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Journal of the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon.

"Eendracht maakt Macht"

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Journal of the Dutch Burgher Union of Ceylon

VOL: LXXIX

JANUARY — DECEMBER 1981

THE JOURNAL

We have pleasure in publishing the Journal after a lapse of 13 years, the last copy being Volume 68 in 1968.

Many changes have taken place in that space of time and many causes contributed to the break in the publication of the Journal, not the least of which was the inability to replace our illustrious Editor, the late Dr. R. L. Brohier, one time President of the Union. Dr. Brohier enriched the literary quality of the Journal with many an article from his erudite pen. More importantly, he contributed many worthwhile publications about Ceylon, his magnum opus being his work on "The Ancient Irrigation Works in Ceylon". Dr. Brohier died last year and we wish to place on record our gratitude to him, but as far as the Journal went after 1968, all that was left was spes est regerminat.

In 1978 the Union had the good fortune to persuade the Hon. Mr. Justice Percy Colin-Thomé to be its President. A literary scholar and a lover of the Classics, well steeped in its traditions of being an admirer of beauty without extravagance, we owe the revival of the Journal to Mr. Justice Colin-Thomé. He holds the prestigious position of a Judge of the Supreme Court but does not allow the Law, well known as the most jealous of mistresses, to monopolise his literary talents. Despite all his onerous duties he finds time to infuse fresh life into the activities of the Union. The Journal was one of them and its bursting into new life in the shape of the 69th volume is due almost entirely to his efforts. To revive interest in it, Mr. Justice Colin-Thomé has obtained articles from gifted writers and financial support for it both here and in Australia where many of our members reside, but remember the Union with affection and are always ready to help.

The years that have passed since 1968 have taken their toll. We remember Mrs. Sam de Vos, a gentle lady always ready to help when money was needed, Mr. Hildon Sansoni, the champion of Ceylon tennis for many a year, who served for several years on the General Committee. We remember with affection Mrs. Muriel Ferdinand, who, for over 20 years, gave so much of her valuable

time, devoted selfless service and her own funds to the efficient administration of the St. Nikolaas' Home. We are happy to record that a plaque in her memory has been set up in the Home.

In this volume we publish some very valuable documents loaned to us by Mr. S. A. W. Mottau, Retired Assistant Government Archivist. A long time resident in Nuwara Eliya, Mr. Mottau spends a lot of his time translating medieval Dutch documents. It is well known that much of his research has been made use of without acknowledgement, by those who do not hesitate to cull the flowers of other minds. Mr. Mottau does not mind for he is one who works not looking for the prize.

But much remains of the gold-mine of information and we hope that until such time at least when Mr. Mottau publishes a book of his own, he will give us a series of articles which we will publish with pleasure.

We as a community have a heritage we can justly be proud of; from decades gone by we have dwindled in numbers but we still have men and women of quality and substance who contribute their time and knowledge to society in general and to the Union in particular.

We would welcome articles, poems and anything of literary value, from members of the Union and well-wishers. We hope to publish the Journal bi-annually and we look to you for support.

**The Hon'ble Mr. Justice Percy Colin-Thom'e, President,
Dutch Burgher Union to the Members of the D.B.U.,
on Founders Day - 22nd October, 1979.**

Your Excellencies, the 32 Dutch Governors of Ceylon; the Hon'ble Mr. Charles Ambrose Lorensz, the first Burgher member of the Legislative Council; the distinguished Mr. R. G. Anthonisz, Government Archivist and Founder of the D. B. U., distinguished past Presidents and distinguished members. Every Nation, every Race, every Community has to take stock of its own unique encounter with history and distil from it a direction for policy and an inspiration for the future.

I wish to remind you today of two episodes of our past history. One which scaled the heights of epic courage, determination,

endurance and sacrifice, and the other which slid into the lowest depths of dark despair. One of the land marks of world history is the extraordinary impact which two small sea going powers, namely, Portugal and The Netherlands, made on the world in the 16th and 17th centuries. The Atlantic Ocean, from Biscay to the North Sea, had much to do with the moulding of the character of the Dutch and the Portuguese. When the earlier explorers of these countries left their shores in flimsy sailing craft with only a sextant and the stars to guide them, nearly all of them made their Last Wills before sailing, conscious of the fact that it was unlikely that they would ever see their homeland again. Every journey to the West or the Far East was an act of faith and a confrontation with an ominous unknown.

However, they never wavered, although thousands came to a violent end or perished from tropical disease. In a mood of serious self-criticism it is, I think, useful to ask ourselves the question: "To what extent does our courage, determination, endurance and sacrifice measure up to the character and qualities of those early pioneers?"

The darkest episode of our history commenced around 1796 and lasted several years. In the late 18th century the two super powers prowling in the Indian Ocean were France and Great Britain. The scramble for India was on, and it was well known that both France and Great Britain were planning, for about 35 years, to capture the Dutch Maritime Regions in Ceylon, and Trincomalee in particular, which they planned to use as a spring board in their designs on India.

At this time the French armies had overrun The Netherlands and Dutch power was in a state of decline. In the last stages of the negotiations between the British and J. G. Van Angelbeek, the last Dutch Governor of Ceylon, Lord Hobart, the British Governor of Fort St. George, Madras, sent a letter dated 7th July, 1795, to Van Angelbeek. This letter was delivered by Hobart's Ambassador, Major Patrick Agnew to Van Angelbeek in Colombo on the 25th of July, 1795. It assured the Dutch that the British came as their ancient friends only for a temporary occupation of the Dutch possession's, to be held in trust until the war with the common enemy France was over. Lord Hobart undertook to respect the laws and customs of the country and held out that no fresh taxes and duties would be imposed, provided provision was made for the

defraying of expenses of internal government. Trade would be free and the inhabitants would be permitted to trade with the British territories on a most favoured Nation footing. "The Officers of the Dutch Government would be left in full and free possession of their employment until His Majesty's pleasure shall be known."

None of these assurances were honoured by the British and in 1800, four years after the Capitulation, Lord North, the first British Governor of Ceylon, in a secret dispatch to Lord Dundas, the British Foreign Secretary, stated that: "The Dutch inhabitants are inimical, being almost to a man ruined by our occupation of Ceylon," and that, "their personal as well as the National connection between them and the mother country and the remaining Dutch Settlements require their exclusion from Government employment so as to render us independent of the Dutch and to destroy their influence in the country."

The imposition of the coconut tree tax further aggravated the misfortunes of the Dutch community. Unemployment among the Dutch community was rampant and at its worst during this period. There was a mass exodus of our people, mostly to Batavia, and the community dwindled to about 10,000 in the whole Island.

Thereafter, it took our depleted community a little over two generations to adjust to a new language and to their new rulers. But revive they did, extricating themselves from what seemed a hopeless situation by their industry, integrity and ability. One of the leaders of the Great Burgher renaissance which started in the middle of the last century was Charles Ambrose Lorensz, who was born on the 8th of July, 1829 and died on the 9th of August, 1871.

It is fitting that we name him the Moses of the Burgher Community as he infused his community with a new self-respect, identity and a sense of pride in their achievements. This golden era lasted till the departure of the British in 1948 and then followed the same old pattern of discrimination, insecurity, frustration and a mass exodus to Australia and other countries. I predict, however, that given a little more time our youth after they have broken through the language barrier completely and have become emotionally and psychologically adjusted to the political changes brought about in recent years will distinguish themselves once again in the professions, the public service, the private sector and in the Arts and Sciences. It gives me great pleasure to note that two young members of our community have

recently covered themselves with glory in the Medical College and have set a shining example to other young members of our community. This is only a beginning. We must do everything we can to help our young people especially in education by leaving them an inheritance of confidence, humanity and faith so that they too when the time comes, may extend the hand of friendship and service to the young of the future generations of Burghers and to the old and needy as well.



"THE WISHING WELL"

(The last three verses)

Give me, fair stream, not gold nor love —
Nor fortune high nor wealth of days,
Nor strength to rise the crowd above,
Nor the deceit of human praise!

But this: That like thy waters clear
Though creeds and systems come and go,
Unvexed within a narrow sphere,
My life with even stream may flow—

May flow; and fill its destined space
With this, at least, of blessing given—
Upward to gaze with fearless face
And mirror back — Some truth of Heaven.

CHARLES AMBROSE LORENSZ

(Published in Fraser's Magazine, London — September, 1854)

Paper read by Mr. S. A. W. Mottau, Retired Senior Assistant Government Archivist of Ceylon on "The Dutch in Ceylon" on the 9th July 1980 at St. Andrew's Hotel, Nawara Eliya, to a group of visiting Tourists from Holland sponsored by the AMRO Bank of Amsterdam.

THE DUTCH IN CEYLON

At the outset, I must say that the subject on which I have been asked to speak to you today is one that is difficult to deal with appropriately in a lecture of short duration. One could really write volumes on the subject. But I will endeavour, as briefly as possible, to present to you some of the more salient features of the period of the administration of the Dutch V. O. C. in this emerald isle, which has been described by one author as 'The pearl of India', and to show you, as far as possible, what manner of people the Dutch in Ceylon were and how they met the demands of the age and clime in which their lot was cast, and more especially what special contributions they made during their rule of approximately 150 years over Ceylon to the general welfare and progress of this country and its inhabitants.

To give you some historical data of the circumstances connected with the coming of the Dutch to Ceylon, it would suffice I think to say that it was primarily due to the founding of the V.O.C. in March 1602 by Johan van Oldenbarneveldt and the other influential merchants in Holland, whose efforts to capture the Eastern markets in spices and other articles of commerce from the tropics from the Portuguese, who held the monopoly at the time, that resulted in several voyages to the East Indies by the Dutch for purposes of trade and commerce.

Prior to their final settlement on the maritime districts of Ceylon, there were several exploratory voyages, first by Joris van Spilbergen in 1602, and later by Adam Westerwolt and others, who came out here as emissaries of the V.O.C. to the King of Kandy, whose relations with the Portuguese at the time had deteriorated. The King of Kandy was anxious to get rid of the Portuguese and sought the assistance of the Dutch with promised concessions for trade to help him to see the Portuguese out of the Island. The negotiations between the King and the emissaries of the V.O.C. resulted ultimately in the capture of port of Galle in 1640 and Colombo in 1656, and also other maritime Portuguese forts later until 1658, when all the maritime forts of the Portuguese were finally captured and taken over.

Initially the Dutch occupied only these maritime forts and the immediately surrounding areas until the year 1765, when the entire strip round the whole of the coast of Ceylon, up to a limit of 5 Dutch miles (about 30 English miles approximately) was ceded to the Dutch by the King of Kandy by Treaty after a prolonged war of three years' duration.

Soon after their arrival in Ceylon, the administration of their maritime forts was divided into three separate Commandements or Provinces, viz: Colombo, Jaffna and Galle. The Governor himself directly administered the Colombo Commandement with the assistance of a Military Commander. This Commandement extended on the Western Coast from Puttalam and Kalpitiya in the north to Bentota on the south. Jaffna and Galle were administered directly by Commandeurs, who were responsible to the Governor and his Council of Policy in Colombo. The Jaffna Commandement included the maritime forts on the West coast from Kalpitiya northwards and also Trincomalee and Batticaloa on the East Coast; and the Galle Commandement consisted of the districts of Galle, Matara, Hambantota and Tangalla on the south coast of Ceylon.

The Governor was assisted by a Political Council consisting of the principal officials of the Company, of whom the 'Hoofd Administrateur' (who was in charge of the commercial activities and trade) and the Dessava (who was responsible, like the present day Government Agents, for the inland administration and land revenues etc outside the main forts). That, briefly, was the set-up of the Company's administration in the Island throughout the entire period of its rule over Ceylon.

I will now endeavour to give you briefly some of the more important features of the Dutch administration and their stay in Ceylon, and particularly what they did in their efforts to contribute to the general welfare and the social and economic progress and prosperity of the country and its people.

EDUCATION & EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS

The Educational establishment of the Dutch in Ceylon was one of their greatest contributions to the progress of this country. The dominions of the country were carefully mapped out into school circuits and schools, at which free vernacular education was provided under a scheme of compulsory attendance. Commenting on their labours in the field of education, the famous English writer and journalist

of the past century the Hon Mr. John Ferguson says: "We are accustomed to think of the Dutch rulers as selfish and mercenary, but the records of a long list of schools in the Colombo, Galle, Matara, Jaffna, Mannar, Trincomalee and Batticaloa districts, show that between 1750 and 1780 A. D., there must have been at times as many as 91,500 children attending school, and more wonderful still, a very large proportion of these were girls. Considering how small a portion of the Island", he adds, "the Dutch really held and the comparatively limited total population, the attainment in schools and scholars was truly wonderful". School tombos or registers were maintained showing the names of children, the dates of their admission to school, their ages at admission, the dates of their baptisms and departure from school and other details, all of which even today provide a vast amount of genealogical information, relating to Sinhalese families in particular. A complete series of these Tombos is preserved at the State Archives in Colombo. The village school was also the Church, and some of these well-designed and well-built, though simple structures, survive even today, and the village schoolmaster is still sometimes described as 'Palliya Gurunanse' or 'Palliya Mahatmaya'. Annually two members of the School Board (Scholarchale Vergadering) a clergyman and a layman selected by the Government, visited each school, at which they remained a whole day, and after a full inspection, submitted an annual report to the Governor and Council. On these occasions, baptisms and marriages were also solemnized by the clergyman after careful enquiry as to whether the parents or parties understood its nature and its obligations. I shall refer later to the work of the two Seminaries established under the religious establishment of the Dutch.

AGRICULTURE & IRRIGATION

In order to encourage and increase the cultivation of rice and other crops and to develop the agricultural resources of the country, the Dutch initiated and carried out many important works of irrigation. Two of the best known of these were the Urubokka and Kirima dams, which was a monument to the skill and energy of Captain Foenander, the Dutch Engineer, who successfully completed the work. The object of the Urubokka dam was to turn the superabundant water which periodically inundated and ruined some of the richest tracts of land in the Matara district into that of Tangalla in the Southern Province, whose extensive tracts had previously to be abandoned owing to the scarcity of water. This magnificent work improved the cultivation of 8000 acres of paddy fields. The present Government has now undertaken a similar project in renewing these

useful works and the facilities which were made available by this original scheme of irrigation. The Mulhriyawa tank, perhaps the largest fresh-water reservoir made by the Dutch for irrigation purposes in the Western Province too served 2000 acres. The Giant's Tank in the Mannar district was constructed to serve the needs of that district. Unfortunately these great works of utility constructed by the Dutch fell into neglect after they left the Island. The Government is now devoting much time and attention to renewing these useful projects for the benefit of agriculture. The British Engineer, Mr. P. M. Pingham, in his work on the history of the Public Works Department, referring to these irrigation works, says: "Giants made them, and giants only can restore them". True to the instincts of their homeland, the Dutch also constructed several canals for the transport of goods etc. in Ceylon, utilising the numerous lagoons and waterways that lie along the coast. The most important of these canals is the one 80 miles long, which starts in the Kalutara district and connects Colombo with the salt-producing town of Puttalam and serves the rich coconut districts of the Western coast.

The intensive cultivation which distinguishes the Jaffna peninsula is an inheritance from the Dutch days and is reminiscent of gardens in Holland. During the administration of the Governor Mr. van Imhoff, the portion of this Island from Colombo southwards, which was described as waste land, was surveyed and divided among the people to be planted with coconuts. When the British took over, the whole of the south-western coast presented the scene of unbroken groves of coconut which we find to this day. It is interesting to note that the 'mammoth', the favourite agricultural implement of the Sinhalese, was introduced by the Dutch.

In the days of the Dutch the streets of Colombo were shaded on each side by double rows of trees. These ornamental and shade trees have now disappeared, though they still survive in some other towns of the Island.

Some of the most delicious fruits are grown from naturalised exotics introduced by the Dutch. Among these may be named the mangosteen, the soursop, the loquat, the star apple, the canary almond and the lovi-lovi as the Malays call it. Cocoa and coffee too were first introduced to Ceylon by the Dutch in the early years of the 18th century.

In the days of the Dutch. European vegetables too were successfully cultivated in Ceylon. The following are still known among the Sinhalese by their Dutch names: Boontje (beans), peterselie (parsley), salada (salad), seldery (celery) and wittekool (white cabbage) which is known in Sinhalese as vatakolu).

Another enterprise of the Dutch was the breeding of horses on the Islands of Delft and the Two Brothers in the Jaffna district. It was both successful and profitable at the time. Unfortunately this enterprise, which was continued by the British in the early days of the last century, was abandoned in more recent times.

Religion & Religious Establishments

A few years after their arrival on the coastal fort of Galle in 1640, the Dutch began religious ministrations in that town on the 6th of October 1642, which date is accepted as that on which the Dutch Reformed Church was established in Ceylon. The religious establishments were conducted more or less on the same lines as in the Fatherland.

