agreed to a peace, on condition, however, that he pay tribute, restore lands he had seized, release prisoners captured at Badulla and allow Portuguese control of Batticaloa.

Senarat died soon after but before he died, he arranged for his state to be divided among his three sons as follows:

His eldest son Kumarasinghe	-	to be King of Uva
His second son Vijayapala	-	to be King of Matale
His third son Rajasinghe	-	to be King of Kandy

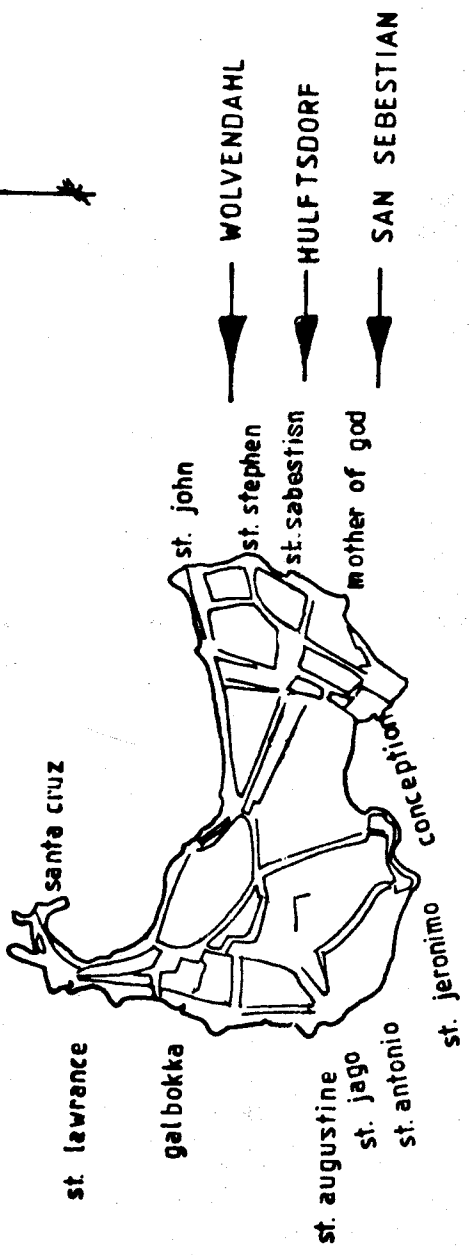
Rajasinghe, the most capable of the three sons, took stock of the position in which he found himself *vis-a-vis* the Portuguese. He argued that earlier strategies of fomenting rebellions causing disaffection and inducing desertion had not turned out to be really satisfactory. He further argued that,

if the country was to be freed of the Portuguese, a foreign power should be asked to assist in defeating the Portuguese, with the inducement of being permitted to trade and of having a firm footing in the country. The initial reaction to his plans came from the Portuguese who, incensed by what they considered to be his perfidy, decided to field an expedition to Kandy in a bid to intimidate the King. This force was, however, defeated by Rajasinghe at Gannoruwa.

At this stage, the Dutch landed at Kalmunai and moved forward in order to capture Batticaloa. A naval detachment also cruised towards Batticaloa. The local garrison capitulated and the Dutch secured control of the fort in an initiative which soon spread elsewhere in Ceylon. The next objective of the Dutch was Trincomalee which was stormed and captured. The Dutch were desirous of capturing Galle but were advised by Rajasinghe to attack Colombo. The Dutch accordingly moved towards Colombo but thought it prudent to reconnoitre Galle en route. They by-passed Colombo, when they found that they were getting no support from Rajasinghe. At Negombo, they found the garrison waiting to give battle but had no difficulty in overpowering it. The Dutch now moved South and the Portuguese expected Colombo to be attacked. Instead, the Dutch moved to Galle which was duly captured. Galle being in the centre of the cinnamon growing area and also being possessed of a good harbour, the Dutch decided to establish their headquarters in Galle. There was desultory fighting thereafter, in which Negombo was successively taken by the Portuguese and recaptured by the Dutch. A Portuguese attempt to seize Galle was also repulsed.

At this stage a truce between the metropolitan forces of Holland and Portugal had been declared in Europe, where the two countries were at war with each other. The local commanders accordingly decided on a local truce. Rajasinghe took no part in the Portuguese-Dutch arrangements.

With the end of the truce not long after, the end of the Portuguese was also in sight. The Dutch moved out from Galle, with Colombo as their objective, Kalutara and Panadura being overcome en route. The Dutch were now ready for their assault on Colombo. Colombo itself was well defended, the main elements of the defences being as follows:



PORTUGESE FORT OF COLOMBO 1656
SHOWING

Dutch Artillery located at WOLVENDAL - HULFTSDORF &
SAN SEBASTIAN

to the North	-	the bay of Colombo
to the West	-	the open sea
to the South	-	the Beira Lake
to the East	-	three strong bastions- St. John's St. Stephen's St. Sebastian's

These bastions were connected round the perimeter of the city by ramparts to the South, West and North, there being twelve in all.

The defending force should have been three thousand soldiers but the garrison could only muster five hundred, supplemented, however, by able-bodied civilians.

The attack on the city took place in two phases. The first was the bombardment of the city from the commanding heights of Hults-dorf, Wolvendhal and St. Sebastian. The ensuing barrages served to damage the ramparts partially but not wholly. As the defences held, it was decided to attack the city by sea and to employ foot soldiers. The sea assault was entrusted to four galleons attacking from the North thus forcing the Portuguese to man the bastions facing the bay. The ships were at this stage sunk and the naval assault petered out. The attack by land was from the East and South along the lake and entrusted to three divisions equipped with scaling ladders. The defences still held and the attackers withdrew with General Hulft, the Commander of the Dutch forces, being wounded.

It was in the circumstances decided by the Dutch to undertake the second phase, namely, the siege of the city. The siege brought out the best in the defenders in a stoic determination not to surrender. They faced innumerable hardships - disease, famine which was accelerated by the influx of refugees from Negombo, Kalutara and Panadura and of course, the reduction in military capability. The military situation would have been alleviated if reinforcements had arrived in time to assist the garrison, but unfortunately for the Portuguese garrison, this did not take place. The end was precipitated by a furious assault on the bastion of St. John which resulted in heavy casualties being sustained both by attacker and defender. The defenders were not, however, ignominiously

defeated, because it was thought prudent to raise the flag of surrender, to prevent further casualties and hardships on the defenders. (Fr. S.G.Perera - *History of Ceylon*)

The Dutch, thereafter, exploited their success in Colombo by moving to Mannar and Jaffna where they subdued the remaining forts of the Portuguese. The Dutch were now masters of the maritime region, till now under the domination of the Portuguese.

An Assessment of the Portuguese Occupation

The actions of the Portuguese by indulging in wanton cruelty, reckless massacres and methods of repression have left behind a sinister reputation. These actions may conceivably be justified on the ground that they themselves were harassed, hard pressed by rebellions and dissensions which dictated retaliation. There is, however, no justification for the despoiling of temples, particularly the Buddhist shrines at Dondra and Hindu shrine at Trincomalee. Whether this reputation is justified in the totality of their occupation is, however, a moot point. They were certainly capable of friendship with the local people to whom they exhibited none of the "superiority" of a European race. Whether the levelling influence of the Catholic faith helped in this process, one cannot say. But the introduction of the Catholic faith, alien though it was, is certainly a feature of the Portuguese occupation.

The contribution that the Portuguese made to military development needs special mention. Seen in perspective, it is to be noted that they arrived in Ceylon when the decline after the power of Parakrama Bahu had unquestionably affected the Ceylonese forces. Nor was the impact of seeing a white race capable of firing thunderous cannon, on an unsophisticated people, conducive to the creation of self-confidence. But that self-confidence is precisely what was created during the numerous military engagements involving the Portuguese that were undertaken by successive Ceylonese military commanders, namely, Vidiya Bandara, Mayadunne, Rajasinghe and Wimaladharmasiri. These commanders served the country well, firstly by organising the fighting element of the public into the lascorins or militia, secondly, by developing esprit de corps among the lascorins, and lastly, by giving them leadership in battle, which enabled them to display a fighting capability

which, hitherto had remained dormant. Professor Geiger who did not have a word of commendation for the Sinhalese soldier in the pre-Portuguese period has by contrast nothing but praise for the fighting spirit of the Sinhalese soldier in confrontation with the Portuguese. There is a further military development, namely, in the manufacture of arms, which needs to be mentioned. Tennent gives many examples given by Portuguese, French and Dutch commentators of their skill. One of them, Farian Y Sousa, is worth quoting. "...at the close of the Portuguese dominion, the Sinhalese made the best firelocks for the East..." It stands to reason that the weapons used by the lascorins included not only the traditional bows and arrows, swords and spears but also muskets made for them locally. According to Codrington the lascorins were also supported by artillery in the form of "gingals" which were portable pieces of ordnance, somewhat after the fashion of an enormous pistol supported in front by two legs and capable of throwing a ball 4 to 12 ounces in weight and fired by a gunman in a sitting position. Elephants, with swords and knives fastened to their trunks, were used in the van of Rajasinghe's army in besieging Colombo. The unmistakable conclusion is that the unsophisticated character of the people in their initial encounter with the Portuguese had developed into a sophistication that is all to the credit of the Sinhalese people. In the process the Sinhalese soldier had matured.

The Portuguese must also be given the credit for the introduction of the fortress into Ceylon. It was a development of the defended area which was featured in the Parakrama Bahu era. The fortress was, of course, developed further in the Dutch period, but the credit for its introduction into Ceylon goes to the Portuguese and with it the techniques of attacking a fortress and defending it, which were different from techniques used in open and in close, wooded country.

It is interesting to note that the Portuguese, who entered Ceylon by accident, ended up with a desire to stay on in Ceylon. Clearly, they, as a seafaring nation in search of trade, were impressed by the location of Ceylon on the trade routes, its potential for defending those routes and the contribution to trade by the riches of the Island, which, according to a Dutch Governor, their kings declared "they would rather lose India than imperil."

The Dutch (AD 1658-1798)

Phase 1. The Dutch and Rajasinghe

There is no question that the Dutch were anxious to take possession of Ceylon. Trade, of course, was the magnet, particularly in the form of cinnamon, elephants, spices and gems. Again, given the development of naval power without which the Dutch themselves could not have projected their interests in the East Indies, they would endeavour to secure such possession before other powers like the British and French having a comparable naval capability and having their own interests in the East Indies, made practical moves to take possession of Ceylon. The openings given to the Dutch by successive kings of Ceylon, Wimaladharmasuriya, Senarath and Rajasinghe, were quite obviously of assistance to the Dutch in securing such an advantage and enabled them to enter Ceylon without going through the processes of invasion.

Rajasinghe, who had encouraged the Dutch to enter Ceylon, probably expected the relationships that had been fostered prior to the capitulation of Colombo, to develop to his advantage in the period following the capitulation. This, however, did not happen as smoothly as he had hoped, and indeed differences between him and the Dutch surged to the surface. The King claimed that General Hulft, the Commander of the Dutch forces, had undertaken to deliver Colombo to him for destruction. The Dutch declined to do this, partly because they did not want to lose such a valuable prize and partly because Rajasinghe had not kept his side of the bargain, namely, to pay the expenses of the Dutch campaign with the Portuguese. Rajasinghe, being frustrated that his military resources were inadequate to fight the Dutch, issued proclamations to his subjects forbidding them from trading with the Dutch. He also made overtures to the Portuguese to

return to his territories on the promise of religious liberties, which were being denied to the Catholics by the Dutch, being restored to them. The embargo on trade was not as successful as Rajasinghe would have liked but the promise of religious liberty led to many Catholics flocking to him. Rajasinghe had a second cause of grievance about territories in the country, being controlled by the Dutch, not being handed over to him even though he was "Emperor". The Dutch attitude fell into three compartments. Colombo, Negombo and Galle were claimed by them in lieu of payment by Rajasinghe of the expense of the Portuguese campaigns which had been withheld by Rajasinghe. This meant that the Dutch continued their hold on the cinnamon producing areas. In the second category were Mannar and Jaffna, which the Dutch claimed to hold by right of conquest from the Portuguese, without assistance from him and indeed, in spite of him, because the conquests had taken place when he was hostile to them. The Dutch placed in the third category Kalpitiya, Trincomalee, Kottiyar and Batticaloa which they chose to hold in order to prevent a foreign power from seizing them. A sort of armed truce followed, with Rajasinghe making no attempt to secure possession of these territories and the Dutch making no move to interfere in the King's affairs.

The differences between Rajasinghe and the Dutch found in Rajasinghe a disturbed monarch. Quite demonstrably, he had miscalculated when he sought Dutch assistance in ousting the Portuguese, after which he judged that they would leave the country with whatever compensatory benefit the King in his generosity might bestow on them. The Dutch had, equally clearly, indicated that they had no intention of leaving the country to suit Rajasinghe's designs. The ensuing situation was obviously the subject matter of discussion and speculation among Rajasinghe's subjects and accounts for the cynical comments made by them, that all he had achieved was the exchange of one foreign power for another - which was like exchanging chilly for ginger - "Miris dila inguru gattha vagei" - that being the pithy Sinhalese comment.

Nor did the people remain passive in giving vent to their chagrin. Plots and attempts on his life have been mentioned which were overcome with the customary tyranny with which Rajasinghe reacted to those who plotted against him. Much of

the plotting against Rajasinghe was engineered by his chieftains who were steadily gaining ascendancy over the people against the King but who were reluctant to be seen in open conflict with the King because retribution was both swift and violent.

Rajasinghe's frustration with the Portuguese and the Dutch led to rather cavalier attitudes to Europeans. An example of this is the capture of some men of the English ship "The Persia Merchant" which was wrecked off the Maldives causing the crew to come in a Maldivian vessel to Ceylon where they were incarcerated. There was also the case of the incarceration of Robert Knox, the skipper of the English ship "The Ann", his son and men of the crew. Rajasinghe's dislike of the English may have been caused by the marriage arrangement entered into in 1661 between Charles II of England and the Infanta of Portugal, Catherine de Braganza. Under the terms of this treaty, it was agreed that, apart from Bombay being given to Charles II as dowry, if the English took Ceylon from the Dutch, they would give Colombo to the Portuguese and if the Portuguese were to take Ceylon from the Dutch, Galle would be given to the English. Further it was agreed that, in any event, England and Portugal would share the cinnamon trade of Ceylon between them. Given the monopoly which the Ceylonese kings wished to have over the cinnamon trade. Rajasinghe would be hostile to both Portuguese and English. As it happens, the older Knox died in captivity whilst the younger Knox escaped and wrote the well known book on Ceylon. Rajasinghe also vented his dislike on the French, when a Royal squadron under Admiral de la Haye came to Trincomalee. During its stay, a Treaty was entered into between the French and Rajasinghe under which the French were given the ports of Trincomalee, Kottiyar and Batticaloa. Provisions for the ships company being delayed, an envoy, de la Nerolle, was sent to the King to arrange for the provisions. The messenger acted undiplomatically in the process and was clapped into chains causing the fleet to sail away in protest.

There were three developments at this stage. Relations between Rajasinghe and the Dutch deteriorated. Secondly, the King who was ageing in any case, appeared to be suffering from the effects of drugs (opium even has been mentioned). Thirdly, perhaps expecting some development in his health, the

chiefs appeared to be strengthening their position. In all the circumstances, the Dutch took the precautionary measure of strengthening the fortifications in Negombo, Kalutara and Hanwella which of course, provide the buffers in the defence of Colombo in the north, south and east, respectively.

Rajasinghe's death was announced not long after. His contribution to history presents no outstanding characteristic that endears. He was vain, as his specially designed personal dress shows. He was petulant, and he had a suspicious nature, probably the outcome of insecurity, which is evident in his dealings with his people whom he also tended to distrust. In his dealings with foreign powers, there appeared a tendency to distrust them because he felt that they were out to exploit his country's wealth and to outwit him in achieving their objectives. He certainly felt insecure in his dealings with them, because he realised his own military weakness which could be exploited. In military affairs, he is believed to have been jealous of his great namesake, Rajasinghe, whose exploits he tried to improve on. There is no question that the earlier Rajasinghe was the more finished military figure. Having said all this, one has to conclude, by asserting that it was in his reign that the Portuguese were removed by the Dutch from this country. Whilst it is true that the removal was the outcome of their superior military capability, the ultimate success could not have been achieved without Rajasinghe's own contribution to the overall strategy. All told, however, it is likely that all his associates, domestic and foreign, were glad to see the end of Rajasinghe II.

Phase 2. Rajasinghe's Successors

Wimaladharmasuriya II succeeded Rajasinghe. He was a mild ruler who indulged in no confrontation with the Dutch. The nearest to confrontation was when he supported a giant petition to the Dutch authorities that harassment of persons professing faiths different from the practised by the Dutch - Buddhists, Hindus and Catholics - should cease and that there should be religious tolerance within the country.

The reign of his successor, Sri Vira Narendra Singh, was characterised by tussles between him and the Dutch on matters of trade. The initial cause of friction was the decision of

the Dutch authorities to close all ports through which foreign trade passed. This measure accrued to the advantage of the Dutch through whom all foreign trade had to pass, and to the corresponding disadvantage of the King, who currently had trade in his hands. Attempts made to change the system failed when the Dutch authorities claimed that the closure had been ordered by their superiors in Batavia. The King countered by closing the gravets, or watch posts, at the frontiers. This meant a restriction of internal trade. The tussle so precipitated showed promise of leading to confrontation, when cinnamon peelers refused to peel for the Dutch. The arrival of a new Dutch Governor seemed to presage an improvement, although the closure of both ports by the Dutch and gravets by the Ceylon authorities was not lifted. The King died at this stage and was succeeded by his wife's brother who was of Nayakkar stock in South India.

During the reign of the new King, Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe, an attempt was made to persuade the Dutch Governor to terminate the closure of ports. He in turn attempted to get his superiors to lift the closure of ports but with no success. The closure of the ports and gravets accordingly continued.

This reign marked the beginning of the Nayakkar dynasty in Ceylon and the end of the dynasty founded by Wimaladharmasuriya, members of which were Senarat, Rajasinghe II, Wimaladharmasuriya II and Narendra Singh. Narendra Singh's mother and wife were Nayakkars and when he married, many of his wife's relatives moved to Kandy, setting a precedent that was followed by members of the Nayakkar families of later Kings of Kandy, who married Nayakkars. When Narendra Singh died without issue, his wife's brother Sri Vijaya, took over the inheritance in accordance with a new law of inheritance adopted by the Nayakkars. When the new King assumed his royal duties, he took a Sinhalese name and called himself Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe but married a Nayakkar.

The etiquette in the Kandyan Courts was conducted in accordance with Nayakkar customs and even the law of inheritance for kings was changed to conform to Nayakkar laws. Because of the language barrier, the Nayakkar kings could not communicate with their subjects. Their influence on the people was consequently marginal and the Sinhalese Chiefs who had

traditionally influenced the people continued to do so. Two distinct classes of courtiers close to the king therefore emerged. One in palace circles was Indian born, Tamil speaking and Hindu by religion, and the other, still close to the king, was Ceylon born, Sinhalese speaking and Buddhist by religion. It was, therefore, an intriguing situation with two parties who sometimes conflicted with each other and who, as Fr. S.G. Perera says, "were soon destined to destroy the very existence of the kings in Ceylon".

Sri Vijaya was succeeded by his brother-in-law, Kirthi Sri Rajasinghe, then a boy of fourteen. The early part of the reign marked literary and religious development. On the literary side, the King ordered the continuation of the Culuwamsa (which had gone only to a second part, from Vijayabahu to Parakrama Bahu IV), into a third part, from Parakrama Bahu IV to Kirthi Sri. On the religious side, there was a Buddhist revival under the influence of the Siamese monks, designed to arrest the tendency to establish Hindu temples dedicated to the Nata, Saman and Vishnu deities, in appropriate in a Buddhist capital. The later part of the reign was taken up in confrontation with the Dutch authorities. Initially, the cause of friction was the refusal of peelers to work on cinnamon plantations, because their income from paddy was insufficient to pay a paddy tax that had been introduced. There followed an insurrection in which the King's forces intervened against the Dutch.

It was in these circumstances that the King, following the precedent set by his predecessors, made overtures now to the British, for assistance against the Dutch. A British mission from Madras sent under an envoy called Pybus was, however, unable to produce satisfactory results. Indeed, it had the effect of angering the Dutch who decided to invade Kandy. The initial expedition was a failure because of the determined resistance put up by the Kandyans who exploited to the full their capability to fight guerilla-type warfare in the mountainous country round the capital to which they were accustomed. The second expedition, directed not through the traditional Balana pass but through Veuda, was successful and the King had the ignominy of his capital being attacked and sacked for the first time in hundred years and the first time by a Dutch force. The Dutch commander was not, however, able

to consolidate his position in the capital, owing to illness among his troops and harassment by Kandyan troops. He was forced, therefore, to withdraw after nine months of unsteady occupation. The inevitable treaty followed. Under its terms, the Dutch were given paramount sovereignty over the dissavanis of Matara, Galle, Colombo and Jaffna; the districts of Kalpitiya, Mannar, Trincomalee and Batticaloa; and over a strip along the entire coast of Ceylon. This made them the masters of the coastal areas. In turn, the Dutch recognised the King's sovereignty over the entire inland area of Ceylon. The trade embargo through the ports was lifted, although the Dutch were to have a monopoly of trade, subject however to access being allowed to the King to the salterns on the coast. The king had to pay tribute. These were humiliating terms which no effort on the King's part could be varied. Kirthi Sri died in 1782.

Phase 3. British Involvement

Kirthi Sri's brother now became King, with the name of Rajadhi Rajasinghe. An international development now intruded into local affairs. With the American Declaration of Independence, war broke out between Britain and Holland and there was risk of British attacks on Dutch colonies. To meet this possibility, the Dutch decided to increase their military capability, then resting on the availability of "National Europeans" of various European nations. Accordingly, they hired the services of a Swiss regiment belonging to a Count de Meuron, in addition to mercenary regiments supplied by the Dukes of Wertenburg and Luxemburg. These were supplemented by regiments of Malayan and Indian sepoys and local levies of Muslims and lascorins.

The ensuing engagements were not, however, on land but at sea, with ships of the British and French fleets involved. The naval exchanges were for the control of the fortresses in Trincomalee - Fort Frederick, which controlled the entrances to Trincomalee and Fort Ostenburg, which commands the harbour. In 1792, they were captured by the British. Later in the same year, the French succeeded in gaining control over the forts which they held till the Peace of Paris in 1793 when they were restored to the British, who in turn handed them over to the Dutch. In 1794, the French declared war on Holland and set up

a Batavian Republic in imitation of the French Republic. The Dutch Statholder, William III of Orange, remained pro English and fled to England for protection. From there, he ordered the Dutch garrison in Ceylon to agree to the stationing of British troops in Ceylon to prevent the French from reoccupying the Forts. In the meantime, the people of Holland decided on a change in the Constitution supporting the Batavian Republic. The local commander therefore decided not to submit to the protection of the British. The British retaliated by overpowering the Forts of Trincomalee - Fort Frederick and Fort Ostenburg. The British, now in control of Trincomalee, moved to subdue Dutch holdings elsewhere. Point Pedro and Jaffna were first taken, Mannar and Kalpitiya followed and when Negombo was taken, the opening was made for the attack on Colombo.

Before the British attacked Colombo, however, they took two initiatives which are worth recording. It will be recalled that the Dutch, considering their weakness in military strength, had hired the services of a Swiss Regiment belonging to Count de Meuron, among other mercenaries. Following an approach made to him by a British official, Count de Meuron had agreed to transfer his regiment to the British, in consideration of the British agreeing to pay all the emoluments due to his officers and men which the Dutch had failed to pay. Some 850 men were involved in this transfer and must have represented a severe blow to the Dutch. The change over also enabled Colonel de Meuron, the brother of the Count, who was in command of the Swiss troops in Ceylon, to give valuable information to the British, regarding the discipline and fighting capability of troops available to the Dutch, along with other information regarding the battle readiness of the defending garrison. The second was a move by the British to secure the co-operation of Rajasinghe against the Dutch by entering into a treaty with him. Rajasinghe offered his full co-operation in return for a guarantee from the British that they would undertake never to allow the Dutch to re-establish themselves in Ceylon. The British were understandably unwilling to agree to this arrangement, even if it were possible. A modified treaty was accordingly agreed to, which did not however receive the King's confirmation before hostilities commenced.

The defensive layout of the Dutch garrison for Colombo presented the following features:-

The garrison at Negombo which provided a forward defended locality.

A defensive screen across the Kelani River at Wattala and Hendala.

Defensive posts on the Kelani itself, entrusted with the task of opposing the river crossing.

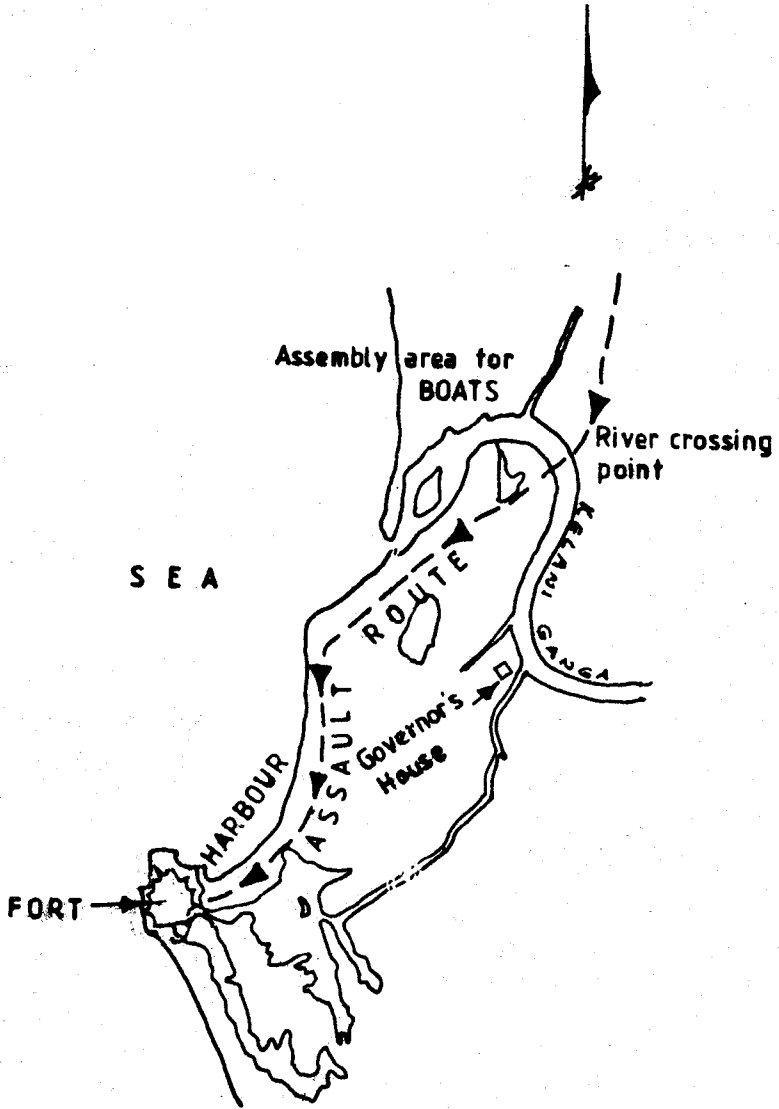
Troops deployed in depth from the river line to the city perimeter, to deny the attacker access to Colombo.

Troops allocated to the close defence of the Fortress of Colombo both forward of the fortress and within the fortress.

The layout clearly indicated an intention to fight for the fortress and to prevent it being taken.

The actual engagement presented a completely different picture. Negombo had fallen, because troops allocated to the fort there had been withdrawn to Colombo. There were some skirmishes north of the river but the river crossing was virtually unopposed. Within the city, the defences appeared to be nonexistent and when a flag of truce was sent by the attacking force, to demand surrender, the flagbearer was escorted with great ceremony. There was every indication of a desire to capitulate and when the terms of capitulation had been agreed to, the capitulation followed soon after.

