



# Service Newspapers During the Second World War

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## *Service Newspapers During the Second World War*

It is generally acknowledged that at the 1945 elections, the majority of the soldiers in the British Forces voted Labour. At the time Conservative opinion held the Army Bureau of Current Affairs partly responsible for these results and some fifty years later, P. Addison, tapping into the recollections of numerous participants confirmed this hypothesis. However, more than just the ABCA bulletins, which were "slightly more left-wing than one would expect" (Addison, 13), it was the fact that discussion on current affairs had become a regular activity in military life which represented the major qualitative change: the army, until then the stronghold of traditional social hierarchies, invited "the soldier-citizen" to reflect on the changes taking place and encouraged him to give his opinion on the future shape of the world. This approach was a democratic act which could not but leave its mark.

If it can be said that ABCA played a role in the growth of radical thought, then what was the influence of the Service Newspapers written by the soldiers themselves? These newspapers were obviously censored, as were ABCA publications, but didn't they, in some ways, by their own selection of news or articles, by the importance accorded to certain facts rather than others, nourish and reflect this hope for a better

world that the conscripts seemed to have stored for nearly six years? This question uncovers another: what image of the soldier-citizen is given to us by these newspapers which, despite the censor, had to satisfy or anticipate the demands of their readers?

This article intends to address these questions and to attempt some preliminary conclusions. However, this study needs more attention: the military press which reveals so much of the interests, preoccupations and attitudes of the soldier, is an integral part of the larger context that is the social history of the Armed Forces, a social history that has yet to be written (Addison, 4).

## CONDITIONS OF PRODUCTION

All the Service newspapers either took their information from the BBC or received it from the Overseas Forces Service, established by the Ministry of Information. This service cabled several thousand words per week to them and posted, following the approval of the censor, illustrations, photographs, articles from the national press, documents and books. The local editorial teams then made their choice, though they were occasionally critical of the material received through official channels. For example, the Cairo Directorate of Joint Publications, responsible for *Parade* and *The Crusader* (see below), thought it "impersonal in character" and expressed the need for "living matter, produced by special writers or editors with a personal interest in and knowledge of the public for which they are catering." They asked "that a small editorial unit be established within the framework of the Ministry of Information to supply the Directorate with commissioned and other material." This request was partially satisfied (INF 1/350).

During the first years of the war, the Ministry of Information did its best to meet the needs of service newspapers as a whole, but in summer 1943, the government decided, in anticipation of the opening of the second front, to re-organise the service and with this objective in mind, switched responsibility to the Welfare Directorate, a department of the War Office, which from then on took charge of the financial and

material provision of the 24 newspapers. However, the Welfare Directorate created a specific body, the AW/S, which continued to collaborate with the Ministry of Information until the end of the war.

## SELECTION AND METHODS

The newspapers consulted in this study included three weeklies, *Parade*, *Ceylon Review* and *the Crusader* because their news coverage included substantially more commentary and interpretation than a simple daily of a few pages. The dailies were always written under the pressure of events or to use their own expression, "published daily . . . shells permitting."

*Parade* began to be published in Cairo as early as August 1940 and had a circulation of about 50,000. Throughout the war, it was distributed for free to the Desert Rats of the 8th Army. At certain periods and notably during the North African campaign, it was estimated that each number was read by at least 10 men (INF 1/350). It had therefore a fairly wide readership but it was also the first heavily illustrated magazine "assembled by members of the armed forces themselves rather than for them" (Bayliss, 9). It consisted of twenty or so pages, most of them devoted to the coverage of military operations. However, every week, under the headings "The Week in Parliament," "London Letter," "Home News" or "Britain Today," it kept readers informed about political events at home and attempted in various ways to maintain a link with "civvy street."

*The Crusader*, during the election campaign of 1945 in particular, similarly published features, surveys, interviews and excerpts from political speeches, livened up by a selection of the best cartoons of the day. Founded in May 1942 by "the father of desert newspapers," Captain Warwick Charlton, *The Crusader* had a circulation of 50,000. It was initially edited in the desert and printed in Cairo (Bayliss, 8).