Coming, as the Dutch did, from their desperate struggles for religious freedom in their homeland, with poignant memories and bitter recollections of the 30 years' war in their minds, they had already found in their settlement in the Island that no security could be assured for them when the Roman Catholic Church and clergy exercised any influence. All Roman Catholic churches and monasteries were taken over and converted for the use of the Reformed Faith as churches, schools, almshouses, etc. A number of these old churches may yet be seen scattered throughout the Island, especially in the Northern areas. The repressive measures which the Dutch initially took against Roman Catholics sprang from causes which were political rather than religious, and the discovery of a plot to massacre the Dutch at Jaffna shortly after its surrender by the Portuguese confirmed their worst fears. With the passage of time, however and the continuance of peaceful rule, the Dutch were moved by a more liberal spirit in their dealings with the Roman Catholics. So their action must be judged by the spirit of the age in which they lived. The natural enthusiasm of the Dutch clergy at various times to spread their faith by means of conversions was held in reasonable restraint by the Civil authorities. Freedom of worship was generally allowed. Non Christians were not forbidden the exercise of their religion, but only Christians were forbidden to take a part in these and were punished when detected. It is true that preference in regard to appointments in the service of the Company was generally given

to Christians. This may have led to certain cases of conversion for personal benefit and gave rise to the term 'Buddhist Christians' (or Government Christians in the time of the British) to denote those who had been so converted but were secretly Buddhist at heart and followed Buddhist rites and rituals in private.

The history of the Dutch in Ceylon shows that they were singularly free from race or colour prejudices. Several instances are on record of young Sinhalese and Tamils having been selected for the Ministry and sent out at the expense of the Company to the Universities of Holland. After completing their course of study and being admitted to Holy Orders after the usual examination and period of probation, they were appointed as Proponents and Predikants to preach both to their local bretheren in their languages and also to the European congregation, and were in every respect on the same footing as the other clergy, taking with them an equal turn in all clerical duties and functions. For instance, there was the Rev. Henricus Philipsz, son of the Maha Mudaliyar at the time, who was sent out to Holland, and after a course of study at the University of Utrecht, returned to Ceylon and was stationed in Colombo as Predikant. His son, Gerrardus Philipsz, and several others too, were educated in Holland and returned to Ceylon as Predikants.

The Dutch established two Seminaries at Colombo and Jaffna respectively, which trained Sinhalese and Tamil young men for the Ministry. The Seminary provided an advanced course of studies which included Dutch, Latin, Greek & Hebrew. Latin, was the medium of instruction in the higher theological class. Later, the scope of the Seminary was enlarged, and it admitted respectable young men who desired to be schoolmasters, Chief Headmen and Interpreters. The importance of the Seminary was emphasised by the fact that the Governor with his Council were present at the examination of its candidates. Governor Van Imhoff expressed his surprise at hearing dusky youths speak Latin and work at their Greek with an interest which promised much good for the future. It speaks well for the system of education under the Dutch in Ceylon that men could have been trained in the Island for the highest offices in the Company's service. For instance, Anthony Mooyaart, Commandeur of Jaffna, who on the death of Governor Van Eck administered the Government of the Island up to the arrival of Governor Falek, received the whole of his education at the Jaffna Seminary.

The Dutch clergy were on the Government establishment and were paid their salaries by the Company. This continued during the British rule too until the disestablishment of the churches from the State establishment in 1870. As such the Clergy were subject to the orders of the Governor and the Council, who kept them in restraint on occasions when they over-stepped their enthusiasm in their religious exertions. There were disputes on several occasions between the Clergy and the Government on the ground that they were impeded in the full exercise of Church discipline. However this may be, the Governor in Colombo and the Commandeurs in the two Provincial stations exercised a strict personal authority over the Ministers. They are said to have sometimes claimed the right in order, as they expressed it, to test the ability of the preacher and to maintain a strictly *extempore* style of preaching, of selecting the text for each Sunday's sermon, and sending it up to the Minister after he had mounted the pulpit. The following story is told of a Governor, whose name is not mentioned, but who, it is said, was noted for his vanity. On one, either to try The Minister's tact and intelligence, or with a view to create a diversion, he sent up, instead of the usual text for which the Minister was waiting, a blank slip of paper. The Minister glanced at it, but nothing disconcerted, he held up the slip of paper so that the whole congregation could see it, then, repeating aloud to himself "Er is niets hier", he proceeded to give out his text from a verse in 1 Timothy Chap. 6, vs. 7 "We hebben niets in de wereld gebracht: het is openbaar dat wy ook niet kunnen iets daaruit dragen". He made this the subject of an eloquent invective against the sin of pride and vanity. We are told nothing of the effect it had on the Governor.

Social Service & Charitable Institutions.

The Dutch established 'Weeskamers' or Orphan Houses and 'Boedelkamers' or Boards of Trustees for the registering and the administration of the estates of Christian orphans, the Sinhalese and Tamils Chiefs usually acting as the guardians of the non-Christian subjects. One of the greatest acts of social service under the Dutch administration was the establishment at Hendala of the Leger Asylum in 1708, which exists to this date under the administration of the Medical establishment of the Government. This important work was begun by Governor Simons and completed by his successor Governor Hendrik Becker.

Natural Sciences

In the field of Natural Science, the Dutch Governor Loten, who was known as the Naturalist Governor, had an excellent series of coloured plates of Ceylon birds prepared under his direction by a young Ceylonese artist. After his retirement he resided in England for some time, where he was made a Fellow of the Royal Society. By his legacy dated 18th October 1778, he bequeathed his valuable collection to the Dutch Society of Sciences at Haarlem. The Dutch in Ceylon rendered valuable aid to medical science by their researches into the department of Botany. Ceylon thus possesses the distinction of having had her Flora arranged and fully described by the great Dutch Botanist Linnaeus, who availed himself of the celebrated Herbaria collected by the eminent Botanists Hermann and Hartog, both of whom had been sent out to Ceylon in the Medical Service of the Dutch V.O.C. It was with the assistance of these Herbaria that Buurman in 1737 and Linnaeus in 1747 prepared their wellknown works on the Ceylon Flora under the titles "Thesaurus Zeylanicus" and "Flora Zeylanica" respectively. The beautiful flowering creeper called 'Thunbergia', so well known in Ceylon, was named after Thunberg, a surgeon in the service of the V.O.C. in Ceylon from 1777-1778, who collected specimens for Linnaeus, whose faithful pupil he was. It would be perhaps befitting also to mention here that the pioneer work on the Fauna of Ceylon was written by a descendant of a Dutch colonist, Dr. E. F. Kelaart, who was born within the shadows of the Dutch period. He is the author of the work entitled "Prodromus Faunae Zeylanicae" and the first Ceylonese to obtain a British degree.

Architecture & Art

The Dutch were good architects and knew how to build in the tropics so as to secure both coolness and shade. Many of their dwelling-houses, some of which exist to this day especially in the Colombo Fort and Pettah areas, are provided with lofty roofs, massive walls and doors, and the dwelling-houses with spacious and well-ventilated rooms and deep verandahs, and they have served as models for the people of this country.

The walls of the Dutch Fort of Colombo were demolished in 1869, but the Dutch Forts at Galle, Matara, Jaffna, Mannar, Batticaloa and other minor stations survive as picturesque memorials of the military defences of a bygone age. The ancient Dutch Churches at Wolvendaal (built in 1749), Galle (built in 1755) and Matara (built in 1706),

still provide services as of old in the simple liturgy of the Dutch Reformed Faith, while the empty Church at Jaffna (built in 1706), which has recently been handed over to the care of the Archaeological Department as an archaeological preserve, stands as a silent witness of a large congregation of former days. These churches, which are paved with tombstones and hung with mural monuments, many of which display the armorial bearings of gentle birth, are rich in historical interest.

The Dutch also set models in furniture-making which were readily followed by the people of this country. Most of the graceful and elaborately-carved furniture in ebony and calamander, now so eagerly sought in modern furnishing, belongs to the Dutch period and was made in Ceylon of local wood. Some good specimens could be seen in this Hotel. A former Director of the Colombo Museum, Dr. Joseph Pearson, said: "That the period of the Dutch occupation of Ceylon coincided with the 'golden age' of furniture development in Europe, and that the Dutch had a genius for transferring to their Colonies and settlements the atmosphere of their own country".

The Dutch were also greatly skilled in the culinary art, and broeders, poffertjes, pannekokjes, suikerbrood, wafels and ijzerkoekjes are still wellknown delicacies on the Ceylon table... 'Pastelas' from 'Pastel' are popular pastries (now called curry puffs), while Smore from smoren' and carmanatcha from 'carbonadje' are tasty preparations of meat. Milk punch from 'melk pons' is a favourite drink.

Judicial Administration

The Dutch were great jurists, and the Roman-Dutch law, which is the Roman law adapted by the Dutch to suit their own needs, is still the basis of the common law in Ceylon. The standard legal works of the most famous Dutch jurists like Voet, Grotius, van Leeuwen, Groeneweg and others, are still consulted by our lawyers and our judges in their decisions in Court cases. To the Dutch is due also the codification of the customary laws of the Tamils into the "Thesawalami", which is still observed as the law in matters such as inheritance and mortgage. This important work was compiled by Claasz Isaacs, Dessave of Jaffna, on the orders of the Governor Hendrik Simons, who was himself a graduate of laws of a Dutch University.

Language & Customs

The Dutch language has enriched the English language with an important vocabulary, of which the following words would serve as instances: The 'Koronchi' ceremony at Sinhalese weddings is derived from an old Dutch custom. It is so called because at a certain stage of the wedding ceremony, a 'kroontje', the Dutch word for a little crown, is placed on the bride's head.

Playing cards, which were introduced by the Dutch into Ceylon, are still known among the Sinhalese by their Dutch names:-

Harten (Hearts) - Hartha.	Aas (ace) - Asiya.
Ruiten (diamonds) - Roite.	Heer (king) - Heeea.
Schoppen (spades) - Iscoppa.	Vrouw (queen) - Porova.
Klaveren (clubs) - Kalabara.	Boer (jack) - Buruva.

There are over a hundred other words, some of which are:-

Haarnald (hairpin) - Harnala.
Aardappel (potato) - Arthappel.
Balk (beam) - Balke.
Blik (tin) - Belekka.
Boedel (estate) - Budala.
Kalkoen (turkey) - Kalukun.
Kijker (telescope) - Kerker.
Kerkhof (graveyard) - Karakoppuwa.
Laatje (drawer) - Lachuwa.
Patroon (cartridge) - Patroon.
Poespas (hurry, or hotchpotch) - Puspas.
Stoep (verandah) - Is topuwa.
Vla (custard) - Pla.
Vinkel (workshop) - Venkela.
Zolder (stairway) - Soldera.
Zuur (toddy) - Sura.

Records

And lastly, but not the least important, I wish to mention the great contribution that the Dutch have made to a study of the history of this country in the most valuable legacy they

have left us in the series of 7000 odd volumes of records of their administration during their rule of 150 years in this Island. These records or archives are of immense interest to succeeding generations as they contain much valuable information, not only of the political activities, but also of the social, topographical and economic conditions of the country in their time, and in addition also a valuable source of historical and genealogical record regarding the people of the country, all of which are being regularly made use of even at the present day.

The most valuable sources for historical research is contained in such series as the minutes of the Political Council and other religious and educational institutions, the circuit diaries of the Governors and Commandeurs and other principal officials in the Company's service, the Hoofd and land tomboos and the school tomboos which I have mentioned earlier, the minutes of the meetings of the Secret Committee during the period of the war with Kandy, the reports of the Ambassadors sent out annually to the Court of the Kandyan King, etc. In this connection, I recommend, if time permits, that your Group pays a visit to the National Archives Museum in Colombo, where the old maps and documents of the period are on display.

Conclusion

The Dutch who settled in Ceylon regarded it as their permanent home. While retaining the best elements of their own civilisation and culture, they wisely adapted themselves to a life in the tropics and they cultivated friendly relations with the other inhabitants of this Island.

When, after a century and a half of their rule, they ceded Ceylon to the British, there remained the community of their descendants, the Dutch Burghers of Ceylon, who have taken their due share in advancing the welfare and interests of this country. Of the permanent settlers in the land, the Burghers were the pioneers in the Public Services, in the professions, in the field of Western athletics and sport, and in movements to improve the conditions of the people. Relatively small in numbers as a community, the contribution of their manhood to the great War in the early period of the present century was a magnificent response, and stands recorded in enduring brass on the walls of the Dutch Burgher Union Hall.

And finally, the Burghers provided a bridge of sympathy and understanding between the British rulers and the people of the country, and helped in creating the loyalty and contentment which distinguished Ceylon as compared with other countries in Asia.

In concluding this talk, may I say that there is just one more legacy of the Dutch which I wish to mention, not in my own words, but in an account by a Dutch journalist who visited Sri Lanka in 1973, which was published in the 'Telegraph' of the 4th of October 1973. This journalist, who met the Director of our Ministry of Tourism at the time, a Muslim named Mr. Thahir, records his impressions of that meeting as follows:-

"De mooiste vrouwen van Ceylon hebben een 'touch of the Dutch', zei de heer M. Y. M. Thahir, directeur van het Ministerie van Toerisme, even voor mijn vertrek eergisteren van het mooie eiland in de indische Oceaan, dat tegenwoordig Sri Lanka heet.

'Dat is een van de beste dingen die de Burghers hier gedaan hebben' lachte hij, 'en inderdaad behoren de meisjes, die licht gebleekt zijn door een Nederlands voorouderschap tot de meest gewilde huwelijks-kandidaten op Ceylon'.

You may be wondering why I have reserved special mention of this relatively incidental, but in my opinion too, rather important and interesting contribution of the Dutch to the welfare of, this Island. My only plea in reply to this query is, that being now in the 77th year of my life, I take refuge in that wellknown Dutch saying: "De oude bok lust nog wel eens een groen bladje" (The old goat still longs for an occasional tender leaf).

I thank you, Ladies and Gentlemen, for your patient hearing and forbearance with me in this rather protracted talk.

"DO YOU REMEMBER US?"

"Do you remember us when we are gone,
 You solitudes, as we do you,
 Like friends upon a sojourning?
 Hear you the sounds of men,
 Soul of the Jungle?
 And do you deem them trespassers
 Upon your cloistral silences,
 Unbroken but for furtive feet
 Upon the leafy loam,
 And feathered minstrelsy?"

"Do you, when man has gone,
 Fold down upon the bivouac with a sigh
 of winds, and soothe the broken places,
 Even as a mother lulls her stricken brood?
 Do you recall the camp-fire's flare,
 The reek of smoking meat,
 The quiet voices and the songs of old,
 Embodying fears you whelped?
 Or are they nought to you
 These journeyings among the dreaming hills?"

"Who that has scaled your citadels,
 And drawn the tranquil bounty of your breasts,
 Can but believe, O Nature, that you came?"

R. L. SPITTEL.



JOHAN GERARD VAN ANGELBEEK

1794 - 1796

Governor van Angelbeek & The Capitulation
of the Dutch
Settlements in Ceylon to the British - (1796)

by

PERCY COLIN-THOME, M.A. LL.B. (CANTAB)
of Gray's Inn, Barrister-at-law,
Judge of the Supreme Court, Sri Lanka.

**GOVERNOR VAN ANGELBEEK & THE CAPITULATION OF THE DUTCH
SETTLEMENTS IN CEYLON TO THE BRITISH (1796)**

BY

**PERCY COLIN - THOME, M. A. LL. B. (CANTAB)
OF GRAY'S INN BARRISTER-AT-LAW,
JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT, SRI LANKA.**

Johan Gerard van Angelbeek, the last Dutch Governor of Ceylon was about 60 years of age when, in 1794, he succeeded his son-in-law Willem Jaeob van de Graaf as Governor of the Island. He was a native of West - Friesland and came out to the east in the ship "Schakenbos" as a cadet in 1751. In a comparatively short time he was promoted to the high office of Onderkoopman (Deputy Merchant) in 1756. In 1764 he was appointed Fiscaal, Colombo, an office which corresponded in many respects to that of the Attorney-General or Public Prosecutor. In the following year he became Political Secretary, Colombo. In 1767 he became Koopman in Tuticorin. In 1770 he was appointed Opperkoopman, Tuticorin, which was the highest office in the Company's Civil Service. In 1780 he succeeded Adriaan Moens as Governor of the Malabar Coast. He was later appointed Raad Ordinair (Councillor in Ordinary) of Netherlands India, in 1787.

