

THE SETTING FOR A DICTATORSHIP

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Date: Circa 1964

I make this statement with a deep sense of responsibility. In the year 1956, a large number of Bhikkhus and myself campaigned throughout the country appealing to the people to return the late Mr. S W R D Bandaranaike to power on his pledge to implement the Buddhist Commission Report. Everyone knows that he won a landslide victory exceeding all expectations. Whatever differences I had with him, I always held him in high esteem as a true democrat.

It is by pure accident that Mrs. Sirimavo Bandaranaike succeeded him as Prime Minister. Taking everything into consideration, I must state that our country has suffered tremendously owing to her ignorance and incompetence. Those who have inside knowledge, are well aware how she had to be groomed for important occasions.

This was done first by an ex-Minister of “a little bit of totalitarianism” fame, then by a Civil Servant who is I believe, obsessed with Nandi Vakyam Prophecies. Before long, these two grooms fell out and there was trouble.

Then came the coalition. Since the Coalition, Mrs. Bandaranaike has been dominated by the Marxists who began to use her as a tool to establish totalitarianism. One of them Dr Colvin R de Silva has told the peasants at Matale that when the Coalition comes to power they will squeeze the necks of capitalists with the Samasaja sickle and smash their heads with the Samasamaja hammer. Another Marxist, Mr Anil Moonesinghe has announced that they will take over Lake House and make it a red fortress. Yet another Marxist, Mr Stanley Tillekeratne, has declared that if the Coalition Government is returned to power and Dr N M Perera becomes Minister Finance there will be no more elections in the country. Yet another Marxist, Mr S D Bandaranayake, has proclaimed from housetops that the best form of government is a dictatorship. Similar views have been publicly expressed by Mr P B Balasuriya and Mr S K Suriyarachchi. Nevertheless, Mrs Bandaranaike has remained silent, and silence on so vital a matter can only mean approval.

Flattery

Is Mrs Bandaranaike, who came to power on the crest of an emotional wave, justified in committing or yielding the country to a dictatorship, when even the late Mr Bandaranaike, who was returned to power by the great social revolution of 1956, remained a true democrat till the last?

The Marxists have already showered fulsome flattery on her by saying that Mrs Bandaranaike is a far abler statesman than the late Mr Bandaranaike. This is echoed and re-echoed by stooges schemers and conspirators. Why should such a palpable lie be told? Do you know that Marxists hate the truth?

Even Lenin calmly brushed aside all obligations in the realm of truth telling, whenever falsehood would serve the revolution more effectively?

Marxists have well begun their campaign. They are now planning to exalt the Prime Minister into a “Goddess” with clay feet by the devices of pageantry publicity and display. Enthroned on a high pedestal the “Goddess” is in splendid isolation and only occasionally can she cast a hasty glance on the humbler folks below. Here is the setting for a dictatorship and not for democracy.

Accordingly, this objective is borne in mind by the Marxists who arrange public meetings at which Mrs. Bandaranaike is scheduled to speak. They take steps to ensure that the meeting-place is the Mecca of thousands of Marxist trade unionists, Marxist teachers, Marxist Government Servants Marxist State Corporation employees, Marxist CWE racketeers and their fellow travelers.

They are transported free by hundreds of CTB buses, which are withdrawn from the normal routes, and by the CGR. If as a result the general public get over-crowded buses or no buses, over-crowded trains or no trains, they must put up with any inconvenience. At the meeting-place there are pandals, decorations and garlands galore: there is plenty of obeisance and acclamation. Thereupon trained applauders take up strategic positions to lead prolonged applause. Subsequently trained hirelings spotlight the pageantry and display in crowded trains crowded buses and crowded bus-stands.

Misuse

Indeed, the Marxist deification of Mrs Bandaranaike does not concern us at all. What concerns us really is the misuse of public property by private parties.

It should be remembered that the new election law, which prohibits the use of flags, posters and vehicles to convey voters on polling day is designed to remove all external pressure that interferes with the voters’ free and unfettered choice of a candidate. The spirit of the election law is flouted by the discrimination shown in favour of one political party and against other political parties.

If one party gets an enlarged C T B Bus Service to its meetings, and other parties get no bus service at all to its meetings, that is downright plunder of public property for private use.