*Ceylon Review* was aimed at the Armed Forces generally and at Civil Defence personnel. It was around 30 pages long (A4 format) and

“carried a variety of features of a high standard, covering all theatres of war, all branches of the services and all aspects of servicemen’s interests — cultural, political and aesthetic” (Anglo, 17). The first issue came out on October 3, 1942 and in the terms of the editorial statement, it intended to “give information and *to encourage discussion*; to inform about the war in all theatres and to give servicemen *details of the world being planned for them*” (17; my emphasis). It voiced the opinions of numerous politicians, including Harry Pollitt, a leading figure of the Communist Party of Great Britain, and reprinted articles from a wide variety of sources such as *The New Yorker* and *Pravda*.

This study gives priority to the analysis of social and political information, without taking into account articles of a strictly military content. The issues used for each newspaper cover the following periods: *Parade* January 1942-July 45, *Ceylon Review* January 1944-July 45, and *The Crusader* May-September 1945.

To give a more complete picture of the aims of the newspaper and of its assumptions about its readership, I thought it appropriate not only to underline the frequency with which certain themes appeared but also to analyse the content of a few important articles; hence the need to quote rather extensively from articles not otherwise accessible to the reader.

The imperatives of the censor at this time, which prohibited these papers from all expression of opposition to government policy, all support for any political party and which imposed on them the exclusive objective, “to improve knowledge rather than to form opinion” (Morgan, Appendix 15), I deliberately picked out passages which, surprisingly, appeared to defend with particular warmth the Labour positions. These passages took up two pages, half a column or ten lines . . . ten lines of partisan language which might have captured the attention of a certain number of soldiers. They were sometimes only details but as Asa Briggs has recently said about the history of the BBC during the war, it is precisely “the details that are interesting” (British Council, 26/10/1996).

## THE CITIZEN IN UNIFORM

### 1942: the Beveridge report makes history

During a large part of 1942, *Parade* made a point of describing daily life back home. It underlined, for example, the work of women and the size of their commitment to the war effort. Equally, as if to reassure the numerous drafted fathers, it covered the various measures taken for the health and comfort of young children and "toddlers." It often dealt with the austere conditions at home, and hinted at the prevailing forms of social injustice, frequently citing, in this context, the Christian Socialist, Sir Stafford Cripps. When he delivered a speech from the pulpit of St Martin's-in-the-Fields, denouncing unequal opportunities, discriminatory schools and describing the insulting reality of slums, the paper reproduced his words and commented: "Sir Stafford Cripps crystallised some points of view that are being upheld today by soldiers, sailors and airmen in the little spare time they get to talk these matters over" (n° 120, Nov.28, 1942). Cripps anticipated in some ways the issues raised by W. Beveridge.

In December 1942, the publication of the Beveridge Report marked a turning point in the social history of the period. Like all service newspapers, *Parade* publicised it and commented upon it, despite the well-known opposition of Winston Churchill to such publicity.<sup>1</sup> The office of the censor directed by Francis William, a left-winger and former editor of *The Daily Herald*, allowed numerous articles to pass in the military press, all of them in honour of "Great Britain's n°1 planner."

*Parade* drew an extremely laudatory portrait of Beveridge, stressing the generosity, the youthfulness and energy of this professor and man of action who had spent thirty years working for the well-being of his fellow men, beginning with his days in Toynbee Hall, the crucible

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<sup>1</sup> Churchill had attempted to withdraw from circulation an ABCA bulletin, entirely devoted to explaining its merits.



of British socialism.<sup>2</sup> Then Beveridge himself presented his measures in simple and practical terms. As if to demonstrate to its readers that there was nothing utopian about the plan, *Parade* printed, alongside his words, an article on the New Zealand social system, presented as a pioneering embodiment of the Beveridge Report.<sup>3</sup> This article, based on a book by a historian, reproduced the latter's conclusions highlighting the need to fight against an economic system based on profit and which "by its very structure limits the extension of social services, except by lowering standards" (n°122, Dec., 5, 42).

The parliamentary debates about the Beveridge Report were also given their place in the columns of *Parade*, which related in some detail the indignation of A. Greenwood and of Labour MPs at the Government's reticence about its implementation. Finally, after underlining Liberal or Conservative positions in the House of Lords, the piece concluded with the words of Vernon Bartlett, a left-wing MP, who had remarked on the BBC that "the opponents of the Beveridge Report paradoxically are the same people who are scared of Communism but they are few in number" (n°134, March 6, 43).