He eventually came to Ceylon and functioned as Governor from 1st August, 1794, until the British occupation on 16th February, 1796. He died on the 2nd September, 1799, in Colombo, and his remains were later removed to Wolvendaal Church in 1813. Although there is a monument to his wife Jacomina Lever and his daughter Christina Elizabeth van Angelbeek, wife of Governor Willem Jacob van de Graaf, there is no commemorative monument to van Angelbeek.¹

Van Angelbeek's name has been associated with the last inglorious days of Dutch rule in Ceylon, especially in the year 1795 and the beginning of 1796. At various times van Angelbeek has been accused of treason and of treacherously surrendering the Fort of Colombo to the British. Many Dutchmen who served the Dutch East Indies Companies at the time of the capture and remained in Ceylon thereafter spoke with great

1. de Vos, F. H. — "The Dutch Governors of Ceylon" Dutch Burgher Union Journal Vol: II, No. 1 — 141.

bitterness about van Angelbeek's spiritless capitulation to the British Forces.¹ Many of them had lost their employment and fortunes after the capitulation.

Two texts published in the early part of the 19th century contributed considerably to the tarnished image of van Angelbeek. The first was Captain Robert Percival's "An account of the Island of Ceylon - 1803" published in 1803. Percival was an officer of the British Army to which Colombo surrendered. He asserted that many of the Dutch were "violent Republicans of the Jacobin party"² who desired to remove van Angelbeek and set up his son³ in his place. This conspiracy was baulked by the sudden arrival of the British Forces. Percival accused the Dutch garrison of shameful indiscipline, disorder, drunkenness and stated that van Angelbeek frequently declared to British Officers that "he was in constant danger of his life from their mutinous conduct. He had resolved to defend the place to the last; but such was the state of insubordination which prevailed that he could not by any means induce the Dutch troops, and in particular the officers, to march out against the enemy." Percival alleged that this state of affairs induced van Angelbeek to enter into a "private treaty" of surrender which he signed without the knowledge or consent of his troops. He alleged that the British Forces were introduced by stealth into the Fort before the garrison was aware of their entrance and he described the garrison as having been "in a state of most infamous disorder and drunkenness; no discipline, no obedience, no spirit." Outraged by this betrayal the Jacobins bitterly reproached the Governor and turned their guns on his house with intent to kill him.

The other text which contained the severest censure of van Angelbeek was "Receuil de Notes sur L' Attaque et Defense de Colombo"⁴ which appeared in the book "Voyage aux

1. Anthonisz, R. G. — "J. G. van Angelbeek" — Dutch Burgher Union Journal — Vol: IX No. 1 — 2.
2. Percival, "An account of the Island of Ceylon 1803" Tisara publication - 76. (reprinted Colombo, 1976).
3. i. e. Johan Christiaan Angelbeek who in 1792 was appointed Hoofd Administrateur, Colombo. See de Vos, F. H. "Dutch Governors of Ceylon" D. B. U. J., Vol: II, No. 1 - 141.
4. There are two English translations of this account: (1) by Mrs. C. A. Lorens. Ceylon Examiner, and (2) by Lt., Col., A. B. Fyers R. E. Royal Asiatic Society Journal, Colombo Branch, Vol: X. — 365.

Indes Orientales" by the French writer M. de la Thombe, published in 1811. where he relied on "information..... given to me at Batavia and in the Island of Java by several Dutch officers of high rank employed there, who had formed part of the garrison of Colombo at the time.

Percival stated that "the dissensions among both the civil and the military officers of the garrison were the cause which most powerfully hastened the surrender." On the other hand, de la Thombe while commenting on the unreliable account of Percival contended that: "Treason alone obtained for the British the invasion and possession of this fine colony."

De la Thombe's accusation against van Angelbeek has been largely based on the manner of the transfer of the Regiment de Meuron¹ to the British. He found the Governor's interviews with Agnew² suspicious in the extreme. He stated that the de Meuron Regiment ought not to have been allowed to leave for India and he called the Governor's preparations "This semblance of defence" and was astonished at his failure to fire at the British ships on several occasions and at the inactivity of the garrison.

However, the conduct of van Angelbeek in the last days of Dutch rule can only be critically evaluated by reference to the course of European politics during this era, its pervasive repercussions on the Colonies and also by reference to the increasing opposition of the Kandyan rulers who were desperately seeking the friendship of European powers as a counterpoise to the Dutch. Van Angelbeek was also beset with administrative and financial problems and the indiscipline and disloyalty of some of his officials and troops.

The Stadtholderate which was restored in the Netherlands in 1747 did not continue for long. The spirit of the War of American Independence inflamed parts of Europe and whereas

1. The Dutch had engaged in 1781, and permanently stationed in Ceylon since 1786, a mercenary regiment belonging to Count Charles Daniel de Meuron, a Swiss. The proprietor had retired to Europe, leaving his brother, Colonel Pierre Frederic de Meuron, in command.
2. Major Patrick Agnew, despatched by Lord Hobart from Madras as Ambassador in July 1795, with a letter to van Angelbeek embodying the British proposals of temporary occupation of the maritime regions to be held in trust for the Dutch until the conclusion of a peace restoring the Constitution guaranteed in 1787.

the people sympathised with the Colonies which revolted and France, the second Hereditary Stadtholder William V favoured Britain. In this milieu the Patriot Party, whose members were influenced by the ideas of the French radicals, was born in the Netherlands. Their pressure brought Holland into the Armed Neutrality in 1781 with disastrous consequences. The British declared war and the Republic was humiliated. Dutch trade was paralysed. The Dutch Colony of Negapatam was captured by the British and Trincomalee was temporarily captured by the British in January 1782 and was only regained with the help of the French.

In 1783 the Dutch were forced to conclude peace with the British by which the British obtained free commercial access to the waters of the Eastern Archipelago. The failure of the war was blamed on William V and only the intervention of Prussia averted the collapse of the House of Orange.

In 1785 the Netherlands was compelled to sign a humiliating peace with Prussia. However, the opposition and hostility of the people necessitated a second intervention in 1787. William V who had been driven out was restored to the throne, and the Constitution of 1747 with the States General and the Hereditary Stadtholder at the head was guaranteed; and the Republic was compelled to ally itself with England and Prussia. However, although the House of Orange appeared to be secured the French Revolution upset all calculations.¹

In 1793 the National Convention of the newly established French Republic declared war on England and Prussia. It naturally followed that Holland became embroiled in the aftermath of the declaration. In the winter of 1794/95 the French under General Pichegru invaded the Netherlands and drove William V and his family to exile in England and with the support of the Patriots brought the Constitution of Holland into line with the Constitution of France. The Stadtholderate was abolished, a new system of representation was instituted, and the United Provinces became

1. de Silva, Dr. Colvin R. "Ceylon under the British Occupation, 1795-1888" Vol: 1, 16.

the Batavian Republic which took over the territories of the Dutch East India Company over whose ruling Committee the Stadtholder, since 1784, had presided as Chief Director General.

The turn of events in Europe and the decline of Dutch power placed the Dutch Colonies in an anomalous position as they became increasingly vulnerable to attack by other European powers seeking to expand their influence in Asia.

The rapid disintegration of the Mughal Empire in India accelerated the competition between the most formidable European imperial powers of the day, France and Britain.¹ If the Dutch colonial possessions were vested in the new Batavian Republic they would be the object of British attack. If, on the other hand, they remained loyal to the expelled Stadtholder residing in England they would be the object of a French attack. It was known that the French were scheming to secure the Dutch colonies of the Cape, Java and Ceylon.

The Dutch ruled a thin coastal strip in Ceylon which stretched at the height of their influence, in the latter half of the 18th century, like a belt around the island encircling the Kandyan Kingdom. The Dutch Governors were confronted towards the end of the 18th century with the growing hostility of the Kandyan rulers who desperately wanted to oust the Dutch from Ceylon with the assistance of some European power. In 1762 they invited the Pybus Mission which was despatched by the English East India Company from Madras in order that the Kandyans could obtain British assistance in a war with the Dutch.

The establishment of the Nayakkar dynasty on the Kandyan throne became a threat to the security of the Dutch.² The Nayakkar rulers had considerable influence outside Ceylon. The South Indian States, especially Tanjore, were equally hostile to the Dutch as a result of the Dutch presence in Malabar. Since the rulers of many of these States were connected by kinship and marriage ties to the Nayakkars the Kandyan rulers could always rely on the South Indian States for support. There was also danger from the Madras establishment of the English East India Company which resented the monopolistic

1. History of Ceylon, (University of Ceylon) edited by Professor K. M. de Silva, "The Coming of the British to Ceylon, 1762-1802" Vol: 3 - Chapter 1, 1. (Colombo, 1973)

2. Chapter 1, 1.

trade of the Dutch in the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. There was acute rivalry between the Dutch and English East India Companies in Bangalore. The strategic value of the Island and its economic resources, notably in the cinnamon trade, were a great attraction to the British and they responded with enthusiasm to overtures from Kandy.

In 1762 on the invitation of the Kandyan ruler the English East India Company sent their first diplomatic mission to Ceylon. The Pybus Mission arrived in Ceylon mainly for the purpose of gathering information on the affairs of the Island.¹ At this time although the British were conscious of the Island's strategic value in the Anglo-French struggle for supremacy in India, they had no definite plans with regard to the Island and no policy to apply. The Kandyan ruler on the other hand was looking for more than friendship and expressions of goodwill and was desperately looking for the assistance of an ally in a war against the Dutch which at that time seemed imminent, but Pybus had no authority to make such an offer. Thus Pybus' request for a territorial foothold for the English East India Company on the King's territory on the coast in return for which nothing substantial was offered was politely declined.

The discovery of the Pybus Mission in Ceylon surprised the Dutch, but by the time the discovery was made they were already at war with Kandy. News of the Pybus Mission served to antagonise the Dutch against the Sinhala Kingdom. By a legal fiction the Dutch administered the territories they controlled as servants of the Kandyan King. The Dutch now intended on converting this fictitious position into the hard reality of effective sovereignty.²

In 1766 after a brief and indecisive campaign the Dutch were able to extract from the Kandyans a settlement and a treaty which gave the Dutch all they desired. The Dutch were now the paramount power in Ceylon and the Kandyan Kingdom was reduced to the position of a landlocked State dependent on the Dutch for essential supplies such as salt and dry fish. Their external trade and foreign relations remained completely under Dutch control.

The Kandyans were bitterly resentful of this humiliation and the rigorous terms of the treaty spurred them to a feverish search for a foreign alliance to assist them in expelling the Dutch from Ceylon.

1. Ibid, 2.

2. Ibid, 4.

A second British mission to Kandy coincided with the British attack on Trincomalee early in 1782.¹ Hugh Boyd in 1782 was to negotiate with the Kandyan King "to conciliate him to our interest" and to impress upon him the good faith of the Company and its desire to cultivate his friendship. In return for British military assistance against the Dutch the Kandyans were asked to furnish provisions for British troops. King Rājadhi Rajasingha was, however, suspicious of British intentions in view of the earlier failure of the Pybus Mission. Furthermore, in the years 1780-1782 British prestige in Southern India had declined in the face of attacks by the French and Hyder Ali. Admiral Suffren's attack on Trincomalee in August 1782 and the fall of Madras underlined the decline of British power. Therefore, although the purpose of the Boyd Mission was to make a bid to have Trincomalee as a British controlled port, the British were really interested in a political arrangement that would deny the French use of this port. The Boyd Mission ended in failure too. Thus at the peace negotiation of 1783-84 the British were content to let the Dutch retain Trincomalee for the time being at any rate.

In the meanwhile Kandyan relations with the Dutch had reached their nadir² during the administration of van de Graaf (1785-1793) and there seemed little prospect of any improvement under his successor van Angelbeek (1794-1796.)

The strategic value of Ceylon in relation to the Indian Peninsula had become known from Portuguese times. As early as 1614 a Portuguese Captain warned Phillip III (II of Portugal) that Ceylon was "the key to all India." He concluded a long memorial on the subject with the prophetic words: "If your Majesty loses Ceylon, we can say we have lost all India and its commerce - which may God prevent!"³

Indeed, even after Ceylon was actually lost, the memory was so distressing to the Portuguese that Frei Fernao de Queiroz began his history of the Island by saying: "Of all the great and lamentable losses and ruins of the Portuguese State in the East Indies, the greatest and most painful.....was the Island of Ceylon, because

1. Ibid, 6.

2. Ibid, 9.

3. Winius, G. D. — "The fatal History of Portuguese Ceylon" (Harvard Univ. Press)

of the fruitful and most rich and in every respect most happy kingdom which was thereby lost, the enormous expense incurred..... and the bloodshed and the lives it cost the Portuguese nation of all which came to naught by our mismanagement.....¹

In 1770, Abbé Reynal in the "History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies"² wrote about Ceylon's "excellent cinnamon" and "richest Pearl Fishery of the East; its ports were the best in India, and its geographical position surpassed all those extraordinary advantages..... It is in the centre of the East; the passage which conducts to the most wealthy regions..... Numerous squadrons sent forth from its various harbours would have commanded the respect of all Asia, and their vessels cruising in the neighbouring seas would easily have intercepted the navigation of other powers."³

Other European powers in the scramble for extending their Empires in India were quick to appreciate the strategic and economic importance of Ceylon. The importance of Trincomalee in the days before the steamer was that it satisfied the needs of Naval power in two ways. During the monsoons a squadron defending India had to lie to the windward of the sub-continent. It also required a safe harbour in which to shelter during the violent weather caused by the inter-monsoonal storms in October and to a lesser extent in April. Only Trincomalee could fulfil these requirements adequately, and hence its importance to the defence of India, as it commanded both the Malabar and Coromandel coasts.

Even prior to the Pybus Mission to the Kandyan Kingdom the British had a working arrangement with the Dutch which left them use of the harbour as a re-fitting port for the British Eastern Fleet. Between 1746-1795 the British had used Trincomalee on 15 occasions during the North-East monsoon, and on 11 occasions during the South-West monsoon apart from the frequent calls made at Trincomalee for repairs, wood and water.³ Even during the 7 years war the British navy continued to visit Trincomalee to use the facilities provided there.

1. Queiroz, "Conquest of Ceylon" translated by Fr. S. G. Perera, S.J., Vol: 1, IX.

2. "Histoire Philosophique et politique des Etablissements des Europeens dans les Deux Indes" Amsterdam 1770. See The Douglas Papers No. 3 para: 75-93 edited by Fr. S. G. Perera S.J., Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1, 118.

3. Colgate H. A. "The Royal Navy and Trincomalee - the history of their connection, c. 1750 - 1958" C.J.H.S.S. VII (D) 1-16. Vide History of Ceylon (Univ. of Ceylon) edited by Pro: K. M. de Silva, Vol: 3, Chapter 1. "The Coming of the British to Ceylon, 1762 - 1802." - 3.

During the crucial years of the Anglo-French contest for supremacy in Asia between 1763-1795 the British Eastern Fleet did not have a headquarters or fixed stations. The French possessed an excellent naval station in Mauritius (then known as Ile de France) which had great potential as a base of operations against the British. The only other base that could have served this purpose was either the Cape of Good Hope or Trincomalee, both of which were in the hands of the Dutch.

With the outbreak of war between Britain and Holland in 1781 Dutch overseas possessions became potential bases for the French for the prosecution of their designs on the British Empire in Asia. Thus by 1781 Trincomalee which was a neutral port whose use was permitted to the British became overnight a potential base of French attacks on India and once the British were denied the use of Trincomalee by the Dutch in 1781 the urgency for a British base on the Eastern side of India became paramount. Plans were, therefore, made by the British for the capture of Trincomalee in order to prevent its use by the French for their planned invasion of British India.

The original British plan was limited to the capture of Trincomalee and the Dutch possessions on the Coromandel coast. In October 1781 the plan was broadened to include the capture of all the Dutch settlements in Ceylon. Trincomalee was captured by the British in January 1782. It was re-captured by the Dutch with the aid of the French under Admiral Suffren in August 1782.¹ Very soon thereafter the British lost Madras and their position in Asia was seriously threatened.

There was no cordiality between the two countries during this period. At the peace negotiations of 1783-84 the British had demanded and obtained the Dutch territory of Negapatam as compensation for the return of the Dutch settlements they had captured during the war. The sacrifice of Negapatam aggravated the sense of grievance the Dutch had against the British and contributed to the increasing influence of France in the affairs of the Dutch. The ascendancy in Holland of the pro-French Patriot Party culminated in the conclusion of a defensive alliance between France and the Dutch Republic in

1. Trincomalee remained in French control until the end of the war in 1783 before the port was given back to the Dutch.

November 1785. There was now a distinct threat of a Franco-Dutch attack on the British Eastern possessions especially in India for which Trincomalee would have served ideally as a base of operations. There was also dangerous possibility that the Dutch possessions in Ceylon would be used as a base for French support to Tippu Sahib in India who was a most formidable opponent of the British.

