

The Jewish Kingdom of Israel formed by ten northern tribes and ruled by the wise king Solomon was destroyed by Assyrians in the eighth century B.C. The kingdom lasted two full centuries.

The political dynasty of Bandaranaiques presided over by a modern day Solomon in the person of Solomon West Ridgeway Dias Bandaranaike, with the collaboration and blessings of the five-fold political onslaught of the Buddhist clergy, the Ayurvedic physicians, vernacular teachers, peasants and workers was destroyed by his own daughter Chandrika. The dynasty of this modern day Solomon lasted barely five decades.

There aren't many dynasties in Sri Lanka for its people to boast about. Although there had been quite a few Prime Ministers and Presidents in the country, only other political dynasty worth mentioning is that of Senanayakes, which produced the independent Ceylon's first P.M. It is also worth mentioning that it remains the only political dynasty of the island with an unblemished record. Even without Senanayake Samudraya or D. S. Senanayake and Dudley Senanayake Vidyalayaks to remind the people of their service, a grateful nation will remember the two Senanayakes for a long time.

However, D.S. and Dudley had no other to step into their shoes and carry on the dynasty (Rukman is not made for such a role). The most powerful President of Sri Lanka tried his utmost to perpetuate his name at least by displaying a Sri Jayewardenepura at the portals of an ancient capital. That only will make the discerning people of the tiny island to observe the name board with derision and dismay.

Ranasinghe Premadasa, former P.M. and President has yet to get a dynasty going by his name. His son who has already made his mark on the political scene, may well become the next President and lay the foundation for a political dynasty under their name.

Thus with the only other political dynasty having been dragged through the mud, only Senanayakes remain the credible political dynasty so far.

Now we get the news that a liberator is due to appear on the scene within the foreseeable future, a liberator in the guise of an offspring of the destroyer.

If this news about the coming of a messiah by the name of Vimukthi is not fiction, one has to wonder what the newcomer will be liberating the dynasty from.

Vimukthi is a far more powerful word than Solomon, which may signify the immensity of the intended change. One can be pretty certain that Vimukthi in this context means something alien to the faithful followers of the various religions hope and pray for. It is in a way, similar to the liberation the working masses struggle for under the guidance of their revolutionary masters. Whereas the liberation sought by them is from the well-established capitalist rulers with all means of attack and violence, this, in way, is going to be a fight against enemies within. In short it will be a deadly struggle, a last ditch battle, to liberate the dynasty from the clutches of the five-fold power base his grandfather consolidated his political career and future on.

Similarities between SWRD and his grandson Vimukthi are confined to mere two factors, namely their common inheritance of the Bandaranaike name (in the case of one in a half hearted way) and the British education both benefited from. It is not certain, however, whether it was at the same seat of learning.

SWRD, the son of Sir Solomon of Horagolla Walawwa, received a tumultuous welcome from the people of Attanagalla when he returned to the island from England. That was before he even thought of entering politics. Vimukthi, his London-based grandson, is said to be the inheritor of Horagolla Walawwa too. Whether new Hamuduruwo of Horagolla will receive the same reception from the people in and around the man-

sion is anyone's guess.

That however, does not mean there will not be a welcoming party for the new liberator. He will, no doubt, be walking to his ancestral walawwa (at least for a cup of tea for it appears that it has been given out to some restaurateur or a hotelier) on a very warm welcome mat spread out by the harshest critics and strongest opponents of his illustrious grandfather. There is some affinity though, they are descendants of SWRD's erstwhile supporters he left high and dry on deserting them to set up his own political dynasty by the name of Bandaranaike.

It is very likely that the newly-minted liberator will prefer to use his film star father's name rather than flaunting that of his grandfather. He may even try to build his political future around the aura his father created for himself as an idol of the silver screen. He will also have another advantage inherited from his famous father, as a



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handsome man able to outshine the idol. The most important advantage of course will be the fact that he has a guardian Goddess, the Goddess of Destruction, who will, no doubt, choreograph his every move on the political stage. His director is going to be an outsider to the clan. He will have no choice in the matter. The drama that he will present, whether it will be called comedy or tragedy, will invariably be directed by the most experienced politician Of Sri Lanka. He is the ever-green leader of the powerful political party his grandfather quit in search of a better future some fifty odd years ago. This director has an unenviable record and an unimaginable survival capacity on the political stage. In other words, he claims the world record for facing the highest number of defeats at elections.

Because of this record the new savior will have to play second fiddle to the already entrenched boss in leading the juggernaut against everything his grandfather stood for. The real challenge for the liberator will be to prevent this much-maligned leader from chalking up another inglorious defeat, arguably the nineteenth in his political career.

In case the new liberator fails to achieve this impossible miracle, the marvelous ethereal castle his mother has been building so long, brick by brick, will crash to the ground along with all her hopes of a political resurrection.

The mother and son combination will achieve one thing; that is to perform the last rites on a political dynasty the masses of the tiny island adored and protected as their own once upon a time.

