

The title of the book that the Victorian writer Helek Garner wrote on the tricky subject of sexual harassment at the University of Melbourne was 'The First Stone' reminiscent of the admonition by the Christ himself to those trying to judge wrong-doers.

It is part of human nature to sit on judgement on every other person while engaging oneself in all the possible evils and corruptions that is humanly available.

The most outstanding instance in this regard is the action by H.E. Junius Jayewardene, who boasted of achieving one long ambition of his, that of getting his back on a Ratwatte. His victim was no simple Ratwatte, but the First Woman Prime Minister of the World and a Bandaranike into the bargain.

J.R. did one of the most deplorable political acts in democratic history and removed Mrs. Bandaranaike from Parliament and deprived her of all political rights.

J.R. also proved to the whole world that when you enjoy absolute power anything is possible for someone who wants to wield power to silence opposition and feel all-powerful.

Is that what is happening now in Sri Lanka?

Are those casting stones at the Chief Justice persons who have never sinned? Who among the vast majority that voted to oust her can honestly claim to be honest and beyond corruption? Who is the pure man or woman that can point a finger at a wrong doer and feel comfortable about himself?



THE FIRST STONE

J.R. planned his campaign to oust Mrs. B. he had a family tree drawn nicely representing the various branches of the tree spreading across the entire body politic and the social fabric of the country. As far as I can remember, it had a terrific impact on the whole election.

Let us go back to history again. This time to the famous St. Francisco conference, at which one of the participants by the name of J.R. Jayewardene almost enlightened the whole world with his doctrine of ahimsa quoting the Buddha's words ' nahi verena verani' I am pretty certain that his audience was spell-bound.

Coming to more recent events, the current President of Sri Lanka too did something similar at the UN General Assembly, when he quoted the Buddha in his admonition to the Licchavis.

' Meet in peace
Discuss or negotiate in peace
and disperse in peace'

Both these leaders no doubt had in their mind the compassion that is essential in dealing with people in whatever circumstances.

J.R. is not among us to respond but the current President is there to enlighten all of us if he cares to, as to what direction he wishes to lead the country, and what part of that teaching he still believes in, so that we can hope for something better in the future.

As far as the Sri Lankan Government is concerned, the issue of the C.J.'s dismissal is over and a new C. J. has taken his oaths. Is that really the end of the matter? What about the international community which has been watching this

with interest, if not dismay?

Are they satisfied? Will they accept the verdict of the Government? Can they still embarrass the Government?

All that is yet to be seen, but what one can safely say is that the reputation the country enjoys in the international community is not very encouraging right now and is getting worse day by day. How long can a government keep ignoring this situation and carry on regardless?

A little bit of humour or laughter are good medicines for a person who is down and out. It also works in the case of nations or countries. Sri Lanka at the moment is in dire need of a big dose of that concoction. "oy who wants to Let us go back in history to get some prize beverage.

We are going to meet the Emperor with no cloths. His Majesty is parading the streets of the city in all his glory with the ministers and other important men in attendance. Everyone is prising the clothes that the Emperor is wearing. No one dares point out that he is stark naked. No. There is one little boy who has no fear of doubts.

He shouts at the top of his voice, ' See the Emperor is walking naked.'

Will anyone take note of his warning this time?"



My assessment is that no Sri Lankan politician at the present time has the credibility to go before the public and present himself or herself as pure and honest. How on earth can a politician in

in case someone decides to do the same with Rajapakses, how pretty will the tree be?

To be frank, I am not conversant with the

details of charges or malpractices levelled against the Chief Justice. I am only looking at it from a common man's point of view. In the eyes of any common man, all this commotion looks nothing but a dirty campaign to retain power and crush all possible opposition.

Intolerance of opposition is the beginning of dictatorship, that was obvious in Soviet Russia and all other communist countries. How can a country that has regular elections and freedom of expression sink that low? one might ask. I too have the same question to be raised. Is the country heading in that direction?

I do not have any proof or the slightest indication of such development, but my doubts are still there.

Intolerance of opposition is the beginning of dictatorship.

his proper senses stand up and charge a government official of corruption or malpractice?

Going by the example set by the first Executive President of Sri Lanka, one wonders whether the current incumbent too is going along the same path, by removing an obstacle on his path, as J.R. removed Mrs. B. to make sure no worthwhile politician would be there to contest him. This time too, it is a Bandaranayake, but a Bandaranayake minus the 'naike' ending to remind people of their clan's doubtful origin. Perhaps the very sound is threatening as it was one of them that almost robbed him of the opportunity to contest.

Or is it a family matter? When