Dundas¹ was, therefore, conscious of the strategic value of Ceylon. Pitt² himself took the precaution of authorising Lord Cornwallis in 1787 to occupy Trincomalee in case of a war with the Dutch. The British persisted with diplomatic negotiations with the Dutch over the control of Trincomalee between 1784 and 1791 which ended in failure because of increasing suspicion and mutual recriminations which was a feature of Anglo-Dutch relations at this time.

The overrunning of Dutch territory by the French Revolutionary Armies in January 1795 and the establishment of the Batavian Republic again culminated in a major threat to British interests in Europe and Asia.

In these circumstances, Lord Grenville,³ British Minister for Foreign Affairs, suggested to the Prince Stadtholder that, in pursuance of "what he owes as much to the interests of the Republic, as to those of his own House, and of the high dignity with which he is invested, "he should" give to the different officers and Commanders of the forts and vessels of the Republic such orders as may distinctly mark the real situation in which His Serene Highness is placed, and may authorise them to avail themselves of the protection, which His Majesty is desirous of holding out to them, according as circumstances may permit;" and expressed the readiness of the British to give "any assurance that he might wish, that any ships of war or forts, surrendered

1. Henry Dundas (1742-1811) first Viscount Melville; 1784, Member of Board of Control; 1791, Home Secretary; 1793-1801; President of Board of Control; 1794-1801. Secretary of State for War; 1804-1805, First Lord of Admiralty. In 1806 he was impeached for malversation and acquitted but judged guilty of negligence during his tenure of office as Treasurer for the Navy. He never held office again and died 1811. Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1,3 ff.1.

2. William Pitt, the Younger, Prime Minister of England.

3. William Wyndham Baron Grenville.

in consequence of such order, would be restored to the Republic at the conclusion of a general peace, by which her independence and constitution should be secured."¹

When the Prince agreed to issue the requested order on condition of an "assurance, in the most authentic form possible, that everything that is ceded will be resorted to the State,"² the British undertook, on the 2nd February, 1795, "in the most formal manner possible, that any vessel, fort or place whatever which will place itself under His (Britannic Majesty's) protection as a result of the said order will be held in trust and restored to the Republic of the United Provinces as soon as His Majesty and the Republic will be at peace with France and the independence of the Republic and its lawful constitution, guaranteed by His Majesty in 1788, will be assured."³

Consequently, William V issued the now well known instructions to J.G. van Angelbeek, Governor of Ceylon, in what is known as the Kew letter:⁴

"Noble and Most Honoured Confidant, Our Trusty and Well Beloved,

We have deemed it necessary to address you this communication and to require you to admit into Trincomalee and elsewhere in the Colony under your rule the troops of His Majesty the King of Great Britain which will proceed there, and also to admit into the harbours or such other places where ships might safely anchor the warships, frigates and armed vessels which will be despatched there on behalf of His Majesty of Great Britain; and you are also to consider them as troops

1. Ceylon Literary Register (3rd Series) 1. iii, 110 ff. Letter of 1st February 1795 from Grenville to Duke of York, reproduced from N. G. Nypel's "Hoe Nederland Ceilon Verloor." See also de Silva Dr. Colvin R. "Ceylon under the British occupation 1795-1833" - 18.

2. Ibid. Prince Willam of Orange to A. W. C. Hagel, 2nd February 1795.

3. Ibid. The British Undertaking, 2nd February 1795

4. Antonisz, R. G. "Report on the Dutch Records, 1907." - 138. Early in 1795 William V in exile in England lived in Kew Palace; Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1-112.

and ships belonging to a power that is in friendship and alliance with their High Mightinesses, and who come to prevent the Colony from being invaded by the French.

Wherefore, Noble, etc.....we commit you to God's holy protection and remain.

Your well-wishing friend,
W.PR.V. ORANGE."

Kew, 7th February, 1795.

The letter did not specify in what capacity the British Forces were "to be admitted" nor was the duration of their stay clarified. Since circumstances did not facilitate precision as no one could tell when and where the French would attack this vagueness was perhaps natural or even intentional.

The Prince's letter was forwarded with the following covering instructions¹ to the Governor General and Council at Bengal, and the Governors and Councils at Fort St. George and Bombay:

"As the conquests laterly made by the French in Holland, will of consequence be followed by an endeavour to secure the distant possessions of that Republic, particularly those in the Eastern seas, His Majesty has judged it expedient, in concert with the Prince Stadtholder (who has retired to this country) to take such measures as appear to him to be best calculated for frustrating that design, the effects of which, in the event of his succeeding, would be highly prejudicial to the Company's interests.

With a view to this object, the Stadtholder, under the authority vested in him, has given orders to the several Governors and Commanding Officers of the different Settlements in the Indian Seas, to admit the Ships and Troops belonging to His Majesty, in order to protect such Settlements against the Enemy, and to hold possession of them, under the condition of their

1. Secret Despatches to Bengal and Circular Despatches (India Office) 1, (Boards Recnlds) - 31.

being restored to the Republic at the conclusion of a General Peace by which its Independence and its Constitution, as guaranteed in 1787, shall be maintained and secured.

In consequence of this determination, Orders will be sent by His Majesty, to the Commanders of His forces by Sea and Land in India, to co-operate with you in carrying into execution such measures as you may determine on, for the purpose abovementioned. And we authorize and direct you, if it should appear consistent with the safety of our Possessions, to detach, on any expedition, any part of the European Troops and Sepoys that can be spared, and to advance such sums of money as may be necessary for such expedition ..

HENRY DUNDAS,
WILLIAM PITT,
GRENVILLE."

9th February, 1795.

It is clear from the Stadtholder's letter that the British were to be in temporary occupation of the Dutch Colonies which were to be held in trust until the conclusion of a satisfactory peace. The Kew letter, however, was used by the British as an authority to mount a comprehensive operation to gain control of the Dutch possession in Asia and at the Cape. "The occupation of the Dutch possessions in Ceylon was the most eventful of these operations undertaken on the basis of the Kew letter."¹

In consequence, the Madras Government, on 7th July, 1795, decided to send a force to Trincomalee under the command of Colonel James Stuart "for the purpose of securing that important place against any attempt on the part of the French."²

A proclamation was made calling upon the Dutch Colonies to place themselves under British protection on the same terms and subject to the same threats as was subsequently offered to Ceylon.³ The British forces left Madras on 20th July, 1795, and

1. History of Ceylon (University of Ceylon) edited by Professor K. M. de Silva, Vol: 3, 8.

2. Madras Military and Political Proceedings 259, XLV, 1951, Hobart to Shore 7th July, 1795.

3. R.A.S.J., C.B. X-394.

arrived at Back Bay, Trincomalee. on the 1st of August.¹ Major Patrick Agnew was despatched from Madras by Lord Hobart, Governor of Madras, with a letter to van Angelbeek dated 7th July, 1795, embodying the British proposals as outlined in the proclamation of the 7th July and enclosing the Stadtholders letter.

This letter² described the political situation and demanded, in effect, that van Angelbeek should permit a temporary British occupation in Ceylon which was to be held in trust for the Dutch until the conclusion of the peace "by which its Independence and its Constitution as guaranteed in 1787 shall be maintained and secured." Lord Hobart undertook to respect the laws and customs of the country and held out that no fresh taxes and duties would be imposed, provided proper provision was made for the defraying of expenses of internal government. Trade would be free and the inhabitants would be permitted to trade with the British territories on a most favoured nation footing. "The Officers of the Dutch Government would be left in full and free possession of their employment until His Majesty's pleasure shall be known;"³ while the European troops in the Dutch service would be taken into British pay on the terms on which they were already employed. Should the Colony, however, offer any resistance to these proposals

1. The forces entrusted to Stuart consisted of:

The 72nd Regiment-748 men, commanded by Major Fraser
71st & 73rd Regiment-851 men, commanded by Major Dalrymple
Royal Artillery-42 men commanded by Captain Lt. Dixon
2 Companies of Madras Artillery, commanded by Captain Carlisle
The 1st Battalion Native Infantry-14 Europeans & 643 Sepoys commanded by Captain Campbell.
Pioneer Corps-221 men, commanded by Lt. Dowse; 6 Companies of Gun Lascars and 12 Staff Officers. (Vide Madras Military & Political Proceedings. Range 253, XLV, 1945, ff: See de Silva, Dr. Colvin R. "Ceylon Under the British Occupation 1795-1833" Vol: 1, 21.)

2. R.A.S.J., C.B.X., 392 ff; See also Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1, 205.

3. Britain did not honour this undertaking. The view of the British Government by 1800 was that "the Dutch inhabitants are inimical, being almost to a man ruined by our occupation of Ceylon" and that "their personal as well as the national connection between them and the mother country and the remaining Dutch Settlements.....require their exclusion from Government employments" so as to render us independent of the Dutch and to destroy their influence in the country": "The Douglas Papers" edited by Fr. S. G. Perera, S.J., pp. 16, 40 and 137. Douglas, an Under-Secretary based his reports to Dundas in September 1800 on the despatches of Frederick North Governor of Ceylon, 1798.
See also Grenier G. V. - "Burgher unemployment in early British Times", D.B.U.J., Vol: LVII, Nos. 1 to 4, 47.

the British would take possession of it by force. In view of the critical situation of public affairs "fraught with distress and ruin" it was to be explicitly understood that "the smallest delay under existing circumstances will be considered a refusal of the offered protection." Agnew delivered this letter at Colombo on the 25th July.

In the meanwhile, the Political Council over which van Angelbeek presided in Colombo, on the 12th July, 1795, decided to instruct their settlements in Jaffna and Tuticorin, where the garrisons were weak, that if the forces of the enemy were too strong for the prospect of a successful resistance, they were to endeavour to stipulate, by capitulation, for a free withdrawal to Colombo with the Company's effects, for the free right to private property, and chiefly for the bringing away of the Company's records. In case the Company effects were withheld a complete inventory was to be made. On the other hand, Colombo, Galle and Trincomalee being "Strong and defensible fortresses," although unprepared for a protracted siege, were instructed to make the additional declaration "that we shall give over this fortress to no one but shall defend it to the best of our ability." As a further precaution the two Companies of Malays stationed at Mannar and in the Vanni were ordered to Colombo and Trincomalee respectively.¹

The arrival of Agnew at Colombo necessitated a reconsideration of these decisions. The flight of the Stadtholder confirmed the news of the French usurpation of the Dutch Republic. The Dutch Company's activities were reported to be dissolved and at a standstill, so that neither the usual ships nor the necessary money, recruits and supplies would be received that year. The coffers and magazines were empty and the medical supplies were exhausted. The supply of rice was sufficient for only five or six months. Relief could only be looked for from the British. On the other hand, the refusal to comply with Hobart's demands would involve not only the loss of all hopes of aid from the British but also cut off all other sources of rice supply on the coast. As Jaffna and Mannar were weakly defended they would eventually fall quickly to the British and in that event the revenue would receive a serious blow as Jaffna, in particular, was a very profitable Commandment and communication with India would be cut off.

1. Ceylon Antiquary published by Turner, L.J.B., (1915-24) Vol: III, ii, 99 ff., Resolutions of the Council of Ceylon, 12th July, 1795.

The Political Council, therefore, on the 26th July adopted the Governor's suggestion "to devise a middle course," which would on the one hand avert all consequences of a flat refusal and on the other hand ensure "that we or our Superiors should remain absolutely masters of our possessions." The Dutch had no illusions of the sanctity of British assurances and it was suspected that the real design of the British was to take permanent possession of the Colony. The Council accordingly determined that the proffered protection should be "totally declined" as a "detestable and abject" course of action and that no British troops should be admitted into the Company's territory except only 800 auxiliaries who should be in the Company's services and pay.¹

These decisions were embodied in a letter dated 27th July and despatched through Agnew to Rainier² and Stuart. Van Angelbeek declared the faithful adherence of the Government of Ceylon "to the old and lawful Government system of the Republic of the Seven Provinces, with the States General and the Hereditary Stadtholder at the head as guaranteed in the year 1787; and that we still acknowledge the English as our close and intimate allies."

Van Angelbeek suggested the drafting of 800 British troops into Ceylon; 300 to be stationed at Fort Ostenburg, Trincomalee; 300 at the Forts of Negombo and Kalutara, and 200 in the Fort of Matara. "But thereby we ought to inform you, that we are destitute of money and therefore unable to pay these troops; and thus we beg that your Government will charge itself with the payment, to be indemnified hereafter by our Superiors." Van Angelbeek's reply respecting Lord Hobart's proposition to put the Dutch Settlements under protection of His Britannic Majesty was: "I am obliged to answer that we are in duty and by oath bound to keep them for our Superiors, and not resign the least part of them." By this reply van Angelbeek hoped to preserve the independence of the Colony without rousing British hostility.

1. Ceylon Antiquary Vol: III, ii, 103, ff, Council Proceedings of 25th & 26th July, 1795; Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: I-208.

2. Commodore Peter Rainier, who in July/August, 1795, transported the British forces in 6 ships to Ceylon waters and who considered the possession of Trincomalee so important that he had determined to proceedither himself Madras Military and Political Proceedings, Range 253, Vol: XLVI, 2333 ff, Brathwaite's Instructions to Stuart, 29th July, 1795.

Agnew arrived in Trincomalee on the 1st August to deliver van Angelbeek's orders and arrangements as to when troops were to disembark. These orders delivered to Major Fornbauer, Dutch Commandant of Trincomalee, were to admit 300 British troops to Fort Ostenburg, to supply them with cannon and stores and to deliberate all necessary measures with Rainier and Stuart. Secret instructions as to how the British were to be received were also included.²

Fornbauer, however, asked for time till the next morning, when his emissaries Captains Renaud and Hoffmann informed the British Commanders that he was ready to observe the duties of the Commandant of any allied power. However, Fornbauer, had received news of warlike preparations by the British against Ceylon particularly at Negapatam. He requested Commodore Rainier to allay his fears by a written denial giving his word of honour in writing³ that he had at the moment no orders authorising him to make war. Fornbauer stated: "I pray him to permit me to refuse entry into the Inner Bay to any English vessels of war until I have definite orders from the General Government of the Island and, that till then I can enter into no negotiations on the subject of his letter delivered to me by Major Agnew."

Rainier and Stuart replied in a letter dated 2nd August, 1795,⁴ that the British came as ancient friends and firm allies of the Republic of the United Provinces, to protect with the troops of His Britannic Majesty the possessions of his allies and to prevent their falling into the hands of their common enemy, under the express condition that as soon as the Constitution of the Republic of the United Provisions is re-established as guaranteed in the year 1787, the places occupied by His Majesty's troops shall be restored." If peaceful permission failed to elicit acceptance of the proffered protection their instructions were to employ force "to compel obedience"

1. Jan George Fornbauer, Major of the Fusiliers, Commandant of Trincomalee and Landregent. He was an engineer who wrote a report on the Kantalai tank on 30. 12. 1793. He died in Ceylon in 1791. CLR I, 5:8; 14:16; Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol1-209.

2. Ceylon Antiquary Vol: III, ii, 109, Council Proceedings.

3. Ceylon Literary Register, (1931) Vol: I, 253, letter from Fornbauer to Rainier 1st August, 1795.

4. Madras Military & Political Proceedings, Range 253, XLVI, 2685, ff: J.R.A.S., CBX., 397 ff.

Fornbauer's next note dated 2nd August, 1795,¹ while agreeing to permit the entry of the vessels into Trincomalee harbour in view of the assurance that the British had no intention of invading Ceylon at the same time declined to admit the 300 troops to Fort Ostenburg as the orders had been signed by van Angelbeek alone; while the Constitution of the Company required that the signatures of at least the majority of the Council were necessary "even on petty affairs of administration." Fornbauer stated that he would be liable to the penalties of high treason if he was not able to justify the admission of 300 British troops into the Fort. He, therefore, asked for a delay until the matter could be rectified.

The British commanders now felt obliged to revert to their former instructions and formally demanded the delivery of the Forts under Fornbauer's command "to be protected by them against the attacks of the French; or his refusal will be considered as a declaration of Hostility."²

On the receipt of Fornbauer's protest³ the British landed unopposed on the 2nd August, 4 miles North of Trincomalee and made preparations to attack.

Meanwhile, there were new developments in Colombo. Van Angelbeek had received on the 28th July⁴ certain London newspapers from Agnew up to the 13th March. The news of the British landing at Trincomalee was considered at the meeting of the Council of the 12th and 15th August.