The reasons for the capitulation were many. In the international setting, the local garrison found that it had no assistance or even instructions from Holland or Batavia. There was no support from the French or from Tipu Sultan of South India who could have been influenced by the French to intervene. So far as the local setting was concerned, the Dutch found that the consequences of the change over by de Meuron's Swiss troops were grave, by substantially reducing the capability of the garrison to defend. There had been



LAYOUT OF BRITISH ATTACK
ON COLOMBO 1796

desertions of Indian sepoys, apart from Malay and Muslim soldiers. The total number available has been put down at twelve hundred Europeans and eighteen hundred Indians, Malays and Muslims. And even among these, there was considerable ill-discipline, owing to non-payment of their emoluments. The local civilian staff were also disgruntled because they had not been paid either. Indeed, the coffers were virtually empty and presented no hope of payment. To crown it all, supplies were also short and there was some doubt whether the garrison could hold out for more than three days. To balance this, the Dutch faced a rather daunting British strength. At sea, the British had available three frigates, thirteen three-master ships and five smaller vessels. On land, the British had at their disposal twentytwo hundred European troops and twelve hundred Indian troops, with the prospect of the addition of two battalions from Bengal. The army of Rajasinghe, five thousand strong, was also preparing to strengthen the left flank of the British.

Capitulation appeared in these circumstances not merely to be desirable but imperative. The terms of the capitulation were fair. Dutch soldiers would be treated as prisoners of war. Dutch civilians could either return home with their effects or stay on, officials being treated as private citizens. The affairs of the Dutch East India Company would be examined and claims against it settled within stated periods. The British Government agreed to honour promissary notes issued by the Dutch Government, up to a limit of Pound 50,000. The Dutch undertook to deliver to the British authorities not only Colombo but also all other places, like Kalutara, Galle and Matara which had not been captured by the British.

After the capitulation, the Dutch Governor, van Angelbeck, was the target of severe criticism, on the basis that the British were allowed into the city too easily and indeed, accusations were made that British troops had been surreptitiously introduced into the Fort, in order to render the assault more effective. An English accusation, by Persival, suggested that the capitulation was a "private treaty" without the knowledge of his troops, who for their part, were incensed when they discovered that there was to be a capitulation. A French accusation, by de la Thombe, went to the extent of suggesting treason. What has been set out above

is I think sufficient to establish that there were many developments to justify the capitulation. There is also evidence that the terms of the capitulation had been referred to the Governor's Council and that the Council had approved them before van Angelbeck finally agreed to the capitulation.

Having said this, one has to add that Angelbeck and his Council have to bear responsibility for much that preceded the capitulation. This includes the ill-discipline of the soldiers which rendered the hard core of the defence ineffective, the administrative inefficiency which was at the heart of desertions and the loss of morale of the civilians and the general disorder within the garrison.

An Assessment of the Dutch Policy in Ceylon

So much for the matter in the narrow perspective of capitulation. There is also the wider perspective of Dutch policy in Ceylon which requires attention. I think it has been established that trade was the central issue governing foreign involvement in these parts and that consequently, a naval and military capability had to be utilised by the Dutch in order to deny such trade to their rivals, also having a naval capacity to secure trade. The decision to control Ceylon was the outcome of that interest in trade and not of responsiveness to the requests of Wimaladharmasuriya, Senarath and Rajasinghe to project themselves in Ceylon. Dutch involvement was deliberate and pre-determined unlike Portuguese interest which, certainly at the start, was accidental.

Like the Portuguese, the Dutch followed a policy of erecting forts. Being more experienced in such work through involvement in European wars, they improved on the Portuguese initiatives. Thus their forts were concentrated in the West which was the cinnamon producing area, with a view to providing protection against naval attacks from the sea and simultaneously against attacks from dissident locals on land - Matara, Galle, Kalutara, Colombo and Negombo received priority. The Dutch went further, by introducing and maintaining a system of inland waterways running from North to South along the Western seaboard which would serve the transportation needs of the cinnamon trade and supplement the road system.

A study of the Portuguese fort system as compared with the Dutch is instructive. Below is a comparative statement:

<i>Portuguese Forts</i>	<i>Main Dutch Forts</i>	<i>Other Dutch Forts</i>
West Colombo Negombo Kalutara	Colombo Negombo Kalutara	Hanwella Kalpitiya
South Galle Matara	Galle Matara	Arippu Hambantota Tangalle Akuressa Hakmana
North Jaffna Mannar	Jaffna Mannar	Elephant Pass Hammanhiel Pt. Pedro Pooneryn Pass- Beschuter Pas Byl
East Trincomalee Batticaloa	Trincomalee Batticaloa	

Source: Ribeiro.

Source: "Dutch Forts of Ceylon" by W.A. Nelson.

What emerges from the foregoing is that the spread of Dutch forts country-wide has been much greater than that of the Portuguese. This has had a significance in wars with local kings which I discuss below.

In siting forts, the Dutch have been more thorough than the Portuguese and the evidence is that, whilst generally the Portuguese sites have been retained by the Dutch, there have been instances where they have been re-sited. The Dutch certainly improved on the construction of their forts. Whereas the Portuguese fort tended to be a relatively weak structure made of earthwork, the Dutch made theirs much more durable, rendering them with stonework. The layout of the Dutch disclosed a square design, although other shapes have been used where the fort had to be sited for a particular defence need which could not accommodate the square fort. The outer perimeter was marked by a ditch, the spoil from which

was utilised to create, with a suitable foundation material, the ramparts from which the musketeers would operate. At the four corners of the fort would be created the bastions for the emplacement of the guns. For entry into the fort the outer ditch would be crossed by a bridge, the opening for which would be secured by a draw-bridge.

I think that the Forts policy of the Dutch, developed as it was from where the Portuguese had left it, had much to do with the relative immunity enjoyed by the Dutch from attacks by local Kings and Chieftains, which had been a feature of the Portuguese occupation. This immunity stems from the fact that the locals would find it more difficult to attack Dutch Forts which were better sited, better constructed and additionally wider spread than in the Portuguese time. There is another reason which must not be overlooked. In the Portuguese era there were many Sinhalese commanders who had both military skill and courage to try conclusions with an alien enemy. One remembers Vidiya Bandara, Mayadunne, Rajasinghe I and Wimaladharmasiri I. By contrast the Dutch had to face rulers like Senarat and Rajasinghe II who, admittedly were a thorn in the side of the Dutch, but lacked the military capability of their predecessors.

Given the policy of the Dutch in maintaining a defensive system centred on the Fort, I am puzzled by the fact that, in the final stage of their occupation, when they faced the advancing forces of the British, the defences of the forts have been proved so ineffective. And this is most apparent when one considers the defence of Colombo the Capital. The strategy of both the Portuguese and the Dutch was to maintain defensive forts north, south and east of Colombo at Negombo, Kalutara and Hanwella which would have to be overcome before an attacker closed in on Colombo. The evidence is that the Portuguese defended Kalutara against the Dutch force closing in on Colombo, whereas the Dutch withdrew the troops at Negombo which should have offered protection against the British force closing in on Colombo from Mannar. Again, the actual defence of Colombo discloses a remarkable difference. The Portuguese put up a spirited fight and declined to capitulate. They went on fighting and went down fighting till the final surrender. The Dutch on the other hand gave no opposition to the British attackers and capitulated under circumsta-

nces which have drawn considerable criticism of the Governor who handled the capitulation.

The explanation given for the capitulation after so much obvious effort had been put into the erection of forts designed to protect the capital and into the actual defence of the capital which had been captured by the Dutch from the Portuguese only after spirited fighting, is that the capitulation prevented bloodshed and paved the way for favourable terms for the capitulation.

One is prepared to accept this explanation. But what one cannot accept is the failure of metropolitan Holland to defend a possession which they had captured by force of arms from a European rival, developed against attack from other European rivals and kept under subjugation for hundred and fifty years whilst they exploited the wealth of the country. The Dutch people might just as well have spared themselves the expense and trouble of the defence of the territory for hundred and fifty years and the ignominy of defeat at the tail end of their occupation. Is it possible that, as Tennent says, the Dutch had become indifferent to the retention of Ceylon? And is there an indifference which is inherent in the attitudes described by Dr. Paul Peiris that "Ceylon was treated as a convenient spot where blackguards, libertines and bankrupts, who had influence in the Directorate, could easily be dumped"?

The Dutch have to their discredit a noticeable lack of tolerance in the matter of religion, whether it be Buddhist, Hindu or Catholic. There is, however, a balancing contribution they have made which must be recorded to their credit. This lies in more than one direction. In the military sphere, they left behind a tradition of erecting forts for defence and the techniques that go with the defence of, and the attack against, a fort. In the economic sphere, they have to their credit a quite remarkable system of inland waterways which had helped to supplement the road system in the matter of transportation. In the cultural field, they have left behind the Roman Dutch Law which forms the basis of the Common Law of Ceylon. Regrettably, they have sullied their own escutcheon by their failure to ensure an honourable termination of what was surely intended to be an honourable occupation.

The British (AD 1798-1948)

It is an interesting feature of British history that, although Britain had acquired an ocean-going capacity around the time the Portuguese acquired it, and that, although Drake circumnavigated the globe not long after Vasco da Gama rounded the Cape of Good Hope in 1498, British interest in India did not manifest itself till 1698 when the British East India Company was formed. Whilst British military power increased progressively in the sub-continent thereafter, it was not till 1876 that the Queen of England was proclaimed Empress of India. It is in the context of the security of the Indian Empire that one must view the contemporaneous actions of the British forces.

At the time of the capture of the Dutch settlements by the British, the British Prime Minister, William Pitt, declared in the House of Commons that Ceylon was "to us the most valuable colonial possession in the globe, as giving to our Indian Empire a security which it had not enjoyed from its first establishment." The security he referred to stemmed from the capture of Trincomalee, "the finest and most advantageous bay in the whole of India, the equal of which is hardly known and in which a whole fleet may hide and remain in security".

The statement has both a political and a military significance. Politically, the reference to India revives the anxiety of the British when they realised that Napoleon had undertaken an expedition to Egypt as the first stage in a campaign to capture India. It also revives the relief felt, when Nelson virtually sank the French fleet at Aboukir Bay and reduced French capacity to attack India. Militarily, the statement reflects the feeling of security that the capture of

Trincomalee projected in the minds of the politicians at Whitehall. Nelson regarded Trincomalee as the "finest harbour in the world". And it is the manifold topographical and geographical features of Trincomalee as a harbour that induced that statement. Its overall size and the depth of the ocean bed within it enabled it to accommodate the entirety of the largest fleet in existence at the time. The hills around it also gave vessels anchored within it protection from any monsoon prevalent at any time. In the tactical field, this ring of hills gives it protection from sea attack from any direction. And in the strategic field, its location at the southern tip of the sub-continent, gave it a capacity to counter any sea-borne threat to India. It is small wonder that the Prime Minister exulted.

Phase 1. The Kandyan Wars, Riots and Rebellions

The events of the first half-century of the British occupation present a disturbed picture. Earlier in this study, the growing power and influence of the Sinhalese chieftains was mentioned and contrasted with the corresponding decline in the power and influence of the Nayakkar kings. Matters came to a head in 1798 when the power of the first Adigar, Pilimatalawa, reached its zenith. The first Adigar ranked next to the King in any case but Pilimatalawa's personal power was such that he had been able to depose the then ruler, Rajadhi Rajasinghe. The King had appointed his Queen's brother, Muttusamy, as inter-rex but not as his successor. Pilimatalawa took advantage of this position to prevent Muttusamy from ascending the throne. On the King's death in 1798, Pilimatalawa moved swiftly to place on the throne the son of a sister of Rajadhi, who assumed the title of Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe. The Adigar's plan was to oust the puppet King in due course and instal himself as King. The puppet King however gave every indication that he would not dance to the Adigar's tunes and indeed proceeded to prove this by declining to marry the Adigar's daughter and instead marrying the daughter of an enemy of Pilimatalawa, much to the latter's chagrin. Muttusamy for his part fled to the British and sought their protection.

Pilimatalawa, being vexed with the King's intransigence and anxious to supplant him on the throne, now sought British

assistance to have the King removed and himself placed on the throne. He offered in return substantial trading benefits to the British. As it happened, the British Governor, North, had felt that the dual control of the Island, whereby the King ruled the interior whilst the British controlled the maritime region, was unsatisfactory and that military control of the Kingdom was the solution. What he needed was a "casus belli". This was forthcoming not long after, when some British persons were molested and a parcel of areca belonging to the British was seized by the King's agents. No restitution was forthcoming, even after the Court acknowledged the seizure of areca. The Governor thereupon decided on military action against the kingdom.

The Kandyan war which followed was set in motion by two British assault groups converging on Kandy. The first, commanded by Gen. Hay McDowell and composed of two thousand men of the 51st and 19th Regiment and a hundred Malays supported by Bengal and Madras artillery set out from Colombo. The second, commanded by Colonel Barbut and composed also of two thousand men supported by artillery, set out from Trincomalee. En route, intermediate forts were set up at Dambadeniya for inter-communication with Colombo and at Matale (later Fort McDowell) for communication with Trincomalee. On arrival at Kandy, they found that the King had left the capital.

The Governor made efforts to reach the King but with no success. He accordingly decided to declare Muttusamy King of Kandy. Attempts made to induce the chieftains to recognise the new King met with no success. North now decided that success would depend on Pilimatalawa's involvement in his plans. Accordingly, he proposed that an Agreement be drawn up between the British Government and "His Majesty King Muttusamy, the illustrious Lord Pilimatalawa, the second Adigar and other nobles of the Court" whereby Muttusamy would hold court at Jaffna, delivering the administration of the country to Pilimatalawa as "Utum Kumaraya". The Agreement was to take effect "as soon as the Prince lately on the throne is delivered to the British."

The success of the Agreement of course depended on the military capacity of the British to hold the capital pending the capture of the King. This, however, failed to materialise

because the garrison was grossly weakened by the onset of jungle fever, from which both Gen. McDowell and Colonel Barbut became casualties, thus necessitating command of the troops devolving on a Major Davis, an officer who proved hopelessly incapable of handling the job. The fever spread, causing the garrison to lose at the rate of six men a day whilst Malay troops deserted. Davis now faced further disaster when hundreds of Kandyan slooped down on his troops. After several hours of fighting, Davis was forced to surrender. He was allowed to leave Kandy with his able bodied ~~men~~, leaving the sick and the wounded behind. He took Muttusamy under his charge. On reaching the Mahaveli Ganga, he found the river in spate and impossible to cross. The King now had Davis at his mercy and demanded the surrender of Muttusamy. This was refused at first but eventually and "basely" as Codrington puts it, handed him over to the King who had him executed. But the worst for Davis was still to come because at this stage, the King ordered him to lay down his arms and return to Kandy. This he did and a general massacre took place under what is called "Davis' Tree" just outside Kandy. The life of Davis himself was spared but he lived a miserable life during which he appealed to his friends to have him sent to England but without avail. He died a broken man. Thus ended a disastrous and in many ways, disgraceful episode in British involvement in Kandyan affairs.

The King, now elated by his success, decided to engineer uprising in Colombo, Negombo, Chilaw, Mannar, Jaffna, Mullaitivu, Trincomalee and Batticaloa. British troops from Bengal and the Cape had to be sent to deal with the attacks on British settlements. The King himself decided to lead an attack on Colombo and indeed set out with a few six pounder guns. At Hanwella, he was stopped by the local garrison, reportedly held by sick persons. His troops were routed and the King had to return to Kandy, a disappointed man.

In 1804, General Weymss, who had succeeded Gen. McDowell, planned a concerted attack on Kandy from various parts of the Island, with the object of causing "the gravest devastation and injury to the enemy's country". Simultaneous attacks were accordingly designed to take place from Negombo, Chilaw, Puttalam, Hambantota, Trincomalee and Batticaloa. Owing to a difference of opinion, however between North and Wemyas, the

orders were countermanded but thos meant for Batticaloa did not reach the local commander Major Johnston. He, therefore, set out with a force of eightytwo Europeans and two hundred sepoys. On arrival in Kandy, he found himself isolated without support from any British troops. He, therefore decided to return to Trincomalee but lost many men due to harassment on the way and the effects of fever. He, however, fought on gallantly and extricated himself in a retreat which Fr. S.G. Perera has compared to the "Great Retreat" of Azevedo which I mention above. Johnson's feat certainly helped to restore the reputation of British troops which had been lost during Major Davis' military misfortunes.

North was now at the end of his tour as Governor and it is interesting to note his place was filled by three military Governors:

- 1803 Lt. Gen. Maitland
- 1811 Major Gen. Wilson (Lt. Governor)
- 1812 Gen. Sir Rebert Brownrigg

This resumed a policy of having military governors at the tail end of the 19th Century with

- 1796 Col. Stewart
- 1797 Major Gen. Doyle
- 1798 Brig. Gen. de Meuron,

the last being the Commander of the de Meuron Regiment that went over from the Dutch to the British. de Meuron's appointment to General rank in the British army is unusual, when one considers that he was Swiss and not British, thus accentuating the importance placed by the British on the crossing over of the de Meuron Regiment to British ranks.

I now pass on to the remainder of the reign of Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe. This period was characterised by a power struggle in which the King tried to destroy the power of his chiefs and they tried to destroy him. Pilimatalawa, although still unable to secure the throne for himself, was still at the zenith of his powers. He now decided to secure the crown for his son, by arranging a marriage between his son and the daughter of the natural son of the late King Rajadhi

Rajasinghe. The King was incensed by this move and deposed Pilimatalawa from the Adigarship. The Adigar now made the mistake of attempting the assassination of the King, which of course failed. He and his son were arrested, tried and condemned to death. Pilimatalawa was beheaded but his son was spared through the intercession of some chiefs.

The new first Adigar was Ehelapola, Dissawa of Sabaragamuwa, and a member of Pilimatalawa's own family and clan. The King disliked him but because of his influence over other chiefs, could not remove him. To counter Ehelapola's position as the chief of the anti-Nayakkar group, the King appointed his chief opponent. Molligoda, as Second Adigar - Ehelapola now found himself losing his position in palace circles and retired to his Dissavani, Sabaragamuwa. Here he was accused of defrauding an Indian dealer in areca. The King ordered him to appear in Kandy to answer for this and other misdemeanours brought to the King's notice. On his refusal to do so, he was deprived of his Adigarship and his family seized as hostage, pending his submission to the court.

Ehelapola now sought British assistance to overthrow the King. For this purpose, he approached a senior British Official named d' Oyly, (who is believed to have had close contact with Kandyan affairs, largely through a spy network which he had created), with a view to securing his services in influencing the Governor to move against the King. The British authorities, for their part, found it difficult to act on the advice of a rebel minister. In the meantime, the King having knowledge of Ehelapola's machinations against him, took vengeance on his family in one of the most gruesome events in Ceylon history. John Davy, in his "Account of the Interior of Ceylon" gives a vivid account of the outrage. The King was also induced to act against all persons who had been associated either with the Adigar or d'Oyly. The hands of the British were thus being forced.

The British for their part, though desirous of ending the Kandyan Kingdom, were not interested in taking action which might savour of military aggrandisement. All they wished was some military control in the Island which would enable them to exploit the natural resources of the land but leave the civil administration intact. In these circumstances, they sought,

as they did in 1803, a "casus belli" to develop, if they were to intervene. The "casus belli" was soon forthcoming. Ten English traders in Kandyan territory were attacked and mutilated, leaving seven dead. There was a suspicion that this was done by Ehelapola's agents but the Governor was not disposed to investigate this, and preferred to treat the incident as aggression and accordingly prepared for war, by mounting an expedition against the King.

In the proclamation issued to account for his warlike moves, the Governor took the stand that the British were acting in accordance with the unanimous voice of the Kandyan Kingdom. Some headmen and their people joined the expedition but still others fled before the advancing British forces. There was virtually no opposition and the forces reached Kandy from two directions, one through the Veuda pass and the other through the Balana pass. Adigar Molligoda did not join the British forces but assisted them with supplies and promised adherence. Before the forces reached Kandy, the King at first declined to believe that the British would dare to attack Kandy after the massacre in 1803 but when it did reach Kandy, he realised that the defence put up by his troops was ineffective and decided to flee the capital. He was followed by troops belonging to the Ceylon regiment led by the followers of Ehelapola and captured. The British authorities arranged to send him to Vellore in one of their ships.

On board the vessel that was taking him to his exile, Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe said the following to his British escort about Ehelapola, "Take care about that man; he has betrayed me who was a father to him" and about Molligoda, he said "He is a good man but not clever. He has sworn to serve the British and you may depend on him because he is a man of his word. He would never have abandoned me if he could have helped it. He has not much power and will not be useful to you. He has many enemies."

Fr. S.G. Perera, himself a great historian, has this to say of the King: "It must not be supposed that Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe was a bad king. He was anxious to do his duty by his people. His quarrels were with the Dissawas and one of the chief reasons why they were so hostile to him was that he evinced a determination to protect his people from the vexa-

tions of the Dissawas who were the real tyrants. It was the Dissawas who prevented him from redressing the wrongs of the people; it was the Chiefs who set the people against him by quoting his authority for their tyrannies." By contrast, John Davy, who was contemporaneously on the staff of the Governor, says this in his book "An account of the Interior of Ceylon": "He may justly be considered an example of the perfect tyrant; wrapped up in selfishness - possessed of ungovernable passion - destitute of religious feelings - destitute of moral principles - and without check, human or divine."

d'Oyly now planned the future of the Kingdom with the two Adigars Ehelapola and Molligoda, the Dissawas and other nobles. An Act of Settlement was drafted which was presented on the 2nd March, 1815 at a Convention summoned by the Governor attended by the Chiefs. The Act of Settlement, which was signed by the Governor, Ehelapola, Molligoda and Dissawas, made the following provisions:

Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe was declared fallen and deposed. His claims and those of his family to the throne were forfeited. The dominion of the Kingdom was vested in the sovereign of England to be exercised through his Governors, saving to the Adigars, Dissawas, Mohottalas, Korales, Vidanes and other Chiefs and subordinate headmen, the rights, privileges and powers of their respective offices.

The Buddhist religion was declared inviolate; its rites, ministers, places of worship to be maintained and protected.

There were other consequential provisions, the Chief of which left the control of the three, four, seven Korales and Sabaragamuwa in the hands of the Chiefs.

The Convention was followed by a Proclamation which was meant for international consumption, in justifying an act of seizure by the British of a neighbouring kingdom. It read:

"Led by the invitation of the Chiefs welcomed by the acclamation of the people, the forces of His Britannic Majesty have entered the Kandyan territory and penetrated

to the capital. Divine Providence has blessed their efforts with uniform and complete success. The ruler of the interior provinces has fallen into their hands and the Government remains at the disposal of His Majesty's representatives."

These events marked the termination of the vestiges of independence in this country which had been ensured, despite efforts on the part of the initial colonial powers, the Portuguese and the Dutch, to end that independence. After the end of the Kandy Kingdom, colonial rule under the British continued. The attitude of British commentators is summed up in the following extract from *Knighton Chapter XVII* quoted by Tennent in Vol.2 Chapter 3:

"From this day (14 Feb., 1815), we date the extinction of Sinhalese independence which had continued without material interruption for 2317 years."

The reactions among the Kandyans were considerable. Ehelapola, who had helped to plan the expedition against the King and to capture him, and had not been chosen for investiture as king, was most disappointed. Molligoda who had helped the British forces with supplies could have claimed similar status, was also disappointed.

The Chiefs for their part found that the arrangement in the Act of Settlement which gave sovereignty to the British brought into being officials in whom was vested the right to carry that sovereignty through. The power of such officials would inevitably redound to the detriment of their own power, whatsoever the phraseology in the Act to safeguard such rights and power. In many ways, the new officials had taken the place of the old chiefs.

The people were disturbed for independent reasons. Those in the three, four and seven Korales and in Sabaragamuwa, now found that their chiefs continued in control of those areas. The people in other provinces who had no quarrels with their chiefs, found that their chiefs had been supplanted by the officials of the British.



**SOLDIER OF
KANDYAN PERIOD**

The outcome of the disappointment felt by the chiefs and the people was the rebellion which broke out in 1818 known in history as the Uva Rebellion. There does not appear to have been a prearranged plan to precipitate the rebellion. Davy thinks that it was a spontaneous outburst following the deposition of the King and the removal of the outward trappings of kingship and regal authority which dispensed summary justice. To this, the chiefs contributed their chagrin that their own trappings of office were being eroded by British officials.

The rebellion itself was sparked off by an attack on a British official who had gone to investigate a crime in the Badulla district. Ehelapola was sent by d'Oyly to investigate the crime. After a preliminary investigation, the Adigar suggested that his brother-in-law, Keppitipola, be sent to keep order in the region of the attack. Keppitipola for his part took the side of the attackers of the British official and, given his influence in the region, there was an uprising which spread over Vellassa, Bintenne, Ulapane, Hewaheta, Kotmale and Dumbara. In view of the sporadic nature of the uprising, the British were unable to work out a coordinated plan of action. Martial Law was of course declared but military posts were established as and when evidence of rebellion was reported. Thirteen such posts were established in areas outside the lower part of Sabaragamuwa, the 3rd and 4th Korales, Udunuwara and Yatinuwara.

It was during the Uva Rebellion that the Kandyans exploited to the full their capacity for guerilla warfare. The following extract from Dr. John Davy's book is illustrative. He said that the insurgents "had recourse to stratagems of every kind and took every possible advantage of the difficult nature of the country and of their minute knowledge of the ground. They would waylay our parties and fire on them from inaccessible heights or from the ambush of an impenetrable jungle; they would line the paths through which we had to march with snares of different kinds, such as spring guns, spikes etc. and in every instance that an opportunity occurred, they would show no mercy and gave no quarter." All along in this study, I have drawn attention to the skill with which the Sinhalese soldiers adapted themselves

to guerilla warfare and exploited the wooded nature of the country. Cordiner's comment on this capability is as shrewd as it is pithy, "There are few countries in the world where the rude and undisciplined peasant is so nearly on a level with the trained soldier." Clearly, in his own terrain, the Sinhalese soldier had come into his own.

Given the harassment of the Kandyans, the extent of the fighting and the fevers experienced in the jungle, the British casualties were heavy. Out of five thousand troops employed, there were one thousand casualties. The Kandyan casualties have been put down as ten thousand. The retaliation on the Kandyans by the British troops included the cutting down of the crops of the Kandyans which brought about a degree of famine. This combined with the effects of the fighting and the incidence of fevers brought about a dwindling of resistance on the part of the Kandyans. Leaders were caught and the rebellion came to an end.

Keppitipola and his henchman Madugalle were tried by Court Martial and sentenced to death. They were both beheaded. Pilimatalawa who had escaped death earlier when tried under the King was also court martialled, but once again reprimed and banished. The outcome of the rebellion was for Ehelapola a bitter blow. Admittedly, he was given credit for his part in subduing Kandy by not being punished but, when he was caught attempting to corrupt and subvert his guards, he was banished to Mauritius. Molligoda, whose disavowal did not join the rebels, came out of the investigations with his name unsullied. Keppitipola was posthumously acclaimed as a hero by his people for having stood up to the British, by leading the rebellion.

The rebellion led the authorities to conclude that the Chiefs had involved themselves in it, in order to subvert the Government and "recover for themselves absolute power over the properties and lives of the great mass of the people." Reforms were accordingly introduced whereby the ancient and established usages affecting the people would hereafter be administered by British officials.

From now on, the control would be as follows:-

A Board of Commissioners would control the affairs of five of the Kandyan provinces - the Kanda Uda Pas Rata. The remaining six Kandyan districts were placed under the control of Government Agents.

Military agents were installed in Uva and Bintenna, the three and four Korales, Matale, Harispattuwa, Hewaheta, Lower Uva and Vellassa.