The grateful nation of Sri Lanka, will, of course, remember their beloved Prime Ministers SWR-ERD and Sirimavo, with devotion. Even if a future UNP government decides, as its leader once did, to get rid of the B.I.A. their attitude will not change. How about their daughter, the only woman President of Sri Lanka? There is Chandrika Weva in the South for them to think of her if they wish to. And it is possible that a stray peasant will walk down the dam of the reservoir and peep into the water to see whether he can detect the figure of a woman who has fallen from the Waters Edge.

Vimukthi will withdraw to his familiar surroundings in the salubrious climate of the land of the colonial rulers who were once adored and entertained by his great grandfather, the other Solomon.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE, IN PLAIN ENGLISH:



Lasantha Pethiyagoda

To this land of opportunity, they come from poor, unjust or war-torn countries, looking for a better life in the West. We tell them we have a just, peaceful environment and believe in a "fair go" for all, an egalitarian society with equal opportunity.

Anyway, after initial "teething problems" and "growing pains" they "settle down", with a roof above their heads, carpet or tile underneath their feet, a fridge with cheap ice cream, low-fat milk, a dozen eggs that weigh 700 grams or 660 grams or more, TV with a remote control, maybe two cars (the older one for the missus who does her shopping and transports the kids to and from school, job (sometimes not that flash if it has to be explained to the folk back home), mortgage, several debit and credit cards etc, and PIN numbers for everything from bank accounts to remote access for the home phone.

They watch SBS TV for glimpses of "home" and more dark skin and foreign accents, while the children are hooked on Channels 7,9,10 etc, which immerse them with thick "Aussie" accents in as little as six months after "arriving". Non-English-speaking parents look on in admiration when the kids speak "Aussie", a far cry from their remote village accents back home.

Meanwhile, the bread-winners try to find motor mechanics, tradesmen and plumbers of their "own kind" as they feel being "ripped-off" otherwise. Most often, unbeknownst to them, they get ripped-off anyway.... In benign situations they willingly part with their hard-earned money like everyone else, at the supermarket counter, petrol pump and energy or phone merchants. At least these mega-companies rip off everyone equally...

On "days-off" they check out the suburbs. In "affluent" suburbs, its all white and pale faces with polite English and proper manners; in the working-class suburbs, its mostly dark skins, foreign accents, swearing, loitering, rubbish and squalor. Of course, some dark skins have "infiltrated" the middle-class suburbs and turn up their noses at the "refugees" while trying to imitate their masters.

At work, they deliberately accentuate their otherwise correct pronunciation with "car-ik" for cake, and "ah-yil" for eight and vainly study the latest foxy news while bopping to the "dinkum" beats on radio. "Oh how I wish I had fairer skin..." becomes a regular sigh. Meanwhile, the "News" is a big need for the middle-aged. They buy all the community newspapers for news from home and watch the evening "News" on TV for fun. Usually its bad news, breathlessly and earnestly reported. So many killed, so much destroyed, chaos, mayhem, misery and despair, (carefully "sanitised" for pleasant view-

ing) together with victory, thrills and sensation, glamour and what is happening with the rich and famous.

On TV, all of ten seconds reporting twenty thousand people washed away in a Bangladesh flash-flood, and a mere full two minutes on the disappearance of a little blonde-haired boy in the inner suburbs...Oh how sad for his distraught parents...

The papers' headline blares: "British tourist dies in the Jakarta bombing" and in small print in an inner page: "Sectarian violence in Iraq claims another sixty five lives yesterday, taking this month's total to four thousand according to morgue statistics".

Ok, ok, tell me if "Aussies" have to be interested in killings and washing away of people thousands of kilometres away from Australia? Not really...After all, it has always been misery for the Third World, and why should we report how many millions die of starvation or ethnic cleansing wars or natural disasters? ... Happens all the time, maite, not big news like when a British cousin gets killed on holiday overseas, or young Jake's disappearance from Bondi beach, huh?

Anyway, we all know how we are fighting terrorism in the Middle East and bringing democracy to the wretches over there, ridding their governments of brutal tyrants and installing representative leaders. In that noble cause, a few Australian soldiers had recently been injured (look fire from the "enemy") We cannot imagine, according to the press and TV, how ungrateful some Iraqis can be, to treat their liberators so shabbily. Our young men in uniform are laying their necks on the line for them...God bless them (Oh, never mind there was never, ever a suicide bombing in Saddam's Iraq) How quickly, some people change under evil influence!

You know, we are a fair bunch in this young and free country of plenty. Ask any Aborigine, how hard we try to break their spirit addiction. (I mean alcohol, not spirit as in self-confidence, God forbid) Hey, if you're a migrant, just shut up and count your blessings you're having it easy here, instead of knocking Australia (are you the "enemy within"?)

Anyway, be alert, but not alarmed, 'cos we're under attack from those who hate our freedoms, not to mention the slamo-facist extremists whose precious natural resources we have coveted and whose societies we destroy in order to help them re-build their lives our way...credit card debt, pornography, early-teen sex, computer war-games, drugs, junk food...so much more fun than goat milk, palm dates and sand storms ..."fair-dinkum maite!"

