

# The Ceylon Coconut Planters' Review

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## EDITORIAL

### DECLINE IN THE PRICES OF COCONUT PRODUCTS AND THE COCONUT INDUSTRY

The fall in the price of copra during the last six months from a value of about Rs. 250/- per candy to Rs. 141/- at the moment of writing, and a corresponding fall in prices of desiccated coconut and coconut oil, would no doubt be causing considerable alarm to Coconut Producers, the Industry in general and the Government.

The coconut producers of this country were, with some satisfaction, reaping the rewards for the trials and tribulations which the industry had faced since the depression in 1930's. The boom prices were reached in early and mid 1959 touching nearly Rs. 260/- per candy. It must also be remembered that even during the war, the prices were not too favourable as the British Government purchased the entire supply and the prices were operated through the Department of Commodity Purchase. There was, later, a short-term boom during the Korean War. However, never did the industry fall from the pedestal of the 'Consols of the East' which gave it pride of place in the early years of this century.

The Coconut Industry is the life blood of the people of this country; and along with paddy it forms the main sustenance supplying the food needs—the oil and proteins to supplement the carbohydrates of rice, but for which this country would be faced with a grave nutritional crisis during the recent years, particularly in view of explosive population growth.

No doubt the Tea Industry plays a great part in the ultimate economy of this country in supplying the main source of revenue to maintain the National Services rendered by the Government, particularly since it gained Independence. But none the less, coconuts, it should be remembered — out of a million acres over 65 per cent comprise of small-holders below 20