In the seven Korales, Sabaragamuwa and Tamankaduwa, there were to be civilian agents.

In enforcing these reforms and in modifying the powers of the chiefs, the Governor used the inherent powers of a sovereign. He therefore assumed a greater power over the country, unfettered by His Majesty's Council of the Chiefs.

There were other reforms which would benefit the people at large more directly. These were also undertaken but at a more leisurely pace. One exception to the pace of reform was in respect of roads, because the Governor who was spearheading the reforms, was insistent that priorities would be "first - roads; second - roads and third - roads". The road to Kandy received precedence. Traditionally, the Kandyan kings allowed the countryside to remain under jungle in order to make it more difficult for an invader to enter the realm. The jungle and fever were the allies of the King and so were the enemies of his enemies. No roads were therefore developed and jungle tracks, known only to a few and wide enough for only one man to use, were all that were permitted. Barnes, the Governor, changed all this and, under the direction of his Chief Engineer, Major Skinner and under the immediate supervision of Capt. Dawson, he saw to it that a road was constructed suitable for use by vehicles. Shortly after the road emerged through the rock at Kadugannawa, it passed over a single span bridge over the river at Peradeniya on its way to Kandy. The Sinhalese had a saying that no foreign nation would succeed in keeping Sinhale unless it had the Dalada, bridged the Mahaveli and bored a road through the hills. All this had now been achieved by the British who perhaps felt the relief from the fact that the hills round Kandy which had furnished a natural

rampart had been breached and the spell of security behind the rampart had been broken.

Other roads followed until there was a network of roads islandwide. Attention had also been paid to agriculture, education, the postal services and the removal of the system of land tenure whereby the King could demand the services of his subjects in kind, called "rajakariya". 1833 was an important year for two reasons. One was the Charter for judicial reform whereby the administration of justice which had been vested in the Board of Commissioners was now vested in the Supreme Court of Ceylon with jurisdiction over the whole Island including the Kandyan provinces. The other was the setting up of an Executive and Legislative Council. The former composed of officials and constituted the Executive of the Island. The latter composed of nine officials appointed by the Governor and six officials drawn from the principal merchants and the landed proprietors, had legislative functions. These two changes constituted the beginning of democracy in Ceylon. The Governor's power to banish a person from Ceylon without trial had hitherto inhibited free press opinion but now the age of outspoken press had been introduced, with the curtailment of the Governor's powers.

There is no evidence that the reforms which were being effected brought the Government nearer to the people, so as to demonstrate public acceptance of foreign rule. There is evidence on the other hand that elements in the country wished to eject the British. A series of rebellions have thus been recorded. In 1820, a pretender calling himself Wimaladharmasuriya attempted a rebellion in Bintenne which was easily crushed. Another in Anuradhapura resulted in the rebel leader being caught. In 1834, following the reforms which abolished Rajakariya, there was some reaction by chiefs who had been affected. Some leading noblemen were suspected of complicity in a plot to seize the Dalada, corrupt Malay soldiers and massacre the British. The chief accused was the brother of the Adigar Molligoda who was tried before a mixed jury of Europeans and Ceylonese. He and the other accused in the case were acquitted. He was however deposed from being First Adigar but was later reinstated and made Dissawe of the four korales. In 1843, there was an abortive rising under Chandragotte Unnanse.

The last of the rebellion was the now celebrated Matale rebellion in 1848. The immediate cause of the rebellion was the imposition of a "gun tax" against which there was protest in Kandy which necessitated the intervention of the Colonial Secretary, Emerson Tennent. There was another demonstration in Colombo where the participants were spoken to by Dr. Elliot of the press who persuaded them to disperse. There now were uprisings all over the country. The worst of them was in Matale, where the crowds not only indulged in riotous activity but also went into the extent of proclaiming one of them, Puran Appu, King of Kandy. Another to be similarly acclaimed was Gongalagoda Banda in Dambulla.

The authorities, mindful of what had happened in 1803 and 1818, the series of attempted rebellions since and the inflammatory nature of recent demonstrations which went to the extent of proclaiming kings, took serious notice of the present uprising. Troops were called out. Matale, Kandy, Dambulla and Kurunegala were placed under martial law. Two hundred persons denounced as rebels were shot and hanged and others publicly flogged and imprisoned. Military help from India was also requisitioned.

As it happens, there was a current of opinion that the actions of the Government were repressive and the punishments excessive. And when thirty-four men were tried before the Supreme Court with only seventeen being convicted, the Chief Justice, Sir Anthony Oliphant, found it necessary to make a recommendation to the Governor for clemency to be exercised in respect of the persons convicted. He used the following words: "When it is considered that only one soldier is wounded by the rebels, that no Europeans had been put to death and that no persons had appeared in warlike array since the outbreak at Matale and Kurunegala, the blood which has already been spilt is sufficient for all purposes, whether of vindication of the law or for example." A private letter written by the Chief Justice, reading as follows, is even more poignant: "I have served my sovereign for twenty years and I have eaten the bread of the British nation for that time. I felt that the glory of the one was being tarnished and the character of the other for humanity was being compromised, and therefore I could not remain passive any longer." Neither of these appeals had any effect on the authorities.

In the meantime, Puran Appu and Gongalagoda Banda had been shot and a monk called Kudappola Unnanse was tried by Court Martial for failing to give information which might have resulted in the arrest of rebels. He was arraigned and sentenced to be shot. The Queen's Advocate H.C. Selby, begged the Governor for reprieve, on the ground that there was insufficient evidence for a conviction. The monk was shot.

This led to considerable public agitation in which Dr. Elliot and A.M. Ferguson of the press, Richard Morgan of the Bar and Lawrence, the son and Private Secretary of the Chief Justice, were participants. The principal complainants who included the Chief Justice and the Queen's Advocate and the officers who conducted the Court Martial, were summoned to London for an inquiry. Private letters belonging to Lord Torrington the Governor were produced and he resigned. Sir Emerson Tennent, the Colonial Secretary, was not reappointed. In a post-script to the episode, an Ordinance was passed indemnifying the Governor and all persons concerned with the Court Martial.

Thus ended a regrettable episode in British colonial history, and certainly in their occupation of Ceylon. Given the background to the uprisings, the apprehension in the minds of Torrington's councillors that the security of the country was at stake may conceivably have been genuine. What was unforgivable was the ferocity with which the so-called rebellion was crushed. It certainly cost Torrington his job. But what is more serious is that it cost the British authorities the doubt, if not opprobrium, cast on their capacity to rule a colony in an emergency.

Phase 2. Military and Political Development

During the fighting leading to the defeat of the Dutch garrison and in its immediate aftermath, the British authorities, predictably enough, relied on their own troops. These included naval vessels, artillery troops for the defence of the fortress of Trincomalee and infantry troops as necessary. Their Headquarters was set up in Trincomalee.

An exception to the employment of British troops was however made by the inclusion of the de Meuron Regiment of

Swiss troops in their establishment. A further exemption now came to be made by the inclusion of locally enlisted personnel to supplement the British Infantry Component. The British Army Historical Research, published in London gives the following information on this British initiative:

In 1796, troops in the Dutch service, who were Malays transferred to the British East India Company and formed initially as a Malay Corps and later in 1802, as the 1st Ceylon Regiment under a British Colonel. In the same year, a "Cinghalese" unit was raised and called the 2nd Ceylon Regiment - this was also called the "sepoy" corps. In 1803, a 3rd Ceylon Regiment was raised with recruits from Molucca and Penang. Both these units were commanded by British Colonels. All three Ceylon Regiments fought in the Kandyan war of 1803. In 1805, more "Cinghalese" and 'Madrasis' were recruited for the 2nd and 3rd Regiments and more Malays for the 1st. There seemed to have been some preference for African recruits and a 4th Regiment composed entirely of Africans was raised in 1814 but disbanded in 1815.

In 1815, the 1st Regiment is reported to have served well in the Kandyan war and Lt. Mylius, in command of some Malay troops, is credited with having been involved in the capture of Sri Wickrama Rajasinghe. In 1817, the 3rd Regiment was disbanded and in 1820 the 2nd followed suit. In 1824, the name of the Regiment was changed to the Ceylon Rifle Regiment. In 1848, the 1st Regiment served with credit in the Matale Rebellion. After the rebellion, the recruitment of "Cinghalese" was reduced. In 1857, during the Indian Mutiny, the 1st Regiment did duty in Ceylon and the men were described as "having remained steady and true to their salt". The Ceylon Rifle Regiment was disbanded in 1874.

The history of the Ceylon Rifle Regiment marks the first phase of the employment of non-British personnel in Ceylon for service in the British establishment. The recital which follows of events that happened in the second half of the 19th century after the Matale Rebellion, is based on the "*History of the Ceylon Light Infantry*" by Oscar Abeyratne, supplemented by my own records.

The second phase in the employment of non-British personnel commenced in 1861 with the enactment of Ordinance No.3 of 1861 designed to "authorise the volunteer Corps in the Colony and to provide for the good order and discipline thereof." This followed a petition to the Governor by a group of citizens led by Mr. Brodie, Assistant Government Agent of Matale. It is interesting to note that the petition was made in Matale which gave the name to the 1848 rebellion and that it was entertained so soon after the uprising. It is possible that the fact that it was a petition of English persons had something to do with its approval.

Not much activity has been recorded between 1861 and 1881, when another group of persons led by WJN Boake, Police Magistrate of Colombo, made another petition to permit enrolment in a corps formed of themselves and submitting themselves to the provisions of the Ordinance earlier promulgated. The then Lt. Governor gave his assent in a Proclamation dated 1 April, 1881. The Corps so formed was designated the Ceylon Light Infantry Volunteers and marked the commencement of the Volunteer movement in Ceylon. Quite obviously, the formation of such a corps would compensate for the void created by the disbandment of the Ceylon Rifle Regiment in 1874.

Some interesting developments have been recorded in the aftermath of the creation of the CLIV. The names, addresses and the preference petitioners gave to the arm in which they wished to serve led to these development.

1. The authorities now realised that the unit would not be exclusively Europeans because, of the 366 petitioners, 210 were European and 156 Ceylonese.

2. The petitioners came from Colombo, Galle, Matara and Matale where detachments were in due course set up.

3. Around fifteen persons wished to join the Artillery and this led to the creation of the Ceylon Artillery Volunteers.

4. The upcountry element led to the creation of a mounted unit in due course to be designated the "Ceylon Mounted Rifles".

5. The stretcher bearers converted themselves into a medical unit.

6. The professions were represented in the unit organisation.

Thus, there was a breakwater company, a railway company, a public works company and the legal and medical company. The legal company modelled itself on the "Devil's Own" in England, which attracted judges and leading practitioners at the bar.

The legal company attracted legal luminaries like Tom Berwick, Hector VanLangenberg, HL Wendt and HJC Pereira whilst other distinguished lawyers like Dornhorst and James VanLangenberg (snr) who were also members of the CLIV, created a tradition which attracted men from Hultsdorp like EW Jayewardene, BW Bawa, James VanLangenberg (jnr), EGP Jayetillake, Gratiaen and others.

Still in 1881, the then Prince of Wales, later to become Edward VII, accepted the invitation of the Regiment to be its Honorary Colonel, thus commencing a Royal association with the regiment in the persons of Edward VIII when he was Prince of Wales and the Duke of Gloucester, his brother. The plumes of the Prince of Wales and his motto Ich Dien, were also permitted to be incorporated in the emblem of the regiment.

In 1888, twentyseven members of the CLIV were enrolled as members of the Ceylon Artillery Volunteers, later to become the Ceylon Garrison Artillery and in due course, the Ceylon Artillery.

In 1890, the stretcher bearers who had been in the regiment since 1881 formed the Ceylon Medical Corps and in due course, the Ceylon Army Medical Corps.

In 1892, the Mounted Company of the CLIV became the Ceylon Mounted Infantry and in due course, the Ceylon Mounted Rifles.

In 1897, Queen Victoria celebrated the diamond jubilee of her reign, and a contingent from Ceylon was sent to participate. Commenting on its performance, the Governor stated as

follows: "For the first time in the history of Ceylon, the Sovereign was escorted through the metropolis by colonial troops and among these, volunteers of Ceylon -artillery, mounted infantry and infantry - took prominent part and, I understand, a creditable position." This created a tradition of contingents from Ceylon taking part in Coronation, Jubilee and Victory celebrations in London.

From the foregoing recital, one concludes that the history of the Ceylon Light Infantry Volunteers marked not only the history of the Infantry Arm in Ceylon but also the birth of many units of the Ceylon Volunteer Force which later became the Ceylon Defence Force.

A word about other, non-military developments in the contemporaneous period. A major factor was the development of agriculture, in the interests of which external and internal communications were developed. The road system, started by Governor Barnes to cater for military needs, was expanded to meet the growing needs of the country. The railway system was started in 1858 and the port of Colombo soon after, when it was recognised that the port of Galle, which had served the needs of the country since the days of the Portuguese, was inadequate to deal with the much bigger vessels dealing with increased exports and imports which used the port. Irrigation was also taken up and by 1872 the entire irrigation system had been developed. The revenue from developments enabled social development to be paid for and this included education, by providing primary education and creating the lead to university education by providing scholarships to universities abroad, till our own universities were established.

The outcome of all these developments was that Ceylonese were being encouraged to take an increasingly large part in their own affairs. Admittedly, Ceylon was still a colony but a colony which was steadily making progress towards shedding the shackles of colonial rule and assuming responsibility for national affairs.

Phase 3. World Wars and Independence

The first half of the 20th century opened with a flourish, by the selection of the mounted company of the CLIV to

form the bulk of a mounted unit which was to serve in the Boer War. The unit acquitted itself with such distinction that it was accorded the honour of carrying a Royal banner.

In 1910, a special appointment of Intelligence Officer, Ceylon, was created and Major TG Jayewardene of the CLI selected for the office. His duties included the setting up of a system to give early warning of vessels approaching possible landing places, collection of information useful to the command and the creation of a secret service to be established on mobilisation.

In 1914, World War I commenced and all CDF units were mobilised. The CGA mounted guns for the defence of Colombo, the CLI took up positions covering the eastern, southern and northern entrances to Colombo, whilst all other units were deployed in accordance with mobilisation requirements. An offer was made by the CLI to muster one hundred volunteers for service overseas. This was turned down. This decision did not however prevent many members of the CDF from offering their services to many units abroad. In the event, 118 all ranks of the CDF were enrolled for service abroad, of whom twelve were killed in action.

This evidence of the spirit which obviously existed in the CDF. Many performed well but the performance of two individuals deserve mention. The first of these was the commendation given by his Commanding Officer to Cpl DB Seneviratne (later Major Seneviratne CLI) which recognises his "conspicuous gallantry devotion to duty and also leadership during an enemy counter attack." Cpl Seneviratne was the recipient of the Military Medal. The second of these commendation was about another CLI man who joined the Coldstream Guards during his service abroad, Private Jacotine, which is made in the Official History of the British Campaign in France and Flanders by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and which reads as follows:

"It is typical of the truly desperate spirit of the men that, when every man on an outpost save one had been killed or wounded, the survivor, Pte Jacotine of the Coldstreams, carried on the fighting alone for 20 minutes before he was blown to pieces by a grenade."

In 1915, the CLI was ordered to relieve an Indian Infantry unit, the 28th Punjabis, who were in charge of a POW camp at Diyatalawa. The CLI remained on guard till the German prisoners were moved to Australia. In 1915, during the riots in Ceylon, the CDF was called upon to perform duties in Colombo.

In 1917, the CLI was ordered to relieve the 80th Carnatics of the Indian Army which had been performing guard duties in Colombo. These duties were undertaken by the Mobilised Detachment of the CLI, composed of three officers and two hundred men, not only for the duration but until World War II commenced.

In 1922, the CLI was awarded the distinction of carrying the King's and Regimental Colours. Quite obviously, its performance in peace time since its formation in 1881, coupled with that of its mounted company in the Boer War which merited the award of a Royal banner and its duties in World War I involving the relief of a Regular Battalion of the Indian Army, must have been taken into account in the award of Colours. The Colours were presented by the Honoray Colonel of the Regiment, HRH the Prince of Wales, to the unit under the command of Lt. Col. TG Jayewardene.

In 1939, World War II commenced and the CDF was mobilised. An Indian Division was posted to Ceylon for operational duties. With the fall of Singapore, the British garrison was strengthened. In due course, the Head Quarters of South East Asia Command, under Admiral Mountbatten, was set up in Kandy along with troops meant for duty in the SEA Theatre. In the meantime, the CDF was reorganised and expanded, so that its units could take over some of the duties till then carried out by British and other troops as they were posted to other theatres of the war. The reorganised CDF was deployed for the following operational duties:-

A regular artillery unit of Ceylonese had been raised just before the war commenced, to supplement regulars of the British service. The artillery of the CDF was reorganised to add anti-aircraft units to coast artillery units. These units were deployed to meet artillery needs in Colombo, Trincomalee and other vital areas throughout the country.

The Engineer Unit was reorganised to undertake field engineering and plant operating functions. An Engineer Training Depot and a Training Wing were also created.

The CLI was expanded to five battalions and a regimental depot. The five battalions were deployed as follows: one in Trincomalee; one in Colombo; one on special duty at the SEAC HQ in Kandy; one on training and the last to provide special duties as required. The battalion at Kandy was primarily on guard duty. But association with personnel from countries involved with SEAC in the operation of a supra-level command gave invaluable experience which does not readily come the way of the CDF. The Battalion in Trincomalee was primarily on guard duty, but was also responsible for defence of a "Local Defence area" in which were located the oil tanks at China Bay. The Battalion was also specially commissioned to assess the likelihood of suicide squads being brought by Japanese midget sub-marines for assault on the oil installation. Special reconnaissance was accordingly organised to gather intelligence covering possible landing areas, assembly areas, routes to the installation and possible points of attack. Special maps were prepared setting out the outcome of the reconnaissance. My unit had the experience of serving both in Trincomalee on the special duties just outlined and with SEAC in Kandy and therefore gained invaluable experience.

The Signals were expanded to meet the needs of the reorganised CDF.

Similarly, medical and logistic units were expanded to meet the needs of the CDF.

There were two outstanding events during the war. These were the two Japanese air raids on Colombo and Trincomalee. The attacking forces tested the defences of the Royal Air Force and anti-aircraft defences organised against them. The performance of the defending forces was outstanding, the number of Japanese aircraft brought down being over 70.

The reason for the two air raids on Colombo and Trincomalee by the Japanese has been argued in service circles ever since they were undertaken and the fact that there was no major follow-up has led to the conclusion that the raids had a

reconnoitring role. Whatever the reason, the Japanese did not return either for further aerial bombing or to mount an offensive on land. A chance of engagement on land with a first class enemy was therefore denied to the CDF which might have compensated for our not being able to volunteer for overseas service.

The CDF at large benefited greatly from association with the various units which were stationed in Ceylon during the war. Some such units were posted for duty in Ceylon. Others were posted for temporary duty, whilst they undertook training in the Ceylon jungles in preparation for operational duties in South East Asia. Many CDF units trained with visiting units and some were quartered in proximity to them. The opportunities for association with regular troops who were on their way to operational contact with a first class enemy were therefore invaluable.

In due course, there was demobilisation. Two events however took place after units had come away from mobilised duty. In 1946, representatives of all CDF units, women's units and regular British units employing Ceylonese personnel, were selected to go to London, in order to represent Ceylon at the Victory Parade in London. It was a memorable opportunity to rub shoulders, in peace time, with officers and men from countries of the Commonwealth and the Empire - Britain of course, Canada, Australia, South Africa, India (this was before Pakistan came into existence) and a host of colonies. As commander of the Ceylon Contingent I was placed in command of five colonial contingents, Aden, Burmuda, Ceylon, Cyprus and the Falkland Islands. The CLI colours were paraded and marched proudly through serried groups of delirious Britishers, before they reached the saluting dais where the Sovereign and the Royal family had accommodated with them the victorious Commanders of the war and the War Cabinet. It was the experience of a lifetime.

In 1947, the CDF was recalled from leave in order to aid the civil power in dealing with a major crisis in the trade union field. Having gone through the experience of a major war, the brush with civilian organisation was rather strange. The experience was however valuable in taking control of disturbed areas, making judgements as to the degree of force

to be used and, in any case, assisting the civil police in the maintenance of law and order.

The experience gained by individuals who went through the war and the post-war events just described was of course invaluable. There was, however, a residual advantage namely, to the authorities, who would be engaged in creating the military organisation which would be set up, with the advent of independence which all soldiers felt was round the corner. The CDF was obviously a reservoir from which could be produced the needs of such organisation.

To turn now briefly to political matters. Consequent on persistent agitation by the Ceylon authorities over the years, Whitehall sent two Commissions to report on constitutional reforms. The first in 1927 under Lord Donoughmore recommended government by Executive Committee and the grant of the franchise to men and women over 21 years of age. Seven Committees were created with control over matters listed for such committee. The Chairman of the Committee would be a minister whose experience as such would stand him in good stead in ultimate cabinet government. Political, financial and legal advice to the Governor would however be reserved for three British Secretaries. Whatever advances these measures meant, the country was still far from the political status it desired.

Agitation therefore continued till a second Commission, under Lord Soulbury was sent in 1944. This commission recommended a bicameral Parliament with a House of Representatives for legislative functions and a Senate. There would be a Cabinet of Ministers (replacing the Board of Ministers) who would have executive functions. Defence and External Affairs would be subjects reserved for the Governor-General. These proposals being still unsatisfactory, the Leader of the House was invited to Whitehall to present the case for Ceylon. The leader Mr. D.S. Senanayake, stressed the experience which his ministers had gained not only in peace time but also in war, by membership of the War Council. He emphasised the contribution made by Ceylon to the war effort and the support given to the setting up of SEAC HQ in Ceylon. He pointed out that the electorate was both experienced and enlightened. He gave examples of Ceylon's economic contribution to the war effort.

Mr. Senanayake's presentation was sufficient for a White Paper to be prepared for the consideration of the Ceylon authorities, outlining fresh proposals which spelt Dominion Status as had prevailed for India. Ceylon accepted and on the 18th June, 1947, the Governor announced the status of a Dominion Ceylon.

In February 1948, the Duke of Gloucester was sent to present the King's Speech from the Throne. In it, the King referred to the surrender of Colombo and all Dutch territory in 1796 to Britain, and to the terms of the Treaty of Amiens in 1802 making the maritime provinces a British possession. The King also referred to the Kandyan Convention of 1815 whereby the Kandyan provinces were vested in the British Sovereign. He then outlined the steps that had been taken to lead to the political emancipation of Ceylon which had resulted in Ceylon being given the status of a responsible member of the Commonwealth of Nations with the status of a Dominion. He expressed satisfaction that Ceylon had achieved freedom by constitutional and peaceful means in collaboration with the British Government.

If it is true to say as I have done that the last half century of British occupation started with a flourish, it is equally true to say that it also ended with a flourish, through the achievement of Independence by Ceylon.

Phase 4. CDF after Demobilisation

Demobilisation after World War II marked a fresh phase in the history of the CDF namely, reorganisation for peace-time duties. War time establishments were clearly too big for post-war requirements and units were required to trim their wartime strengths, leaving only sufficient officers and men to meet peace-time needs. In the process, I found myself the senior commander on the effective strength of the CLI. I had already had the responsibility of commanding a Battalion in wartime and the distinction of commanding the Ceylon Contingent at the Victory parade in 1946 in London but the peace-time command of the Regiment, in line with pre-war commands from the inception of the Regiment in 1881, was a satisfying experience.

In the process of reorganisation, the post of Commandant of the CDF which hitherto had been filled by a British officer, was now assigned to the Senior Commanding Officer of the CDF. The process of Ceylonisation was continued by the offer to me of the post of Staff Officer of the CDF, a post which was expected to lead to the Senior staff post in the Army that was expected to follow. At the time this was offered, I had reverted to the Bar where I had practised when war broke out and had been offered a post in the middle order of the Attorney-General's Department. I had now to decide between my prospects at the Bar which were not inconsiderable and my prospects in the Army which were unpredictable. I chose the latter because I felt that I should make myself available to help in the creation of the Army of Independent Ceylon.

Although Independence had been announced in 1947, it was not until 1948 that the instruments of Independence were handed over to the Prime Minister, Mr. D.S. Senanayake. As mentioned earlier by me, the responsibility was delegated by the King to his brother, the Duke of Gloucester. As it happens, the Duke of Gloucester was himself a distinguished soldier who had a place in the CDF as the Honorary Colonel of two units, the CLI and the CPRC. As though to emphasise the connection between the Duke and the CDF, the Commandant of the CDF and the Commanding Officer of the CRNVR, the naval counterpart of the CDF, along with the Commanding Officers of CLI and the CPRC were required to be part of his entourage at the Independence ceremony.

The CLI also took advantage of the presence in Ceylon of its Honorary Colonel to commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the presentation of Colours to the Regiment by his brother, the Prince of Wales in 1922. In my address of welcome, I made reference to the fact that the CLI had now produced two of its officers to serve in the Cabinet of Mr. D.S. Senanayake, namely, Lt. Col. J.L. Kotalawela and Major E.A. Nugawela. I pointed out that their elevation to cabinet rank enriched the history of the regiment which had in its past history produced officers who in later life had become judges of the Supreme Court including a Chief Justice and other distinguished legal luminaries both at the official and the unofficial bar.

Later in the year, units of the now reorganised CDF made their way to Diyatalawa, to resume the pre-war tradition of conducting their Annual Training Camps at the location in which, at the turn of the century, prisoners of war captured during the Boer War had been accommodated.

Finally, the units of the CDF had the satisfaction of taking part in the First Independence Day Parade. It was a memorable occasion because the focus was exclusively on the CDF as in pre-war years - a focus which would in future years have to be shared with units to be raised as part of the Army of Independent Ceylon. Appropriately enough, it highlighted the officers and men representing their predecessors who had shouldered defence responsibilities in the Boer War, two World Wars and the inter war years. Equally fittingly, the parade highlighted the officers and men who would be called upon to form the nucleus of the units waiting to be raised.

A chapter in the history of the CDF had closed, leading to the opening of another chapter in our military history.

The Colonial Period in Retrospect

It would be rewarding to conclude the study of the Colonial period which had involved the occupation of Ceylon for 450 years, by reference to the general attitudes of the three Colonial powers concerned, to a policy of continued occupation.

The Political Factor

The Portuguese came to Ceylon by accident but stayed on by design. By the time, however, they had encountered Mayadunne and his son Rajasinghe I, the Portuguese began to realise that they were in a situation which was different from that which they had planned for, in the aftermath of the agreement with Parakrama Bahu VIII whom they had met on their arrival in Ceylon. The comment of deCouto is illuminating: "The island of Ceilan amongst our discoveries proved to the State what Carthage proved to Rome. Little by little, she consumed men and artillery to so great an account that she alone used up in her way, more than all our conquests in the East." Such was the assessment of what Ceylon had cost the Portuguese so far. This notwithstanding, there was no move to withdraw from Ceylon and indeed the evidence is that the occupation should continue, particularly because Rajasinghe was not followed by anyone who was as difficult as he had proved to be. Certainly, the fighting against the Dutch who planned to supplant them, was indicative of a desire to continue in occupation. And when the occupation ended, the attitude of Portuguese rulers was summed up in the comment that they would willingly have given up all India to preserve so precious a possession as Ceylon. One concludes that, if the Dutch had not intervened, the Portuguese occupation would have continued indefinitely.

The Dutch by contrast came with the will to conquer but left because they lacked the will to fight for continued occupation. It turned out in practice that the possession of the entirety of Ceylon was not what they wanted. Rather was it the control of the maritime provinces that they desired so that the requirements of their international trade could be met, although, as Dr. Paul Pieris states, their (sole) aim was the speedy acquisition of wealth. The cost of continued possession, compounded by the cost of European wars in which they had become involved, perhaps dictated the conclusion that they could not maintain their hold on Ceylon indefinitely. Certainly, their capitulation in the face of the British invading forces was a clear demonstration of an intention to give up possession with the minimum of casualties.

