

A tale of two nations – Part V

The aliens in the country are English both intellectually and emotionally irrespective of whether they are Sinhala or Tamils. In the early part of the twentieth century there were Burghers and some Muslims who belonged to the English nation. These people who belonged to the English nation were under the local leadership of Burghers who wanted to create the so called Ceylonese “nation” which was nothing but the Ceylonese chapter of the English nation. It was an aborted nation as we have said in a previous article, though some people still strive to resurrect this aborted Chapter as the Sri Lankan nation. As the leadership of this nation changed from Burghers to Tamils in the twentieth century the Ponnambalam brothers together with their cousins in the Coomaraswamy family became the leaders of the so called Ceylonese nation and enjoyed all the privileges that the British were willing to give to them.

As we have said earlier there is a difference between Sinhala nationalism and Tamil nationalism. Sinhala nationalism had been cultivated over more than two millennia in the country and it worked from bottom to top. In other words the Sinhala nationalism was something that was there in the culture of the Sinhala people and nobody had to introduce nationalism to the Sinhala people as they had established themselves as a nation contrary to western theories on nation and nationalism. The Sinhala people had only to find leaders and what was difficult after the massacre of traditional Sinhala leadership by the “humanitarian” English in 1817-1818 was to find such leaders. In 1848 the Sinhala were able to find a “transitional” leadership in Puran Appu and Gongalegoda Banda. Towards the end of the nineteenth century Anagarika Dharmapala became the leader of the Sinhala Buddhists who were outside the “Ceylonese” circle.

The Senanayakes then became leaders of the Sinhala with their work in the “Amadyapa Sabha” and other such movements. The Senanayakes were a “halfway house” in between Ceylonese and Sinhala and were able to attract the Sinhala people as well as the Ceylonese Chapter of the English nation. When the UNP was formed under the leadership of D S Senanayake the Sinhala people who were emotionally and intellectually Sinhala gathered around the UNP not because such people were “Ceylonese” or belonged to the Ceylonese Chapter of the English nation but they thought that the UNP under D S Senanayake was nationalist. Most of the Sangha until very recently voted for the UNP due to the nationalistic sentiments. The so called internationalist attitude of the Marxists helped this trend and if any Sinhala “vedamahaththaya or iskolemahaththaya” joined the LSSP it was because they thought that by being anti colonialist the LSSP was nationalist. After the SLFP became the party of Sinhala *Jathikathva* “vedamahaththayas and iskolemahaththayas” in overwhelmingly joined that party and not the Marxist parties. However, some of them who had joined these parties previously continued to remain as party members and most of them were happy when these parties went into coalitions with the SLFP, unlike a few lawyers, academics and lumpen proletariat who decided to establish the so called parties of the proletariat.

After the SLFP was formed the nationalistic Sinhala people shifted from the UNP to the SLFP. However it did not happen overnight. The SLFP was originally a liberal party, but under pressure from Sinhala nationalism, especially after 1953, when the party gradually adopted nationalistic policies. It is not the SLFP nor S W R D Bandaranaike who took nationalism to the people but it happened the other way round. The Sinhala nationalism by 1953 was led by people such as Mr. L. H. Mettananda who had canvassed for free education against the wrath of the Ceylonese Chapter of the English nation. The cartoonist in the Daily News, the so called flag staff of the Lake House and the paper of the English nation of the country did not care two hoots for any kind of decency when he wanted to criticize Mr. Mettananda's policies. The cartoonist was a Burgher and naturally he did not write in favour of Sinhala nationalism. Most of the Burghers were members of the English nation in the country and they wanted to maintain the status quo at that time, namely the supremacy of their nation in what they called Ceylon. They have since then opposed concepts such as *Rata Jathiya Agama* of the Sinhala Buddhists who have contributed over millennia to establish a unique culture in this country.

A nation, whether one goes by the western or other definitions of nation has to have a country unless one wants to consider so called diaspora in various countries as parts of different nations. In that case England will have not only the English nation but nations such as Tamil Chinese and Arabic. However even the westerners who are portrayed as great humanists would not like to have number of nations in their countries. We have said that a nation has one prominent, dominant or significant culture and may be other cultures but not so called multiculturalism with equal status for all cultures number of times but it needs repetition as the members and some associated members of the English nation of the country continue to ignore this salient phenomenon. (An associated member of the English nation may be basically a Tamil Hindu or a Muslim or even a Sinhala who identifies himself with the English nation intellectually for the simple reason that he does not tolerate what he calls Sinhala supremacy. These associated members cannot fight against Sinhala Buddhist culture by themselves and therefore associate with the dominant Anglo Saxon culture in respect of so called human rights and associated stuff. Some of these people would like to impose their inherent Tamil Hindu or Muslim culture on the Sinhala people but are unable to do so. Recently such an associated member wanted President Rajapakse to pour sand on his head instead of worshipping the land or the mother country. It was nothing but asking the President of Sri Lanka, yes the Sinhala Buddhist country, to follow Muslim practices giving up what he has acquired from the Sinhala Buddhist culture. It may or may not be a so called Freudian slip, I must say that I do not have much respect for pseudo western psychologists such as Freud or the new Freuds in the postmodernist movement, but it certainly speaks volumes for what they want this country to be).

A nation has one dominant, prominent or significant culture. In the west it is invariably a variant of the Judaic Christian country and it is always the dominant culture. They may not talk of *rata Jathiya ha agama* but they will fight for their king or queen. They have different ways of expressing their allegiance to the country, the nation and the religion (culture) and they will not hesitate to impose their cultural dominance when it is necessary. Of all the colonialisms that the world has seen over thousands of years it is the western colonialism that has three interdependent components political, economical and cultural. Previous colonialisms were mainly

concerned with political aspect and any cultural effects would have been a corollary of political authority. Sometimes as in the case of Ariyans invading Dambadiva (there was no India or even Bharat then) the invaders not only gave their culture to the inhabitants of the country but they also borrowed from the locals many cultural aspects. However in western colonialism there is a cultural component interdependent with the political and the economical and in a sense Gramscian concept of hegemony is associated with this new form of colonialism.

The associated members of the Ceylon chapter of the English nation should be especially concerned with what is happening in western countries such as England and its colonies in Britain, Australia, USA, France. These countries do not want the Muslim women to wear their traditional dress not to speak of allowing pouring sand on their heads. The Muslims in some of these countries have been asked to go back to their countries if they do not want to abide by the western Christian dress code. The westerners would not tolerate what they call Muslim Fundamentalism in their countries as for them their *rata Jathiya ha agama* are more important than the so called human rights. (To be continued)