When the White Paper on Employment Policy was issued, the newspaper naturally turned to Beveridge to expound on the new document. In a methodical fashion, he underlined three main themes, each of which was the object of reservations on his part, which were then clearly expressed. He drew the reader's attention to the fact that to maintain adequate means in peace may involve either drastic redistribution of incomes or a much larger measure of State activity than is contemplated in the White Paper." Or later, referring to the suspicion aroused in Conservative ranks at any mention of the word "control," he wondered whether the fight against "the five evils" could be effective "if its intensity has to be adjusted to whatever resources undirected private enterprise happens to leave over?" He also spoke of the courage

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<sup>2</sup> Toynbee Hall is one of the first University Settlements in East London founded by Canon Barnett with the support of Oxford and Cambridge Universities (1883). Its residents — most of them post-graduate students — devoted themselves to the promotion of the welfare of the poor.

<sup>3</sup> The Ceylon Review drew the same parallel in N°122, Dec.5, 1942.

necessary for the reformer to overcome opposition: "This declaration of war on unemployment is the beginning of a voyage to a better world but it remains for the people of Britain to make certain that the voyage is completed." These concluding words, which were a real call for vigilance, were placed as a sub-heading and written in bold type by *Parade's* editors (n° 202, June 16, 44).

Drawing once more the portrait of Beveridge, the paper derided the prejudices which traditionally surrounded the association of the words, planning and individual liberty.

He is known as "Britain's n°1 Planner," a fact which makes frantic individualists (as he calls them) apt to paint a cold picture of him. It is an axiom of non-planners that all planners are cold and inhuman, busy in a ghoul-like way, planning your life and mind into a dull and uniform mould from which enterprise and adventure will be excluded. Add to this robot picture the fact that Sir William is an economist and you have an impression as far removed from the truth as it would be possible to get it (ibid.).

There was no better method for immunising the reader against the enemies of control than to ridicule their positions and to present the man they criticised in a sympathetic light. It was also an efficient way — though probably unpremeditated — to shift thought towards an acceptance of the Labour programme of controls and nationalisations.

#### **"It is for this they fight"<sup>4</sup>**

During the first five months of 1943, the question of reforms is raised 12 times over sixteen issues of *Parade*. Out of these 12 occasions, in articles of variable length, 11 mention progressive politicians, 8 Labour and 3 Liberal. In this context, the Prime Minister is only cited once, when he announced his four-year plan for reconstruction. However, *Parade* also saw fit to transcribe his conclusion: "We must

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<sup>4</sup> This is the headline of an article by Arthur Bryant, regular correspondent of the Service newspapers in which he speaks about democracy, liberty and socialism.



beware of trying to build a society in which nobody counts for anything except the politician or an official, a society where enterprise brings no reward and birth no privileges" (n° 137, March 27, 43).

In contrast, whenever post-war Britain was discussed, Dalton, Bevin, Cripps, Morrison, Lindsay (Oxford academic and a supporter of the Workers' Educational Association) the Archbishop of Canterbury, William Temple (nicknamed "the Red Dean" in the thirties) and of course Beveridge, spoke in the name of "the common man."

Bevin, speaking about the housing problem, was said to have found the words which went "right to the heart of the soldier," (n° 128, Jan 23, 43). For Dalton, the economic crisis of the twenties was accounted for by the absence of "price control and planned economic transition from war to peace" (n° 131, Feb 13, 43). He was shown learning the lesson of the past and coming to grips with the same problem, "canvassing each industry to find out what can be done" and ensuring "that workers are to have a voice before important decisions are taken" (n° 132, Feb 20, 43).

No section of British society, if the papers were to be heeded, lay outside the need for reform, neither national sports "where there is scope for a Beveridge Plan in the new world to come" (n° 142, May 1, 43), nor the Church of England which required "a wider distribution both of the manpower and possessions of the Church, a fairer system of payment so that all clergy and lay workers of the Church receive a living wage . . . simpler services . . . to put right what is wrong" (n° 211, Aug. 26, 44).