The British captured Ceylon because of her strategic importance in safeguarding British interests which stretched from Britain to the Far East and Australia and in assisting in the defence of India. It is possible that if the British had continued control of the seaboard completely, with only a military control of the interior to prevent interference with their maritime settlements by the Kandyan, they might not have moved towards total control. As it turned out, however, the persistent rivalry between the Nayakkar Kings and their chiefs made it imperative for the British to seize the interior and to be masters in Ceylon. External developments, however, made their independent impact. Whilst Britain wished to continue in control of India, the significance of the American War of Independence could not be denied. The course of British history thereafter points inexorably to the disintegration of the British Empire, qua Empire, with the development of important components of the Empire towards Dominion status. Successive world wars brought home to Britain the fact that India's performance in them had been so crucial that her claims to rule herself could not be rejected. India was given her independence if only for that reason, although the fact that India could fight for her independence was not lost in Whitehall. Burma having concurrently received her independence, it would have been invidious to reject the claims of Ceylon which had a significance of its own. Her incapacity to fight militarily for her independence, had only marginal significance.

It is an important element in our history that no intrigue was undertaken to oust the British, as had happened in the case of the Portuguese and the Dutch. Wimaladharmasuriya, Senarath and Rajasinghe II intrigued to secure Dutch support for the ouster of the Portuguese. The Nayakkar brothers, Kirithi Sri and Rajadhi in concert with their chiefs, intrigued to secure British support for the ouster of the Dutch. During the British occupation, the Kandyan kingdom had come to an end and the chiefs who might have intrigued against the British were in positions of no real authority or influence to initiate such an undertaking. Nor had the Ceylonese hierarchy at the time ignored the lesson of history that the removal of one foreign ruler is followed by the rule of another foreign invader. Additionally, the philosophy of the Ceylonese commoner of the time of Rajasinghe II, (who compared the replacement of the Portuguese by the Dutch with the exchange of ginger for chilly), had not been lost to Ceylonese thinking. Taking the matter a stage further, who was there on the Ceylonese horizon to be beckoned forward to share with Ceylon the defeat of the British forces? Neither the French who had shown some interest by the seizure of Trincomalee nor the Danes who had appeared fleetingly in Ceylon waters had the will or the resources to oust the British. It is to the credit of the Ceylonese leaders of the time and of Mr. D.S. Senanayake in particular that no steps were taken to intrigue against the British.

Nor is the reason for this far to seek. Even if the British had come to Ceylon as conquerors, they ended their period of occupation by a demonstration of their desire to assist in Ceylon's affairs in a manner which neither the Portuguese nor the Dutch attempted. Looked at in liberal terms, the legacy of the Portuguese was the introduction of the Roman Catholic faith. But this was of no account to the average Ceylonese of the time, who was more than satisfied with the tenets of Buddhism to give him spiritual satisfaction. The Dutch made an attempt to introduce the Dutch Reformed Church in lieu of Catholicism but their projection lacked the zeal of the Catholic missionary in securing the adherence of those Ceylonese who were interested in a change of faith. The legacy of the Dutch therefore, was the construction of a canal system which helped in the matter of transportation and, even more significantly, the introduction of

Roman Dutch Law which forms the basis of the Ceylon's Common Law.

Whilst the Portuguese and the Dutch contribution is not in substantial and enabled the authors to secure approbation, the contribution of the British has been of greater overall value. On the one hand, they contributed to economic development by creating the infrastructure serving the needs of such development. This included the creation of the means of production, the organisation of exports of produce and the imports of goods to support production and the means of communication to facilitate movement. On the other hand, they also contributed to political development, by introducing the elements of democracy, creating the instruments of the parliamentary process, preparing the electorate in the exercise of the vote and guiding the leaders to progress towards political freedom through the democratic process so as eventually to conduct national affairs without outside assistance and safeguard the freedom achieved from threats to security, whether internal or external.

What flows from this recital is that the assistance of Britain in achieving political emancipation and ultimate economic independence was not consistent with a desire on the part of the British to continue their occupation indefinitely. It is quite apparent from the actions of the Attlee Government that they did not subscribe to Churchill's declaration that he would not be a party to the dismemberment of the British Empire.

Accordingly, Colonial rule in this country came to an end without the trauma of engaging in a military initiative to achieve that end.

Military Development in Retrospect

I have now come to the end of my study of the earlier phases of the Military History of Ceylon and before I pass on to the Modern phase, I would like to pause to dwell inevitably on the extent of military development that had taken place in the earlier phases of history.

In what I have called the Indian Period of our Military History, the conclusion I came to was that, for reasons which

I examined above, our rulers did not take steps to create a healthy military tradition. I made the initial point that, even though Duttagamani had no precedent to go by, he had the vision to recognise the need to create the instrument which would enable him to defeat the intruder to his land. I have deplored the fact that over the years, there was no move to follow the precedent created by Duttagamani to maintain a force for security purposes. The only initiative that seems to have been taken was in the setting up of palace guards for personal security and in the creation of ad hoc military organisations to deal with a threat which had already materialised. No efforts seem to have been made to create a military instrument to deal with a future contingency. The contingency had to arise in the form of an invasion or other security crisis, before the effort was made to deal militarily with the contingency which had arisen.

Having said this, I should not be understood to say that our history is completely devoid of character because, as I have said earlier, I can think of six of the royal commanders of Ceylon who have enriched our military history during the Indian period. I take this opportunity to set out what has made them stand out to claim acclamation.

Duttagamani blazed the way by his initiative in creating an attacking force of 11000 men to subdue a foreign adversary about whose military prowess he had no prior knowledge and to undertake a march of some 150 miles through difficult territory involving jungle, mountain and river, during the last stages of which he had to overcome an enemy deployed in various locations for protracted defence. It is not only the pioneering effort of the expedition that arrests our attention but also the military effort involved in the assembly of forces, equipping them, providing for their logistic requirements and the final handling of the operation itself against an enemy who must obviously, have the military capability to enable him to subdue the local forces and occupy the land for forty years, that demand special mention.

Gajabahu whom I recognise next, ascended the throne at a time when Ceylon had been visited by the most "predatory" of the invasions known up to then, during which some twelve thousand Sinhalese had been captured and taken to India. It

was left to Gajabahu to mount a punitive expedition to India - the first of its kind in our military history. Whilst there are varying accounts of the manner in which he dominated the confrontation with the Cholan King, there is little doubt that he was able to bring back his captured subjects and perhaps even a like number of Indians, apparently in reparation.

Dhatusena's claim to military fame lies in the context of his involvement against an invader whose forces had already subjugated parts of South India and who now had turned on Ceylon which was kept under subjugation for twenty seven years, during which the enemy had taken the capital and parts of the hinterland. Dhatusena was shrewd enough to lie low in the mountains for some time, during which he organised an attacking force before he emerged from his self imposed exile and engaged the enemy successfully. What I find more impressive however is the vision with which he set up naval defences on the coast to prevent future invasions and the military force designed to take on an invader who had pierced the naval screen. That is the sort of initiative which was lacking in the average Sinhalese king who succeeded Dhatusena.

I have mentioned Vijayabahu I, who came to the throne after the country had been ravaged by the Indian Emperor Rajarajah and had continued in occupation of the country for thirty eight years, during which he was represented by a Viceroy in this country. It was a time when Ceylon had lost her independence and become a unit of the mighty Cholan Empire. This, however, did not daunt Vijayabahu when he ascended the throne. He assembled an army and deployed its elements with such military ability that he was able to regain control over the kingdom. Vijayabahu also had the acumen and shrewdness to move his capital to Polonnaruwa which enabled him to supervise the development of agriculture in the hinterland and to set up a military headquarters from which would be controlled any invasion of the country from the north and any rebel movement from the south. Vijayabahu's ability is further evidenced by his creating a plan to invade Cholan territory which was only thwarted by the rebellious action of his mercenaries who were hostile to attack their own kith and kin.

Parakrama Bahu I has an unchallengeable claim for special mention as an outstanding royal commander of forces. His

campaigns record actions in three parts of the country during which his ability as a strategist becomes established. On the battlefield, he does not appear to have led his troops like Duttagamani or Rajasinghe but to occupy a rearward location, from which he could better read the tactical situation and influence it by deploying reserves as the situation demanded. This is not to deny him acknowledgement of his tactical ability which is recognised to the extent of taking charge of a tactical situation by personal intervention if necessary. It is the combination of his mastery of the strategic situation with that of the tactical battle that enabled him to secure control successfully of Maya Rata, Raja Rata and Ruhunu Rata. He was as masterful in open country as in wooded country when he encountered opponents using guerrilla tactics. It is not altogether surprising that Parakrama Bahu's domestic successes induced in him the will to undertake expeditions against kings abroad. This meant the building of ships, marshalling military forces, laying in the logistic requirements for his attacking force, on a scale not hitherto known. There was not the uniform success which he expected from the expeditions. This does not detract from his personal military image because he did not lead the invading forces himself. What gives him credit is the organising ability which enabled him to attack the very forces which had over the years been a scourge in this country.

The sixth name which I have singled out for special mention earlier in this study is Parakrama Bahu VI, who ascended the throne after the decline following Parakrama Bahu I's reign had set in. His military prowess was such that he subjugated the whole country including Jaffna which he controlled by installing his Viceroy in Jaffna. This enabled him to concentrate on the South which involved consolidation of his capital in Kotte and the supervision of the affairs in the cinnamon growing area which gave the kingdom the wealth which had been lost to the kings after Parakrama Bahu I. Parakrama Bahu VI also found himself strong enough to mount a naval campaign to proceed against a Vijayanagar Chief who had interfered with a cargo of cinnamon belonging to Ceylon. In all the circumstances, this act needed courage of a high order.

To the names who claimed military fame in the Indian Period, there must be added another name, now from the

Colonial period, whose exploits demand his independent niche in the Valhalla of great Commanders of this country. This is Rajasinghe I who commenced his military life at a tender age and without great military knowledge. What is striking about Rajasinghe is that, for the first time in our military history, his forces were opposed to a European invader who had at his disposal European troops and European war equipment. Rajasinghe was not daunted but perhaps stimulated by this, because he showed at Mulleriyawa that his troops were the equal of the Portuguese forces in open country. It was this experience that induced him to undertake the historic attacks on Colombo, during which he exhibited not only his leadership capability but also his tactical acumen in assault and siege operations against a well fortified fortress which was also defended by men with upto date weapons. Rajasinghe's claim to fame is assured.

The impact of those leaders on our military development is worth mentioning. Early on in this study, I questioned a statement by Sir Emerson Tennent in which he refers to the "ineptitude" of the Sinhalese soldier for military service and to the reliance consequently placed by the then kings on mercenaries from India, to defend the frontiers and to attend to other security requirements. The action of Duttagamani against Elara was against the invading force from India which also provided the mercenaries. No one has claimed that Duttagamani's force was inept in dealing with Elara's force and one can therefore conclude that Duttagamani for the first time proved the aptitude of the Sinhalese soldier for a major operation against what at that time was a first class enemy. Parakramabahu's soldiers were not ranged against a foreign enemy in his domestic engagements. They were, however, pitted against successive forces in open country, and in close, wooded country where his enemy exhibited both tactical skill and persistence in exploiting the terrain in which they were fighting a guerilla war. Added to this, one recognises the performance of his soldiers against the Burmese forces under his general Nagaragiri and their account of themselves in India under Lankapura. I perceive a considerable degree of aptitude for military service in the exploits of Parakrama Bahu's soldiers abroad. Under Rajasinghe I, the Sinhalese soldier was pitted against a first class European enemy in open country where they were faced with first class weapons

and in repeated assaults on Colombo and other Portuguese forts, to be followed by siege operations, in which Professor Geiger, described their performance as "death despising". This is high praise from a reliable critic who was not consistently an admirer of the Sinhalese soldier. In the Dutch period, the Kandyans displayed what Dr. Paul Pieris has described as their "natural instinct for guerilla fighting". This they later developed against the British in their savage opposition of the British forces. The foregoing discloses that, whatever ineptitude the Sinhalese soldier displayed in the earlier engagements with an invading force, they had matured as time passed and had come into their own by the time the Colonial period had come to an end.

Whilst recognising the manner in which the Sinhalese soldier has responded to the call of his sovereign when faced with a national crisis, I would have preferred our history to have disclosed a tradition of military service which would have resulted in the reasoned passing on of military experience which would have not merely enriched military literature but would also have been of practical value to those who succeeded in office, in fashioning the military instruments needed to deal with future crises.

So much for our early military history. I ask myself what the Colonial rulers of Ceylon have done in the direction of military development. The evidence is that neither the Portuguese nor the Dutch thought it prudent to assist in the creation of local forces. The Portuguese were constantly on the defensive in meeting the pitiless campaigns of Mayadunne and Rajasinghe, to think of anything but a capacity to survive and to defend those areas in Ceylon where they could further the interests which prompted their continued occupation. Nor did the Dutch find it convenient to help in the formation of local forces because they were busy creating the static defences which would enable them to safeguard the maritime areas which gave security to their naval forces and to create the wealth which they were interested in amassing. In these circumstances, neither the Portuguese nor the Dutch made any contribution to military development in Ceylon except to provide the Military opposition needed to develop the capacity of the soldiers ranged against them.

What then of the British? Unquestionably, in the first half century of their occupation, they found themselves in the position of defenders of their settlements against indigenous fighters who resisted any offensive operations by vigorous guerilla defence and thereafter engineered rebellions designed to overthrow the British regime. The position appears to have changed in the second half century of the British occupation which was less turbulent. During this phase, the British were able to give consideration to the inclusion of some "Cingalese" in a locally raised regiment, in which however they prudently included some Malays, Indians and Africans, presumably to deal with any anti-British move on the part of the "Cingalese". The experiment, and I doubt whether it was anything more than an experiment, paid off and in due course, the CLI Volunteers were formed and constituted the founding of the Volunteer movement in Ceylon. The British authorities certainly recognised the "spirit" underlying the thrust towards the creation of volunteer units in Ceylon.

In the first half of the 20th century, the pioneering work of the 19th century seems to have advanced and the CLI was able to participate in the Boer War with regal recognition and also to take over duties hitherto performed by regular units of the Indian Army during World War I, thus giving evidence of a latent capacity to shoulder the responsibilities of soldiering. The change of the nomenclature of the Force from Ceylon Volunteer Force (CVF) to Ceylon Defence Force (CDF) in 1910 was significant, in that it recognised the willingness of the Ceylonese to undertake their own defence. Their participation in World War I was indicative of the existence of a spirit underlying the willingness not merely to "volunteer" in Ceylon but also to fight in a major war overseas. Clearly, the involvement of our soldiers with fighting troops overseas would prove valuable, whilst the example of the valour and courage of soldiers like Private Jacotine would be stimulating.

The outbreak of World War II gave a boost to the development of the CDF. Regular troops of the British and Indian Armies could not be spared in large numbers for the defence needs of Ceylon because of their deployment for operational duties elsewhere. The defence requirements of Ceylon were therefore, largely met by personnel of the CDF and of the

Ceylon Royal Artillery. I have elsewhere in this study given some outline of the expansion of the CDF for such defence needs. Quite obviously, the opportunities provided for full-time regimental training (as opposed to the part-time training given in peace time) and the experience gained in being exposed to requirements of defence in a recognised theatre of war particularly in association with seasoned regulars from abroad, went far to improve the standards of professionalism which is an ingredient in the complete soldier. This progression towards professionalism was now provided under British auspices.

There is an aspect of wartime deployment in Ceylon which is relevant in a study of this nature which is devoted to an examination of the historical process. Those of us who served in Trincomalee could not fail to be struck by the fact that we were now part of the historical process. Those, for instance who entered Fort Frederick where Fortress Headquarters had been located, were soon aware of the historical changes that had taken place there. These reached back to the Portuguese who destroyed the "Temple of the Thousand Columns" in defence against a Dutch attack, the action of the Dutch who called the fort "Pagoda Hill", because pagoda for them was synonymous with shrine, and the British contribution to history in 1803 by naming the fort after their Commander in Chief, Frederick Duke of York. Fort Ostenberg completed the historical involvement. From the heights of the ridge of Ostenberg, those in service at the time had a fleeting manifestation of what to us was a legend, (namely that Trincomalee harbour could hold the entirety of the largest fleet known then), - when Trincomalee harbour was called upon to accommodate at one time a troop convoy which included the Queen Mary, the Queen Elizabeth and their escorts of battleships, aircraft carriers, destroyers looking for all the world like toyships in a child's indoor tank. At ground level at Ostenberg, we engaged in the much more military exercise of setting up machine gun posts, checking arcs of fire, and camouflaging the positions round the perimeter of the ridge, as infantrymen through history had done before them. The machine gunners posted at harbour mouth, had the unforgettable experience of coming under Japanese fire when they were subjected to low level strafing during the Trincomalee raid in 1942. One remembers the tears

of relief in their eyes when they were reunited with their fellow soldiers after the raid.

I have dwelt on the foregoing experiences advisedly. Whilst peace time training which simulates battle experience is of value, it is the ultimate experience in war that completes the training schedules and turns out the complete soldier. One recognises that the experience of the CDF in World War II did not involve fighting with the Japanese in field operations but it was sufficient for those with imagination to guess what the real thing would be like. Those of us who saw the sun drenched bombs of the Japanese hurtling earthwards through the air with their message of hate and destruction, learned to thank God that the bombs were directed to a distant destination and to be prepared for the bomb to fall on our own position if God so willed. The experience was as exhilarating as it was frightening.

The military legacy which the British left behind them at the end of their occupation must have been the satisfaction of having engineered the creation of a military force which had assimilated at least the rudiments of professional soldiering not only in peace time but also when confronted, however fleetingly, with a first class enemy in the setting of a major war.

Part 3
THE MODERN PERIOD

The Creation of the Army of Ceylon

The Political Setting

The constitution of Ceylon, which was introduced with the grant of Independence, provided for the Prime Minister to hold the portfolio of Defence and External Affairs, in addition to that of Prime Minister. This contrasted with the earlier arrangement, whereby Defence and External Affairs were reserved for British control. The Prime Minister was now therefore, charged with the responsibility of creating defence and foreign policies and of executing these policies.

An elementary fact of our military history is that such military units as were located in Ceylon at the time of Independence were part of the military organisation designed to meet the regional needs of the British Empire. Shorn of the British element which withdrew following independence, the residue was inadequate to meet defence requirements of that age, which could involve warfare on land, sea and in the air. We had no air Force, whilst our military and naval components were not only small but also lacked the professional character of the full time serviceman. The Prime Minister had therefore to ensure that our defence forces were professionally equipped to meet our overall defence needs. Predictably enough, the Prime Minister, in his briefing of the House of Representatives as Parliament was called at that time, said categorically that he could not accept the responsibility of Minister of Defence, unless he was provided with the means of defence. This of course meant the creation of a Regular Army, a Regular Navy and a Regular Air Force suitably trained and equipped.

It is an equally elementary fact that the creation of these military instruments would take time and that, in the interim period, we should have a viable defence shield. This in turn dictated reliance on a foreign ally who would be

willing to provide that shield and would have capacity to do so.

In the search for such an ally, the Prime Minister had more than one option. One was to search for an ally in our own region and that clearly pointed to India or Pakistan. Given the hostility that had been generated between them at the time of the grant of independence to them, it would probably have been impolitic to choose one of them, because the other might conceivably resent such action. This meant going further afield and this pointed unerringly to Britain, with whom we had been intimately connected in peace and war for a period of 150 years and who had assisted us in the search for Independence. Britain for her part had considerable interests in Ceylon in the form of commercial investments which she would be keen on safeguarding. She also had regional interests in the Indian Ocean stretching from Aden to Singapore which again she would wish to safeguard. She would, therefore, be interested to continued tenure in Ceylon, even though such tenure would be on invitation. It was, in all the circumstances, in the mutual interests of Britain and Ceylon to come to terms with each other. The outcome of the assessment of the situation was the signing of an agreement which was called "Defence Agreement". This Agreement provides instructive material and I accordingly reproduce it in full:

"Whereas Ceylon has reached the stage in constitutional development at which she is ready to assume the status of a fully responsible member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, in no way subordinate in any aspect of domestic or external affairs, freely associated and united by common allegiance to the crown;

And whereas it is in the mutual interest of Ceylon and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland that the necessary measures should be taken for the effectual protection and defence of the territories of both and that the necessary facilities should be afforded for this purpose;

Therefore the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of Ceylon have agreed as follows:



**SOLDIER OF
MODERN PERIOD**

(1) The Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of Ceylon will give to each other such military assistance for the security of their territories, for the defence against external aggression and for the protection of essential communications as it may be in their mutual interest to provide. The Government of the United Kingdom may base such naval and air forces and maintain such land forces in Ceylon as may be required for these purposes, and as may be mutually agreed.

(2) The Government of Ceylon will grant to the Government of the United Kingdom all necessary facilities for the objects mentioned in Article 1 as may be mutually agreed. These facilities will include the use of naval and air bases and ports and military establishments and the use of telecommunication facilities and the right of service courts and authorities to exercise such control and jurisdiction over members of the said forces as they exercise at present.

(3) The Government of the United Kingdom will furnish the Government of Ceylon with such military assistance as may from time to time be required towards the training and development of Ceylonese armed forces.

(4) The two Governments will establish such administrative machinery as they may agree to be desirable for the purpose of co-operation in regard to defence matters, and to coordinate and determine the defence requirements of both Governments.

(5) This agreement will take effect on the day when the constitutional measures necessary for conferring on Ceylon fully responsible status within the British Commonwealth of Nations, shall come into force.

Done in duplicate, at Colombo, this eleventh day of November, 1947. Signed on behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

HENRY MOORE

Signed on behalf of the Government of Ceylon.

D.S. SENANAYAKE"

The Agreement came in for heavy criticism from the Opposition in the House of Representatives. This was based on the argument that, even conceding that the agreement was necessary, it constituted a gross reduction in our independent status and gave rise to the thinking that ours was a "fake" independence. Mr. J.R. Jayewardena put the case for the Government succinctly, when he said that the British people had helped us to become a free nation once again.... If we come to an agreement with them to defend us at our request and they seek our assistance when they need it, it would be in our common interest. The Prime Minister said that Britain was being invited to share our defence responsibilities as a friend and that he could not think of a "safer or better friend" for Ceylon than Britain.

What is material for the military affairs which I am examining is the fact that Britain was willing to undertake the measures that were necessary to safeguard Ceylon from external aggression and that Ceylon for her part, would enable Britain to maintain such bases in Ceylon as are necessary for the installation of the naval, air and land forces of Ceylon - a vital element in the build-up of the forces.

The Concept for the Army

The first indication of British assistance to the Army was the secondment of a British Officer for service in Ceylon, initially as Military Adviser and thereafter as Commander of the Army. The officer so selected was Brigadier the Earl of Caithness DSO (he was the 19th Earl). Brigadier Caithness had served on the Western European Front and thereafter in Burma during World War II, during which he had been decorated with the Distinguished Service Order. He had helped in the reorganisation of the Burmese Army for post-war duties before he was posted to Ceylon. I was astonished at the speed with which he worked. He arrived on a Saturday, took charge of some military manuals for study during the weekend, saw the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry (of Defence) on Monday, by whom he was briefed on the Ministry concept for the Army, its composition and its formation and, on returning from the Ministry, offered me the appointment of Chief of Staff of the Army.

I should like to pause briefly to dwell on the impact of this offer, which was twofold. On the one hand, it was flattering, even if it was not unexpected and certainly opened up attractive vistas of military development. On the other hand, it brought home the responsibilities that the appointment would bring about. We were, for the first time in the history of the Commonwealth, about to set up from scratch an army for an independent member of that Commonwealth. One reflected instinctively, on the armies of India and Pakistan which, at the time of independence, had already had a military tradition reaching back to the days when their predecessors had fought the Persians under Cyrus, the Greeks under Alexander and state enemies in the reigns of the Mauryans, the Guptas and the Moghuls, before they were assimilated into the military system of Imperial Britain long before independence. By contrast in Ceylon, such military experience as we had in history lacked the continuity of martial tradition such as had been enjoyed in India. Again, no comparable army had been set up in an imperial environment, which indeed had ceased to exist with Independence. It seemed that, whatever the advantages of the Defence Agreement, there was a risk that, at some time or other, we would lose the British shield and would consequently have to fend for ourselves. It would be a responsibility which would not be undertaken lightly and I certainly wondered whether I had the capability to undertake such a daunting task. And yet, that responsibility had to be taken. It also struck me that, this responsibility notwithstanding, there was a latent challenge which the situation presented - a challenge to ensure that Ceylon be provided with an Army which would be commensurate with her new independent status. The challenge was accepted.

Brigadier Caithness then outlined the Ministry concept of what the Army should provide. The Army envisaged included the retention of the Volunteer Units then in existence and the creation of the following regular units:

An artillery regiment to undertake coast artillery and anti Aircraft defence;

An infantry battalion to undertake internal security, static guard and ceremonial duties;

Operational support from a modest signals unit;
Logistic support from modest elements for supply, ordnance, electrical and mechanical, apart from medical requirements;

A works services section to provide maintenance of Army buildings;

A small police section;

A Recruit Training Depot;

Army Headquarters superimposed, to handle initial initiatives to set up the Army, and coordinate training and administration of units as they were created and finally, to provide the Command element.

I confess that I was taken aback when I listened to Brigadier Caithness' recital, because what was visualised was essentially basic and fell short of the concept I had of what the Army of independent Ceylon should be. Such an Army would be an Army of all arms, including Armour, Field Artillery, Field Engineers and an Infantry component of Brigade strength initially.

I did not, however, give expression to my views because it was obvious that the Ministry was basing its thinking on two factors. Firstly, the need to start on a modest scale, so that the foundations of the Army could be soundly laid. Secondly, the need to conserve expenditure in a setting in which the Government would not consider defence a high priority, given more urgent and important calls on its resources. It is relevant to say that defence expenditure at this stage accounted for only 1% of Government expenditure, whilst India spent 24%, Pakistan between 35 and 40% and Indonesia 25%. We were fortunate that we did not face the internecine confrontations experienced by India and Pakistan, rebellion in Burma and public disorders in Indonesia.

The reasoning had much to commend it and I decided to go along with the plans. In any case, I argued that this was only the beginning and that in due course, it would be possib-

le to put my ideas forward. I also argued that there was no guarantee that any other officer in the Army would adopt my thinking: which meant that, if my ideas were to prevail, I should be there to see the matter through and help to create the sort of Army that I had visualised for an Independent Ceylon.

Preparations for the Setting up of the Army

The process of setting up the Army was for me a fascinating experience. I was amazed at the capacity of Brigadier Caithness not only to work out the overall pattern for military development but also to ensure the details in filling in the pattern. The process took the following outline-

1. Drafting the Army Act.
2. Preparing the Pay and Pensions Code.
3. Ensuring British assistance for the following:

Providing a training team to handle the training at the Recruit Training Depot;

Providing advisers for the Ordnance Corps and Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Corps which had not existed in the CDF;

Securing vacancies at British Training Schools for selected officers of the CDF, earmarked for the Army;

Securing vacancies at Sandhurst for our officer cadets.

4. Working out cadres for units and for the Recruit Training Depot from selected officers and Non-commissioned officers of the CDF.
5. Preparing selection procedures. This meant selection boards for officers at the Ministry, for soldiers at Army Headquarters and for recruits at selected recruiting centres throughout the country.

6. Working out schedules for the supply of rations, arms, ammunition, operational equipment and other ordnance stores for transport and other requirements.
7. Preparing to run the Hospital taken over from the British Army.
8. Working out accommodation requirements for units.

Naturally enough, I was called upon to assist Brigadier Caithness in the work that he was putting in hand and, in particular, advise him on local matters on which he would have no prior knowledge. We were fortunate in the Staff Officers who helped in a very complicated process. Major Maurice de Mel handled operational and training matters, Capt. Roy Jayatilleke administrative matters and Capt. Van Twest all quartermaster matters. They formed a willing, capable and reliable team.

