

The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon, Ltd.

December 16, 1952.

Dear Mr. Mettananda,

Many thanks for your letter. I appreciate very much indeed the spirit which apparently prompted you to write to me. I do not doubt for a moment that you have the interests of the country very much at heart.

I purposely delayed replying to your letter because I wanted to watch the papers carefully to see whether in point of fact undue prominence is being given to foreign elements. I have failed to notice any such tendency. It has always been the policy of our papers to seek to cover all matters of news interest to readers and to provide a forum for the expression of all points of view subject, of course, to the discretion vested in an Editor.

It may, perhaps, be opposite to point out here that our papers are complementary to each other and the leadership problems of each paper may make it necessary for a certain type of news of news to be given greater prominence in one paper than in another, or even published exclusively in one paper. This does not, however, alter the policy of our group of our papers which has always been to give publicity to all matters of news interest and to all points of view.

The Daily News, as well as our other papers have consistently endeavoured to pursue the interests of the nation - an ideal which, as you correctly point out, was set by the late Mr. D.R. Wijewardena. They view this ideal in broad terms and as embracing the welfare of all those whose privilege it is to be citizens of Ceylon. They may on occasion be mistaken, as all human endeavour often is, but they never flag in the pursuit of this ideal. The role played by our papers this very year in helping to save this country from the horrors of totalitarianism provide sufficient proof, if need of proof there be. In fact, at the present moment, the Acting Editor of the Daily News is one who joined the late Mr. Wijewardena in February 1948, a month after he started publishing the Daily News, and worked with him throughout his long career and ever since. It is hardly likely that he would never deviate consciously from the pursuit of the ideals set for the Lake House papers by Mr. Wijewardena.

I am really astounded at your suggestion that I am influenced by the machinations of denationalised persons. While I am at all times ready to accept advice from anybody capable of giving it to me, in all matters the decisions I take are mine and mine alone.

In regard to your statement that "contributions on matters of far-reaching importance by men of undoubted sincerity" are ~~sent~~ consigned to the waste-paper basket, I shall be glad if you can let me know of any of such instances in which, to your knowledge, such contributions were rejected on the score you have suggested.

Yours sincerely,

Sgd: Esmund Wickremasinghe

L. H. Mettananda, Esqr.,  
Ananda College,  
Colombo 10.

CELW/AN.