The coverage given to reforms from the end of 1942 reflected the preoccupation of the Cairo editorial board who eventually sent a detailed memorandum in September 1943 to the Ministry of Information addressing the urgent need for reorientation of propaganda. They insisted that what was required was "a win-the-peace propaganda with increasing emphasis on Britain and British aims for post-war reconstruction." Their reasoning in this was clear:

The soldiers are to a great extent uneducated and to some extent mis-educated in British current and post-war affairs. A more educated minority have been nourished on the political doctrines of the USSR and fancy themselves Communists. The majority hold a middle view. But all probably without exception, hope for certain fundamental social and economic changes, promising equality of opportunity after the war. They know little about the details of the Beveridge Report but feel strongly for the principle implied in it, regarding it as the symbol of the "square deal" which they desire as the reward of their services. They are however sceptical of the Government's intention to implement this or any such policy . . . Impartial information and guidance on matters concerning British domestic and international policy and post-war plans is required now to educate these troops for their future as democratic citizens (INF 1/350).

The authors of the text were working at the grass roots and they had a thorough, intimate knowledge of the soldiers of whom they spoke.

*Parade* and *Ceylon Review* extensively covered the various White Papers, giving priority to the problems which they knew concerned the soldiers. They quoted the comforting words of Bevin and Morrison about housing, they drew their readers' attention to the position of some Labour MPs who, together with A. Greenwood, worried about the non-implementation of the Uthwatt Report on the purchase of land for public purposes by the local authorities (*Parade*, n° 253, June 16, 45). This concern echoed that of E. Shinwell which had appeared in *Ceylon Review*, a year earlier (n° 24, June 10, 44) and was one which recurred many times in the readers' letters (*Ceylon Review* n° 8, 9, 23, 24, 1944).

Employment, when debated in Parliament, was similarly discussed throughout the armed forces. *Ceylon Review* summarised Bevin's speech, including a moving passage in which he related his visit with the Prime Minister to the troops about to go off to Normandy. Many of them came from regions deeply scarred by unemployment and yet when facing a momentous battle, Bevin said "the one question which they put to me as I walked through their ranks was 'Ernie, when we have done this job, are we coming back to the dole?'" Bevin, the staunch

comrade, called familiarly by the soldiers-workers, promised that they would not (n° 2, July 8, 44).

As early as January 1945, even before a general election had been considered, the service newspapers presented the policies of the different political parties. *Ceylon Review*, for instance, presented in its 20 January issue, the Labour and Conservative positions.

A. Greenwood, former Labour minister and leader of the opposition, stated in his preamble the right of the soldier to a better society "in return for [his] service to the community and the fulfilment of [his] duties as a citizen." He asserted that a secure peace was not merely an absence of war but "a fullest international co-operation" for "the advancement of human well-being." He referred especially to co-operation with "the progressive dominions, now ruled by Labour government." Above all he was bold enough to address the question of the colonies "shamefully exploited in the past" and which must at last obtain self-government. He insisted on the economic interdependence of countries and contended that British prosperity could in no way depend on the poverty of others. For this vision to become reality, it was necessary to stop relying on the financiers of the City who on the whole were far too concerned with their own enrichment and were "not good judges of the interest of the common man." One needed to put public interest and public well being first "to fight those evils" which were largely the result of "the free play of competitive and selfish interests." Greenwood wanted to stop "the wanton destruction of products and the deliberate limitation of production in order to maintain profits." He then indicated the main measures recommended by the Labour Party (n° 3, Jan. 20, 45).

This text undoubtedly carries a vision. It is written by a generous spirited man who tries to convey to the reader his own faith in an ideal of justice and brotherhood, and to inspire him with the daring of political innovation.

*Ceylon Review* then gave space to Walter Elliott, a representative of the Conservative Party, who did not have the stature of Green-

wood. His own article is nothing but a long series of warnings, made in the tone which Churchill would later adopt in his famous Gestapo Speech. The Conservative Party was, he claimed, in favour of full employment "*But* there is one price at which absolutely full employment . . . may be bought too dear. That is to have one's lifetime in a perpetual barracks under a perpetual sergeant-major. Behind the Socialist State there looms always the danger which easily may become terribly true of the National Socialist State — the One Big Boss whom no one can sack" (my emphasis). The Tories agreed that in future "there must be a place for the State *but* also a place for private enterprise. Private enterprise means business and business, you say, may mean Big Business ? Well, that is a risk. **BUT** there is no escape from risks..." On the thorny question of controls, Elliott caricatured the Labour position which he said could open the gate to "a new tyranny, as bad as any of the old" and was nothing but "a new road to 'Serfdom.'" <sup>5</sup>