I found myself responsible for two special duties. One was the drafting of the Army Act which, because of my legal background, devolved on me. The Army was fortunate that the Legal Draftsman at the time was Mr. AWH Abeysundera, later to mount the Supreme Court Bench. He displayed a keen perception of the requirements underlying an Army Act in dealing with the future Army. He was as quick as he was thorough and the draft for the Act was, therefore, produced with remarkable despatch. The work of the drafting of the Army Act was for me a memorable experience which helped me in the draft of the Army Regulations, in which I used the King's Regulations as a guide.

The second was the arrangements for accommodation and the special plans for the construction of the Army Cantonment. The initial accommodation plan was to house units in some of the buildings with which they were traditionally associated. Thus the infantry would move into Echelon Barracks, a historic site in the history of the CDF. (This has now been demolished in the interests of development.) Similarly the Artillery went back to their traditional home at Rockhouse, Mutwal, adjacent to the guns which would provide the ashorage service covering the mouth of the harbour. At Diyatalawa, the CDF was already allocated the camp which had been made at the turn of the century for prisoners of the Boer War from South Africa.

We took over other camps from the UK Army, one of which was earmarked for the Army Recruit Training Depot and others for the use of units which would be stationed at Diyatalawa. The UK also released accommodation which would be used by units not stationed in Echelon Barracks and Rock House.

It was not the policy, however, of the Government to permit units to be located in buildings situated in the centre of the city like Echelon Barracks. Accordingly, it was decided that, except for units whose operational commitments dictated their continued occupation of accommodation in Colombo, units would be provided accommodation outside Colombo in a site acquired for the purpose, where the Army Cantonment would be established. This site was chosen to enable accommodation to be provided for four main groups of the Army -

An Army HQ area providing barrack accommodation for personnel of Support units and Store accommodation for Barrack and Ordnance stores which were to be served by a spur from the local railway line.

An Infantry area

An Artillery area

An Engineer area.

It was a massive undertaking because, apart from barrack accommodation there was provision for parade grounds, playing-fields, swimming pools, a gymnasium and all the basic requirements for unit requirements. Actually the concept was for a small township providing married quarters for Officers, WO's, NCO's and others, a post office, a school and space for the erection of temples, mosques, churches and kovils. Predictably enough, the scope of the work envisaged was so great that the construction was entrusted to the Director of Public Works who, in turn, thought it necessary to appoint one of his senior officers to function as Architect for the cantonment. It was also considered necessary to second the services of a British Army Brigadier of the Royal Engineers, Brigadier Moore, who was assigned to provide expert advice on the execution of the project. I was delighted to be associated with the project as the Army Commander's representative at all

major project meetings. In the process my own knowledge was enriched. Working with the Cantonment Architect, Mr. Wynne Jones, was an experience in itself, if one goes by the prodigious thinking he puts into the project, evidence of which were the numerous questionnaires he sent to us about every conceivable user of the building to be constructed.

The Build up of the Army

On the 10th October, 1949, the Army Act was passed in the House of Representatives and we were empowered to attend to the build up of the Army in real earnest. The period immediately following the enactment of the Army Act witnessed a flurry of activity to put the finishing touches to the setting up of Units and their physical build up. Officers appointed to command units married up with their Junior Officers, their Warrant Officers, their Non Commissioned Officers and others earmarked for the reception of recruits from the Depot which would form the bulk of Units. A host of regimental detail was put together in this period.

A major event in this period was the selection and despatch to the Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst, of a dozen starry-eyed youngsters who would not only enter the portals of a distinguished training institution but would, on their return, perform regimental duty before being selected, in some cases, to command their units and, in rare cases, to command the Army of their country. I have lived long enough to see three of them placed in that position, Majors General Denis Perera, Weeratunga and Seneviratne.

The selection of recruits for training in the Army Recruit Training Depot was concurrently undertaken. The recruiting staff was carefully chosen with a future Army Commander (then Capt. Udugama) as its head. Brigadier Caithness thought it desirable for me to be associated with the recruiting staff during its initial sittings. This certainly enabled me during the work that I did with the recruiting staff, to learn something of the standard of persons who applied, their educational levels, their family or community backgrounds and the environmental picture surrounding them. Recruiting centres were set up in all the provincial capitals from which we had applications - Colombo, Kandy, Galle,

Jaffna, Kurunegala, Ratnapura. It was interesting to note the progress made by the recruits so selected not merely to Non Commissioned Officer and Warrant Officer rank but also to Officer rank and I was delighted when a man I had marked with an Alpha + + as a recruit was recommended for commissioning before I gave up command of the Army.

As I envisaged in an earlier part of this study, Brigadier Caithness had no difficulty in finding the nucleus for the Units that were being created from the CDF. Actually, the total in the CDF on demobilisation was sufficient to find all members of the Regular Force, if he had so chosen. As it was, what he was looking for were the Officers, Warrant Officers, Non Commissioned Officers and certain key men from the CDF to form the core of the Regular units he was creating. The bulk came from the output of the Recruit Training Depot. In this way, the youth of the Army was to be maintained.

And so, after months of almost feverish preparation, we were able to create the units which had been envisaged in the initial briefing of Brigadier Caithness by the Permanent Secretary. The list makes interesting reading:

Army Headquarters

- 1 Anti - Aircraft/Coast Artillery Regiment
- 1 Works Services Unit Ceylon Engineers
- 1 Sqn Ceylon Army Signal Corps
- 1 Bn Ceylon Light Infantry
- The Ceylon Army Medical Corps
- 1 Coy Ceylon Army Service Corps
- 1 Coy Ceylon Army Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Corps
- The Ceylon Army Police
- The Ceylon Army Recruit Training Depot.

The units so raised would form part of the Regular Force of the Army, committed to full-time soldiering, equipped and trained to undertake "frontline" duties in peace and war. It would be some time before they were fully organised and trained for such duty but from now on, they had to shoulder whatever responsibilities that arose.

With the enactment of the Army Act, the affairs of the Ceylon Defence Force underwent a metamorphosis. The Ceylon Defence Force Ordinance was repealed and the HQ of the CDF disbanded, but units of the CDF continued as units of the Volunteer Force which was the volunteer counterpart of the Regular Force. The name allotted to the Volunteer element was "Ceylon Volunteer Force", so that it seemed to have turned full cycle and resumed the name with which it came into existence at the end of the 19th Century namely, "Ceylon Light Infantry Volunteers" and changed not long after to "Ceylon Volunteer Force" before it became the "Ceylon Defence Force".

In order to ensure cohesion within Corps of the Army, both regular and volunteer units were required to share nomenclature, dress and other concomitants of regimental life. In this way, members of regular units were able to succeed to traditions of the Corps which their counterparts in Volunteer Units had enjoyed from the time of their inception many decades ago. Even the Infantry had to conform and the officers posted to the "Ceylon Infantry Regiment" when the Army was formed had to accept the change of their unit to "Ceylon Light Infantry". In the process of sharing traditional customs, the members of the CDF who had been selected to form the nucleus of regular units played a vital part.

Such was the reincarnation of the Ceylon Volunteer Force, with their units being renamed as follows:

- 2 (V) Anti Aircraft/Coast Artillery Regiment
- 2 (V) Ceylon Army Signal Corps
- 2 (V) Ceylon Army Engineer Corps
- 2 (V) Ceylon Army Light Infantry

2 (V) Ceylon Army Service Corps

2 (V) Ceylon Army Medical Corps

The Ceylon Cadet Corps. I discuss this corps in the next chapter of this study.

Having joined the CDF in 1934, I was particularly pleased to note that developments within the army were such as to ensure continuity of service for those who had borne the heat of the day for a long time and who were keen on offering their continued services. They had the satisfaction of finding that some of their number had been chosen for demanding duties in the Regular Force. Equally, they themselves had the satisfaction of knowing that their own services were of value to the country.

The Army of Independent Ceylon had, in the process, come into existence.

Before I pass on from 1949, the year in which the Army was formed, I think it would be appropriate for me to reproduce the personal message which Brigadier Caithness sent to all of us on the day on which the Army Act was passed. It disclosed an unsuspected appreciation of the past and a sensitive assessment of the future and I was struck particularly by the emphasis he placed on the standards which he expected us to set and to secure the foundation which we would create on which the Army would be built. The message reads as follows:

Personal Message

from

**Brigadier the Earl of Caithness DSO
Commander, Ceylon Army**

On this day which sees the inauguration of the Ceylon Army, I should like to take the opportunity of addressing a message to all officers and men who will be selected for those appointments or employments which are necessary for its formation.

I feel very honoured to have been selected the first Commander of the Army and whilst I hold this appointment I

shall always endeavour to make the Army one of which your country can be proud; but in this task I must have and I feel sure that I always shall have your constant support.

Your country has had a proud military history in the past and the material with which to form a fine Regular Army undoubtedly exists today. To those of you who will be selected to start this Army I offer my heartiest congratulations. On you has been placed not only a great distinction of which you should be proud, but also a great responsibility. For on your loyalty, your courage and your good conduct and devotion to duty the Army will be judged and the standards which you set will be those which will be followed by those who come after you.

I feel confident that these standards will always be of the very highest order and that you will form a splendid and secure foundation on which the Army can be built.

GOOD LUCK TO YOU ALL.

Caithness
Brigadier
Commander, Ceylon Army.

The Fifties: Communal Conflict Erupts

If 1949 was a crucial year for the Army as marking the commencement of its legal existence and the skeletal formation of its units, 1950 was crucial as marking the year in which the recruits designed to give bulk to such units were brought in for the first time for their training. The Officer selected to command the Recruit Training Depot, Major Jayatilleke, had returned after specialised training in the UK and the Instructors at the Depot had been put through a complete course of training under the British Training Team that had been set up for the purpose. The Depot instructors included Sinhalese, Tamil and English speaking NCO's. Recruits who had been selected had now been "screened" by the Police and put through medical tests for physical fitness and mental stability were, therefore, ready for training. Initially, they were made to accustom themselves to the wearing of uniform and to the needs of personal and barrack cleanliness. Their training included parade ground drills, physical training, weapon skills, map reading, use of ground for tactical skill, the significance of the Army Act and the whole range of discipline. Additionally they became acquainted with the imponderables esprit de corps and loyalty to country, to unit and to superiors and colleagues, all of which are vital in the makeup of the individual soldier.

Mr. D.S. Senanayake was invited to inaugurate the Depot on the 6th February, 1950. The fact that he agreed to officiate indicates that he recognised the importance of the occasion. Predictably, in his address, he highlighted the fact that the recruits had jettisoned a known form of life and had adopted a new and hitherto unknown form of life which was dedicated to unquestioned obedience and which involved, if it

became necessary, the laying down of one's life for one's country. It was appropriate that such words should come from the father of the nation, the architect of independence and the political head of the Army. After the ceremony, Brigadier Caithness and I toured the training sites on completion of which, he turned to me and said with a glint of satisfaction in his eye "Tony, it works". It was the culmination of hard, unrelenting work over many, many months.

We now turned to the task of being available to unit commanders in dealing with the many problems connected with the build up of their units which sometimes went beyond the mere matter of marrying up recruits as they came from the Depot and Young Officers from Sandhurst with the cadres of Warrant Officers and NCO's made available to them. Broadly speaking, Brigadier Caithness took charge of organisational and training matters whilst I did administration. But Brigadier Caithness left nothing to chance and often involved himself with administrative matters.

Two organisational matters were taken up at this stage. One was the creation of the Field Engineer Regiment, on the representations of Brigadier Moore who had been functioning as adviser on the Cantonment that the Army would be incomplete without a Field Engineer element. This was a matter after my own heart because my concept of the Army provided for such an element. I naturally supported the proposal and plans were made for the creation of the Field Engineer Regiment under Capt. Ramanayake, later to command the Unit.

The other was the reorganisation of the Cadet Unit which had carried the name "Cadet Battalion - Ceylon Light Infantry" (CB-CLI) given to it when formed as part of the CLI Volunteers in 1881. The unit was well established and had attracted cadets from leading public schools in Colombo, Kandy and Galle, justifying the formation of the "Cadet Battalion" in 1918. A second battalion was now formed and the name "Battalion" was inappropriate and justified the new appellation given, namely, Ceylon Cadet Corps. Its value as a feeder unit to the Volunteers was well recognised.

Priority in the posting of recruits was given to two units - the 1st Bn of the CLI under Lt. Col. Wijeyekoon, in

view of their internal security and guard duties and to the Artillery unit under Lt. Col. FC de Saram, (then doing Long Gunnery Staff Course in the UK), in view of their operational responsibilities covering coast and anti-aircraft defence. Subject to these and other priorities in technical units, the Army worked to a steady routine in the fifties.

An officer from the establishment of the British troops in Ceylon was posted to Army HQ in order to organise staff duties within the HQ. He was also given the task of handling the training of three officers who were considered suitable material to undergo training at the Staff College at Camberly. This move created a predictable interest among officers to gain staff experience. Among the first to be selected was Major Bahar who later commanded the Army Training Centre and Capt. Attygalle who commanded the Army in due course.

Brigadier Caithness arranged for my own training abroad at this stage. Although I had commanded a Battalion during the war stationed at Trincomalee, he thought I would benefit by a Company Commanders Course, before I proceeded to the Senior Officers School, and by a series of attachments to British Units and Formations, in West Germany.

Before I went to Germany, I was detailed to lead the Ceylon Contingent at the funeral of King George VI, an experience which was interesting because of the ceremonial involved.

In Germany, I was attached to the HQ of an Infantry Unit, an infantry brigade, a Corps, till finally I spent some time with the HQ of Rhine Army. What I saw at the highest levels was unlikely to prove of assistance to me in Ceylon at the present stage of our development. But my meeting with the Commander-in-Chief, General Sir John Harding, was of special interest and value to me. He had a reputation in tank operations in World War II and I took advantage of my being with him to mention my interest in raising an armoured unit for the Army in Ceylon. He listened patiently, whilst I explained that all I wanted to create was a modest unit equipped with scout and armoured cars so that Officers, NCO's, drivers and wireless operators could become armour minded and form cadres for any sophisticated unit that might be formed later. He

agreed with my views and stressed the need not to think in terms of tanks because, apart from initial costs, there would be recurrent costs, if one wished to keep pace with research and development.

On completion of my attachments in Rhine Army, I went to London where I was conducted on a tour of the many branches of British Army organisation headed by the CIGS. This was of course interesting but unlikely to have any practical value in a tiny Army such as ours in Ceylon. I did, however, derive much value from my call on the CIGS, Field Marshal Sir William Slim. I was quite amazed at the grasp he had of British Army assistance to our Army and at the interest he displayed in our progress in Army development. Not unnaturally, I took advantage of his obvious interest in our Army to mention my keenness for armour and was delighted when he did not frown on my enthusiasm. I returned home a rather satisfied man because of what I had achieved in my discussions with General Harding and Field Marshal Slim.

My return to Ceylon in 1952 coincided with the death of Mr. D.S. Senanayake, our first Prime Minister. Although he did not have the time to spend much time with the Army except for ceremonial occasions like the distribution of medals, the impact he had on the Army was considerable and his death was for many of us a matter of almost personal loss. His funeral of course provided the first ceremonial of its kind that the Army handled and the units taking part were steady in their drill and generally gave a good account of themselves.

Not long after the Prime Minister's death, the Army witnessed another sad event - namely, the departure of Brigadier Caithness from Ceylon on termination of his assignment. I have set out above considerable evidence of the contribution of Brigadier Caithness firstly as Military Adviser of the Government and later as the Commander of the Army during its formative stages. I can think of no better tribute to the work of Brigadier Caithness than the following message sent by the CIGS for inclusion in the first issue of the Army Journal which I set up in 1952.

Message

from

**Field Marshal Sir William Slim, G.C.B., G.B.E., D.S.O., M.C.
Chief of the Imperial General Staff**

With the formation of her own Army, the ancient Kingdom of Ceylon implements one of the most important provisions of the Independence Act. Now as a Dominion and partner with Great Britain in defence against aggression, she enters upon great responsibilities. It is of vital importance, therefore, that her Army should be of the highest calibre in its officers, the men and its equipment. Realisation of these standards is already far beyond the planning stage, and I have watched the rapid progress that has been made in recruiting, organisation and training. It has been carried out against a background of sound administration to which the British Army has been able to contribute a useful measure of experience. In this, I believe, we have a secret of a combination that augurs well for a strong and a well defended Ceylon in the years ahead.

Sd/W.J. Slim

Field Marshal

It makes no direct reference to Brigadier Caithness but the reference to the "rapid progress made in recruiting, organisation and training" of the Army points unerringly to the work of the Army's first Commander. Unquestionably, Ceylon has been the beneficiary following the decision to post him to this country at a crucial stage in the history of Ceylon's military forces.

Brigadier Caithness was followed as Army Commander by Brigadier F.S. Reid, a Gunner Officer where his predecessor was an Infantryman. Brigadier Reid had been in Ceylon as Officer commanding British troops in Ceylon for some time after the Army was formed and had established a close rapport with Brigadier Caithness during that time. He, therefore, was no stranger to the problems of the Army. I found his approach different to that of Brig. Caithness, who preferred to be involved in what he wanted done, whilst Brig. Reid played a mere detached role. For me, it was an interesting experience to work with both.

In 1952, the Army was called upon to perform its first "operational" role - namely, the "capture" of emigrants from India who found the benefits of working in Ceylon more attractive than life in the rigours of South India. The area of entry of the small boats conveying the illegal immigrants was near Mannar, because of the shortness of the distance traversed. The 1st Bn of the CLI under Lt. Col. Wijeyekoon was the first unit detailed to undergo the task of scanning the coast, seizing boats, capturing immigrants and handing them over to the police authorities. They set a cracking pace for units which succeeded one another. It was an all arms affair, with Artillery searchlights scanning the horizon, signals connecting Force HQ with Army HQ and logistic personnel providing administrative and logistic support. Initially, the operation was itself called "Ops Monty" after Major Monty Jayaweikrema, whose brain child it was, as Parliamentary Secretary for Defence. In due course, the Force was called the Task Force for Anti Illicit Immigration (or TAFII) in routine coast watching duties.

In 1953, the Army was represented by a Contingent of all arms at the Coronation of HM the Queen, and I found myself in command of the Ceylon Contingent marching through London for the third time - twice in quick time and once in slow time. Whilst the march did not have the glory of participation in Victory Parade, it had the glamour of participation in Coronation celebrations. Ceylon had the distinction of providing a Guard at Buckingham Palace in association with men from Commonwealth countries, Canada, Australia, India, Pakistan and New Zealand. Our men got good coverage from the British media for their drill and smartness although our khaki uniform compared indifferently with the glamour of the Guards Uniforms. This, however, did not prevent the Queen from congratulating me on the smartness of the drill of the men, when I escorted her at a parade for the distribution of Coronation medals at the Palace.

In 1953, the Army had its first confrontation with Trade Unionists. Mr. Dudley Senanayake, who had succeeded Mr. D.S. Senanayake as Prime Minister, found himself in the thick of a controversy over the price of rice. The Government decided to raise the price, although rice was a major element in the staple food of the people. There was an angry reaction and

the unions were so ferocious that the Government was obliged to call an emergency. It was, therefore, a setting in which the Regular Army was for the first time involved with major Trade Union action inducing the declaration of an emergency.

The "Hartal" as the strike was called, provided me with considerable experience. The Army Commander was away in the UK attending a Conference of the CIGS and I was in command. The last time I had been in a comparable situation was in 1947 when the CDF was recalled from being mobilised for action against trade unionists. The troops then were seasoned and took to their duties readily. The position now was that, granting that the men were regulars, they had not had similar experience. It is, however, only results that can speak and the results spoke volumes. The troops behaved with great steadiness in all parts of the country and were able to restore law and order with great ease. There was for me a moment of crisis when I found myself short of troops except a batch of recruits who had just completed their recruit training but had no regimental training. There was a risk in employing them because their lack of experience might compromise a given situation, with perhaps adverse effects on their own morale. I decided to take a risk and involved them. I was delighted with the results because they behaved as to the manner born. This was also true of some Young Officer cadets who had just returned from Sandhurst and had been given little regimental training. Their performance was equally superb. Altogether, the inexperienced regulars reacted correctly to the situation and fully appreciated the need not only for "minimum force" as necessary but also for a greater degree of force when dealing with relatively recalcitrant opponents. We had handsome tributes from the Prime Minister and Sir Richard Aluvihare, the IGP, with whom we had been in close association.

One of the lessons I learned from the "Hartal" was that intelligence in the Police and, for that matter, in the Army, was far from satisfactory. I also felt that there was not sufficient cohesion between Army and Police in operations. On the return of the Army Commander from the UK therefore, I gave him a full report not only of the performance of the Army but also the shortcomings which I had experienced. As a consequence, a Joint Intelligence Bureau composed of Officers of the Armed Services and Police was set up, along with a Joint

Operations Bureau similarly staffed working closely with Service Commanders in briefing the Security Council on the intelligence situation and the operations and deployment required to deal with any hostile development disclosed by intelligence. Such operation would determine the point at which overall direction would pass from the Police to the Army.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake resigned at this stage and Sir John Kotalawela assumed duties as Prime Minister, thus giving the CLI the distinction of having produced a Prime Minister. Sir John was the first Prime Minister of the country with previous military experience because he was appointed Commander of the CLI shortly after World War II broke out. As it happened, he was also a Minister and, because of the more important call on him for ministerial duties, he had to relinquish command. At the time of the formation of the Regular Force, Sir John had been critical of the selection of some officers and one wondered whether he would introduce many changes as Minister of Defence. There were none and he was presumably satisfied with what had been done in the formation of the Army. There was, however, one matter in which he introduced a change - namely, his decision to order the men to build their barrack accommodation in the Cantonment. Given their lack of skill and experience, this dictated the redesigning of the buildings involved and the men actually constructed the more simplified buildings, but the progress was grossly reduced.

In 1954, the Army Commander gave effect to a policy directive issued by Mr. Dudley Senanayake that officers being considered for command of the Army should possess both staff and field experience at high level before a choice was made. I was accordingly posted to the field and assumed duties as Commander of the 1st Battalion of the CLI and Lt. Col. Wijeyekoon, then Commander of the Battalion, was posted to Army HQ as Chief of Staff. I was also given command of the other troops in the Cantonment where the CLI were located and promoted Colonel.

Given the guiding hand of Lt.Col. Wijeyekoon, I found the unit was well grounded in tactical training and administrative duties and it was therefore, easy for me to progress to more advanced training. In order to equip my senior officers in

such training, I directed them to conduct exercises in which their colleagues would take part and I was satisfied with the results obtained.

Two events of an unusual nature took place when I was with the CLI. One was the presentation of colours to the Battalion by the Queen. It was sad that Lt.Col. Wijeyekoon, who had initiated the move to have colours presented to the unit, would not be in command at the ceremony. Owing to the limitations of time, the ceremony of consecrating the Colours was not done in public as part of the ceremony of presentation and the consecration was accordingly done at a special ceremony within unit lines. Owing to speculation whether the consecration should be exclusively Christian (the Queen being the Defender of her Christian faith) in a predominantly Buddhist Unit, I decided that there should be an ecumenical service with Buddhist, Christian, Hindu and Muslim chaplains officiating. At the presentation ceremony, the second battalion of the CLI which was the unit to which colours had initially been presented by the Prince of Wales in 1922 also received their colours from the Queen during a parade of armed forces on the Galle Face on her birthday. She had the unusual experience of the Officers and men on parade singing "Happy Birthday to you".

The second was the "Trooping the Colour" ceremony which my unit conducted in Colombo not long after the receipt of Colours from the Queen. It was the first occasion on which a regular Unit of the Army performed the trooping and I was advised by many competent critics, including Lt.Col. Wijeyekoon who should himself have been on parade, that the standards achieved were those expected of regular officers and men. Not long after, I was appointed Aide-de-Camp to the Queen.

While I was in command of the CLI, I had the pleasure of persuading the Army Commander to enable the formation of the Armoured unit of the Army to be commenced as a sub-unit in the battalion. Capt. Attygalle was selected to handle this and, in due course, to command the armoured regiment. In 1955, the unit was formally recognised and I had the satisfaction of having helped to create a unit of the Army without which, I had consistently argued, the Army was incomplete.

1954 was a memorable year in the development of the Army as being the year in which collective training was undertaken for the first time. Hitherto, unit commanders were free to conduct the training of their sub-units, such training being geared to the rate of build up of their units and inevitably being limited in scope to regimental training. Brigadier Reid thought that the time had come for units to look outwards and to be involved in collective training in which units other than their own would be involved. To give the Army a lead in this direction, he decided to conduct a tactical exercise without troops to start with and follow this up with a tactical exercise with troops in which Battalion Group would be exercised.

I think Brigadier Reid had a secondary object in mind when undertaking the foregoing and this was to use the exercise as the setting in which to assess my tactical ability in the command of a Battalion group. So far, all he knew about me was that I had commanded an infantry battalion during World War II and that he had placed me in command of a regular infantry battalion and of troops located in the Army Cantonment. He was, therefore, personally unaware of my capacity to command even the Battalion Group which he was mustering, the largest formation he could muster at the present stage of the Army's development.

The exercise was, appropriately enough, called "Exercise Tyro". It was devoted to the movement of a Battalion Group from the Diyatalawa area to contain a force which had landed in the Tissamaharama region and to the conduct of a withdrawal operation from Tissamaharama to Diyatalawa, by way of Wellawaya. Several "incidents" staged by a controlled enemy kept the troops under my command fully exercised during the entire operation which also helped in the conduct of administration in the field.

I thought that the exercise was well timed because it took troops away from routine regimental duties connected with unit build up and involved them in a training exercise which might well have prevented them from getting stale. There was unquestionable benefit from the assembling of units for a command military purpose apart of course, from actual participation in the exercise which clearly widened their military

outlook and experience. There was residual benefit accruing to participants in that it enabled them to get to know personnel from other units with whom they would have to associate in operational duties.

I was away in the UK in 1955 when important changes in the cadre of the Volunteer Force took place. Two units of the Volunteer Force were created, one in Kandy and the other in Matara, whose nucleus was provided by the men of two outstation companies of the CLI resident in Kandy, Galle and Matara. What was interesting apart from the military aspects of course, was the names given to these units, "Rajarata Rifles" in the case of the Kandy unit and "Ruhunu Regiment" in the case of the Southern unit. In both these areas, Sinhalese soldiers had fought with great courage in military history and the names selected perpetuated the memory of military exploits of the past. There is evidence that recruiting was brisk, suggesting the popularity of the units being raised and the influence of the Commanding Officers, Lt.Col. Ratwatte in Kandy and Lt.Col. Dharmapala in the south.

1955 also witnessed the creation of two other units in pursuance of a policy decided on by the Ministry of Defence. Trade Unionism had developed in Ceylon and its performance during the hartal to which I have referred above, was evidence of Trade Union potential, which might in a given setting involve a move to topple the Government. Given the fact that the Army was still being built up, and certainly had not reached maximum levels, the Government decided to form military units with personnel from Departments carrying out essential services. Accordingly, members of such services as the Railway Department, the Post and Telegraph Departments, the Public Works Department and the Port Operating Organisation were invited to join military units to be formed within the Departments. Two such units were created in the Railway and the Post and Telegraph Departments, whilst others in the PWD and Port Operating sector were due to be started. It was made clear to members of these units that their military service was entirely voluntary, no compulsion being imposed and that, should the occasion demand, the unit would be mobilised for military duty, during which the members would carry out duties connected with their departmental functions and that their

loyalties at that stage would have to be with the Army and not with their unions. There was obviously very considerable enthusiasm for the services contemplated and by the time I returned to Ceylon, the CRER and the P & T Regiment had been formed, after some initial reluctance to join which, however, Commanding Officers were able to overcome.

