

Why should we go back to the thirteenth amendment?

The Tamil racist lobby with sponsorship from the west is again busy on two fronts. On one hand they are again making “allegations” on so called war crimes based on gossip such as Sarath Fonseka’s statement on white flags. Fonseka has not been consistent in what he says and any court of law would dismiss his so called evidence which is nothing but a series of contradictory statements. In any event he does not have direct evidence on the “sudu kodi” as his is mere hear say evidence. He says that he heard from a journalist that the Defence Secretary had told Major General Shavindra de Silva to shoot even those who come out with white flags. The gossip reports that are composed by various “international organizations” should be sent to SF for bedtime reading, and the government should completely ignore them without wasting time. It should be clear at least now that SF is being made use by the west, having made him a “crown witness” to frame charges against the Defence Secretary and the President.

The second front, which is more important than the gossip being discussed, is concerned with the thirteenth amendment that was based on the infamous Indo–Sri Lanka agreement, which is being attempted to be implemented with support from India. This attempt to implement the thirteenth amendment is not entirely unconnected with the gossips that are propagated on so called war crimes. The gossip is intended to discredit the victory over the most ruthless terrorist group in the whole world, which was equipped with ships, aircrafts and heavy weapons aided by the western forces. When it is realized that it is the western media and organizations that are behind gossiping against the Sri Lankan Government and the Armed Forces it becomes clear as to the motives of the western powers.

As we have said number of times Tamil racism was created and nourished by the English, after the Dutch imported Tamil labourers from Coramandel coast for their tobacco cultivation. Both Dutch and the English used Tamils against Sinhala. The Tamils were given privileges over even the Sinhala Anglican Christians and were made the leaders of the so called Ceylonese nation after dismantling the Dutch from that position. The fall of the Tamil leadership began in the twenties of the last Christian century and after the universal franchise was given by the English to the Sinhala Buddhists were able to aspire to become leaders of the country. The implementation of the universal franchise was the biggest blunder by the English as far as Tamil racism is concerned and people such as Ponnambalam Ramanathan who had realized that they would lose the leadership that they had among the Ceylonese opposed universal franchise from the very beginning.

The Tamil racist leaders interpreted any loss of the privileges that they enjoyed as an injustice caused not only to them but to the entire Tamil community and with the assistance given by the English, and with Tamil Nadu prepared to air the “grievances” of the Tamils in Sri Lanka Tamil racism took up a course a detrimental to Sri Lanka in general and Tamils in particular. The Tamil racist leaders in Sri Lanka with the assistance of the English and the Tamil leaders in Tamil Nadu demanded solutions to the so called grievances of the Tamils in Sri Lanka and gradually moved towards a separate state having first wanted to establish a federation and then a confederation. It has to be

remembered that the Tamil leaders in India were the first to demand a separate state for them long before the Muslims agitated for a separate state. Also the Tamils were the favourites of the English when it came to finding subservient labour to serve in the empire from Africa to Asia. (The English used Africans in the so called new world.) Tamils who have never had a state or a country for themselves as an ethnic group were interested in establishing a separate state in the Northern and the Eastern Provinces of Sri Lanka claiming them to be so called Tamil homeland though the provinces were demarcated by the English finally as late as 1889.

The Tamil leaders beginning with Ponnambalam Ramanathan agitated on so called injustices and grievances, and as solutions proposed from increasing the number of Tamil representation in the state council (in essence reduction of Sinhala representation) to a confederation, claiming that the eastern and northern provinces were so called homeland. The so called aspirations of the Tamils were also introduced and later the LTTE under Prabhakaran wanted a separate state. As a so called solution the thirteenth amendment was imposed on us by India going by their experience. However, the Sri Lankan situation is entirely different from that in India which did not even exist before the English came to that land mass known as Bharath or Dambadiva but never as a state or a country. India is a collection of dynastic kingdoms and as such a quasi federal constitution may be appropriate for that country created by the English. In Sri Lanka we have had a nation and a state from Pandukabhaya days and the tribes that lived in the country, including those who had come from Dambadiva, except for the Vedda tribe, formed the Sinhala nation. Immigrants at various times thereafter have been absorbed into the Sinhala nation, except for the Muslims who had arrived prior to the Portuguese and the Tamils who were brought by the Dutch.

The paradigm on which the so called Tamil problem has evolved is expressed in terms of grievances, injustices and aspirations. The Sinhala people have opposed not only these expressions but the “solutions” that have been proposed, simply because the paradigm itself is wrong. However, Tamil racism was not prepared to listen to the Sinhala opinion as it was backed by the English and the Tamils in Tamil Nadu who influenced the Indian government to take up an anti Sinhala stand. If not for the support Tamil racism had from the English and the Indian government it would have died a natural death long before Prabhakaran was born. One could even say that without the sponsorship of the English Tamil racism would not have been born.

Without listening to the Sinhala people Tamil racism carried on and whenever the Sinhala refused to give into their demands the Tamil racist leaders went a step further and asked for more. It has to be remembered that the thirteenth amendment itself was opposed by the Sinhala people in spite of Dixit and the other high powered diplomats and according to the Tamil racists and other pundits Prabhakaran carried on because of the “intransigence” of the Sinhala people. Prabhakaran is not outside Tamil racist politics and he was only another link and worked within the general paradigm of Tamil racist politics. From Ponnambalam Ramanathan to Velupillai Prabhakaran it was one chain and one paradigm and with the defeat of Prabhakaran Tamil racism cannot move further. Having fought for a separate state Tamil racism has been defeated by the Armed Forces ably led

by the President and the Secretary of Defence. There is nothing more the Tamil racists can ask for now and the paradigm has to be thrown away. Instead of a paradigm shift the Tamil racism backed by the western forces and India wants to go back along the same paradigm and to demand the government that the thirteenth amendment should be implemented with some additions referred to as thirteen plus by the pundits.

This is nothing but ridiculous. If the Sinhala people were willing to give all the powers under the thirteenth amendment and something more then the so called international community would have approved it and pressurized Prabhakaran to accept it. Prabhakaran depended on the “international community” and he would not have dared to ignore them in spite of his so called bravery. The Sinhala people decided otherwise and accepted the challenge of the LTTE and their sponsors and fought on without kneeling down before the western powers. The outcome of it was the defeat of the LTTE and hence of the Tamil racist paradigm. Neither the west nor India has any right to demand that the thirteenth amendment should be implemented with additional powers given to the Provincial Councils as all such demands have been defeated in the process that ended up in the Nandikadal lagoon. Why should the Sinhala people agree to implement thirteen plus now after defeating the LTTE when they could have agreed to do so without making the soldiers to sacrifice their lives to defeat the LTTE. The soldiers sacrificed their lives because the Sinhala people did not want to agree with the unreasonable demands of Tamil racism and thought that the LTTE which took up arms supplied by the west should be defeated.

It is not only Prabhakaran and the LTTE that were defeated last year but the entire paradigm of Tamil racism. Prabhakaran was part and parcel of the Tamil racist paradigm and was at the apex of the movement based on that paradigm. The Sinhala people (meaning of course the majority among them) do not want to get entangled in a defeated paradigm and it is time to think in terms of a new paradigm. There should be a paradigm shift in the Kuhnian sense and not in the sense of the seminar circuit in Colombo that does not know the difference between a paradigm and a parachute. At least the ordinary Tamils should now listen to the Sinhalas and try to understand why the latter oppose so called devolution of power.