In response to this, a reader wrote a long discursive letter in which he exposed the extent to which Conservative policy was "completely out of touch with the spirit of the public." He analysed the rhetoric of the article, illustrating the way in which Elliott tried repeatedly to avert the risks of a Socialist government. The reader commented on Elliott's way of crying wolf: "It is obviously nonsense to talk about risks in this way to millions of voters who've been taking ghastly risks in their stride for the past half decade . . . [they] are not likely to be impressed by the counsels of caution, nor scared into voting for the status quo by the sight of Mr Elliott dangling the skeleton of an old Red bogey-man who died of exposure many years ago" (n° 5, Feb 3, 45). <sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> It seems that Churchill's "Gestapo speech" is no accident: an examination of some speeches or articles by other minor conservative figures such as W. Elliott reveals that such a mind-set and images already lay at the heart of Conservative thinking.

<sup>6</sup> It is worth pointing out that the reader's position here recurs in many instances of readers' correspondence. This same argument will be taken up again by The Guardian in its article on the Labour electoral victory, reprinted in Parade, N° 260, Aug. 4, 1945.

### A democratic society

From mid-43 to the elections, *Parade* and *Ceylon Review* asked, on several occasions, B. Russell, C. M. Joad — well-known for his part in the radio programme, Brains Trust — J. B Priestley, Julian Huxley and other academics to discuss the meaning and moral basis of democracy. All of them were politically progressive or even radical thinkers. In addition, the extent to which the service papers would give space to left-wing views, is shown by the following extract written by professor J. D. Bernal: “To reap the full benefits of science, there must and can be an intimate relation between science and social processes at every stage. . . . Private and institutional greed, the desire to preserve orders and ranks in a society that has out-grown them, have been potent factors in the past and are potent factors still in delaying progress. Unless they are dealt with and dealt with now, there is no chance for any better world” (*Parade*, n° 235, Feb. 10, 45).

The papers frequently volunteered examples of democracy in action, such as the creation of a Junior Town Council in East Ham (London) “an experiment in citizenship . . . one of the happier omens for the future. If the perfect state grows up it will be because the citizens of a million East Hams have worked hard to achieve the perfect parish pump” (*Parade*, n° 210, Aug. 12, 44). They also showed factory workers participating in the management, or town dwellers directly involved in the development of reconstruction plans, everyone being “questioned before decisions were reached” (*Parade*, n° 248, May 12, 45).

*Ceylon Review* presented in detail the activities of the Industrial Discussion Clubs, as evidence of the new taste for debate: “Up and down the country there are springing up small groups of people who are not satisfied with their knowledge of what is going on in the country. . . . These groups meet in factories, in the city suburbs, or in pubs and clubs to discuss any questions that seems to them important.” The journalist showed how they would then collectively write amendments to government bills and forward them to their MPs or local representatives (n° 25, Dec.16, 44).



Such democratic debate was something that soldiers would already be familiar with through their experience of ABCA. Between ABCA bulletins and these papers there is, on occasions, a similarity of style and tone, in particular the frequent use of "You" by which to address the conscience of each individual soldier, personally and directly.

Another aspect of the democratic outlook of *Parade* and *Ceylon Review* is exemplified by their coverage of industrial disputes. Throughout the war, workers, and particularly miners and dockers organised strike action. The papers were careful not to fuel any feelings of antagonism between soldiers and workers. They either did not mention the subject, or allowed union leaders and other representatives of the Labour movement to expound on the background of the strikes (*Ceylon Review*, n° 11, March 11, 44 and n° 16, April 15, 44). What may be even more significant is that these periodicals never offered a word of criticism against the strikers.

The papers also published a certain number of informative articles on parliamentary democracy, explaining its history and its operation. However, right in the heat of the electoral battle, *The Crusader*, a sister publication to *Parade*, put the cat among the pigeons with the publication of a survey comparing the social composition of Parliament, party by party, with that of the country, highlighting numerous discrepancies in representation, notably the role of the aristocracy which "has 400 times its due representation." It then remarked: "the surprising thing is not the smallness of this section of the community in comparison with the whole but the hugeness of the share which it obtains in the membership of what is supposed to be a democratic House." The conclusion of the survey was that this Parliament was not socially representative of the nation, hence maybe "its failure to conform to our ideals and fulfil our expectations" (n° 157, June 3, 1945).