Inevitably, there was much criticism of the Government policy, on the ground that it would work counter to the virility of the Trade Union movement in the country. The Government argued that the formation of the units was designed to ensure the even running of the services essential to the community which might be interfered with by irresponsible trade union action. The Government also pointed out that service in the units being created was essentially voluntary, there being no compulsion to join and those joining being in no doubt as to their loyalties in the event of their units being called upon to function in a crisis.

1955 was for me a crucial year. I was asked to go to the UK to undergo a course of training at the Imperial Defence College. Soon after the course started, Brigadier Reid resigned from his assignment as Army Commander and I was selected to take his place. I had no idea that Brigadier Reid had any plan to leave the Army before his term came to an end and when the letters and telegrams of congratulation came and the High Commissioner in London indicated ignorance of my appointment, I began speculating whether there was something queer about it all. In due course, it all fell into place and I was told that Colonel Wijeyekoon, as he now was had been selected to act for me as Army Commander and that I was to continue my course at the IDC till its completion at the end of the year.

The course itself was fascinating, having characteristics quite different from any course I had attended. It was meant necessarily for Officers in the British Services of the bracket Colonel/Major General and for British civil servants having comparable status. Officers from Commonwealth countries were also accommodated and there were in my year, officers from Australia, Canada, India, Pakistan, New Zealand and South Africa. The United States also were given vacancies.

The course of study included-

The countries of the Commonwealth

The countries of the Western Alliance

Communism

The Economic Problem

Nuclear Problems

The lecturers included Cabinet Ministers, Senior Officers of the Services (Field Marshal Montogomery was one in my year), writers and authors (Chester Wilmot addressed us in my year), University Professors and other distinguished people. There were daily lectures followed by long discussion period. Syndicate papers had to be prepared from time to time. During short vacation periods, groups of students visited industrial areas in the UK and in the long vacation they visited countries of the Western Alliance. I derived great benefit from the course and recommended to the Government that we should send a representative from this country each year from the services and the civil service.

1956 was an eventful year. I assumed command of the Army and naturally enough looked forward to working under Sir John Kotalawela who had appointed me Army Commander and whom I had known from the days I had been a young officer in the CLI. As it turned out, he was pre-occupied with political affairs, because he had decided to call a General Election before his term had run out. In the event, his party lost the election to Mr. SWRD Bandaranaike who had led the MEP during the Election. Accordingly Mr. Bandaranaike became the fourth Prime Minister to direct the affairs of the Army.

My first call on him, which was to have been a "courtesy call" turned out to be a working session. During this, he announced his decision to disband the Essential Service Units which had been set up during Sir John's time, the argument being that such units would serve as a bar to the free development of trade union activity in the Departments. This was a predictable development, given the opposition to the units

prior to formation. Mr. Bandaranaike also said that he wished to disband two units of the Volunteer Force which had been recently created. These were the 'Rajarata Rifles' and the 'Ruhunu Regiment'. He had two reasons. One was (and this applied particularly to the Ruhunu Regiment) evidence of disloyalty during the Election. I said that I had no such evidence brought to my notice whereupon he countered by saying that he had evidence on which he proposed to act. The second was that these units had a regional character which could create a precedent for the creation of other regional units, as for instance the Jaffna region. What he preferred were units formed on a national basis.

Whilst agreeing with him on the regional issue, I pointed out that the disbandment he contemplated, would result in the reduction of men available for duty in a crisis. To replace them with volunteers would take time but to replace them with regular troops would be costly. He replied that, in the circumstances, he would agree to the formation of another Infantry Unit. This was the setting in which the Singha Regiment was formed - a development which I found satisfying, because it gave me the second infantry battalion in the Brigade organisation which I had envisaged in the Army of Independent Ceylon.

Considering the fact that I would have to work with the Prime Minister for four years, I was glad of the opportunity to meet him on important issues so early on in our association. I found the Prime Minister a surprisingly easy person to take with. He was extremely clear in the exposition of his views, he was courteous in listening to me, quick in meeting arguments and positive in his statement of what he wanted done. I was particularly interested in his contrast of my responsibilities as Army Commander which he said were to him as Minister and his own which he said were to the nation. I certainly looked forward to my tour of duty under him.

One of Mr. Bandaranaike's acts after assuming office was to introduce the Sinhala Only Bill in Parliament which led to the commencement of ethnic violence in Ceylon. Up to now, Tamil attitudes were centred on the political issue of representation in Parliament as evidenced by the demand for a 50/50 split in Parliament - 50 per cent of the seats going to the

Sinhala majority and the remaining 50 per cent to the minorities. This was rejected by the Soulbury Commission which, however, enacted the compensatory provision in Section 29 of the Constitution which guaranteed provision against legislative discrimination against racial and religious minorities. Up to 1956, the use of Sinhala and Tamil as the official language had been the declared policy of the all political parties. The Tamil party had obtained landslide victories at the last General Election in the Tamil areas just as the Government coalition had obtained landslide victories in the Sinhala areas. The Tamil leaders accordingly demanded parity of status for Sinhala and Tamil, when the Sinhala Only Act was passed making Sinhala the only official language. This now brought an ethnic element into the Sinhala Tamil conflict. Violence between the two communities broke out and could not effectively be handled until an emergency was declared. In due course, the rioting ended and the soldiers were able to return to their barracks after they had helped to restore law and order in all parts of the country where rioting had broken out, particularly the Gal Oya Valley where the rioting had assumed serious proportions. The violence which had erupted died down but Tamil resentment continued, because no political effort was made to deal with the demands of the Tamils. The Tamils who had declared their intention to fight for a federal arrangement whereby the North and East would be Tamil Controlled, leaving the remainder of Ceylon to be administered by the Government, now gave every indication of performing satyagraha to achieve their ends. Mr. Bandaranaike felt that he should enter into negotiation with Mr. Chelvanayagam, the leader of the Tamil Federal Party. In July 1957, a pact was entered into between them (since called the BQ Pact), whereby regional councils would be set up, on whom would devolve political powers designed to meet Tamil demands and concessions on language would be given which, however, would not reduce the effect of the Sinhala Only Act. On this basis the satyagraha was called off.

In August of 1957, I was due to visit the UK in order to participate in the Conference of Commonwealth military leaders organised by the CIGS. Before I did so, I had the authority of the Ministry to select British army personnel who would be made available to help in the build up of the Armoured Unit, the Field Engineer Unit and the Field Artillery Unit that were

in the process of being organised. I was also keen on setting up an Artillery School and Field Engineer School. Accordingly, I interviewed officers of the British Armoured Corps, Artillery and Engineer Corps whom I found suitable for my purpose. On my return to Ceylon, I found that there was some resentment that foreign personnel were being brought into the Army, after the British personnel brought to help in the initial stages of Army formation had left Ceylon. Whilst I appreciated the spirit that led to this apparent hostility to my plans, I pointed out to my critics that, given their responsibility towards the build up of their units, they would not have the resources to deal with the matters I had in mind, the chief among which was the setting up of training schools. The British officers concerned reported to me in due course and were assigned the special duties I had in mind for them. The Armoured Unit had been sent by me to Ridiyagama Camp where they had ample scope for field training. After completing field training they returned to Colombo where permanent accommodation was found for the Unit in Mutwal. The Artillery School was formed and set up in Colombo. The Engineer Training School was formed and set up in Amparai not far from the Hardy Institute which provided the basic instruction for sappers, leaving it open to the School to conduct training in field engineering operations including mind laying & watermanship bridging in the training areas around. All told, I was pleased with the progress being made by these, and for that matter, other units of the Army.

1957 also witnessed a development, not unconnected with the Army, which centred on the take over by Ceylon of the bases which, under the Defence Agreement, the British Services controlled at the time. Mr. Bandarnaike was of the view that the continued use of the bases by the British would create the impression that such user represented some diminution of our independence. He also argued that the bases had been permitted to a country in the Western Alliance and that this would affect the credibility of our non-aligned stance. Mr. Bandaranaike had taken pains to create the image of non-alignment in our diplomatic relations which up to then had been only with Western nations, by entering into diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union as a preliminary to similar arrangements with other socialist countries. In doing so he hoped to redress the diplomatic balance to some degree. I saw

the political implications of the Prime Minister's thinking but I was concerned with the military consequences that, following on the withdrawal of Britain from the bases, Britain's contribution to our defence needs might be diluted. Mr. Bandaranaike countered by saying that, even conceding such contingency, our non-aligned stance would stand us in good stead in the event of our being threatened by a foreign power. This constituted Mr. Bandaranaike's policy on the issue of the continued user of our bases in Trincomalee and Katunayake by the British authorities.

When Mr. Bandaranaike went to the UK in order to have discussions with the British Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, Lord Home, he asked me to join his delegation along with the Commanders of the Navy and Air Force. The talks proceeded smoothly and the British delegation agreed to hand over control of the bases to the Ceylon Services. Mr. Bandaranaike allowed British personnel to remain in the bases to deal with any matters which required their presence. I noted that there was no move to abrogate the Defence Agreement. On our return to Ceylon, ceremonies were conducted to bring down the British flag flying over their bases and send up the national flag in their rightful place. Mr. Bandaranaike felt that in this way our independence was quite overtly demonstrated.

1958 saw matters between the Tamils and the Government brought to a head. The BC Pact had still not been implemented and perhaps we might have gone on indefinitely with the *status quo ante*, had it not been for some agitation in some Sinhalese circles calling for its abrogation. Mr. Bandaranaike's hands were as a consequence forced, particularly because the agitation was spearheaded by members of the Buddhist clergy. The Pact was then abrogated and led to the hardening of Tamil and Sinhalese opinion. This in due course led to violence which erupted and spread to all parts of the Island. An emergency was declared, the volunteers were called out and the Army was fully stretched to deal with the situation. An interesting feature of the situation was the fact that the Governor-General, who of course was *de jure* Commander-in-Chief of the Services, assumed the *de facto* role of Commander-in-Chief and issued orders to Service Commanders at

daily conferences. The situation was unquestionably difficult because of the violence that the soldiers experienced, involving the use of much more than the "minimum force" adopted in "Aid to Civil Power" operations. The evidence was that the soldiers did not indulge in excessive violence in bringing about law and order. There was one exception when a sub-unit in the Uva Province brought about a fervent appeal to me from respected citizens I knew, to remove my "uniformed thugs". The situation was quickly handled, as indeed was the general situation in the country and we were able to claim that the Army had helped to restore law and order, with the approbation of the citizens of the country.

During the 1958 emergency, the construction of a landing strip in the Amparai region was undertaken by the combined resources of regular and volunteer engineer personnel under the general direction of Major Hacker who was handling the setting up of the Army Engineer Training School in the neighbourhood. When the airstrip was commissioned by Mr. Maithripala Senanayake (who incidentally spoke in Tamil as well as Sinhala), I had the pleasure of telling the public present that the airstrip was a gesture of good will on the part of the Army to the people of the Eastern Province who were of course welcome to avail themselves of the facilities offered by the airstrip.

The riots in 1958 brought home to me the difficulty of operational control from Colombo and the need for decentralisation. I discussed with the Permanent Secretary my ideas for regional commands, the merits of which he recognised. My scheme was to divide Ceylon into three regions as follows -

The Northern Region:

The Northern, Eastern and North Central Provinces

In this region, the main internal security problem concerned the Tamils. Centrally placed in the region was Trincomalee, where I had an Artillery Regiment commanded by Lt.Col. Wickramasuriya whom I proposed to instal as Regional Commander.

The Central Region:

The Central, Uva and Sabaragamuwa Provinces

In this region, the threat to internal security could come from Indian Tamil labour, based on the tea estates. Centrally situated in the region was Diyatalawa, where I had an Infantry Battalion commanded by Lt. Col. Jayatilleke whom I proposed to instal as Regional Commander.

The Southern Region:

North Western, Western and Southern Provinces

In this region, the threat would be from Trade Unions. In Colombo, centrally placed in the region, I had more than one Lt. Col., the senior of whom was Lt. Col. Maurice de Mel, whom I proposed to instal as Regional Commander. The Armoured Regiment would, however, be under command of Army Headquarters.

The Cantonment of Panagoda

Units located in the Cantonment, commanded by Col. Wijeyekoon, would form the Island Reserve.

The duties of Regional Commanders would be to keep in touch with the police and other security personnel in their region and to take the initial steps to deal with any internal security problem that might arise in their region and administer any troops sent from outside their region to supplement their own regimental troops in the event of a crisis.

In due course I sought the formal approval of the Ministry for the formation of Regional Commands and for the appointment of Regional Commanders. I was a little taken aback when the Ministry did not accept my recommendations, on the ground that appointments had to be gazetted and could not be approved administratively. I found this difficult to understand because I had made it known that, in order to save expenditure, the Regional Commands would be set up on the footing that the regimental Commander given the job of Regional Commander would not treat himself as having been "selected"

for the appointment and would perform regional command functions, in addition to his regimental functions and would not claim any special staff to carry out his duties. Strangely enough, when I announced my intention to retire from the Army, the Prime Minister asked me to continue in Command, largely in order to implement what he described as my "splendid" scheme for regional command. I declined the suggestion that I continue as Army Commander for this specific purpose, because I thought the scheme was so simple that my successor would have no difficulty in implementing it, once Ministry approval, which had been withheld, was forthcoming. Since my retirement, regional commands have been set up, although the regions are different from those I had visualised.

1958 also saw the formation of the Army Training Centre. The Recruit Training Depot at Diyatalawa had as its primary function the turning out of recruits, but also conducted short courses for NCO's and sometimes for young officers. With the expansion in the Army, there was a need for an organisation to undertake the training of officers. The unit was accordingly reorganised so that a Training wing would be set up, parallel to the Recruit Training Wing. The desirability of setting up an Academy for the training of cadet officers passed through my mind, but because I was still able to send cadet officers to the Military Academy at Sandhurst, I put that development off. The ATC provided for the appointment of a Lt. Col. as Commandant and Major Bahar was selected for this appointment. The Academy has since been set up.

1959 witnessed development in many fields, on the organisation side. Regular units had been brought up to regimental strength, justifying my decision to promote the commanding officers of all such units to Lt. Col.

The following statement of units and their Commanders makes interesting reading:

Recce Regiment Ceylon Armoured Corps - Lt. Col. Attygalle

1st Regiment Coast/Anti-Aircraft Artillery

- Lt. Col. Wickremasuriya

3rd Regiment Field Artillery - Lt. Col. Abraham

1st Field Engineer Regiment - Lt. Col. Ramanayake
 3rd Works Services Ceylon Engineers - Lt. Col. Perera
 1st Battalion Ceylon Light Infantry - Lt. Col. Heyn
 1st Battalion Ceylon Singha Regiment
 - Lt. Col. Jayatillake
 The Ceylon Army Medical Corps - Col. Serasinghe
 The Ceylon Army Service Corps - Lt. Col. Perera
 The Ceylon Army Ordnance Corps - Lt. Col. Abeysinghe
 The Ceylon Army Electrical & Mechanical Engineer Corps
 - Lt. Col. Mattysz
 The Ceylon Army General Service Corps - Lt. Col. Wijemane
 The Army Training Centre - Lt. Col. Bahar
 The Ceylon Army Police Corps - Major Zylva

On the Volunteer side, I recreated the office of Commandant CDF and installed Col. Wijeyekoon as Commandant. The Volunteer Force cadre remained as has been earlier in this study, except that a new Volunteer regiment, the Gemunu Regiment, had been created. With the CLI and the Singha Regiment already created, the formation of this new infantry unit produced the infantry component of the Infantry Brigade I had visualised for the Army, although the creation of the regular battalion of the Gemunu Regiment had to take place before one could claim that the full infantry complement of the Brigade had been formed. This, however, was not long in coming, as it did, after my retirement.

A major development was the rapid progress made in the construction of the cantonment. Money had been made available as required and some Rs.40,000,000 had been voted in Mr. Bandaranaike's time for this purpose. Progress had been made by the change of policy whereby the building of barrack accommodation was not undertaken by the soldiers. Lt. Col. MLDA Perera, the Commander of the Works Services Unit was instrumental in ensuring progress at the cantonment by acting as

liaison officer with the PWD in the construction process. A new development was the Bill for the creation of "Defence Stations", which I helped to draft. This Bill empowered the Minister of Defence to set up areas to be called "Defence Stations" initially round the cantonment. This station would be under the control of a special body, composed of Army personnel and local civilians, which would have municipal status in the station and the power to control all non-military activities in the station, including buildings, obnoxious industries, removal of houses of ill-fame, gambling etc. In due course, the concept of "Defence Stations" would be extended to all service establishments in Trincomalee, Katunayake and Diyatalawa.

1959 also witnessed the culmination of my plan for installing my successor. In deciding on four years as the Army Commander's tour of duty, Brigadier Caithness and I had worked on the following priorities:

Year 1 Taking stock after take over of command

Year 2 Finalising own plans for the Army & implementing them

Year 3 Making changes as dictated by experience

Year 4 Consolidation.

Training of Successor

In my case, the selection of successor was automatic and Col. Wijeyekoon, who had acted for me when I was at the IDC, was the obvious choice. In order, however, to enable him to familiarise himself with Army affairs at close quarters, I had appointed him Inspector of Training which enabled him to keep me posted on training matters and also to keep pace with Army development. I had also appointed him Commandant of the Volunteer Force so that he could keep pace with Volunteer affairs. He was in this process well-equipped to assume duties as Army Commander.

A word on the training of the Army would be appropriate at this stage. Up to the time I assumed command of the Army,

the emphasis in training had been on conventional war in open country. In my early training directives, I pointed out to units the need to familiarise themselves with conditions in the jungle so that they could address themselves in due course to training in guerilla operations, without any constraint arising from unfamiliarity with jungle conditions. In the process, units would become familiar both with conventional operations in open country and guerilla operations in close, jungle country. In my training directive for 1959, I announced that there would be an Army Exercise towards the end of the year designed to ascertain what progress units had made in the training I had outlined but residually, to give Col. Wijeyekoon experience in the command of a force of all arms in jungle operations. The "enemy" was directed by the Chief of Staff, Lt. Col. de Mel in carrying out guerilla tactics designed to exercise the main force under Col. Wijeyekoon. The Prime Minister was an interested spectator. The Exercise was from my standpoint a successful one because the Army had been introduced to the problems of deployment in the jungle, to the handling of guerilla type operations of an elementary nature and of course, administration in the jungle.

I had planned that Col. Wijeyekoon should round off his preparation to assume command of the Army by attending a course at the Imperial Defence College. Because of preoccupation with personal problems, however he asked that his course be deferred till 1960. This of course would have meant an extension of my command which, as I expected, was not approved by the Ministry. I accordingly arranged to retire at the end of 1959 and Col. Wijeyekoon was denied the chance of a valuable course of training at the IDC.

Just before I retired, Mr. Bandaranaike was assassinated and I had the melancholy duty of arranging for the second military funeral of a Prime Minister since the inception of the Army. I found in Mr. Bandaranaike a singularly easy superior to deal with. His attitude to me as Army Commander was that I had the right to expose my views as freely as I liked but that correspondingly, he had the right to disagree where necessary and indeed to give decisions which he expected me to accept and to implement loyally. There was a memorable occasion when I attended a conference presided over by him at which were present Ministers, Permanent Secretaries and Senior

officials. During the discussion, I expressed views quite unacceptable to him. He listened to me with great patience and made a decision which of course I accepted. After the conference, however, I apologised to him for what might have appeared as an "obstructive" attitude on my part, whereupon his reply was "My dear fellow, if the time comes when you do not speak out as you did today, I shall be distressed." I was impressed by the fact that he so readily saw the military aspects of a problem, even though there was no military element in his make up; but of course, he read widely. As a consequence, apart from the initial disbandment of units at the time he assumed the premiership, he generally speaking, accepted my advice on the formation and build up of the Army. He also stood by the Army during his time in the construction of the Army Cantonment, in spite of its considerable cost. On the occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the founding of the Army in 1959, I had asked him to declare open the Army HQ building at the Cantonment and indeed had his name inscribed on the stone commemorating the occasion, which would match the other foundation stone bearing the name of Mr. Dudley Senanayake, when he commissioned the construction of the building some years before. I was distressed when his death prevented him from keeping his appointment and having his name perpetuated in stone at the Cantonment.

Mr. Bandaranaike would have liked me to continue as Army Commander at the end of my tour which ended in 1959. In declining his invitation, I pointed out that I had been at the centre of things in the Army whether as Chief of Staff or Army Commander for so long that continued service would block promotion to the officers junior to me, which in a growing Army such as ours would be highly prized. Mr Bandaranaike made the flattering suggestion that I should accept appointment as High Commissioner in Pakistan. I had not planned to continue in Government service on retirement but could not refuse. Indeed, I saw merit in accepting Mr. Bandaranaike's suggestion as signifying Government recognition of the view that the Army was capable of producing material for the Foreign Service at the highest level. I have lived long enough to witness four Commanders of the Army follow me in appointments as Ambassadors or High Commissioners and I am glad of the precedent I helped to establish. Mr.

Bandaranaike's death prevented me from assisting him in the conduct of foreign affairs - a field in which he revelled. But that is another story.

My service in the Army came to an end not long after Mr. Bandaranaike's death and I was able to leave it with a sense of satisfaction that I had been able to participate in crucial changes in military affairs during my twentyfive years in service. I also felt a sense of pride that I had assisted in the creation of the Army of Independent Ceylon. Above all I felt a sense of gratitude that my tour had not been visited with failure to carry out the wishes of my superiors and that I had been enabled to bring about the changes I had mapped out for the Army, from the time Brig. Caithness outlined its initial concept. As I looked back, the Army had the wherewithal to form a Brigade Group, having at its core three infantry regiments (although admittedly the regular component of one of them was still to be raised) and having, on the one side the operational support of armour, field artillery, field engineers and field signals and, on the other, the logistic support of services, to maintain it both in barracks and in the field. All that remained to be done was the creation of the HQ of the Brigade Group.

At the risk of appearing presumptuous, I reproduce my final message to the Army on retirement, which expresses rather inadequately the depth of feeling I experienced, as I severed connection with an Army which had enriched my experience whether as a Volunteer or a Regular, in wartime and in peace.

MESSAGE

from

**Major General A.M. Muttukumar, OBE ED ADC
Army Commander**

To All Officers, Warrant Officers and NCO's

I write this on the occasion of my retirement from the Army after twentyfive years of service as a soldier.

Many thoughts pass through my mind as I write this but the most compelling is an awareness of the loyalty which you and your subordinates have invariably given me. No one but I myself has any conception of what your loyalty has meant to me and how much it has lightened my task as Army Commander. No less compelling is my high assessment of the devotion to the ideals of service and the requirements of efficiency which have characterised your work during my tour as Army Commander. In an age of changing values, it is comforting to note that some at least of the values passed down to us by our predecessors are still being cherished and fostered.

My retirement coincides with the Tenth Anniversary of the inauguration of the Army of Independent Ceylon. When the Army was formed, we set out to achieve standards of conduct and professional efficiency in keeping with the prestige of an independent state. There is ample evidence that the required standards have been achieved and are being maintained. You and your subordinates have reason to be proud of your contribution to the success achieved hitherto.

What of the future? I need scarcely say that not only must there be no deterioration in standards but that the excellence of the standards achieved so far should act as a spur to improved standards in the future. In achieving this, a responsibility is cast on superior and subordinate alike. It is the duty of the superior (particularly at the higher level) to provide, by precept and example, the lead which his subordinates have a right to expect of him. Equally, it is the duty of the subordinates to act correctly, not merely because of precept nor merely for fear of punishment but because he is disciplined enough to want to act correctly. Conscience must at least be as effective a deterrent as any code of discipline.

My departure from the Army has brought home forcibly to me the unimportance and impermanence of individuals and the corresponding importance and permanence of the institutions to which they belong. I go now, but the Army remains and it will unquestionably remain when in the fulness of time you, like

me, get ready to leave the Army. It is my fervent wish that, when that time comes, you will be able to say as I can today, that my successors in office have in mind the true interests of the Army and will see to it that high traditions of conduct and efficiency are maintained and the spirit of true service remains vigorous.

GOOD LUCK TO YOU ALL

Army Headquarters,
Colombo, 31.12.1959

Anton Muttukumaru
Major General

The Sixties: An Abortive Coup d'état and its aftermath

For the ten years following my retirement from the Army, I was abroad performing duties as a member of the Foreign Service in various part of the world. My knowledge of military development, therefore, lacked the intimate, day-to-day contact which had characterised the ten years I spent with the Army as a Regular Officer. I did not, however, lose contact with the Army completely because, given the known interest I had in the Army, I was informed of major events.

The first event brought to my notice was connected with the Tamil problem. In the aftermath of the 1958 riots, Mr. Bandaranaike made a move towards reconciliation with the Tamils by enacting the Tamil Language (Special) Provisions Act but this did not go so far enough to assuage the feelings of the Tamils. In the election campaigning taking place in 1960 after Mr. Bandaranaike's death, the Federal Party supported the UNP which came into power under Mr. Dudley Senanayake, but withdrew its support when it discovered that the UNP showed no signs of making any substantial effort to solve the Tamil problem. Mr. Senanayake resigned and in the general election which followed, Mrs. Bandaranaike, now leading her husband's party the SLFP, was voted into power. The Federal Party soon found that Mrs. Bandaranaike was unlikely to grant any concessions in solving outstanding issues, because the stated policy of the Government was that it would follow the policies of Mr. Bandaranaike.

Mr. Chelvanayagam now found it necessary to take action to demonstrate the dissatisfaction being experienced by the Federal Party. This took the form of a satyagraha movement. The satyagraha was essentially in keeping with the outlook of

Mr. Chelvanayagam who would eschew violence in securing his demands. He was fortified in the stand he took up, by the example of Mahatma Gandhi, who chose non-violent protest as the instrument for ensuring self-government for India.

The possibility of non-violent protest against the Government had been examined by us in the Army in 1954 when intelligence reports indicated that protesters against the visit of the Queen to Ceylon might demonstrate their hostility by lying on the streets. We had accordingly to devise counter-action to clear the streets, with the minimum force.

When the Government was confronted with the Tamil satyagraha movement, the Army was predictably enough ordered to deal with the satyagrahis who had been deployed on the streets. As it happens, there were women as well as men satyagrahis so deployed. The presence of women constituted a problem for the Army which did not relish the idea of having to deal with women protesters. They had nevertheless to be got out of the way, in order to give the Army full scope to deal with the men, in case force had to be used. Their action brought about much criticism but, this notwithstanding, the Army brought the situation under control without the violence that was expected but not without violent protest that the Army had been overzealous in carrying out the orders of the Government. Indeed, the "engagement" between the Army and the satyagrahis came to be described cynically as the "Battle of Jaffna" by supporters of the satyagrahis.

It was during the early sixties that the Army went through the experience that was new in its history and, for that matter, in the history of the nation. This was an attempt at a coup d'etat by senior officers of the Army with whom were closely associated senior officers of the Navy and the Police. Significantly, the Air Force kept aloof.

It is virtually axiomatic to assert that a coup d'etat is a matter of profound importance, because it is designed to change a Government which, as in Ceylon at the time, was legally constituted. It is, therefore, not lightly undertaken and its implications are certainly multifaceted. On the purely military side, military opposition against the protagonists of the coup must be taken into account, the risk being

the counteraction to the coup could lead to civil war. On the non-military side, it would be imperative to ensure that the people at large are in sympathy with the coup organisers. After all it is the people that put the government into power and if there is a move to subvert the government, there could be protest against the coup by action to interfere with the life of the community through strikes affecting essential services and by other means.

The possibility of the Ceylon forces undertaking this form of action was examined in "Ceylon-Dilemmas of a new Nation" by Howard Wriggins and it would be rewarding to recall what he says:-

"The Army has remained aloof from politics and has loyally served whatever Government the electorate has chosen... Ceylon's Army has no great tradition of combat... This is not to say it is ineffectual. When it was called out in the 1958 communal riots, it promptly mastered the disorders and re-established public peace. But no recollection of past grand missions tempt its leadership to dominate affairs. Moreover, while its officer corps no doubt has that firm disdain for the men of politics that is common to many army professionals, they nevertheless has been deeply imbued with British ideas of the limited place of the military man in public life. If public disorders become frequent and if the men of politics appear chronically incapable of effective government, some leaders in the Army might become persuaded that they were indispensable in the domestic political arena. But matters would have to be dire indeed before this lurking temptation would become a political reality."