At the meeting of the 12th August⁵ van Angelbeek reminded the Council that the decision of 26th July had been arrived at under the impression that the French had "usurped" the Government of the States-General. The London newspapers, however, gave a different version. "it would appear that our Republic has indeed been conquered by the French, and that the changes in the Government were effected with the consent of the majority of the people of Holland; that the calling together of the Assembly of Provisional Representatives of the people was the work of the

1. Ibid. Range 253, XLVI, 2383 ff. Ceylon Literary Register (1) 1931, Vol: I - 255

2. Ibid. Range 253, XLVI, 2698, ff; J.R.A.S., C.B.X., 309 ff.

3. R.A.S.J., C.B.X., 400.

4. Ceylon Antiquary Vol: II, ii, 109 ff. Secret Resolution, 3rd August, 1794.

5. Ibid. Secret Resolution, 12th August, 1795.

Deputies of the different cities of Holland; that the abolition of the old form of Government and the Stadtholderate was the work of this Assembly, and that the States General are now constituted as formerly, with only this difference, namely, that this Province shall be represented in the Assembly of their High Mightinesses by the Burghers Holm, Lestevenon and Lorcq." They had to consider anew, in relation to these facts, their earlier declaration of loyalty and alliance to the Statholderate and the Constitution guaranteed in 1787. "What should we do if French ships were to come and the French desired to be received as friends, and also brought with them orders from the new Assembly or Government of the Netherlands to that effect?..... Can we now with a clear conscience faithfully adhere to the old Government? Can we in face of orders from Holland to recognise the new regime, oppose them and take orders against the newly formed Republic and the Republic of the French Nation?"

At the adjourned meeting on the 15th August¹ it was resolved "that the Republic was the sovereign of her Colonies, and, accordingly, of this Government; moreover, that the Colonies were bound to accept whichever form of Government the Republic adopted and to obey the commands of their rulers." It was, therefore, decided to accept and obey orders of the Batavian Republic, but to adhere to the old Constitution until the receipt of legitimate orders; to break off all engagements with the British which might conflict with the orders of the new Republic; to instruct Major Fornbauer accordingly, annulling the decision to receive 300 British troops into Fort Ostenburg and to instruct him to defend Trincomalee to the utmost;² and to inform the Commanders of the British Expedition of the annulment of the demand for 800 auxiliaries.

Accordingly, in a letter dated 15th August³ van Angelbeek and the entire Council informed the British Commanders that "having received news that you have thought fit to invade the Company's territories with armed troops and to summon the Forts of Trincomalee, and Ostenburg" the resolution to

1. Ceylon Antiquary, Vol: III ff. Secret Resolution, 15th August 1795.

2. Ceylon Literary Register, (1931) Vol: I - 258-259.

3. R.A.S.J., C.B.X., 400; Madras Military & Political Proceedings, Range 253, XLVII, 2925 ff.

received 800 auxiliaries had been annulled and the Forts and establishments in Ceylon would be defended against everyone endeavouring to make themselves masters thereof.

This letter precipitated hostilities. Stuart attacked Trincomalee opening batteries on Fort Frederick on the 23rd August and effecting a breach by the 26th. Fort Frederick surrendered the garrisons consisting of two Companies of Europeans, Dutch (147 men), the 5th Company of the de Meuron Regiment (84 men), Two Companies of Wurtemburgers (136 men), three Companies of Malays (284 men), a Company of Sepoys (79 men), a detachment of Artillery (35 men) and three Staff Officers or 768 officers and men in all, of whom 89 were sick or wounded.¹

Fort Ostenburg surrendered on the 31st. The garrison consisted of 256 officers and men: 4 Staff officers, a Company each of Artillery (8 men), European Dutch (32 men) de Meuron Regiment (69 men) and Wurtemburgers (54 men) and two Companies of Malays etc., (89 men) - but a further 56 men had deserted during the 30th and 31st.

The Fort of Batticaloa surrendered to the British on the 18th September. Jaffna capitulated on the 28th September. On the 6th October Mannar surrendered. On the 13th November Kalpitiya surrendered. Thus the district of Batticaloa, Trincomalee, Vanni and Mannar were in British hands by the end of 1795.

In the meanwhile, a Scotsman Hugh Cleghorn, former Professor of Civil Law at St. Andrews University, Scotland, had offered his services to Dundas for facilitating the seizure of Ceylon by the British, by negotiating the transfer of the Swiss Regiment de Meuron, which formed the principal part of the garrison of Ceylon, from the Dutch to the British services. Cleghorn had earlier befriended Count de Meuron at Neuchatel. Dundas jumped at the offer and sent Cleghorn post-haste to Neuchatel to bring the matter to an immediate conclusion. Profiting by the troubles in Holland the British Government made use of the predicament of William V who was persuaded to write an order to Dutch Governors to receive British troops and warships. Armed with a copy of this

De Silva, Dr. Colvin R. "Ceylon Under the British Occupation 1795-1833" Vol: 1-32.

letter Cleghorn succeeded in effecting the capitulation of the Regiment on 30th March, 1795, and set sail for India with the proprietary Colonel of the Regiment, Count Charles Daniel de Meuron.¹

Hobart, Governor of Madras, who was not aware of the negotiations in Europe had already called upon van Angelbeek by his letter of 7th July, 1795, to hand over the Settlements to the British in virtue of the letter of the Stadtholder. Cleghorn arrived in India and communicated the news of the transfer of the Regiment to the Officer in Command, Captain Pierre Frederic de Meuron,² by letter concealed in a Dutch cheese, and a British Envoy was sent to effect the transfer. This settled the fate of the remaining Dutch Settlements in Ceylon. Since 1786 the de Meuron Regiment had five Companies in the garrison of Colombo, two in Trincomalee, one in Batavia and the rest in Galle and Kalutara.

Count de Meuron received a *douceur*³ of £ 5,000 from the British for transferring the services of the Regiment to the British. The expenses of his journey to India to supervise the transfer of his Regiment to the British and the expenses of his return trip were also paid by the British. He was

1. Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1-5, 303, In 1798 Cleghorn came out with Governor North as Colonial Secretary to the Government of Ceylon on £ 3000 a year, and was Commissioner of the Pearl Fishery, 1798. He could not pull on with North who suspended him in December 1799, and Cleghorn threw up his appointment and left Ceylon on 3rd February, 1800. "Heaven be praised," wrote North, "the Preston with Cleghorn has weighed anchor from this place." Cleghorn died in Scotland in 1834 and on his tombstone is indicated that he "was the Agent through whose instrumentality the Island of Ceylon was annexed to the British Empire." "The Douglas Papers" edited by Fr. S. G. Perera. S.J., -Ceylon Literary Register (1931). Vol: 1-12 ff. 1.
2. Brother of Count de Meuron. The Regiment had a distinguished record. It served at the Cape, helped Admiral Suffren to capture Trincomalee from the British in 1782, and served as marines in Suffren's fleet in his engagements with the British fleet under Sir Edward Hughes. It then fought against General Stuart at Cuddalore, 1783, and returned to the Cape for 5 years, 1783-1788. It served in Ceylon from 1788-1795 taking part in warfare against Kandy and in defence of Trincomalee and Ostenburg in August 1795, the 2 companies being the heaviest sufferers during the seige. As a part of the British Army it gained glory in the Mysore campaign, taking a prominent part in the storming of Seringapatam, 1799, under Colonel Wellesley, the future Duke of Wellington. In 1806 the Regiment was ordered to Europe and served at Gibraltar, Messina - 1808, Malta - 1812, and Canada - 1813-1816, where it was disbanded; Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1 - 105.
3. Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1 - 5, 303.

appointed a British Major General and his brother was appointed Brigadier General in the British Army and later became Commander-in-Chief and Military Governor of Ceylon until the arrival of Lord North.

After Hobart heard the dramatic news of the transfer of the de Meuron Regiment to the services of the British he once again dispatched his Ambassador Major Agnew on the 22nd September to Colombo so that a peaceful occupation of trust might be effected on the remaining Dutch territories. On the 9th October the Dutch Council decided, by 6 votes to 3, to reject the British proposals. The Governor himself adding his casting vote in favour of his decision. These resolutions were embodied in a letter of 13th October to Madras.¹

Colombo 13th October, 1795.

My Lord and Sirs,

We have had the honour to receive from Major Agnew your letter of the 22nd September last, and reply to it as follows:

Our answer to Lord Hobart's letter of the 7th July, which agreeable to his Lordship's desire was dispatched to the Commanding Officers of the British Naval and Land Forces before Trincomalee, contained all that his Serene Highness the Hereditary Stadtholder demanded from us, and the strongest reasons why we could not agree to the remaining demands of His Lordship which went much further.

Our Governor alone signed that letter, because Major Agnew insisted so much on having this dispatch immediately on account of the danger to which the Frigate was exposed in the bad monsoon, and, as part of the Members of Council lived without the Fort, hours would have been spent in getting it signed by them. Our Governor signed it without hesitation, as the draft had been approved by everyone of us, and as the Governors of Ceylon have always in matters of the greatest importance, given orders to the Subordinate Officers by letters signed alone by them.

Major Fornbauer should then without hesitation have complied with its contents, and we have therefore left the consequences of his refusal to his account.

We nevertheless expected, with much reason, that the Commanding Officers would have contented themselves with the Major's offer to ask additional orders and then to comply; in which case this unfortunat misunderstanding could have been adjusted within a few days.

But as they commenced public hostilities by invading our territory and summoning both our Forts, we were obliged by our letter of the 15th August to repeal our peaceable offer.

We will suppose for an instant that the misdemeanour of Major Fornbauer had given the Commanding Officers a right to commence hostilities. But with what reason can the conquest of Batticaloa, Jaffnapatam and Tuticorin, be justified, the Chiefs of those places having made liberal offers for the admittance of your troops? And what right or argument can you allege, My Lords and Sirs, except your superior force, to summon us to deliver our Establishments in the manner you have done by your letter of the 22nd September last?

Respecting the Capitulation, which the Count de Meuron has entered into with your Government for the Swiss Regiment, we declare he had no power to do it because he had consigned his Regiment permanently to us, as long as the Company might want it, as appears by the 25th Article¹ of the Capitulation of which a copy is annexed. He says in his letter to his brother² the Colonel Commandant that the Government with whom he capitulated is dissolved, and that therefore he had resolved to withdraw his Regiment from the Dutch Army. But the Government is not yet dissolved, as will appear

1. Article 25 reads: "The Capitulation will be permanent" as long as the Company needs the services of the regiment; Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: I - 63, ff. 1.
2. In the postscript of this letter the Count wrote: "You are Brigadier-General from this day. Keep the secret until my friend (Cleghorn) tells you." Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1-56. ff. 1.

at the conclusion of a General Peace in the Netherlands. In the meantime we are here the representatives of the same, and as such you acknowledge us by your letter of the 22nd September last.

But although we are deprived of that part of the Regiment which is here and which consists of 500 men, we are, however, not destitute of resources to defend what has been confided to us; and if we are at last crushed by a superior force, we will find sufficient consolation in the reflection that we have done all that could be expected from loyal officers, who prefer their honour and their duty to every other consideration.

We have the honour to be, with distinguished consideration,

My Lord and Sirs,

Your most obedient servants,

J. G. van Angelbeek	C. van Angelbeek ¹
D. C. Von Drieberg ²	J. Reintous ³
B. L. Van Zitter ⁴	A. Samlant ⁵
J. A. Vollenhove ⁶	D. D. Von Ranzow ⁷
A. Issendorp ⁸	T. G. Hofland ⁹

Colombo 13th October, 1795,
To the Right Hon'ble Lord Hobart,
Governor, and Council at Fort St. George.

1. Dr. Christiaan van Angelbeek, son of the Governor, Chief Administrator.
2. Diederich Carl von Drieberg, Colonel in Command, "infirm, not attached to the cause and since August has done no duty." - Cleghorn papers 225.
3. Johannes Reintous, Dissawa of Colombo.
4. Benedictus Lambertus van Zitter, Political Secretary.
5. Abraham Samlant, Trade Supervisor, son of Abraham Samlant, Commandant of Galle who died 3rd May, 1766, buried Dutch Church, Galle.
6. Dr. Johannes Adrianus Vollenhove, Fiscal.
7. Daniel Ditloff von Ranzow, Chief Warehouse Keeper, son of Count von Ranzow, born in Ceylon, afterwards "Commissioner of Government to the Assembly of Deacons," Colombo 1800, President Director of Orphan House, Returned to Batavia.
8. Assuerus Issendorp, Book-Keeper.
9. Thomas Gerrardus Hofland, Trade Supervisor, died 21st July 1815. Lewis, J. P. "Tombstones & Monuments" 390. Ceylon Literary Journal (1931) Vol: 1-64.

When Agnew informed van Angelbeek of the transfer of the de Meuron Regiment to the British Army van Angelbeek was completely taken by surprise and he tried to keep the de Meuron Regiment in Ceylon and even threatened to keep them prisoners during the siege. However, Agnew had informed van Angelbeek that if he attempted to disarm the de Meuron Regiment and keep them prisoners the British would bring the matter to instant issue in the Fort. Van Angelbeek was, therefore, compelled to consent to their leaving the garrison on no other terms than that they should not appear against it during the siege.¹ According to Agnew, subsequently on the 13th October, van Angelbeek, relented and thanking the de Meuron Regiment for their past services supplied ships for their transfer to India which the entire Regiment reached in November.

De la Thombe suggested that van Angelbeek did this because he was secretly planning to hand over the Dutch possessions in Ceylon to the British. Apart from owing the de Meuron Regiment arrears of pay that were now guaranteed by the British van Angelbeek may have been relieved to be rid of a Regiment whose proprietor had been secretly bribed by the British and whose loyalty to the Dutch had become suspect.

De la Thombe,² contradicting his earlier charge that there was only "a semblance of a defence," conveyed the impression of careful preparations against the coming of the British, and the Secret Resolutions of 14th February, 1796, mentioned a report of Captain Engineer Foenander to the same effect.³ The troops at Galle were withdrawn to Colombo to make up for the loss of the de Meuron Regiment; native levies were recruited and a militia of European and Topass inhabitants were also recruited but as Agnew observed⁴ although this added much to the number of the garrisons they added little to their strength and quality and the loss of the de Meuron Regiment deprived the Dutch of the most efficient part of their European Force leaving them destitute of officers of experience. Furthermore, Colonel de Meuron later supplied the British with a considerable amount of valuable information and intelligence about conditions

1. Cleghorn Papers 203-4; Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1-61.
2. R.A.S.J., C.B.X., 365 ff.
3. Ceylon Antiquary Vol: III, ii, 116.
4. Madras Military & Political Proceedings, 253, XLVIII-3960 ff. Agnew to Hobart 19th October, 1795.

in Ceylon, the strength of the garrisons and the layout of the Forts along with advice as to methods of attack which Stuart appears to have followed.¹

After the failure of Agnew's second mission the Madras Government on the 27th October decided to capture Colombo and was convinced that if it was attacked by a "respectable force conquest would be extremely easy."² Stuart was well reinforced with troops by the middle of January, 1796, consisting of 2236 Europeans and 4649 natives. Besides the Company of Artillery with two of lascars, the 77th, and the two native battalions were on the way from Bengal under Major Petrie to meet Stuart's force in Negombo.

Captain Barbut captured Chilaw on the 1st February and Negombo on the 3rd, which was found abandoned.³ The abandonment of Negombo was explained by the Dutch Resolutions of the 29th January.⁴ It was feared that the superior strength of the British Forces would cut it off from Colombo and the garrison was withdrawn to Colombo on 31st January. In the meanwhile Agnew had secretly explained to the Kandyan King that the British actions against the Dutch had been taken with a view to avert a civil war in the Dutch possessions and to prevent their capture by the French. He urged upon the Kandyan Monarch the dangers of French revolutionary ideology especially its antipathy to Monarchical Rule.

The British had, on 12th October, 1795, concluded a Preliminary Treaty of alliance and friendship with Kandy,⁵ as a result of which the Kandyans promised Stuart in November to aid

1. War Office Papers 1,362, contains a document of lengthy answers by him to a number of queries - Vide also Cleghorn Papers, 287. He was amply rewarded by the British who made him a Brigadier-General in the British Army and appointed him Commander-in-Chief and Military Governor of the Settlements in Ceylon till the arrival of Governor North on the 12th October 1798. To the Dutch community in Ceylon this was perhaps the unkindest cut of all. After North arrived he reverted to his post as Commander-in-Chief. "The Douglas Papers" edited by Fr. S. G. Perera, S.J. - Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1-6 ff. 1.

2. Madras Military & Political Proceedings, 253, XLVIII, 4048 ff. Hobart to Shore, 27th October, 1795.

3. Ibid 253, LVIII.

4. Ceylon Antiquary, Vol: III, ii, 113 ff.

5. Madras Military & Political Proceedings, 253 XLIX, 4086 ff. Andrews to Hobart, 13th October, 1795.

him with provisions both at Trincomalee and at Colombo.¹ Further, a letter from the General of the Kandyan Forces informed Stuart that he was proceeding towards Colombo with the promised provisions.² The Kandyans offered Barbut at Chilaw provisions and a force of 5000 men armed with matchlocks.