If one party airlifts 4,000 Radio Sets and Loud Speakers at public expense and gets a lion’s share for its own use and spares just a few to other parties, that is downright plunder of public property for private use. If one party uses Radio Ceylon for its election propaganda and other parties are prevented from doing so, that is downright plunder of public property for private use.

Moreover, the party that enjoys all these unlawful privileges is in a position to drive teachers and other Government servants from pillar to post to suit the whims and fancies of its candidates

Deified

Deified by the Marxists, Mrs Bandaranaike is towing the Marxist line. Now she talks of 'polarisation of forces', 'class struggle.' Apparently she does not know the meanings of these exclusive Marxist terms. She knows neither Buddhism nor Marxism nor their respective roles in the history of mankind. Obviously she has forgotten that she owes her place just as the late Mr Bandaranaike owes his place to the peaceful Social Revolution of 1956. We know that the Marxist line she is towing is entirely opposed to the objectives of that Social Revolution.

It is for this reason that a large number of Bhikkhus who worked very hard for the late Mr Bandaranaike are now working against Mrs Bandaranaike. I know that they are interested in the cause and not in individuals. At the moment two names come to my mind, namely Devamottawe Amarawansa Thero and Medagoda Dhammajothi Thero, I know personally how they suffered untold hardships and spent sleepless nights, while canvassing support for the late Mr Bandaranaike. But today these Bhikkhus are insulted not only by the Marxists but also by Mrs Bandaranaike herself. At the same time the Coalition Government has got a number of Bhikkhus who are paid by the State to say that Marxism is no danger to Buddhism and that it is in conformity with Buddhism.

Now I come to know what Mrs Bandaranaike's attitude to Buddhism is. She talks glibly about a rightful place for Buddhism. Let us see how she has tackled some of the vital problems of Buddhists.

1. The universal demand of the Buddhists is that the Government should encourage prohibition. Mrs Bandaranaike's reply is that 90 per cent of the Buddhists support the Government policy of spreading the drink-habit.
2. The Buddhists want vested schools with a majority of Buddhist children to have Buddhist Head Teachers. Mrs. Bandaranaike replies by appointing Catholic teachers to vested schools attended by one hundred per cent of Buddhist children.
3. The National Education Commission Report (1961) condemned political interference in the appointments and transfers of teachers. The Ministry of Education has become an Employment Bureau for the stooges and agents of party candidates, and education in the country is in a mess.
4. The frequent complaint of the Buddhists that mercantile firms discriminate against them appears to have been ignored by Mrs Bandaranaike. Some of the firms are known however to have given jobs to V.I.P.s' children or relations.

5. The finances of Buddhist Temporalities are rigidly controlled by the Government while the finances of Catholic Temporalities are a secret even to Government. This discrimination continues even though we have pointed it out to Mrs Bandaranaike.
6. Buddhist Charities have been subjected to income tax with retrospective effect from 1955. Consequently, Buddhist Charities like Anagarika Dharmapala Trust are facing bankruptcy today. On the other hand according to the minutes of the meeting of the St. Joseph's College Welfare Association held on 15th May 1961 the Corporation of the Archbishop of Colombo is free of income tax.

Disruption

Today, Mrs Bandaranaike goes about saying that the Coalition Government was thrown out by the machinations of Catholic Action. But despite the assurances given by the Government to appoint a Catholic Action Commission no action has been taken. Even the SLFP Manifesto makes no mention about it.

It is thus clear that when Mrs. Bandaranaike had the chance of redressing the genuine grievances of Buddhists, she did not do so. Instead, she joined the Marxists and disrupted the Maha Sangha and the Buddhist laity. She must accept her share of responsibility for the anti-Buddhist atmosphere prevalent in the country today. The Maha Sangha is insulted and assaulted.

If Mrs Bandaranaike honestly believes that there should be a place for Buddhism why does she allow the red menace in the CTB to attack innocent Bhikkhus?

The Coalition Group is using Buddhism for that Group's own dictatorial designs. If and when dictatorship is set up Mrs Bandaranaike will have no place in it . For as I have pointed out in a previous article, should a dictatorship be set up, socialism will be swallowed up by Marxism. That means that under a Marxist dictatorship Bandaranaike will be the first to be liquidated.