Howard Wriggins wrote this book not long before the coup and one is struck by the almost prophetic character of the assessments made by the author.

As far as one can make out, the political situation facing the protagonists in the coup had in their judgement deteriorated sufficiently to justify their intervention. Whether the leaders of the coup were sufficiently shrewd to read the political setting must remain obscure but they were

unquestionably strong characters with influence in their respective services - Lt. Col. de Saram in the Army, Rear Admiral de Mel in the Navy and DIG de Zoysa in the Police and of course others. Lt. Col. de Saram was certainly an officer of unusual, almost unorthodox ability, capable of influencing both his subordinates and his colleagues. Actually, I had earmarked him to succeed Col. Wijeyekoon in command of the Army and I was saddened when his family problems led to his resignation from the regular force and I was delighted when he found the time to join the volunteer force. His forceful personality infused spirit into his men as I discovered when soon after I took command of the Army, I was faced with a "mutiny" from a few men of his unit who had been refused vocational training at the end of their five year term of service. They created history by insisting on taking their grievances to the Prime Minister on the ground that, during the 1956 election campaign, he had invited the people to bring their grievances to him. It needed a Prime Ministerial directive to clarify the situation and to prevent others from seeking similar redress. (I should add in parenthesis, that I was criticised for not punishing the men concerned for offences under the Army Act. I did not do so advisedly, because there was no point in prolonging the service of men who had opted to leave the Army and whose punishment might have led to their being treated as martyrs. Their discharge strengthened rather than weakened the Unit, as had been predicted, because what they left behind was disciplined.)

Lt. Col. de Saram's forcefulness as a Unit commander and his unquestioned leadership qualities must have helped to influence several units in the Army both of the regular force and the volunteer force to join the coup - a factor which must have loomed large in assessing the contribution of the Army in the coup arrangements, particularly to compensate for the fact that the Air Force was not a participant.

The coup failed and in assessing the failure, one takes into account the lack of public support which must have had its impact on the success of the coup. This is a potent element in a democracy where a move is made to subvert a popularly constituted government. And, as I comment above, it is possible that the leaders of the coup failed to read the

political situation adequately before they undertook the implementation of their plans. It is also as well to recall the comment of a Prime Minister that it was not possible to associate popular success for a coup that had no Buddhists in the hierarchy handling the coup. Additionally, with the hindsight one possesses, it is possible to conclude that the coup leaders lacked the dedication which leaders of other coups have demonstrated. Mrs. Bandaranaike, the Prime Minister, acted with despatch and decision in identifying the Units that were loyal to her and in ordering them to take suitable action to safeguard the state. When the coup leaders called off the coup, bloodshed was unquestionably avoided. But clearly there could not have been a firm commitment to the achievement of the objects of the coup, if the leaders were prepared to call it off, on what appears to have been the first show of resistance to their plans. This apparent lack of dedication is perhaps due to the fact that there was no proper command structure. There was certainly collectiveness in leadership which perhaps helped in planning but would be insufficient in producing effective command, because of its diffuse character.

Following the abortive coup, there were predictably enough some military developments. The first of these lay in the short term, with the disbandment of two regular artillery units and the utilisation of loyal personnel from them for the creation of a new Artillery Unit. The Volunteer Artillery Regiment was disbanded. The plant Regiment of the Engineers and the Volunteer squadron of the Signals were disbanded. To compensate for the loss of manpower in these units, the following units were raised:

One Volunteer Battalion of the Gemunu regiment;

Two Volunteer Battalions of the National Guard;

One Regiment (Development & Construction) of the Engineers.

The second lay in the long term and centred on the impact that the coup had on the Army as a whole. In 1980, I was preparing a paper on "Armament Culture - the diffusion of militarisation" which was meant for the UN Committee on Disarmament. The Army Commander of the time Major General JED

Perera, briefing me on Army developments, made the following remarks on the aftermath of the coup:

"...The overall effect of the abortive coup was the creation of a split in the Officer Corps in the Army, leading to suspicion and lack of esprit de corps which was evident in more recent times and the abortive coup could be regarded as one of the most damaging events in the history of the Army."

I get the impression that even now, nearly twenty-five years after the coup, there is a residual lack of trust among sections of the Officers Corps.

A third and perhaps equally damaging effect of the coup has been the example which it has created. In 1965, another abortive coup was staged - this time undertaken by senior non-commissioned officers in the Army to topple the Government of the time. Apart from the principal participants in the plot, the then Army Commander, Major General Udugama was also arrested for suspected complicity in the plot. As it happens, he was acquitted as I anticipated because the evidence against him was essentially circumstantial. What is disturbing to my mind is that a coup could have been undertaken so soon after the first one and that persons lower down in the Army hierarchy were involved. What is also saddening is that these coups, however unsuccessful, took place so early in the life of the Army, when it had not reached maturity. Sri Lanka was not in the happy position of the countries which have staged great coups in their history, which have passed from a phase of disapprobation to one of acceptance. Whatever the early reactions to them, the world has come to recognise that the American Insurrection paved the way for the Commonwealth to develop; that the French Revolution blazed the way to national emancipation and that the Russian Revolution has introduced the Communist ideology. It is the will of the people that matters whatever claim to divine guidance is made. I recollect that, when the validity of the Ayub Khan regime was canvassed in the Courts, the Supreme Court of Pakistan ruled that it was the outcome of the will of the people based on the law of necessity.

In 1965 also, there was a development in the Tamil conflict. Hitherto the Federal Party had to negotiate with the

SLFP, whether under Mr. SWRD Bandaranaike or Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike. In 1965, the UNP came into power once again and Mr. Dudley Senanayake, the Prime Minister, saw fit to include a Federal politician, Mr. M. Tiruchelvam, in his cabinet. The climate had clearly changed and Mr. Senanayake and Mr. Chelvanayagam found it possible to enter into a Pact, now called the DC Pact. Its provisions included the vesting of powers to District Councils over subjects to be mutually agreed upon, subject to Government control over matters of national interest; Government undertaking to implement the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Act and agreement on priorities to be adopted in the allotment of land under the Land Development Ordinance. By 1968, the Government had prepared a White Paper on the implications of the DC Pact but strenuous opposition to it obliged the Government to withdraw the Paper.

The resultant position was, for the Tamil people, demonstrably unhappy. The Federal Party had admittedly concluded pacts with Government leaders of both of the SLFP and the UNP, both of which had however proved abortive. The outlook was, therefore far from satisfactory. As the sixties came to an end and they faced the commencement of the seventies, there was perhaps the feeling in the minds of the Tamil leaders that the time was approaching for them to rethink their strategies.

The Seventies: Sri Lanka Faces Terrorism

Sinhalese Terrorism

The Seventies opened with a general election in which the SLFP was elected to power, with Mrs. Bandaranaike at its head. A feature of the election was the emergence of a new political party, the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP). This was a party composed of youth, led by youth, having the ideals of youth and the courage of youth. This courage was evident in the display of their political philosophy underlying the revolutionary purpose of changing institutions which offended them (Parliament was one) often suggesting nihilism in its ruthlessness. Significantly, plantations would be ripped up to give way to a massive food drive, the loss of foreign exchange (a bourgeois concept) being compensated for by self-sufficiency in food and full employment. Their courage was also evident in the display of their military skill which enabled them to control many regions in the country and give battle to the armed forces in fierce guerilla fighting. The JVP is associated with the Ruhunu region which produced the men who, through our military history, displayed fighting qualities dear to the kings for whom they fought. The men of the JVP appear to have inherited some of that aptitude for guerilla activities which enabled them to take and hold the Singharaja region in the South and the Ritigala region in the North.

Their strategy was unusual, for months, they conducted classes in the villages where possible and in the jungle, during which adherents to the cause were prepared ideologically by reference to the ideals for which the party stood. The men and women involved (for there were women as well) were also prepared militarily through training in fire-arms, minor

tactics in the jungle including offensive and defensive action, administration in the jungle including first-aid and nursing and in general, getting the fighters ready for operations against the security forces. Concurrently with the foregoing, they indulged in thefts and robberies of firearms and explosives. Funds for their activities were obtained through subscriptions and donations, supplemented however by thefts, robberies and holdups of banks and other institutions - all of which gave their activities a predominantly "terrorist" character.

The political strategy of the JVP was shrewd, as it needed to be, for a fledgeling party to campaign against such seasoned opponents as the UNP and the SLFP. In order to defeat the UNP which was the party in power, they took every opportunity to support the SLFP in the election campaign, although one is not clear whether there was any electoral arrangement for joint action with the SLFP. The SLFP was probably disarmed by the anti-UNP fervour of the JVP and perhaps did not fully appreciate that the JVP stood for itself alone and, as was proved in 1971, was as anti-SLFP as it had been anti-UNP prior to 1971.

They came into military prominence when they made simultaneous attacks on a number of police stations with a view to capturing the arms in the stations and residually reducing the military effectiveness of such stations. The plan apparently had been to attack many more stations in the initial assault but some failure to read the code involved in the attack led to a partial assault. Even so, the evidence is that ninety-two police stations had been attacked, damaging fifty and causing around fifty to be abandoned.

The situation was seen as a major threat to national security and the Government was obliged to declare a state of emergency. The armed forces were deployed and soon found themselves heavily engaged. Coordinating officers, who in the 1958 emergency had been appointed only in Jaffna and Batticaloa, the centres of Tamil occupation, were now deployed on an island-wide basis to deal with the actions of the insurgents, which were sufficiently violent to justify the thinking that the Government was dealing with "Terrorists". Their tactics seemed to lie in giving themselves a base in the

jungle, from which they would sally forth and terrorise the neighbourhood and harass the troops sent out to follow them into their jungle hideouts.

The army had been alerted in my time as Army Commanderto the need for training in guerilla operations in the jungle and follow up training by Gen. Wijeyekoon, my successor, stood them in good stead. He arranged for two of his senior officers, Lt. Col. Udugama and Lt. Col. Attygalle (both as it happens destined to command the Army in their time) to go to Yugoslavia for training in guerilla operations for which Yugoslavia under Marshal Tito had created for herself a special aptitude. Additionally, senior NCO's were sent to Malaya for familiarisation with the jungle operations which had been conducted by General Templer against Malayan insurgents. The Army at the time of the 1971 Insurrection was under the command of Major-General Attygalle who had the unique experience of having undergone guerilla training under Yugoslav experts and of raising the Armoured Unit from its infancy to maturity. I was personally delighted to hear of its extensive deployment and performance during the crisis, because it seemed to justify my faith in its creation.

The insurgency was instrumental in proving the value of our non-aligned stance in international affairs. Discussions I had with Heads of foreign missions in Colombo disclosed that some of them had been approached for assistance in the provision of military hardware to supplement the resources of the Armed forces. Military aid poured in from India, Pakistan, Britain, the USA, the USSR, China and of course Yugoslavia, which had up to now supplied us mountain guns. It is pretty obvious that, if the material supplied was the delight of the commander in the forward areas, it was the nightmare of the commanders of logistic units in the rear areas, because of the variety of the material supplied.

The Army benefited enormously from the engagements with the terrorists, in that its overall experience in operations was widened. In the fifties they had been engaged in anti-trade union activities, and in activities against unarmed opponents. In the sixties they were required to deal with non-violent satyagrahis whilst parts of the Army were deployed to deal with other parts committed to an abortive coup

d'etat. In the seventies the Sinhalese terrorists presented a new sort of "enemy"- young, dedicated, armed, ruthless and, in their actions, terrorist. It was the first time the Army had to deal with armed terrorists capable of exploiting skill in guerilla tactics in the jungle from which they operated, in furtherance of an objective to which they were dedicated and for which they were prepared to lay down their lives.

It was also the equally determined actions of the Government in maximising the use of the resources of the forces, strengthened by the raising of a National Service Regiment and reinforced by the considerable assistance provided by friendly countries around the globe, that enabled the Government to gain ascendancy over the terrorists. The cost was heavy because insurgent casualties were innumerable but this was the price to be paid for national security.

There is a residual explanation for the Government's success in the exchanges with the terrorists - namely, the fact that the people at large were not in sympathy with the insurgents. At the time of the abortive coup d'etat in the 60's, the will of the people was implicit in support of a Government which the people had put in power, against the intentions of a group which sought to subvert and topple such a government. And the will of the people was manifest now, even though the insurrectionists were Sinhalese. No Tamil, Muslim or other non-Sinhalese was involved in the JVP insurrection but this had no impact on the people who declined to support the aims of the insurgents. A new phase of violence accordingly died down.

Tamil Terrorism

Peace however did not descend on the country with the end of the insurgency, because the communal problems involving the Tamils in the North still persisted. At the close of the previous chapter of this study, I suggested that perhaps the Tamil leaders were considering a rethinking of their strategy to secure their demands. Events in the 70's certainly suggest that there was now a watershed in relations between the Tamil leaders and the Government. The Tamils had negotiated peacefully with all governments which had governed Sri Lanka since Independence but found that no finality had been reached on

the issues outstanding. In 1974, an event took place which the Tamils found disturbing. The International Association for Tamil Research which was devoted essentially to cultural activity, had held international conferences beginning in 1965 in Malaysia. The second and third conferences had been held in Madras in 1966 and 1968 respectively. The fourth was held in Jaffna, despite the refusal of the Government to issue visas to some distinguished participants. What shook the Tamil people, however, was the action of the Police who, acting in the belief that the conference had subversive undertones moved into the conference hall with tear gas, in the aftermath of which seven Tamil persons were killed, when a fire broke out and created a stampede.

Perhaps this was the straw that broke the camel's back because in 1976, at its Annual Convention in Vadukoddai, the TULF adopted a resolution that its goal now was the setting up of the "separate, free, secular, sovereign, socialist state of Tamil Eelam". Mr. Chelvanayagam, the Tamil leader, is reported to have said that the Tamils had reached the stage when only God could help the Tamils.

It was around this time that Sri Lanka began to experience the activities of the Tamil group of militant youth who called themselves the Tigers. The name is interesting because the royal emblem of the Cholas of South India (often ranged in our military history against Sinhalese kings) was the tiger. It has also been suggested that the name was chosen to match the appellation of the Singha, (or Lion) Regiment in the Army of Sri Lanka. The Tamil tigers were generally speaking born after 1956 when communal conflict erupted in Ceylon. They were, therefore, brought up in the shadow of that conflict through two decades. They had matured in the time sufficiently, to be aware of the disabilities affecting their community. They were themselves personally disadvantaged by the discriminatory provisions of the policy of standardisation in education because educational opportunities at tertiary level had been reduced, with the inevitable impact on obtaining employment opportunities.

It is significant that the appearance of the Tamil Tigers on the scene closely followed that of the JVP militants - a coincidental but not perhaps wholly accidental occurrence.

The similarity between the two groups is that they both chose violence as the medium of the projection of their objectives. The dissimilarity between them however, was that whereas the JVP wished to topple the Government and instal their own in its place, the Tigers only wanted a separation of the country to provide for the state of Tamil Eelam.

The Tigers initially made themselves felt with a bomb attack directed against the Police Superintendent who had led the police attack on the International Tamil Research Conference. This was followed by the killing of Mr. Alfred Duraiappah, the Tamil Mayor of Jaffna, who was accused of collaborating with the SLFP Government. Other violent incidents were attributed to the Tigers, in which the targets were not only security personnel but also others who were accused of cooperating with the Government.

With the general election fixed for 1977 approaching, however, the UNP, now campaigning for its election, issued a perceptive manifesto in which it said that "the lack of a solution of the problems facing the Tamil people has made the Tamil speaking people support even a movement for the creation of a separate state. In the interest of national unity and integration, so necessary for the development of the whole country, the party feels such problems could be solved without loss of time. The party, when it comes to power, will take all possible steps to remedy their grievances in such fields as Education, Colonisation, the use of the Tamil language and employment in the public and semi-public corporations. We will summon an All Party Conference as stated earlier and implement its decisions."

In the election that followed, the UNP swept the board in all the areas in which the TULF had not fought the election, whilst the TULF swept the board in the Tamil areas. The leader of the TULF was elected leader of the Opposition in Parliament.

Very shortly after the election, violence swept through the country. Violence is, of course started by extremists who have an element of chauvinism in their makeup. In this case, it is believed that the Sinhalese extremists were disturbed by the conciliatory character of the UNP manifesto towards the

Tamils which might lead to reconciliation. Coupled with this is the fact that the TULF had been strengthened by their election victory which disclosed public support for the policy of the TULF now devoted to the creation of a separate state. Concurrently, the UNP had itself secured a massive victory at the elections which probably led the Sinhalese extremists to argue that any anti-Tamil move should be undertaken in the period of that triumph.

Whatever the reasons, violence now erupted for the first time during a UNP regime. The violence involved damage to Tamil persons and property in various parts of the country on such a scale that the declaration of an emergency seemed imperative. As it happens, this was delayed in being promulgated. The decision could only be taken by the Prime Minister, Mr. JR Jayewardene who, having been critical of the long period of rule by the previous Government under emergency, had to be circumspect before he judged that the declaration would be justified. In the event, the Emergency was declared and enabled the services to restore law and order but not before damage had been done to Sinhalese/Tamil relations.

The Army underwent a change in command at this stage. Lt. Gen. Attygalle who had commanded the Army for over ten years handed over command, to take up an appointment in the Ministry of Defence. His term of command was the longest in the history of the Army, during which he had to contend with the insurgency of Sinhalese terrorists. He was also the last Army Commander to have had previous service with the Ceylon Defence Force and his retirement represented the end of an era. He was retired with the rank of General - the first time any officer of the Army reached that exalted rank. His place as Army Commander was taken by Major-General Denis Perera. The significance of his appointment was that he was the first Sandhurst-trained officer to take command of the Army. His appointment therefore, correspondingly introduced a new era into the history of the Army, with a full trained professional as its head.

In 1978, Parliament passed an Act to introduce a new Constitution in replacement of the one passed by the SLFP in 1972, which had converted Sri Lanka into a Republic but had retained other elements in the Constitution in which execu-

tive, legislative or judicial powers had been vested. The 1978 Constitution effected sweeping changes, the chief of which was the creation of an Executive President who was vested with unprecedented powers. This was on the ground that what the country needed was a strong executive which was above Parliamentary control. Parliament was accordingly "devalued" but its position vis-a-vis the judiciary disclosed that the latter had in turn been "devalued". Evidence of the latter devaluation appears later in this study.

The UNP was taking serious notice of the problems facing the Tamil people in terms of their election manifesto. The removal of "standardisation" was considered, with its replacement by a scheme whereby 30 per cent of the vacancies in Universities would be reserved for those who merited such vacancy; 55 per cent allocated on a District basis and 15 per cent reserved for persons in less developed areas. In 1978, the Tamil language was recognised as a national language and language rights, promulgated by regulations in 1966 to give effect to the Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Act of 1958 but not implemented, were constitutionally recognised.

1978 also saw an intensification of the activities of the Tiger militants who had been disturbed by the violence in 1977 and by failure of the Government to call an all-Party Conference referred to in the 1977 election manifesto. Their activities included attacks on security personnel, on politicians and on others whose actions the militants could not countenance. They also did damage to property and robbed banks to provide themselves with the funds they needed for their activities. They also disclosed that they possessed up-to-date arms which they had been trained to operate. They gave every indication of being "terrorist" in character. In order to control the activities of the Tamil terrorists, the Government enacted the Prevention of Terrorism Act which gave sweeping powers to security personnel in respect particularly of arrest and detention of persons indulging in "unlawful activity" as defined in the Act.

The President also took the positive step of ordering the Chief of Staff of the Army, Brigadier Weeratunge, to "eliminate the menace of terrorism in all its forms from the Island and more especially from Jaffna", the mission having to end

in six months. It was a manifestation of the concern that the President felt that violence showed no signs of abatement and his desire that the menace be eradicated without delay.

The mandate meant, of course, that the actions of the Army should be effective and decisive. Predictably, the Tiger reactions were retaliatory, and some of their actions led to the conclusion that the Tigers were prepared to accept the challenge implicit in the President's directive. It is axiomatic that violence begets violence and events that took place in the next six months led critics of the Army to conclude that the Army in Jaffna was not so much an Army in occupation as an Army of occupation. Unquestionably, a new phase in relations between the Army and the terrorists had begun, with no quarter being sought and none being given.

In 1979, the Army was reorganised to carry out the role being allocated to it in respect of the country as a whole, in the context of the Government's desire to intensify and accelerate national development. The role of the Army was defined as follows:-

The defence of Sri Lanka against an external or internal threat;

Maintenance of law and order in aid of civil authorities;

Maintenance of essential services when ordered to do so;

Participating in National Development projects.

In order to create the executive structure to achieve the last of these purposes, the Army was reorganised so as to provide "task forces". Each task force was composed of one regular battalion and two volunteer battalions and such forces were deployed in the North, North Central, Central and Southern regions. The Western (or metropolitan region) would be manned by the specialist forces - armour, artillery and engineers.

Two special units, not hitherto part of the Army's organisation, were created for special duties. The first was a Women's unit which was responsible for carrying out communications, clerical and nursing duties. It had the effect of relasing manpower needed in the forward areas. The other was

the creation of a commando unit. This unit was of course additional to the existing fighting units and added to the fighting capability of the Army.

The role assigned to the Army was to carry out not only the duties for which it had been organised and trained but additionally to assist in the national development effort.

The discharge of non-military duties was of course part of the Army's responsibilities but had hitherto been associated with national calamities and their effects - floods, droughts, cyclones, earthslips and similar abnormalities that justified the assistance of the Army, its resources and expertise.

The new policy altered the nature of Army involvement in non-military duties by making such involvement a continuing commitment and not merely as temporary as the incidence of natural phenomena. Up to now the only continuing commitments for the Army were the campaigns against illicit immigrants and against smuggling, in collaboration with the other services and the Police. The scope was now widened and included the construction of roads, levelling of sites for building and other projects, actual building construction, the setting up of playing fields and indeed, other projects having a national character in which the involvement of the Army would assist the authorities.

Inevitably, the engineer resources of the Army had to be geared to carry out these responsibilities. This meant increases in establishments and the provision of special equipment, particularly for the plant operators in the Army. All Engineer units, the Works Services, the Field Engineer Regiment and the Development and Construction Regiment, were heavily engaged.

In the process, the decision to include provision in the Army Act to make soldiers liable to non-military duties was justified, in spite of the reservations of its opponents (I was one of them), that the provision would reduce the military efficiency of non-technical units. The policy also justified the strong recommendation made by Brigadier Moore that the Army establishment should include Field Engineers.

The Eighties: Ethnic Confrontation

The Eighties commenced with the enactment of the District Development Councils Act, designed by the Government to break the deadlock created by the TULF to campaign for a separate state. Under the terms of this Act, Development Councils were to be set up in all districts of the Island (including the Tamil districts) which would be empowered to undertake development in their respective areas. It was part of the overall development plan of the Government but residually, constituted the grant of autonomy to the regions concerned. The Tamils found that the provisions of the Act did not go far enough in respect of autonomy, in that the appointment of District Ministers, who would be key personnel in the regions, was reserved for the President whilst Ministers at the Centre, and not District Ministers, were alone empowered to initiate projects for development.

These disabilities notwithstanding, the TULF decided to nominate candidates to contest seats in the Councils for the Tamil areas during the election fixed for 1981. The election campaign was expected to be vigorously fought by the parties involved and the local police force in the Jaffna District was accordingly strengthened by the move of police personnel from various parts of the Island into the Jaffna District. The police had been perturbed by the actions of the terrorists prior to the election campaign which included attacks on security personnel, homicides, attacks on politicians and bank robberies, during one of which two policemen had been killed. During the pre-election period, feelings had run high and two policemen had been killed and two others wounded during an election rally. This led to police retaliation in the city of Jaffna, during which, apart from burning the market place, the

office of a Tamil newspaper and the house of a Tamil politician, the entire Public Library in Jaffna was destroyed, involving the loss of some 95000 books. It would be an understatement to assert that this outrage represented incalculable loss because some of the books destroyed are irreplaceable. It is certainly predictable that intellectuals will bemoan the loss of these literary treasures for centuries to come. I remember being told in Baghdad that the sacking of its great library centuries before by Hulahukhan, one of the marauding Mongols, was still the cause of distress among intellectuals in Iraq, whilst later in Cairo, I was told of a similar impact on the minds of cultured people by the destruction in the 4th century of the books of the famous library in Alexandria by Patriarch Cyril's black army of monks. It is sad to reflect that the outrage was committed by the police, who are projected as the friends of the people. The anonymity occasioned by their coming from other parts of the island apparently concealed their identity during investigation.

There followed a period of violence during which what has been described as a pogrom against the Tamils was conducted in the Eastern, Uva, Sabaragamuwa and Western provinces. Predictably, there was Tamil terrorist reaction, followed by security personnel conducting arrests under the Prevention of Terrorism Act and extracting confessions from those arrested under conditions which have been denounced as violation of human rights. Consequently, one found that, whereas the year 1981 opened under favourable conditions of relative tranquillity, violence took over as the year progressed with both terrorists and security forces being involved.

1982 - An Election Year

1982 was a year of relative calm because the President had declared 1982 an "Election Year" and the energies of the electorate were directed to the forthcoming elections. Actually, the general election for Parliament had been fixed for 1983 and the Presidential election for 1984. The changing security situation and the expected deterioration in the economic situation perhaps suggested that the election should be advanced. The Presidential election was accordingly held in 1982, resulting in a convincing victory for President Jayewardene, which enabled him to continue in office for a

further six years. The general election was not, however, held. Instead, an island wide referendum was held, on the issue whether the existing Parliament could continue in office for a further period of six years. The referendum resulted in favour of the Government. In the result both the President and the UNP Parliament continued in office.

If the position of the Government had been strengthened by the effect of the foregoing, the security situation showed no abatement, with terrorist activity on the one hand and reprisals by the security forces on the other. If anything, the situation tended to be aggravated by three developments. The first was the promotion of Police officers against whom judgements had been entered in the Law Courts. The second was a demonstration by mobs against Supreme Court judges who had given judgement against Police officers, without any investigation as to the authors of such outrage. The third was the promulgation of Emergency Regulation No.15A which empowered security officers of given rank to bury or cremate bodies thrown up in security operations, so long as this was done with the authority of the Secretary of Defence. This is believed to have been occasioned by the judgement of a magistrate who had returned a verdict of manslaughter against security personnel who had been involved. Quite obviously, it could cause practical dislocation of security operations, if individuals involved in such operations were to be involved in investigations and court proceedings. On the other hand, it is obvious that the regulations could lead to misuse by persons wishing to cover up a deliberate offence against the law. There is reason to believe that the foregoing developments tended to create in the minds of potential wrongdoers a feeling of immunity from inquiry and from punishment, the effect of which was not long in being felt. Inevitably there was also some insecurity in judicial circles on the ground of a diminution in judicial prestige.

At this stage, in the face of repeated acts of violence against persons and against Government and bank property, the Army made plans to take more positive action in the North. In an engagement which followed, a terrorist leader had been killed and the Army, elated by this success, made plans to secure the end of another terrorist leader. The plan involved Army movement along a known route. This route was mined by

the terrorists and in the blast that followed, thirteen soldiers were killed - the largest in a single encounter so far. The local reaction was immediate and massive. Grieved by the sudden deaths of so many of their comrades, the rest of the unit went on the rampage, destroying much property and inflicting deaths on some thirty-five innocent civilians. I was distressed by the news because the unit to which the men belonged was the CLI, my own regiment. Knowing the standards of discipline in the unit, I decided that the action against civilians was spontaneous and not deliberate although, regrettably, none the less reprehensible.