The Kandyans who were mobilising in the Seven, Four and Three Korales also threatened to cut off the Negombo garrison from Colombo. A sympathetic rising of the Sinhalese in the neighbouring Maritime districts which was anticipated contributed to the rescision by Resolution of the original intention to defend Negombo and it was decided to abandon all subordinate posts in view of the superiority of the enemy forces and to defend Colombo alone.

Negombo was to be the rendezvous for the British Forces setting out from Trincomalee, Rameswaram, Tuticorin and Mannar. Stuart had arrived there on the 4th February and on the following day he was joined by the Bengal reinforcements. He was also supported by a naval force consisting of 9 war-ships.³ The whole army arrived by the 6th evening, and on the 7th Major Petrie advanced with a detachment of the 77th Regiment to reconnoitre the Kelani river. Stuart, with the main army, joined him on the 8th and prepared to attack the enemy posts on the 12th. But they had been abandoned by the Dutch on the 10th after destroying their batteries from a fear that the enemy fleet might land their troops in their rear.⁴ There were also other factors that induced van Angelbeek to order the Dutch troops to withdraw to the Fort of Colombo. It was known that a large Sinhala army of about five thousand men was also advancing towards Colombo. Van Angelbeek was handicapped by not having warships to assist in the defence of Colombo against the British.

Stuart's army crossed the river on the 11th and encamped with its left on Wattala and its right on Mutwal. In the early morning of the 12th, Captain Barbut on the right was attacked by two companies of Malaya led by Lieutenant Colonel Raymond and Captain Legrevisse. The Dutch were repulsed with the loss

1. War Office Papers, 1, 362, Stuart to Dundas 10th November, 1795.

2. Ibid. Stuart to Dundas, 31st December, 1795.

3. War Office Papers 1, 362, Gardner to Dundas. 16th February, 1795.

4. Percival, 115; de la Thombe in R.A.S.J., C.B.X., 379.

of 2 men killed and 2 officers and 10 men wounded. Later the Dutch lost 40 killed and 60 wounded.¹ Raymond himself was so seriously wounded that he died soon afterwards.

No further fighting occurred and Captain Gardner who had anchored some 2 miles from the Fort on the 12th, landed the guns on the 14th. The Dutch withdrew into the Fort on the 13th, closed the gates and raised the drawbridge. The British forces occupied Mutwal, Korteboam, Wolvendaal and Hulftsdorp. The Kandyans, whose general had joined Stuart at Negombo, reached Wattala on the 12th. They crossed the river on the following day and took up a position on the left of the British army with their own left extending to the Governor's House at Grandpass which was to be the General's headquarters.²

On Sunday the 14th February the garrison was summoned through Major Agnew. Stuart and Gardner pointed out in a letter³ to the Governor and Council that British naval superiority precluded the possibility of any help arriving either from Europe or other Dutch possessions in Asia. They therefore demanded a surrender of the remaining Dutch settlements in Ceylon. The refusal to do so would be followed by opening fire with their batteries whereafter the option of capitulation would not be given and surrender would have to be "at discretion."

The letter was considered at a Council meeting the same afternoon.⁴ Van Angelbeek reminded his colleagues that the October Resolution of resistance had been made in the cherished hope that the necessary orders and help would soon be received from Holland and Batavia, in reliance on a widely current rumour that Tippu Sahib would create a diversion in India and that the French fleet would soon appear in Eastern waters. All these hopes and expectations failed. Van Angelbeek went on to describe their plight. The native chiefs had failed to supply the 800 volunteers they had promised. An attempt to attack the British advance had failed with the loss of 40 killed and 60 wounded; while 200 Chaliyas included in those forces had deserted. Of the four

1. Ceylon Antiquary, III, ii, 115 ff. Secret Resolution, 14th February, 1796.
2. Madras Military & Political Proceedings, 253, LVIII, 898 ff. Stuart to Hobart, 13th February, 1796; War Office Papers, 1, 362. Stuart to Dundas, 21st February, 1796 (which contains a map of the attack). Ceylon Literary Register (1931) Vol: 1, 492-498.
3. Ceylon Antiquary, III, ii, 115 ff.
4. Idem.

companies of armed Sinhalese and four companies of Moors, 260 of the former and half the latter had deserted and the remainder could not be trusted. Desertions had also occurred among the Malays and more than half the Moorish artillery had defaulted. The Colombo garrison had thus dwindled, with the exception of officers, to 584 European infantry, 772 Malays, 124 European artillery, 118 sailors and 19 artisans. All the coolies had fled and there was no copper money in the Government chest. In contrast, the British forces were estimated at 10,000 men and the fleet at three frigates, 13 three-masters and 5 smaller vessels. Van Angelbeek had consulted the opinion and advice of his staff officers on the prospect and probable result of resistance. With one exception they had all recommended surrender.¹ They advised that the fortress could not hold out for longer than 3 days and that the superior forces of the enemy left no chance of a successful defence and that a refusal to capitulate would only result in the destruction of the city and the slaughter of its inhabitants. Further, that as a surrender after resistance would have to be at discretion, neither the Republic nor the Company would, in that event, derive any benefit either for the present or until the restoration of the colony at a general peace.

It so happened that P. Sluysken, Governor of Surat, happened to be in Colombo during this critical time and he too advised van Angelbeek to capitulate on the same lines suggested by his staff officers.

In these circumstances, the Council unanimously resolved to propose an equitable capitulation and van Angelbeek was entrusted with the negotiations. Van Angelbeek submitted his proposals to Major Agnew. The draft of the Articles of Capitulation, together with Agnew's observations, were submitted to the Council on the 15th February and unanimously accepted.² The capitulation was signed by van Angelbeek and Agnew, and approved and confirmed by Stuart and Gardner on the same day. Colombo was occupied by the British on the morning of the 16th February 1796.³

1. Ceylon Antiquary, III, ii, 115 ff.
2. Ibid -118.
3. Madras Military & Political Proceedings, 253, LVIII-902 ff. Stuart to Hobart 16th February, 1796; War Office Papers 1, 362. Stuart to Dundas, 21st February, 1796.

The British found in the Dutch garrison 1310 Europeans and 1840 Malays, Moors and Sepoys.¹ The discrepancy between these figures and van Angelbeek's figures is probably because van Angelbeek had omitted untrustworthy troops, deserters and invalids. In the Capitulation were included the remaining Dutch Settlements in Ceylon. Troops were immediately despatched to occupy Kalutara, Galle and Matara. Captain Macquarrie of the 77th occupied Galle on the 23rd February. Lieutenant O'Reilly, with the 9th Battalion occupied Matara on the 24th February. The garrison of Galle which had been denuded for the defence of Colombo, consisted of European Infantry - 24 officers and men and 23 invalids; 18 European Artillery and 5 invalids; 32 seamen; 6 Malays and 14 invalids; a European Surgeon; 382 native officers and soldiers.

Percival's allegation that van Angelbeek had entered in to a "private treaty" of capitulation with the British and de la Thombe's charge of "treason alone" are untenable, as the Council was not only aware of but also approved the terms of capitulation. Furthermore, van Angelbeek had consulted his staff officers and Governor Sluysken before agreeing to the capitulation.

As Turner² points out the allegations of Percival and de la Thombe that the Dutch troops became so incensed with the "betrayal" that they attacked the Governor's House is again insubstantial. There is some support for Percival's and de la Thombe's allegations of connivance from Major Agnew who wrote that from his talks with van Angelbeek he had the impression that the Governor might surrender Colombo whenever a respectable English Force appears against it, but that van Angelbeek had to be assured of protection from without as he was unable to counteract the opposition of the majority of his Council.³ However, this observation is not borne out by the Council proceedings.

On the other hand, there appears to have been some truth in the allegation of indiscipline and that there were many supporters of the Jacobin Party in the Dutch Settlement. Colonel de Meuron who was intimately connected with the last days of the Dutch

rule in Ceylon reported that the garrison was "divided into violent factions" and he represented the Jacobin Party to be "numerous" observing that if they aimed at the Government they might put van Angelbeek to death and, in that event, from despair defend the place to the last, "But this is not very probable; as all the Malay troops are entirely devoted to the person of the Governor."¹ This statement throws further doubt on Percival's account that the Malays joined in the attack on the Governor's House.

The suggestion of incipient indiscipline is supported by the fact that a Secret Resolution² of the 10th February, 1796, appointed a Military tribunal to deal with misdemeanours of the native troops in Colombo and also arranged for the constitution of a similar tribunal to try the European military "should it happen that the National Regiment and the Wurtembergers were implicated in one and the same offence."

The reasons for the transfer of the de Meuron Regiment, the failure to fire on British ships and the inactivity of the Dutch garrison, and failure to defend Negombo have been stated. The wider reasons given in the Secret Resolutions have adequately accounted for the surrender. Trapped by the superior armed forces of the British Army and Navy as well as by a large Sinhala Army there was little else van Angelbeek could do.

The capture of the Dutch Settlements in Ceylon by the British Forces was mainly the work both of the British Cabinet and the East India Company. There were inconclusive negotiations at Paris and Lille in 1796-97 at which the British contrived to obtain the acquiescence of the Dutch in accepting the permanent transfer of their territories in Ceylon to the British. The Dutch East India Company and the Batavian Republic could not be persuaded to agree.³ Dundas was determined at the retention of Ceylon and he succeeded in convincing Pitt to the same point of view. Subsequently, the transformation and very great improvement of the British position in India had a curious effect on Dundas. He came to believe that British power in India was secure enough to rely on naval supremacy

1. W.O. Papers 1-362, Stuart to Dundas, 21st February, 1796.
2. Turner L.B.J., "Collected papers on the History of the Maritime Provinces of Ceylon, 1793-1805."
3. Cleggoff Papers 214.

1. Ibid - 224
2. Ceylon Antiquary, III, ii, 115.
3. Mendis, V. L. B. "The Advent of the British to Ceylon, 1762-1803" 169-186

to meet any future threat from the French should it ever emerge. "The determination to keep the maritime regions of Ceylon as a Crown Colony weakened considerably. What Dundas wanted was consolidation, not expansion, of British power, and Wellesley's initiatives and ambitions came to be viewed by Dundas as an irresponsible and expensive overextension of reserves."¹

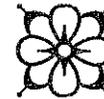
The former Dutch possessions in Ceylon were finally ceded to the British at the Peace of Amiens on the 25th March, 1802. The Amiens settlement merely ratified the preliminary peace concluded at London on 1st October, 1801. Dundas opposed the treaty and resigned office. Thus the retention of British control over the maritime regions of Ceylon at the peace of Amiens owed more to Pitt and Lord Grenville, the Foreign Secretary, than to Dundas.

Pitt² said, in November 1801, in the House of Commons of this acquisition that it was: "to us the most valuable colonial possession on the globe, as giving to our Indian Empire a security which it had not enjoyed from its first establishment." The security depended particularly on Trincomalee. "The finest and most advantageous Bay in the whole of India..... the equal of which is hardly known, in which a whole fleet may safely ride and remain in tranquillity."³ Admiral Nelson regarded it as the best harbour in the world. Governor Maitland later called it: "the real key by possession of which alone you can hold the naval superiority of India. Its mere geographical position if looked at nearly carries perfect conviction on this head along with it. But when you couple with its situation the periodical winds that blow in this country, when we reflect that no vessel can sail from the one side of the Peninsula of India to the other, without coming nearly in sight

1. Brynne, E. "The Marquess Wellesley and Ceylon, 1798-1803: A Plan for Imperial Consolidation." *C. J. H. S. S.* 111 (2) pp. 1-13.
- Adler, C. J. "Britain and the Defence of India: The origins of the Problem, 1798-1815. *Journal of Asian History* Vol: 1 (1) 1972. See also "A History of Sri Lanka" by Prof. K. M. de Silva (London, C. Hurst & Co and Delhi, Oxford University Press) pp. 185-6.
2. Annual Register, 1802 - 31.
3. Turner, "Collected Papers on the History of the Maritime Provinces of Ceylon" - 38.

of it, not a doubt can remain in the mind of any considerate man that it is the sole point in India that can enable you to enjoy the full benefit you ought to derive from your Naval power in this Country."¹

Thus in these candid observations the British revealed, after the capture of Ceylon, their predominant thesis for the invasion and capture of the Dutch Settlements in Ceylon.



1. Colonial Office Papers, 54 - 22. Maitland to Windham, 20th September, 1806.

**SUMMARIES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE SECRET WAR
COMMITTEE OF THE DUTCH POLITICAL COUNCIL OF
CEYLON DURING THE WAR WITH KANDY 1762 — 1766**

(Continued from Vol. LVI — LVIII DBUJ)

INTRODUCTION

BY

S. A. W. MOTTAU (Retired Asst. Archivist)

THE Minutes of the "Secret Committee" of the Dutch Political Council of Ceylon contain a complete record of the secret discussions which guided the policy and plans adopted by the Dutch in the later stages of their campaigns during the War against the Kingdom of Kandy from 1762 to 1766, and the prolonged peace talks which culminated in the Treaty of 14th February 1766 (1)

A treatise on this War, chiefly based on the documents in the Rijks-Archief at the Hague, has been published in Dutch as a thesis by W. Zwier under the title "Het verdrag van 1766 tusschen de O. I. Compagnie en den vorst van Kandi".

The wealth of detailed information on this subject contained in the series of "Secret Minutes" in the Dutch records in the Ceylon Government Archives was not, however, made available to the public in English translations until very recently, when the contents of one volume of the proceedings of the Dutch Secret Council dealing with the events leading to the War and the earlier stages of it, covering the period January to November 1762, were published in the Dutch, with an English translation of the same, by Mr. J. H. O. Paulusz, retired Government Archivist, in August 1954.

Since then, English translations of the five subsequent volumes(2) of the Dutch text, containing the discussions of the "Secret Committee (a Privy Council specially appointed to deal with the War against Kandy) (s) were, at the instance of Government, undertaken by Mr. E. Reimers retired Government Archivist; and the work on four of these has already been completed, covering the proceedings at the Sessions of the 'Secret Committee' from 5th October 1762 to the 20th of December, 1765,

1. Copies of this Treaty in Dutch are filed in several volumes of the Dutch records in the Ceylon Government Archives. (Nos. 3344, 2444, 2448 ect) An English translation appears in the 'Orientalist', Vol 3., page 115
2. Ceylon Government Archives, Dutch records, Nos. 4864-4868.

These translations, with the Dutch text in typescript, were deposited by the translator at the Government Archives monthly as they were prepared by him, with a view to their publication as each volume was completed. Four of the five volumes were ready for the Press since 1954. For some unknown reason, however, the work of publishing them was never undertaken, and the useful work done by Mr. Reimers in this connection has not yet seen the light of day, and has lain in the repositories of the Archives, as it were, "hidden under a bushel".

Having worked on these records recently since my retirement from the public service, I find that these translations are most useful for a detailed study of the delicate and intricate circumstances connected with the strategy and policy adopted by the Dutch in the conduct of their campaigns during the war. The translations, at least, are fully worth the trouble of publishing *in toto* Owing to the need for economy in printing, however I have endeavoured to condense them in the form of brief summaries of the proceedings of the Dutch War Council, setting out the main trends of the mind of the Dutch Administrators and the motives underlying their plans and actions during the progress of the War. Translations of the more interesting and important phases of the discussions have, however, been quoted in full, in order to convey more fully the precise motives and principles followed by the Dutch Administrators in their relations with the Kandyan monarch and the dignitaries of his Court and his subjects.

I am sure that if Mr. Reimers were alive today it would have afforded some measure of satisfaction to him as author of these translations to find that his work has been made available to the public even in this abridged form.

FURTHER EXPLANATORY NOTE BY THE EDITOR

The dominion which Holland had acquired over coastal Ceylon proved to be an inheritance of ill-will. Rajasinha, their Kandyan ally had, in his eagerness to get rid of the Portuguese, promised more than he could perform. Holland took advantage of it. Whereas the Kandyan King contended that he had been swindled out of his territory, the Hollanders and: "Meet the charges of the war and we will evacuate the forts when you please". It may well be that van Diemen, who wrote as much to the king on the 26th of September 1640, would not have been so free in his offers had he not been certain the king could not meet their claims!

The Dutch showed no lust for further conquest after the expulsion of the Portuguese. Their military policy was purely precautionary and defensive, and the Supreme Government at Batavia all along urged the maintenance of peace with the Kandyan monarch—at all costs. In 1761 the strained relations between the Dutch in Ceylon and the Kandyan King led to open war. The aggressive policy of the Dutch Governor, Baron van Eck, who arrived in Colombo on November 11th 1762, culminated in an invasion of Kandy.

The expeditionary force had been mustered at Negombo. Van Eck left Colombo on January 13th, 1765, took command of the force, moved to Kurunegala, and proceeding thence via the Galagedera Pass, reached Katugastota on February the 16th, Kandy was occupied and the Royal Palace looted on the 19th, the king of Kandy having retreated to his hill-strongholds off Hanguranketa. On March the 4th, van Eck left Kandy taking with him some booty. He reached Colombo in six days. In the minutes of the Secret Council, 1764 (March 23rd) he is shown to be "absent through sickness". According to his tombstone in the Wolvendaal Church he died nine days later on the 1st of April.