*The Crusader* did not call for its readership to vote Labour, thereby respecting the prohibitions of the censor, yet in choosing to



publish this survey, it surely helped the soldier “to crystallise his political thought” with a bias to the left rather than to the right.

To give another example of the difficulty of controlling the “independently-minded journalists” (Bayliss, 8): out of the 18 cartoons selected by *The Crusader* during the campaign, 12 made the right their target, and six the left. As for *Parade*, in its June 2nd issue of 1945, it devoted a whole page to photographs of soldiers reading about the election and debating. One of which showed a private, sitting in the desert with a pyramid in the background, engrossed in... *The Reynold News*, a paper of the co-operative movement.

The papers stressed the importance of the vote, “which is to a citizen as a gun to a soldier” and often incited the soldier, once back in civvy street, to take his full share of responsibility in the functioning of local and national institutions. Conscious that the press in general can only function within a network of relationship with its readers, within what S. Hall has termed a “structure of awareness” (Smith, 12), this insistence on democracy and the need for reforms in Service newspapers can be viewed as a way of meeting the conscripted soldiers’ aspirations.

Any doubts that the service newspapers did not reflect the concerns of their readership can be allayed by reference to their correspondence pages. To provide an extended example, a Captain James of the regular army in a letter sent to SEAC — daily paper of the South East Asia Command — complained bitterly of the lack of discipline among conscripts and further stated that “75% of the men now fighting for their King and Country were doing so under duress.” This attack created a terrible uproar among the readers who sent many letters, often signed by several servicemen, refuting Captain James’s claims. These responses no doubt reflected the general climate of opinion and bore witness to the social and political opinions of the soldiers themselves. A sample of their comments makes this plain: “I agree with Capt. James that if a country is worth living in it is worth fighting for. But may I ask that gentleman if pre-war Jarrow was a place worth living in and fighting for ? Were the derelict areas of South Wales and the slums of East London worth fighting for? Are poverty and

hunger worth fighting for?" Or another: "It is lack of discipline, both mental and physical, which causes 'Jack' to imagine (says Captain James) he is as good as his 'Master' and which leads him to expect equal treatment in post-war England when he has once more made it safe for democracy. . . . This lack of discipline causes people like myself to have odd illusions and to imagine that, at times, Jack can be better than his master" (Anglo, 68).

This helps to illustrate the extent to which the men under arms had become critical of the military hierarchy, thus confirming what Barnett has already stated, namely that in the second World War the soldier was "not so trusting and obedient as the 'tommy' of 1914" (Barnett, 274). A growing sense of egalitarianism had permeated the Forces.

## CONCLUSION

A soldier more apprised of democracy, distrustful of privileges and hierarchies, interested in the development of a fairer post-war society which would provide him with what he demanded, "a square deal," is the portrait of the regular reader which is reflected by *Parade*, *Ceylon Review* and *The Crusader*. That these papers were sometimes, if not openly pro-Labour, at least in favour of change and therefore implicitly against the Tory Party, is the main information to be derived from an initial examination. This leads into another debate concerning censorship which certainly did not seem to have been exerted as strictly as one would have imagined.<sup>7</sup> Perhaps it was this thought which lay behind Brigadier Morgan's remark made some years after the war that

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<sup>7</sup> An interview with Beveridge conducted in 1943 by the London correspondent of *Parade* in which the economist used blunter language than usual was not censored. F. Williams and other high officials, after cutting a hundred words, chose to leave the responsibility for publication to the editors themselves. So long as the conduct of the war was not questioned, they preferred to make suggestions and to rely on the willing cooperation of the editors. *Parade* did not publish this interview.

“the editing of the Service Newspapers was sometimes undercontrolled” and that there had been “complaints of political bias” (Morgan, 132).

Even if this could be established beyond doubt, we should guard against hasty conclusions as to the political influence of the papers. We know how difficult it is to verify with any precision the causal relation between the orientation of a newspaper and that of its readership. All studies on this subject advise that one proceed with prudence. The only thing which can be stated in a conclusion, of necessity provisional, is that a soldier, able to extract political intelligence out of the news, could find in *Parade*, *The Crusader* and *Ceylon Review* information likely to shape or confirm a pro-Labour preference or at the very least to fortify an anti-Tory inclination.

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