

### Nova Scotia training successfully applied in Srilanka

Co-operative development techniques learned in Eastern Nova Scotia are being applied with impressive results in Negombo, a large fishing community on the west coast of Srilanka, formerly Ceylon, according to J.T. Chiasson, Associate Director of the Coady International Institute and the Extension Department of St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, N.S.

While in Ceylon, during the Christmas holidays, Mr. Chiasson visited three Cingalese natives who had received their training in Antigonish, either at the University or at the Coady International Institute. They were Father Joe Fernando, parish priest of Negombo, Sister Irene Seneviratne, and Loku Valasurya, all of whom are engaged in economic development projects in the community.

"What they have accomplished is nothing short of amazing," said Mr. Chiasson. "Sister Irene graduated only four years ago at the Coady Institute, but she has already worked wonders. One of her recent projects was a new co-op housing group on the outskirts of Negombo. She organized the group, got roads hacked out of the jungle for the site, and started on the construction of 140 homes. More than 100 are finished; the rest will be ready by June....She applies the same techniques used by housing co-ops in Nova Scotia."

The new houses are in sharp contrast to the old palm-thatched huts they replace. "They are simply built, with a strong wooden frame filled in with cement blocks, and a roof of corrugated iron. And they have septic tanks," says Mr. Chiasson.

"Sister Irene had only one early difficulty in getting the project started.

When she called the interested villagers together they at first objected to the idea. Before they had houses, they said they wanted a school for their children....So they found a big, old wooden house, acquired it and fixed it up, and set up their school. Then they got busy with the housing co-op."

Earlier Father Fernando, who had studied social leadership at St. Francis Xavier University in 1957, had organized other housing groups, and in Negombo more than 400 new homes stand as a tribute to his dedication and organizational ability.

#### Advance in fishing

"But perhaps the biggest advance made in the community," said Mr. Chiasson, "was in the fishery. Before Father Fernando came to Nova Scotia the fishery had been primitive. The men fished from outrigger catamarans made from logs lashed together. It was nothing but paddle power."

"When Father Joe returned from Antigonish he got the fishermen together in a co-operative, and had them embark on a modernization program which first put outboard motors on the catamarans and later had the fishermen scrapping the catamarans in favour of fiberglass boats made right in Negombo.

"And he got them using nylon nets."

"What a difference it has made! All you need do is look at the way the Negombo fishermen live and compare it with conditions in which the unorganized fishermen are living," said Mr. Chiasson. "The Negombo people have a far, far better life...and they did it themselves."

The Antigonish formula of self-help, he said, had been applied in many other ways. "Just outside Negombo there is a youth centre. It is actually a flower marketing co-op, where they raise and ship orchids for sale on the world market. They also make all kinds of handcraft items from native woods and coconut shells. They even manufacture badminton rackets."

Loku Valasurya, who graduated only last year from the Coady International Institute, is now program director at Sarvodaya, which Mr. Chiasson described as a government institute devoted to the training of local people for various rural development projects.

"Sarvodaya is a kind of a little Coady Institute. Its trainees are sent back to the villages they came from, and they take with them much of what Loku learned while he was in Nova Scotia."

Loku Valasurya's training at the Coady Institute was sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency.

"It was all so encouraging, really inspiring," he said. "It is a wonderful thing to find things like that going on, good things, seeing people learning to do things for themselves. And it is so good to know that so much of all this stems from the kind of things a Cape Bretoner, Dr. Moses Coady, once only dreamed about."

### Weekend hockey results

#### National Hockey League

##### Results February 9

Montreal 7, NY Rangers 2  
Toronto 4, Minnesota 1  
Pittsburgh 3, NY Islanders 2  
Boston 5, Philadelphia 3  
Vancouver 5, Detroit 4  
Los Angeles 2, St. Louis 1

##### Results February 10

Philadelphia 3, Montreal 1  
NY Rangers 4, St. Louis 2  
Boston 4, Minnesota 0  
Vancouver 5, Buffalo 2  
Chicago 5, Pittsburgh 3  
Los Angeles 6, Atlanta 3

#### World Hockey Association

##### Results February 9

Cleveland 4, Toronto 3  
Chicago 5, New Jersey 2

##### Results February 10

Quebec 4, Edmonton 3  
Houston 2, Winnipeg 2  
Chicago 4, Los Angeles 2  
Minnesota 5, New England 2  
Toronto 5, New Jersey 4

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