The primitive raids and encounters between the Dutch and Sinhalese forces which led finally to open warfare and culminated in the peace Treaty of 1766, form the main theme of the translated minutes. The early British attempts to get a foot-hold in the country are also occasionally referred to.

1. The following quotation from Mr. J. H. O. Paulusz's introduction to his work describes the arduous functions of the 'Secret War Committee' of the Dutch and the wealth of the existing information contained in the record of their deliberations.

"These Privy Council records contain the essence of all that was said and decreed by members while they wrestled with hardest problems:—scandals in the administration; how far to lay impious hands on the feudal and caste systems; whether to hang rebel leaders or gag them, and give their followers a free pardon or a whiff of grape shot; what pairs of eyes and ears it would be profitable to use at Kandy and what animosities to whet; whether to brandish the olive-branch or the sword.

At these confidential meetings the despatches and advices which called for executive action were tabled and read out; the arguments for and against a suggested solution were marshalled and weighed; and the over-riding reasons which clinched the final decision were set out in detail. Thus, all the inner workings of the Government mind and the motives underlying its actions were clearly revealed. Not only can actual events be studied but also groundless fears and imminent contingencies which in practice failed to come to a head but yet governed daily action. Apart from setting down the political and military designs of the central authority, these minutes also embody reports from secret service agents and diplomatic envoys, tales of escaped prisoners, petitions from humble villagers and even parables by Sinhalese Dissavas, which gave vivid pictures of the habits and social life of the people."

**SUMMARY OF THE MINUTES OF THE SECRET COMMITTEE
OF THE DUTCH POLITICAL COUNCIL IN CEYLON**

1762 - 1766

343 **22nd December 1764**

This meeting is specially summoned to sign the letter to be sent to Batavia approved at the last meeting.

345 **26th December 1764**

The Governor tables a letter received from Mr. van Damast Limberger from Mergui in which he says "that the Roman Catholic Priest (Father Manuel). who had left this together with the said van Damast, since his arrival there on the 6th December last year had continually encouraged Damast with the hope that the said Prince together with his son would come here, and, in order to make this appear probable, had recourse to various false pretexts and deliberate falsehoods till he, perceiving that the said Damast began to be more and more suspicious had finally made his escape and gone over to a Portuguese Captain who happened to be there in a private ship, and again assumed the monk's cowl, that the said van Damast after first inquiring and discovering from the Siamese Governor and Viceroy of Tennasserim, through a certain Armenian who acted as intermediary between strangers and the Governor and Viceroy of Tennasserim, had learned that the Prince was at the last-named place but was kept under such strict surveillance that finding it was not possible to see, still less to speak to His Highness, he had decided to address the Viceroy himself with regard to his Commission and that this had the result that the latter had not only given him a favourable hearing but had also expressed his willingness to help to bring the matter to a favourable conclusion, and that he Damast at the advice of that Regent had addressed a letter supported by his recommendations to the Court of Siam regarding the object of his Commission and was now awaiting the result."

348 The Dissava Bauert reports that the Dissava of the Three & Four Korales had informed him verbally "that the Ministers could not send Ambassadors to Sitawaka as that was something new and some guile lurked behind it, but that they still abided by their proposal to send Ambassadors to Colombo".

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It is thereupon resolved that "although the attitude of the Court again showed its unwillingness to conclude peace according to our intentions, and its specious attempts in every way to keep us preoccupied or to relax our attention from our preparations for war, and we might very well accordingly be sure in advance that this Embassy will conclude without any result being obtained thereby: however, in order to give the King and his Ministers full measure in every respect and to deprive them of all excuses for their deceitful practices, it was decided that their Ambassadors could every well be received here and their object demonstrated", and a reply is sent to the Dissava of the Three & Four Korales accordingly.

350 And it is further resolved that the Hon. Lieut-Colonel Feber and the said Dissava should leave as soon as possible for the army in order to lose no time in making the final preparations for the campaign and to be prepared, in the absence of a treaty, to attack the enemy with vigour as soon as the roads might permit and to forec a peace by might of arms, and; in the meantime, also to keep our eyes fixed on the hitherto uncertain outcome of this important Commission of van Damast, the success of which (May God grant it) would be of the utmost importance to the Company",

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352 **30th December 1764**

The Governor informs the meeting that "he had had the movements of the Kandyan Army in the Seven Korales under the superior command of the Adigar followed up by trustworthy natives and that, at the beginning of this month, he had received information from various spies that it was posted beside the mountains of Ettamby in a formidable entrenchment of batteries which were secured on both sides by breastworks, and that the Commander of the army had assured the King that he would maintain himself in the said stronghold or fight to the death"; and measures are taken to counter any reported attacks by the Kandyans against Chilaw.

355 The Governor tables his correspondence with Major Bodenschatz of Chilaw, and it is decided "to attack the enemy in five or six days' time, and accordingly before the departure of His Excellency, from the direction of Chilaw, by the said Bodenschatz, and simultaneously from Gonawile from two or three directions by as many detachments as may be considered necessary to

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fall on them from all sides, and to instruct the Hon. Lieut-Colonel Feber, who will leave this on the day after tomorrow for the main force, and the Dissava Bauert who is already there, to fix with the said Bodenschatz by letter the exact time for the attack and accordingly to carry it out simultaneously from all directions”.

- 357 The Governor informs the meeting that “after repeated examination of Moors and Sinhalese who were acquainted with the locality, he had discovered among other things, regarding the approaches to Kandia, that an advance was possible as far as Naroepe, a place situated above Kornagalle in the route of march of the main force, and indeed to Weewede, through the Hapitigam Korale via Allauw along the limits of the Four Korales, and thereafter through the mountains of Ketta, and after much thought had come to the conclusion that if a flying-column would advance about the same time as the main force advancing from Wisenawe to Kornagale, the retreat of the enemy, if, as was very likely, they would make a stand at Kornagale, could be cut off from the pass of Balane by the flying-column, also that His Excellency considered that the Senior Captain-Lieutenant Maurer with his Company of Marines and a few Companies of Malays should be employed for the purpose, but that its true object should be kept secret and that it should be given out that this detachment was intended only to observe the enemy in the Three and Four Korales and to cover the advance of the main force against them, and that it should remain encamped at Allauw till the main force was ready to cross the range of Gaalkandouwla Kandy: and after full deliberation, seeing that the line of march which that detachment would take, according to the statement of the natives, could bring it through the range East of Wisenawe to Wewedde aforesaid and that it would be in a position accordingly to command the pass of Ballane, it was decided fully to approve the proposal of His Excellency”.
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- 360 It is also unanimously decided to promise their liberty to all slaves who would accompany the expedition on condition that they faithfully performed all the duties imposed on them.
- 361 On the Governor’s proposal it is also decided to select the best from the condemned Eastern criminals to serve as coolies during the war, on payment of 1 rixdollar and 30 lbs: of rice per month.

1 **4th January 1765**

It is decided to accept the offer to supply lascarins made by the Korala of Kattoene. Mudaliyar Dassenaike is to proceed with the lascarins over the Walawe to occupy the district of Panua and the salt pans there.

- 2 Mudaliyar Ilangakoon is to inform the people in the King’s territory by olas distributed among them that the war was brought about by the present Malabar King and his Malabar Ministers, and that no harm will befall the true inhabitants of the country, and that the Company intends to replace the Malabar Nayakkar by one of their own people.

3 Tammoderum Pulle is to be warned against giving any support to the Kandyans. Mr. Keuneman is instructed to flatter him and keep him in good humour with inducements such as participation in the next Pearl Fishery at Arippe etc.

5 **11th January 1765**

Lieut. Jean Francois Grenier is paid 150 rixdollars as reimbursement of the expenses of his journey to Cochin and Cannanoor to recruit Sepoys.

- 6 The further letter to the Batavian Government is approved and signed. Certain arrangements regarding the expedition to the Walawe suggested by the Matara Dissava Mr. de Ly are turned down others approved.

7 **22nd January 1765**

- 13 The Matara Dissava reports the Korala of Cattoene had succeeded in taking effective possession of one of the Gravets of the Colonna Korale. The Dissava is authorised to give him all assistance at his discretion with the troops etc, at his disposal for further attacks on that side as his success could more or less contribute to make the Kandyan Court somewhat alarmed.
- 14 He is, however, warned against advancing too far into the King’s territory and against allowing any outrages to be committed against the inhabitant and against the desecration of any temples and sanctuaries, so that the subjects might realise the difference between the Company’s Government and that of the King’s “as that is always observed whenever conquests by force are brought under our rule and should all

the more be observed in circumstances such as these where a district which offers submission on its own initiative occupied by us", and that he should report everything for the Governor's approval.

16 13th March 1765

The Governor tabled the Secret instructions left by him for the guidance of Marten Rein, Commander Elect of Kandia, prior to his departure from Kandia, for the conduct of State and Military affairs, as follows:-

"Before my departure from here, it was my desire to leave behind these short instructions for you guidance in this difficult administration to which Your Honour has been appointed. You must now however expect an elaborate memorandum of instructions which they should be according to custom, but only my considerations regarding some important points. For although, in these circumstances, a similar document could be of greater service as most of those which have been drawn up at a change of administration in Governments which have functioned for many years, and so forth. Your Honour can however easily conceive that I have had neither the time nor the opportunity for preparing such an exhaustive document amid the din of weapons and such a continual perplexity of various duties which at such a time as the present are unavoidable and can better be imagined than described.

18 The reasons why we must be in occupation of the Capital of this Kingdom are known to Your Honour, and at the same time it is very important that our utmost efforts should be directed to attain their object, for this appears to be the only means for forcing the obstinate Court to come to terms.

The experience which your presence in this Island for many years and your various appointments both civil and military have given Your Honour, and still more, your, happy disposition for an ordered Government which I have always perceived in Your Honour, your character and your quickness of decision and action: all this makes me hope that Your Honour, before others, will attain this great object. In order to make the same possible and to facilitate it, I, since my presence here and even before that, have made every effort and particularly

provided for food and ammunition for the garrison, without a sufficient supply of which it goes without saying that our project would not be practicable, as from the latter half of the coming April the rainy season would make it impossible at least for four or five months, and, during the interval, it would be but with difficulty that important transports could be got through during the months of August and September.

Accordingly, I have had paddy and salt collected daily from the neighbouring villages and hamlets by as many people as I have been able to bring together. The supply of the former today is already more than 12,000 parras, which yield 6,000 of rice, and is daily increasing, and there is sufficient salt here for a year.

Oil, too, could be found here in plenty and could be pressed. Arrack, which is indispensable for the European military, it was not possible to bring here in sufficient quantity, but there are hopes of devising ways and means for installing stills both here and at Weewedde.

In addition to the supply of ammunition which is fairly considerable, I have according to a statement prepared by Captain Lieutenant of the Artillery de Ridder, sent for everything that is considered necessary for the garrison for a year. The list accompanies this.

For its transport, I have sent all the Kamodjes and 200 coolies to Gonawile, and on my return journey (from Kandia) I shall take all precautions for its safe conveyance; and, in addition, I have already written by circular to the Commanders of the field-posts that between both of them they should cover the transports with strong detachments.

If Your Honour receives this relief, I trust that Your Honour will be in a position, with a garrison which I would estimate at 1200 but may leave to you discretion, to be able to maintain yourself against the enemy till the rainy season and the conditions of the roads permitted the resumption of the operations with renewed vigour.

For this it is chiefly necessary that the collection of paddy should be carried out with all diligence, and as many cattle as possible driven together and secured at your field-posts, so that flesh could be served up to the European military at least

twice weekly; and in no lesser degree must the distilling of arrack be continued, for which I have already selected various Javanese and other natives who understand tapping for toddy and who already are actually busy.

A moderate use of vinegar is good for the health of the men, and that, too, can be made here in proportion to its demand, but with regard to the ammunition without which all those things would be useless or inadequate for the attainment of our object, nothing more can be done for increasing the supply by any expedient, and it should therefore be used with the greatest economy.

And as it is believed that the enemy perceiving that it is our intention to maintain ourselves here would make every effort to drive Your Honour away, I have also fully considered as to what would be the most effective measures to frustrate them without the expenditure of too much ammunition and without exhausting the troops too much: and I now state those views here below not so much as to bind Your Honour to adopt them as orders regarding so delicate, and, by reason of the numerous exceptions which can accompany them, difficult a matter to be previously determined, but which should always be left to the personal discretion of a Commander, and besides, which I can entrust with the greatest confidence to Your Honour, but only to draw your attention to them in order that they may be made such use of as Your Honour may consider necessary.

The King together with his Court had fled to the mountains of Oeva and first to Hanguranketta. I have had him followed to that place and the palace that he had there burned. Where he subsequently is, I have not yet been able to discover in spite of all inquiries, but his army, or a portion of it, is maintaining itself some hours' distance from this place in the direction of Oeva in the mountains. On the 2nd of this month, one of our commandos encountered them and a skirmish resulted whereby some of our natives were wounded. I therefore think that His Majesty should be left unmolested in his hiding-places, for it sometimes costs us more or less men and always much powder and ball, and is also in vain as he can always escape us by flight.

On the other hand, should the enemy approach your posts and attempt to lurk too close by, they must immediately be attacked and no time be given them to establish themselves there.

In this connection it would be a great advantage if Your Honour, as soon as the weather and roads are dry, patrolled the surrounding country at an hour or an hour-and-a-half's distance from this place, partly as officers and men could come to know the terrain where today or tomorrow they must manoeuvre, and partly because the enemy would all the more be prevented from venturing too close.

However, if in spite of all this it should happen that they came within range of Your Honour's cannon, I have had the principal approaches commanded by batteries and placed there the cannon, which were taken here, for so far as they had carriages, and as there are a supply of heavy and dry wood and iron in abundance, Your Honour could have carriages made for some pieces. There are sufficient gunners at hand here to man your artillery in ease of need. The outbuildings of the palace, both on the North side as well as behind it, which hinder the defence on that side and are conveniently situated for a surprise attack by the enemy, must be demolished and cleared away, all the more as without them ample accommodation can be found in this extensive palace for the men and the entire equipment.

The giving of the usual recommendations to be on your guard, to maintain good order and similar elementary instructions, which it is presumed are implanted in all servants, even those of average standing, and least of all should be given to a ruler, I would dispose of, all the more as I am convinced of Your Honour's prudence, skill and vigilance, and if Your Honour knows how to add thereby the art of maintaining the good spirits and courage of the men, I have no doubt whatever but that Your Honour will surmount all difficulties.

But if Your Honour through unforeseen and insurmountable adverse circumstances should be forced to leave Kandia before help could reach you from Colombo, I think that the retreat to Colombo should be attempted through the Four Korales,

and preferably by that route, as, as soon as the weather and roads will permit, in the months of August and September, I intend to attack the Four Korales and force a shorter route to Kandy

Therefore Your Honour must immediately send out a detachment of about 60 or 70 Europeans and 300 Javanese and Sepoys to reconnoitre closely the ordinary passage over the so famous mountains of Ballane and to give a circumstantial, clear and complete description of it in writing; and for that exploit I recommend Lieutenants van Hounold and Wolfhard, the latter of whom is also known to have a knowledge of engineering; and the latter has been distinguished for his military knowledge, is ingenious and bold in an undertaking and fortunate in its accomplishment.

- 24 I have already mentioned *en passant* that I leave it to Your Honour to decide what the strength of the garrison should be: I however recommend to Your Honour in a matter of such extreme importance, among the Europeans, the Jager Corps, whose officers by their good conduct and outstanding services deserve much praise and regard, the Marines who have distinguished themselves not a little by their particular bravery and whose Commander Captain-Lieutenant Maurer is an excellent soldier; among the Malays, the Companies of Mondoe And Aboe which have also excelled; but Your Honour should not conclude that the other officers and companies were in any way inferior: all of them deserve honourable testimony, but those mentioned above had found more favourable opportunity to display their merits in a better light.

After discussing everything further with Colonel Feber who for that purpose remains here for some time longer, His Honour must march to Colombo with the men whom Your Honour can spare. With him there, must also leave for Colombo Lieut-Engineer Kuhn who is now engaged in preparing a plan of the palace and the town, but if Your Honour considers that he could be of further service, he must stay behind, and the plan should be sent by the said Colonel.

In order to maintain communication, I shall for the present allow the field-posts to remain and discuss with Your Honour, whom I expect to meet on the way, as to whether it would

also be possible to continue the posts of Wewedde and Wisename during the rainy season, although I can see great difficulty in doing so, particularly as these posts could not very well be supplied with necessaries.