So much for the instant and local reaction. The reaction in distant Colombo was more dramatic and traumatic. The bodies of the thirteen dead soldiers were due to be brought to Colombo, where a full scale military funeral was planned. Unfortunately, the bodies were late in arriving at the cemetery where a large body composed of relatives, friends and well wishers of the deceased soldiers had been invited to congregate. The delay led to speculation as to the cause and to some concern. This was exploited by the inevitable rubber-necks and other "interested" parties. As time went on, the unrest took an anti-police turn. This led the police to tear gas the crowd which, now inflamed, vented its feelings on the police and on the persons and property of Tamil people living in the vicinity of the cemetery. So far, the actions had been spontaneous.

On the following day the situation had changed dramatically. Colombo now witnessed the actions of mobs who had with them lists of householders in the areas where they operated. Tamil homes were thus identified and the mobs proceeded to destroy all the property so disclosed. Both large establishments and small private properties were destroyed. The loss to property has been estimated as going into millions, whilst the action against individuals resulted in thousands being displaced. An unsatisfactory feature of the carnage was that more than one unit of the security forces were seen assisting the mobs and in other cases, turning a blind eye to the work of the mobs. Having said this, I must record the fact that many Sinhalese persons have been known to assist the Tamils being attacked, some of whom doing so at risk to themselves from the frenzied mobs and others giving asylum to the distre-

ssed Tamils. These acts served to restore one's faith in human nature and human kindness.

There are two other incidents which are worth recording. One was a scare, which was probably engineered, by the report that the 'Tigers' had come to Colombo and were attacking service targets. This led to an unholy scramble among the people, to get away from possible areas of involvement and return to their homes. During the scramble which was predictably disorderly, much property was destroyed and many persons injured or killed by opportunists being involved in the melee. The other was the massacre of some fifty-two political Tamil prisoners who had been housed in a "maximum security" prison in Colombo. They are reported to have been killed whilst in the custody of prison guards but not necessarily by them. None of the persons responsible for the systematic action against the Tamils on the streets has been identified or brought to trial so far. The explanation was that there was not sufficient identification to justify prosecution. This applies equally to the prison outrages although the process of identification in that context must have been infinitely less difficult.

The Government has taken up the position that the disturbances were caused by foreign agents, who however have not been identified. At the same time a party bearing a communist label and the JVP were proscribed, on the ground of suspected complicity and their leaders arrested. Subsequently, the leader of the communist party concerned was released but others remain in custody, although no charges have reportedly been framed against them.

The President making a statement shortly after the disturbances, took upon himself some of the blame, particularly in that he had not taken action against the TULF and in not taking action to make it clear that the Government would not countenance moves to form a separate state. This was followed by the sixth amendment to the Constitution, forbidding any action to set up a separate state in the Island, on pain of varied punishments set out in the schedule accompanying the amendment.

In 1984, the President summoned the long awaited All Party Conference. Almost as it started its deliberations, the SLFP decided not to continue further participation. Given the position of the SLFP in the country, this decision tended to weaken the effectiveness of the Conference. This notwithstanding, the Conference continued sitting till the end of the year, with no positive result having, however, been achieved. At the risk of over simplification, the Conference failed on crucial issue of devolution, with the TULF declining to accept anything less than Provincial Councils and the Government asserting that it would not agree to anything more than District Development Councils.

In 1985, a new, unexpected and politically dangerous development took place, in the form of an attack by Tamil Terrorists appearing in Anuradhapura, the sacred city of the Buddhists. There they killed some 150 innocent civilians, some in the precincts of the sacred Bo Tree hallowed over the 2000 years of its existence in Sri Lanka. The attack was in a predominantly Sinhalese area which the Tamils have not invaded hitherto and seemed designed to draw attention to the fact that, the All Party Conference having failed, the prospects for a negotiated settlement had receded and that consequently, options were now open. The significance of this attitude was that, if violence had up to now had a relatively mild character, potential violence, if the Anuradhapura massacre was a pointer, could be unacceptably intensive and extensive.

The opening was thus created for India to step in and help in the negotiating process. A proposal that a conference be held at a neutral venue was accepted and talks between the Government, the TULF and the militant groups took place at Thimpu in Bhutan. Apart from differences in attitude between the Government and the TULF, differences between militant groups also emerged which are traceable to ideology, political perceptions and to military strategies. Predictably therefore, they did not form a united organisation. The People's Liberation Organisation of Tamil Eelam (PLOTE) appeared on its own. The Eelam National Liberation Front (ENLF) appeared as a composite of four groups - the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Tamil Eelam Liberation Organisation (TELO), the Eelam People's Revolutionary Liberation Front (EPRLF) and the Eelam Revolutionary Organisation of Students (EROS).

Their differences notwithstanding, the TULF and the Militants were able to present the principles underlying their political postures, whilst the Government reiterated the views outlined during the All Party Conference. There being no detailed exposition of attitudes, the Conference adjourned after two sittings, during which no finality was reached on the issues outstanding.

Efforts by India to resuscitate talks at Thimpu or other venue have so far failed. At the same time, one notes that the Government has furnished India with a working paper setting out views that can be the subject matter of settlement. The TULF has reacted by stating that the demand for Eelam is negotiable, on the basis that autonomy be granted to a region represented by the joinder of the northern and eastern provinces of the Island. The Government has modified its stand by suggesting provincial councils as the unit of devolution but has asserted that the regional unit suggested would be unacceptable. This is done to safeguard the interests of the Muslims who can hold their own in the Eastern Province but would be submerged under the overall strength of the Tamils in the North and East. So far, the militants have not made their position clear on political issues.

To turn now to the military side. The ENLF seems to want to carry on fighting. The PLOTE seems to be interested in negotiation, if by such strategy they can be recognised as the leaders of the Tamils in the event of the TULF losing their position of influence among the Tamils. If there is to be a military solution, PLOTE would prefer an all-out engagement with the security forces to the hit-and-run tactics employed by the other militant groups. They would also be interested in a link-up with extremist groups in the South and instal a Government of their own projecting a marxist image. In such event, Eelam would have lost its appeal.

Given the need for tranquillity during possible negotiations, the Government and some of the militant groups have agreed to a cease fire, or cessation of hostilities as the Government describes it. This has not been consistantly observed, whether by the terrorists or the security forces. A Monitoring Committee composed of distinguished Sri Lankans has in these circumstances been set up in order to monitor viola-

tions of the cease fire. Its first report has been published which appears to be evenhanded but its work is far from complete and it is therefore not possible to make any assessments of its work.

The position therefore appears "fluid" and the outcome obscure. Looking at the two sides from a military angle and taking the militants first, it appears that their position has been strengthened since the 1983 disturbances. At that time, manpower must have been one of their main worries, having as they did an overall strength of around thousand with a hard core of a few hundred. The 1983 disturbances left many young persons without homes, without employment and indeed without hope for the future. With the promise of a land of their own made by the militants, hope now entered their lives. Given the idealism of youth, the call to fight for their land has been strong and the numbers joining the militants have grown, according to some estimates, to several thousand. Training for the army being set up has been possible in ad hoc training camps permitted to be set up in Tamil Nadu, apart of course, in our own jungles. Funds are made available from Tamil sympathisers around the world, supplementing the resources amassed by attacks on local banks and other repositories of cash. Above all, they have the support and sympathy of the people with whom they operate, again bringing to the fore my claim that the will of the people is a potent factor in a conflict of this nature - although one recognises that recent attempts to dramatise their position, like the assassination of popular ex-Parliamentarians, have reduced public sympathy for them. How effective they will be except perhaps in guerilla operations will depend on the unity which they can forge among themselves and their ability to train collectively in furtherance of objectives centrally worked out. Once such unity is created, they could conceivably provide a credible counter to the security forces.

The Army has correspondingly improved since the 1983 disturbances. At that time, I thought and said both publicly and in private that there was a need for improvement in intelligence techniques and in operational skills, to display the professionalism which is the hall mark of the disciplined soldier. I also advocated a policy of winning the "hearts and minds" of the local people who appeared often to resent what

they considered to be the hostility of the Army to the civilian. Judging from reports, there seems to have been considerable improvement in the intelligence and operational sectors which is attributed to the availability of Israeli intelligence personnel and SAS-trained personnel from Britain, whose stamp is evident from much that is done by the security forces. I have been interested in the setting up of special training establishments, through which all units earmarked for operations in the north and east have to pass. In the political field, the services have been immeasurably strengthened by the appointment of the Minister of National Security, who can give them the day-to-day support which the President, preoccupied as he was with other equally important problems, could not give. And in the financial field, one notes the considerable budgetary provision that has been announced in the 1986 budget. These resources, when converted to men and material, will help the services enormously, so long as increases in strength do not take place too rapidly without careful selection and without the concurrent training inputs which are imperative in the build up of units. A logical step in military development has been the creation of a Joint Operations Command which is charged with the military direction of the operations undertaken by the Services in the current crisis. I am particularly interested in the fact that the first two Joint Operations Commanders, Lt. Gen. Weeratunga and Lt. Gen. Ranatunge, started their military life after the Regular Force was created - a measure of their own capacity and of the maturity reached by the Army.

A major element in the thinking of the protagonists on both sides is their perception of the purpose underlying the fighting. On the side of the militants, the purpose is the creation of the separate state of Eelam. On the side of the security forces, the purpose is the preservation of the integrity of the state. A residual purpose would be the preservation of the state in the interests of the Sinhalese people. The Tamils have access to the benefits of association with the people of Tamil Nadu. The Sinhalese have no such ethnic allies. Given the history of invasions from South India with which this study began, the possibility of their recurrence remains in the forefront of the minds of numerous Sinhalese. They have certainly been disturbed by reports that Tamil

militants seeking refuge in South India have access to camps where they can conduct military training for the operations against the security forces of Sri Lanka. Quite apart from this, the sympathy of the people of Tamil Nadu for Ceylon Tamils has been made evident - in the form of street demonstrations, strikes and speeches in Parliament and of the crowning move by an influential member of the Tamil community in Tamil Nadu who, in the aftermath of the 1983 disturbances, assembled a "force" of several hundreds which he intended to move across the Palk Strait in a massive demonstration of solidarity with the Ceylon Tamils in the north. In the event, the crossing did not take place but the impact was considerable at the time. Given current international conventions, however, the possibility of the Sinhalese being isolated to the point of extinction is remote.

I have noted that the current conflict is sometimes referred to as a "war". *Prima facie*, there is some justification for such thinking because the "casus belli" is a state. It is conceivable that the present fighting is treated as a part of a "civil war" to come. I doubt, however, whether even in such an eventuality, the fighting could be comparable with a state of war against a foreign enemy. Such a war would be conducted without restraint, on the basis of the philosophy that "all is fair in war". The services have not been exposed to that sort of fighting and it is conceivable that many of the "violations" of human rights that are laid at the door of the services are attributable to the individuals thinking that he is engaged in a war in which "all is fair" particularly when the adversary is out to kill, with upto date weapons, in the achievement of his objective. Such an attitude could certainly lead to the actions against innocent civilians highlighted by International bodies like the ICJ, Amnesty International and to discussions by UN bodies devoted to the study of human rights. The soldier, particularly at the sharp end in operations, thinks in terms of black and white. He does not see the "grey" areas which the perceptive officer does, and indeed, must see. It follows that a heavy responsibility rests on the officer, particularly at junior level, to make the soldier realise that all is not fair in a "war" of the kind he is involved in, whatever may be fair in a war against a foreign enemy.

I should have liked to continue this study of the ethnic conflict which burst on the country in 1956 when I was Army Commander. My own personal affairs, however, have taken a turn which militates against further recording of events connected with that conflict. This also means that the Outline of military history which I had undertaken has also to stop. Perhaps someone will emerge who will pick up the threads where I have left off and weave the continuation of this study.

As I lay down my pen, I see in my mind's eye numerous aspects of ethnic confrontation. These initially centred round the issues enumerated in the UNP manifesto in 1977 which cover ethnic, political and economic matters. These cannot be disposed of as affecting the Tamil speaking people alone, because they present overtones which have significance for the Sinhalese people as well. There are the more profound issues raised by the TULF and echoed by the militants which centre round the state of Eelam which they believe will eliminate the disabilities now being experienced by the Tamil people. There is the equally profound matter raised by the President that the integrity of the State of Sri Lanka is not negotiable. These matters have disclosed differences which so far have defied settlement.

I note that India has made her resources available in the search for such settlement. In so doing, she takes into account primarily Sri Lankan attitudes. She also has her own considerable preoccupations. In the domestic sector, she would be interested in the repatriation of several thousand Tamil refugees who have flocked to India. This however would have to be done only when the security situation in Sri Lanka permits them to return without the fear that induced them to flee to India. This is a factor which the South Indian Tamils - a potent factor in Indian politics - would watch with more than ordinary interest, given their sympathy for the Tamils of Sri Lanka. In the external sector, India would be mindful of the possible destabilisation of the South India/Sri Lanka region which a worsening of the ethnic situation in Sri Lanka could precipitate. Such a worsening could be initiated by a resumption of hostilities, particularly if they take place on a scale hitherto not experienced.

When I contemplate this contingency, many thoughts crowd my mind. There is my interest in the Army, because of my association with it which commenced over fifty years ago and which ended with the period when I helped to create the Army of Independent Sri Lanka. There is my interest in the Tamil militants who are part of the community to which I belong. Overall, I am aware of the fact that the protagonists, whether they be Sinhalese soldiers or Tamil "terrorists", share a past in which their fathers and their fathers' fathers before them participated and can share a future in which their children and their childrens' children could participate as citizens of Sri Lanka. But the predominant thought that demands expression is the fervent hope that the Gods, who have lavished so much elegance and beauty on this lovely land of ours, will make it their divine purpose not to sully that beauty by the continued shedding of precious blood and will instead endow our leaders with the wisdom to arrive at a lasting and equitable solution of the issues which now threaten the integrity of this country.

Retrospect and Prospect

As I said at the conclusion of the previous chapter to this study, I have now come to the end of an undertaking which has taken me back nearly twenty-five centuries. During that period the country has been ruled by one hundred seventy-eight Kings or Queens and governed by twenty Portuguese Captains General, thirty-one Dutch Governors, thirty-one British Governors and two Governors General, one Ceylonese Governor General and two Sri Lankan Presidents. Looked at cursorily, this presents a bewildering picture. On close examination however, certain features present themselves which I have discussed as the study progressed but nothing is lost in restating the most interesting.

Early on, I took the liberty of questioning the description by Sir Emerson Tennent of the "ineptitude" of the Sinhalese soldier for fighting. As the study progressed, I came to the conclusion that this was not consistently true and that there have been times in history when the aptitude of the soldier for fighting was unquestionable. On further analysis, I found that such aptitude was manifested when they came under the influence of the great captains of our military history. This is not surprising because an essential element in the make up of the military commander is his capacity to bring out the best in his men, and to exploit it in operations. This is sometimes called charisma which is precisely what the great commanders in our history (I have named seven) have been able to demonstrate. I am glad to find that Professor Geiger, himself a stern critic, has concluded that there were times when our soldiers, whatever "unwarlike" properties the people had, were able to rise to great heights in military performance.

I have in this study also come to the conclusion that the Sinhalese kings made no effort to create what in modern times is called a "standing army" even though the repeated invasions to which the country was subjected pointed to the need for such an institution. Considering the talent that has been available, a standing army would perhaps have prevented the occupation of the country and the loss of our independence which occurred at least once in our early history, before the advent of colonial rulers. If such an initiative had been taken, there would have been a wealth of military knowledge which would have helped to fashion military thinking and assist in the creation of military tradition. Dhatusena, who created an army and a navy against contingencies, provides the exception that proves the rule. In fairness to the rulers, I have examined some of the reasons why there has been this weakness, which do not have to be restated at this stage.

I have made the point that, in the colonial period, the Portuguese and the Dutch made little contribution to military development except to provide the opportunity of engagement with foreign forces. Britain was the exception, although in the early stages of British occupation, they were too preoccupied with riots and rebellions against them to want to develop local forces. In due course, the pattern changed and the British saw fit to develop local forces which made their mark during the major wars in which they were engaged - the Boer War, the First Great War and the Second Great War which brought war to our own territory through the actions of the Japanese.

What was nurtured in the process was what Independent Ceylon gained. Apart from forming the core of units of the regular force being created, personnel trained by the British helped in creating traditional values. Officers inculcated in their juniors the attributes of leadership. Warrant Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers, who would be in touch with the new soldiers all the time, inculcated in them the significance of discipline which is an integral part in the makeup of the individual and esprit de corps which is an integral part of the collective makeup of the unit to which the soldiers belongs. It is axiomatic that, without discipline the men of the unit can only appear as a rabble. Similarly, esprit de corps can be self defeating. "Going on the rampage" is of

course an example of "esprit de corps". Such action if directed to a laudable cause is received with approbation but if it is directed to an unacceptable purpose like the harassment of innocent persons, it is reprehensible. The torch, if that is the right word, has now been passed on by the old guard to the custodian of the military values which have been developed.

This study opened with a reference to peaceful relations with India followed however with a recital of unsatisfactory relations. It ends with references to India's interest in helping to settle the ethnic problems facing Sri Lanka. This discloses a friendliness of approach which goes beyond good neighbourliness and prompts the suggestion that history has turned full cycle and good relations become evident.

Prospect

In viewing the prospect ahead, one must recognise that the Army has had a fair share of operational experience although not against a foreign enemy. It is therefore wrong to say that the Army has had only ceremonial experience and that its training is only for that purpose, because the reality is otherwise. The Army has been trained to deal with the operational duties with which it has been charged. It has also been fortunate that the exposure to such operational duties has come gradually. Initially there was trade union activity. There was then activity against unarmed opponents in the confrontation between Sinhalese and Tamil. There was a satyagraha which by definition is non-violent, but in practice determined. The abortive coup involved no fighting but caused the elements concerned to get ready for fighting. The insurrection involved the Army against an armed opponent who exercised the Army extensively in guerilla operations in the jungle and of course the towns. And now the Army is engaged against an armed opponent that shows that he is well organised, well equipped and well trained, to establish the creation of a separate state for which he is prepared to fight bitterly. In the process, the Army will unquestionably achieve maturity in internal security operations, as it demonstrates the professionalism which will enable it to concentrate on its objectives because they are military, without distraction by unmilitary stimuli such as ethnicity.

It has certainly received the approbation of successive Governments which have seem fit to retain the Army as a major component of the security structure. This is its reward for its devotion to the duties which have been assigned to it.

What the Army needs to achieve complete maturity, is exposure to the rigours of engagement against a foreign enemy in safeguarding the external security of the country. It is only when it emerges from such engagement with credit, that the future historian can make his judgement as to whether the Army has served the country efficiently and faithfully under all conditions facing it. I venture to suggest that, in its short history, the Army has learned not only some of the operational aspects of fighting but also such of its psychological aspects as would complement the picture. These involve many elements which have to be assimilated - leadership, discipline, esprit de corps, loyalty, tradition, devotion to duty. It is the aggregate of operational skill and adherence to the psychological adjuncts in the military makeup, that creates the values which have made the great armies of history and which must, I suggest, be attained, if our own Army is to emerge in history as a **great Army**. In my judgement the auguries are good.

Epilogue

I am conscious of the deficiencies in the work I have concluded, which inevitably are characteristic of an attempted sketch or outline of history. The perceptive student of military history will readily notice that there is much detailed information which must be included in a properly researched study. This includes the nature of campaigns conducted, strategic considerations in the conduct of war, tactical moves in battle, training, accoutrement and equipment, logistic support and a host of other matters. I have given some attention to some of these requirements in my discussion of the great offensive of Duttagamani, the defensive layout in Sigiriya of Kasyappa, the strategic outlines of Parakrama Bahu's campaigns, the tactical skills demonstrated by Rajasinghe I. There is however a great deal that awaits research. And there is much research material available in India, Portugal, Holland, Britain and of course, Sri Lanka. There can additionally be some evidence thrown up by work conducted in the cultural triangle that can enrich history. I do not exclude myth and legend which, if properly edited, can provide material for possible inclusion in a history.

I have been critical of Sinhalese Kings for not having taken steps to create a "standing army" even though they were under constant pressure from the South Indian region. Such moves would have enriched military history and helped to create military tradition. I have examined possible explanation for this state of affairs and have asked myself whether the concept of the "standing Army" is so essentially modern as to absolve the kings for their omission. This is a matter which needs research.

I have made little mention of the Tamil Kings and their activities in a fuller history, this matter will have a recognisable place.

I have created in my mind a Valhalla and have named seven great Captains of our military history as having earned entry into that Palace of fame. There may be others and their claims are worth examining. Whilst on the subject of our great commanders, there is merit in mentioning what has exercised my mind regarding Duttagamani. The name by which he is known in our history, underlines a personal characteristic which does scant justice to the man and his exploits. If the verdict of history is to remember him by a personal characteristic, one would have picked on a more noble one and described him as "Gamani the magnanimous" in commemoration of his historic attitude towards a fallen foe.

I should like to have featured pictures of the great military heroes but have not been able to find suitable ones of all of them during the period of research. I have, however reproduced pictures of soldiers in history which are the result of research done many years ago when I was Chief of Staff, by a team led by Col. (then Capt.) Ranatunge. The conclusions arrived at in that research were submitted to a group of experts whom I assembled, who approved the final drawings which were thereafter converted into statues made under the direction of the late JDA Perera at Heywood. These are now reproduced in this book and would go some way to recognising the contribution of our soldiers to military history, which I trust I have been able to demonstrate in this study, as having been considerable.

I would conclude by making a reference to a suggestion in the book entitled "A Return to Kandy" by Wesak Nannayakara - namely that a statue of the "Unknown Sinhalese Soldier" be erected at Balane, the scene of many unsung exploits of Sinhalese soldiers in the campaigns of their kings against Colonial invaders. Such a monument would remind passersby of some aspects of our military history and would certainly perpetuate incidents of valour hitherto unrecognised.

Up-date

This is being written in August 1987 after an interval of 20 months during which I have been out of Sri Lanka and therefore lacking intimate connection with events.

Earlier in this study, I ventured the opinion that, if the Tamil militants unite, they could form a credible opposition to the Sri Lankan forces in guerilla-type operations. This has not happened and, indeed, the LTTE has been engaged in bitter encounters with some of its fellow militants. The strategy underlying this policy suggests a design to present itself as the strongest element in the dissident movement and capture the leadership of the Tamils.

Efforts to resolve the outstanding problems have taken place. In August 1986, the TULF had discussions with the Sri Lankan authorities which however broke down, because there was no agreement on the joinder of Provinces. At the end of the year, there were hopes of a settlement between the Governments of Sri Lanka and India, which regrettably were not realised.

Concurrently, encounters between the militants and the armed forces were reported, thus making the peace process more remote. In April 1987, there was staged a most outrageous incident and in the heart of Colombo. In the area of the Central Bus Station, a bomb was exploded, the potency of which was sufficient to cause hundreds of deaths and casualties. There was an immediate outcry and the Government was obliged to order aerial bombing of areas believed to harbour militants. The bombing was ceaseless and caused its equation to carpet bombing. Inevitably, many innocent civilians were killed and damage done to supplies. Indian reaction was such that the Indian Government felt itself bound to mount a

"mercy" mission by sea, which however was not cleared with the Sri Lankan authorities. The Indian boats were halted by Sri Lankan Navy patrols. The mission was then repeated by air with the concurrence of the Sri Lankan authorities.

India's action, though overtly compassionate, had a deeper significance suggesting the will on her part to intervene, if she judged that action of the Sri Lanka forces were indiscriminate and therefore unacceptable to India's own Tamil community.

Fresh negotiations were then entered into between the two Governments which resulted in an Agreement being signed by Prime Minister Gandhi and President Jayewardene. The main elements of this agreement are as follows:-

The Sri Lanka Government would agree to a joinder of the North and Eastern Provinces. Within the year, however, a referendum would be held in the Eastern Province on the issue whether its people agreed to the joinder.

Each province would be administered by an elected Council with a single Governor and Chief Minister superimposed.

The militants would lay down their arms. Tamil detainees would be released.

The Sri Lanka armed forces would hand over security responsibilities to Indian troops who would replace them in the North and East. It would be the responsibility of Indian troops to supervise the surrender of arms and to keep law and order.

The Agreement has had a mixed reception. The TULF feels that it does not represent a final solution but is a step in that direction. The militants oppose the agreement but, doubtless under Indian persuasion, they have agreed to lay down their arms. Just how much is involved is obscure and it will be the work of the Indian troops to locate and secure all the arms. Sri Lanka's response in releasing detainees will be related to the surrender of arms.

Singhalese reaction is, by and large, hostile to the agreement. Within the cabinet, there are both supporters and opponents. The opposition is based on the belief that the joinder is only a step to the resumption of a demand for a separate state. Mrs Bandaranaike has condemned the agreement on the ground that the territory involved is completely out of proportion to the Tamil community which is only 12% of Sri Lanka's population. The Mahanayake of Asgiriya has recommended the withdrawal of the agreement. Disapproval has been staged in more than one Singhalese area but the worst evidence of disapproval took place at a meeting of Parliamentarians when a grenade was thrown and wounded several of them and killed one. Whether this is only the tip of the iceberg will become apparent in the future.

These reactions were predictable in a setting in which opposing participants in negotiations took up inflexible positions.

This has now changed with President Jayewardene, while declining to agree to a separate Tamil state, has agreed to a joinder of the two provinces claimed, by the Tamil militants. Given the racial composition of the Eastern province - which currently stands at 40% Tamil, 33% Muslim and 27% Singhalese, the chances of the Tamils being outvoted are strong. If that happens, Singhalese opinion will be assuaged.

Given all the circumstances facing him, the President has reached a momentous and courageous decision. In the short term he has ended violence without going through the trauma of exercising the military option which he has sometimes been tempted to take. In the long term, the agreement opens up the prospect of reconciliation between communities which have been forcibly separated, of the resumption of tourist arrivals and of the commencement of rehabilitation.

What then of the Armed forces? It would be futile to believe that there are no elements in them who would have preferred to end violence through some positive action of their own. Such elements will derive satisfaction from the reflexion that the militants have not won a victory. The forces also have the satisfaction of being entrusted with the preservation of security in the South of Sri Lanka in the

event of Singhalese dissidents attempting to subvert security. It is a role that they can accept with dignity and execute with customary efficiency.

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Errata

- Page 4 Para 1 Line 5 for "this" read "his"
- Page 20 Heading of Chapter 3-insert "Fourth" after "Third"
- Page 21 Last para line 1 For "referce" read "reference"
- Page 22 In heading "Fourth Invasion...-" for AD 43 read AD 433
- Page 30 Para 3 Last line for "Machiavilli" read "Machiavelli"
- Page 32 Para commencing Vyaddas Line 2-for "waht" read "what"
- Page 34 Last para Line 8 Delete "a" between "in" and "cowhorns"
- Page 45 Para 3 Line 8- delete "for"
- Page 89 Para 2 Line 10 for "in appropriate" read "inappropriate"
- Page 97 Para 3 Line 5-for "hundred a" read "a hundred"
- Page 113 Para 2 Line 1-for 1976 read 1796
- Page 128 Para 2 Line 2- for "in substantial" read "insubstantial"
- Page 132 Para 2 Line 2 from bottom for "frist" read "first"
- Page 158 Para 1 Line 15 for "Jayeweikrema" read "Jayewickrema"
Para 2 Line 1 Delete "the Army" and substitute "Ceylon"
- Page 166 Para 3 Line 5 - for "take" read "talk"
- Page 168 Para 1 Line 24 for " mind laying and watermanship, bridging" read "mine laying, watermanship and bridging."
- Page 176 Para 2 Line 2 - for "ene" read "end"
- Page 182 Para 3 Line 11 - for "has" read "have"
- Page 207 Para 2 Line 2 -for "centred" read "centre"
- Page 213 Para 3 Line 2 -add fullstop after "activities". "in" become "In"

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