

A tale of two nations – III

In social sciences it is not easy to generalize unlike in the case of physical sciences and generalizations have to be done with abstract concepts. Thus in social sciences there would always be cases that do not follow the general pattern and some would be happy with the adage “exception proves the rule”. Even in physical sciences there are exceptions the difference being that the exceptions themselves are general. In spite of these general exceptions the westerners practice these theories though they would not hesitate to state that if observations do not agree with the theories then the theories would be modified or sometimes even be rejected. This is nothing but western hypocrisy and very often the theories are not rejected as in the case of gravitational theory of Newton. This theory has survived in spite of the fact that no single planet or a comet moves along a path described by the so called universal gravitational theory. I always make it a point to tell my students in the Classical Mechanics class that no planet obeys Newton.

All theories and concepts including that of an external world are (wo)man made and we live in a (wo)man made world. No rationalist, objective materialist or any other person can show that an external world exists independent of the observer (mind) without appealing to the mind (i.e. independent of the observer). What these objective materialists do not want to accept is that even the concept of the so called external world which they think exists independent of the mind is a creation of the mind. **Nobody can show independent of the mind that an external world exists independent of the mind.** If anybody thinks that I have found the above statement in a western book or a journal he/she is mistaken.

In any event we were discussing the creation of an alien nation in Sri Lanka. This process could be generalised, bearing in mind that there are exceptions, and is applicable to most of the colonial countries and has been discussed by many authors though not in the same format. The alien nation created by the colonialists consists of those who are intellectually and emotionally European (English, French, Dutch etc., depending on the nation of the colonialists) and accept the supremacy of the relevant European culture. Very often they are also prepared to accept that the king or the queen of the European nation, when he/she exists, is also their king or the queen. Of course even the others accepted the king or the queen but that was under different circumstances. The language they prefer is the European language though they may have a knowledge of the language of the country, referred to as the vernacular “in the good old days”.

This alien nation was and is connected to the particular European nation by an umbilical cord and is part of the relevant European nation. They may not have franchise in the “mother country” at present, but for example there were Sri Lankans who would have loved to enjoy the “voting rights” as commonwealth citizens those days in England, meaning that they were considered as British subjects even after we were given independence. The aliens, meaning those who belonged to the alien nation were and are at home in the respective European countries and not in the native countries.

In Sri Lanka the alien nation is emotionally and intellectually English and is in general represented by the UNP. It does not mean that all those who are members of

the UNP belong to the alien nation but the leadership in general are aliens. However, this statement has to be qualified as the Senanayakes who became leaders of the UNP were not strict aliens as they were emotionally somewhat Sinhala. The predecessor of the UNP, the Ceylon National Congress had an alien leadership in general and the Senanyakes had to fight hard to become leaders of the Congress and later of the UNP. They were nobodies who had become somebodies but managed to be Sinhala emotionally though English intellectually. To become English intellectually one does not have to come first in the class or to pass S.S.C. in the first division but only to accept the supremacy of the western world implying the knowledge of the world created by the west during the last five hundred years or so together with that of the Classical world of the Greeks and the Romans. This does not mean that they would not consult a *Vedamahaththaya* occasionally but would look up to western medicine men and women in general.

Once I was told by an elderly gentleman from Panadura who had been educated first at Royal College and then at S. Thomas' College that those days Royal was somewhat hostile to "nobodies" from the provinces whereas he found S. Thomas' more hospitable to such students. It was perhaps true in general more than eighty years ago though the situation has changed considerably since then. However, the Anglican spirit had prevailed at Royal College which has produced more Bishops of the Anglican Church than the school that comes under the Bishop in respect of administration. Nobodies who did not strictly belong to the alien nation had to fight to become leaders of the political organisations that represented the aliens, and with the universal franchise it became somewhat easy for them to acquire leadership of those organisations.

The non-aliens, say in the case of Sinhala were all Sinhala emotionally, while some of them were English intellectually. The percentage of Sinhala people who are English intellectually has been increasing irrespective of the medium of instruction. As a person becomes more and more educated he/she is brainwashed to become English intellectually to a greater extent. By the time a student sits for the G. C. E. (Advanced Level) Examination he/she has lost his bearings in the intellectual world and has become *pavena parandela* in general. However, even these people are Sinhala (Buddhist) emotionally and though they could not become leaders of the UNP would be attracted by those leaders who are somewhat Sinhala emotionally. Senanayakes (educated at S. Thomas') had this advantage over the Jayawardhanes (educated at Royal) and even Bandaranaikes (educated as a boarder at the warden's residence at S. Thomas'), and in spite of their top hats and tail coats were more closer to the people emotionally than the latter who were clad in the national dress. The Senanayakes had been identified with the freedom struggle, the *Amadyapa Maha Sabha*, and were more Buddhist emotionally than Jayawardhanes and Bandaranaikes who had become converted to Buddhism perhaps through rational thinking. Those who were Sinhala emotionally could be attracted more easily by Senanayakes and with franchise they became better equipped to be leaders. Both Bandaranaike and Jayawardhane would become leaders (through the SLFP and the UNP respectively) and were able to attract the Sinhala Buddhists only after they identified themselves with the Sinhala Buddhist sentiments such as Sinhala as official language and *Buddha Jayanthi* and *Dharmishtha Samajaya*. The present day leadership of the UNP is not Sinhala emotionally, and even though Ranil tries hard to identify himself with the Sinhala people with his *raban playing, addressing the young as nangila and mallila (he should be addressing*

them as duula puthala) he does not have the natural ability to do so. It is quite clear that he is only acting and that he belongs to a different nation. He is not a bad politician but unfortunately he is in the wrong country. If he was born in England he probably could have ended up as a successful Prime Minister. (To be continued)