- 25 But whether this can be done or not, Your Honour must rely on yourself, and if it was highly important to have any messages sent to me and if there were no other means at hand, the last expedient should be for a resolute detachment to force its way through the Four Korales.

- But I trust that extreme measure will not arise, for besides the fact that I place implicit confidence in Your Honour, I leave you an army from whose integrity the greatest advantage could be expected with good reason on account of the excellent proofs given in this glorious expedition, and as at the head of the same there are two such staff-officers as Their Honours the senior Majors Frankena and Duflo, whom I have appointed to that rank owing to the continued illness of Majors Medeler and de Reder, and regarding whom, for Your Honour's information and peace of mind, I would add further that His Honour Frankena is a man of resolution and courage who at every opportunity has shown that he fully understands his metier,
- 26 his dispositions are well thought out and bear witness to his experience; and His Honour Duflo, till so far Captain of the French free-Company, has since the beginning of this war been with his Company in the field where the fighting was hottest: Mature, Puttlam and Gonawile testify to this, and the last place in particular which was captured last year and which has been of great advantage to us as it has accommodated us as the general magazine for the army. In this campaign, with a handful of men, he maintained himself against the whole might of the Kandyans. To his personal merits I have added a political motive for his promotion.

The capitulation of the above-mentioned Free-Company has expired; their nation has re-established itself on the Coast and the men request their discharge; but the services of this small troop have led me to expect similar advantages in the future, and by promoting him as Major, Lieut. de Grand as Captain-Lieutenant and Ensign Leuwendael as Lieutenant, the whole Company with a few exceptions is willing to come to terms and enter our regular service.

I have had the less objection in this case, the appointment of a Staff-Officer being absolutely necessary, to let my choice fall on him before others as he is of the Reformed Religion. Your Honour will discover in time that they have deserved their promotions, regarding which I have entered into communication with the Supreme Indian Government for its approval.

Your Honour should also know that after my arrival here, seeing that the Kandyans had broken off the peace negotiations, I had taken the opportunity of giving them a fresh inducement to renew them by a letter despatched to the Ministers of State, a copy of which accompanies this, and in order that Your Honour may know what the conditions are which I have proposed to them, I also add hereby a copy of the same.

- 27 Finally, I also leave for Your Honour's consideration a file of all the important papers relating to these dis-orders, which the Secretary, van Angelbeek, had collected for his use in this expedition. They include the pertinent matter relating to what was transacted at our meetings since the year 1761 between ourselves and our Superiors and ourselves and the Court.

Regarding the ordinary economy, Your Honour needs no instructions and I accordingly cut short this document, wishing Your Honour the blessing and aid of God Almighty, for the good of the Company and your own honour. (Signed at the Headquarters of Kandia. 4th March 1765). Read also the

- 28 minute of an old letter written by the Governor before his departure from Kandy to the collective Ministers of the Court as follows:

"The demands of the Company are known to Your Honours and were declared to the Lords Ambassadors, among others in my army which was posted over the Mahaveli Ganga.

The Lords Dissavas of Oeva and Oedapalata appeared two days later before me in my army and requested that I should waive from those demands in particular the claim for the Wannu of Nogoere because one of their most celebrated temples stood there, also of some other districts and the costs of the war. I had them told that as they had brought no credentials from the king, I could not treat with them, and as I saw that no credentials had been sent, I merely requested that the Lords

- 29 Ministers might remain at Kandia, when I would come to

- them and negotiate with them regarding the said claims. But up to now none of the Lords Ministers of the Court have appeared, so that I must conclude that a proper report had not been made to His Majesty, and I now furthermore have had this addressed to Your Honours, for the last time, amicably 29 to know whether Your Honours are in earnest to make peace or not. If yes! then I shall completely waive the claims for Nogoere and the costs of the war, which has also been told to the Dissava of Oedepalata, and I am also agreeable, out of love for peace, to waive something from the claims made before this to the inland provinces and amicably to treat regarding this with His Majesty's Ambassadors provided they brought with them signed credentials from His Majesty. Should Your Honour's take this into earnest consideration, it would be a good thing.

And as, on my return journey to Colombo, I have nominated and appointed the Right Honourable Marten Rein as Commander of Kandia in order to occupy with the army the Capital of the Kingdom during the war and to hold it in our power, Your Honours could address him at Kandia or me at Colombo. In the Dutch Army at the Capital Kandia, the 3rd of March 1765."

- 30 Recruitment by Governor van Teylingen of Coromandel of a French Corps under the command of Captain Hugel (mostly composed of Germans) and their arrival in Colomb. It is intended to use them for the next expedition in July / August.

32 27th March 1765

The Governor being ill and too weak to attend the meeting, the Secretary produces the following proposition in writing by the Governor dated 26th March 1765:—

- 33 "My illness prevents me from attending this meeting in person, and my present debility denies me the hope of having sufficient strength to do so in the next few days; and seeing the time is too short to delay any longer our deliberations regarding what should be done by the Company after the conquest of Kandia, in order to improve its state here and to place it on the most solid foundation: as I have an expedient at hand to give you which after the approval of the Supreme Government of Netherlands India would require some months to put into effect: so have I by these presents wished to inform Your Honours for your consideration of my reflections and suggestions.

The present government and constitution of the state of Kandia is as disordered and unstable as can be imagined. The King is a Prince of little ability, not so well versed in the affairs of the country and very indolent and reckless by nature, listens in all matters to his Malabar relations who surround him who are keen on the trade in Ceylon products; and as regards affairs of State is ruled by his Ministers, each of whom pursues his own interests; and should the Royal authority be in some way active, it is by misuse and in the hands of his Ministers who seek to displace one or another of their colleagues out of their posts and to appoint others in their place. It can easily be conceived that the Company has little hope of entering into a lasting peace with such a weak and vacillating Government, which, although the King himself heartily desires it, he has not sufficient power to conclude against the wishes of one or another of his Ministers; also even if peace might be concluded, its maintenance would depend more on the caprice and pleasure of one or another of his Ministers than on the King himself, because his Malabar following and his Ministers would oppose a peace where by the former would be deprived of any hope of participating in the Ceylon trade, and the latter of the Provinces under their authority which they would have to resign to the Company.

I am therefore of opinion that it would be to the best interests of the Company if the King's Government in this Island could entirely be overthrown, or if the present Malabar King could be replaced by another who was not hampered by a following of such harmful and mercenary relations and at the same time know how to restrain his ministers, and with whom a lasting peace could be concluded.

It is possible to carry both propositions into effect now that we have occupied Kandia.

For the former, the war should be continued with vigour and in the coming months of August and September the Four Korales or some other parts of the low-country occupied, and when the dry season again comes that we should go in pursuit of the King into his hiding-places, for which an expedition from Batticaloa over Bintenne would be very expeditious; but in order to carry this out with energy, we should now obtain two battalions of Malays from Batavia as early as

possible and raise an additional 1000 coolies in Coromandel. The latter is to make still another attempt to place the said Prince of Siam on the throne. The fatal invasion of the Peguanese had this time presented it.

We should accordingly send to invite him here, and to send the Commissioner of the Arecanut Department, Willem van Damast Limberger, who having once been employed in this affair has a knowledge of all the necessary qualifications, together with the Amernian who accompanied him here from Mergi and is known to the Siamese Court, direct from here to Siam or Juddia to invite the said Prince, or, if that could not be done, another Prince of the Royal family to come here with him in order to ascend the throne of Kandia.

If this plan should succeed, which is very likely, I am of opinion that he should be given by the Company as a fief, or if need be as Sovereign, the domains of Kandia, Oeva, Matale, Bintenne and other inland territory; and the low-country, particularly the Three and Four Korales, the Saffregam Sissavany or at least the Kolonna, Attakalan, and Mende Korales, the Seven Korales from the mountains of Ketta as far as the sea and Northwards as far as the Chilaw river and all the territory bordering the sea must be bargained for the Company as Sovereign. The new King would have enough to be grateful for to the Company, and the Honourable Company all in the Island with which it is concerned, all the cinnamon and security in that respect against interference by any rivals.

This double proposition, should, I think, be placed most respectfully before Their Supreme Excellencies as early as possible for their approval, while we in the meantime must not delay to obtain the said coolies or Nagapatnam, and that with all possible speed in order that they might already be available here in the month of August. As regards negotiations with the Court, if they might again be resumed, they should be protracted until Their Supreme Excellencies' approval is received regarding our two expedients.

I am too weak to enlarge on this further, but the Secretary, with whom I have several times discussed this scheme while in the field, can give you more information regarding my sentiments and arguments for so far as there might be any other points for consideration by Your Honours'.

- 35 The Council having considered these proposals approved of them and decided to place them before the Batavian Government.
- 36 They were of the opinion, however, that the former, viz: the acquisition of sovereignty by the Company, was more desirable than the latter, i.e. the raising to the throne of the Siamese Prince, that "although nothing could be feared from the Siamese Prince, that he would out of self-interest and desire for the Company's profits encroach on the Company's rights, as the Siamese, as little as the Kandyans, were inclined to and capable of doing so; that there were grounds for believing that he would be able to restrain the Ministers, as during his presence here in this Kingdom he knew how to avail himself so greatly of the superiority which according to the Kandyans belonged to the solar dynasty; nevertheless, that after he had been honoured and respected as a King, indeed although he might reckon that he was under obligation to the Company for raising him to the throne, we could not be sure that his descendants and successors would be in that frame of mind with respect to us; and, in short, in that eventually, that there could always be a King who in one way or another could injure the Company in the enjoyment of the profits here: wherefore, we should have nothing to fear if, after possessing ourselves of the whole Kingdom, we apportioned the inland provinces as fiefs, or on hereditary tenure, among the most distinguished of the Ministers, who, now being petty rulers from their former position of the King's slaves and thereby deriving considerable betterment by this change of Government would be inclined through their own interests to help to establish and maintain, it, and who at all events would be powerless to undertake anything against the Company, provided that we, on our side, took care that those Provinces having once been divided were not brought together under one Chief either by marriage, inheritance, alliance or any other means, for which little statecraft would be necessary".
- 39 Meanwhile, it is decided to proceed with the preparations for undertaking again the expedition through the Four Korales as soon as the rains abate, to recruit 1000 coolies from Negapatnam for this purpose, and to send Willem van Damast Limberger to Juddia on the mission to the King of Siam, accompanied by the Armenian (Johannes Kalus), and to ask for two battalions of 1200 Eastern troops from Batavia.

42 17th April 1765

Letters are received from Major Fredrik Willem Baron de Rheder (Commander of Gonawille) and Lieut. Hounold (Commander at Wisenawe), and it is decided to send them assistance of Sepoys and European troops to enable them to advance to Kattegampele etc. and dislodge the Dissavas from their hiding places and demolish the batteries there.

46 20th April 1765

Preparations are made for an expedition through the Three and Four Korales, as agreed between the late Governor van Eek and Mr. Mooyart, Lord Commander of Kandy, and it is decided to obtain the advice of Lieut. Co. Jan van Wetzel and Major J. H. Medeler as to what the strength of the necessary detachments would be for this purpose.

48 The principal object of the expedition being to open communication with the garrison at Kandy, which, owing to the rainy season had to be interrupted by raising the field-posts between Wisenawe and that city, through the Four Korales as being the shortest way, in order to reinforce the garrison and supply it with all necessaries, and that it was only of secondary importance to occupy that Province for so far as that could be done by Their Honours *en passant* and without losing sight of the primary object".

50 The route to be taken by the detachment before it joined that from Kandia should be from Sitawaka as far as the mountains of Ballane, a distance of 15 hours' march, viz: from Sitawaka to Rouanwelle, 4 hours, from there to Idamapane, 5, and from there to Dombegaroepe, 6 hours, where the aforesaid mountains begin.

51 J. G. van Angelbeek and Major Medeler are commissioned to draft a set of instructions for promoting good transport arrangements of baggage etc. during the expedition, such as reducing the weight of the barrels and casks containing gunpowder, ammunition, beer, arrack etc., in order to facilitate and expedite transport over the hilly and difficult terrain.

54 The promised help by Maha Mudaliyar Hingangoon of Matara is to be availed of for requisitioning the necessary transport coolies.

55 It is decided not to accept an offer of assistance of troops
from the Governor of the Marrua State (Tammoderum Pulle)
56 as they were undisciplined and could not be greatly depended
on; but Mr. Keuneman, the Resident of Kilkare is to be
asked to see if he could recruit some Kamatjes at Negapatnam
for service as coolies on the expedition.

57 Mr. Keuneman from Kilkare reports "that he had received a
verbal message from a person named Moettoe Sjoepa Naresinga
Andewer, who represented himself to be a son of Wiemela Irrena
Raja Singa, according to him a former King of Kandia, and
requesting that he might be allowed to come to us to this
Island, and, with that object, that he might be provided with
some money to discharge his debts, also that on Keuneman's
requesting him to state his message to him in writing and
also to address a letter to His Excellency the Governor, he had
thereupon received 4 olas, or Malabar letters, which the said
Keuneman had at the same time forwarded with request that
he might be fortified by our orders". Decided to have these
59 letters translated first by the Predikant in charge of the
Malabar community, the Rev. Willem Ondaatje.

60 22nd April 1765

The Chief Administrator produces the translations of the three
Malabar letters from Moettoe Sjadeappoe Naresinge Andewer
referred to at the previous meeting, which are addressed:

1. To the Dutch Resident at Kilkare.
2. To His Excellency the Governor at Colombo.
3. To the Interpreter of the Gate, Moettoe Sjadeappa
Mudaliyar.

61 In the letter to the Governor he says: "I am a son of King
Rasje Manie Raaje Srie Rasinge Maha Rasa. The present King
of Kandia and the Sinhalese nobles by writing olas have
63 persuaded the Dutch Company to shoot dead our father-in-law
and brother in the Wanny. After which, having informed the
King of Siam and the people of the five Pattus of this and
receiving a reply from the latter that not they but Dutch
gentlemen had done this, we were informed since by the former,
or in fact the priests, in very courteous terms, that after
warning all the Sinhalese inhabitants that they should help to
set Us on the throne and speaking to them, the matter had
gone amiss.

If your people would invite us there through five gentlemen
under oath and by a signed document, and furnished all the
necessary expenses which will amount to 2 or 3000 rixdollars,
We shall be prepared to come.

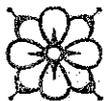
After my arrival, I shall deliver to you in 8 days not only
Kandia but also the King. Be pleased to accept this as an
unquestionable fact, for Your Honour must not mistrust Us
or be in doubt, as We are of the same stock and family as
the present Kandyan King, and our children have wedded with
theirs and We again with theirs. We have at the same time
informed the Residents of Kilkare of this, and were told in
reply that they would write to Colombo and let us know the
answer. If the letter, the authority and the expenses are sent
64 soon, We shall come immediately. At Nagapatnam there is a
house of mine and one of my brother-in-law's. There are certain
goods of ours in them, and in order to obtain them We request a
letter for the said place.

We are also sending herewith an ola addressed to the Dissava
of the Three & Four Korales. It should not be made public
but should be given to him in secret together with 2 carpets, 4
tuppettiyas and 1 diamond ring".

In the letter to the Sadeappos Pulle Mudaliyar he says:
"Our Lord and Chief as well as all of us are well and
prospering, and Your Honour must let us know by letter how
you and His Excellency the Governor are. We have come to
Kilkare and spoken with the Residents, and were also told in
reply that they would write to Colombo regarding the matter.
Because our Princes in former times had been shot dead by the
Hollanders in the Wanny, we are somewhat afraid, but if a
written authority under oath were sent and we were given
65 the due respect, honour and presents, we and our people who
are 2 to 300 in number will come over. If Your Honour would
at the same time see to the expenses which are required in
such an event, we shall listen to Your Honour's advice. Be
so good then to deal with this matter as Your Honour thinks
fit, for we leave the entire burden of these affairs on Your
Honour. An ola is also being sent herewith for the Dissava
of the Three & Four Korales, and after reading the same, Your
Honour must deal with it with the necessary secrecy.

Either Nella Tamby Modliaar or Mardappa Modliaar, whoever of them is the Company's Interpreter must read this ola, check the accounts of the expenses and write to Nagapatnam for the goods".

66 "After the reading of which", the Chief Administrator communicated to the other members "that the 4th ola, which was found to be addressed to the Dissava of the Three & Four Korales, had hitherto remained unopened as he did not wish to take it upon himself to break its seals without their advice, submitting at the same time as to how it should be dealt with. Whereupon, having considered the matter and noted that the ola was addressed to the principal Ministers of a Court with which we were in open war and according to the most positive rules of the law of nations could freely be opened, while at the same time it was trusted that further information could be obtained from it: accordingly it was unanimously decided that the said ola should immediately be opened as the others, and to meet again this evening in order to make our decisions regarding its contents and those previously inserted".



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