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Hon. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's Political Testament

The Committee System

S. SIVASUBRAMANIAM

The following are some extracts from one of the speeches delivered by the late respected Prime Minister Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike regarding the Cabinet System of Government and Government by Executive Committee and other alternatives:—

"Under this system, the opposition Party or Parties, having no voice in the Government and and only the power to oppose and criticise Government measures, naturally tended to carry that opposition and criticism to the fullest length possible and to oppose all Government measures, whether good or bad. As far as back-benchers of the Government Party were concerned, they were generally expected merely to serve the purpose of a voting machine in order to carry such measures through the Parliament.

"The advantages of this system, where it was possible to work it successfully, were the following:—

"Firstly, stability of a Government was reasonably ensured for the life time of each Parliament;

Secondly, efficiency of kind was ensured by real control and guidance of policy being in the hands of a few men in the Cabinet who dictated to the rest of the Cabinet, who in turn, dictated to the Government Party in Parliament;

"Thirdly, a co-ordinated policy could be better achieved under this system.

"The success of this system depends primarily on the existence of two parties, one or the other of which could obtain an

overall majority at a General Election. If such a position does not obtain, then the whole situation changes and the disadvantages tend to outweigh the advantages. The Two-Party idea is not suitable for coalitions and, where coalitions become necessary owing to the fact that no one Party has an overall majority, then this system results in the weakening of Government and, in the end, may result in the complete breakdown of the whole system.

"Mr. Ramsay Mac Donald's first Labour Government is an example although, fortunately for England, the position righted itself later by one Party being able to achieve an absolute majority. What happened in France is a further proof of the weakness of coalitions under this system. In Burma, when the A. F. P. L. Party under U Nu split and U Nu was compelled to seek the assistance of Communist elements in Parliament in order to carry on the Government, there was a breakdown, resulting in the establishment (even temporarily) of a military dictatorship.

"In Indonesia, the same thing happened to the coalition Government of Sastroamidjojo with the same result.

"Secondly, owing to the fact that the Opposition in Parliament has no voice in the Government, there is a tendency on their part to subordinate national interests to purely Party considerations. There is also widespread frustration both amongst members of the Opposition, whose chief function is apparently to oppose, and back benchers of the Government whose chief function is to vote for Government measures.

The most important disadvantage is, of course, the tendency to subordinate national needs to Party needs.

"Although the British system proved successful in their own particular circumstances, it is wrong to assume that it is either the best of the most likely to succeed in the case of other countries where the circumstances are different. In my opinion, what appears to some people as the breakdown of Democracy itself in certain countries recently, is really not a failure of Democracy but of the particular democratic machinery adopted.

"In our own country we had the Executive Committee System from 1931 to 1946. There were, no doubt, defects in this system as it was worked in Ceylon, but it has always been my view that it was a mistake to have scrapped it altogether without first attempting, at least to remedy those defects while retaining the system. We have adopted lock, stock and barrel the British Machinery. It would appear that we are entering an era in our political life when the defects of the system are likely to manifest themselves increasingly, and the position deserves serious consideration of the Joint Select Committee.

"Apologists for the British System claim not only that it is the best system but that it can and should work in other countries as well. They say that its failure in France was due to the fact that the defeat of the Government did not involve the dissolution of Parliament, and therefore frequent changes of Government during the lifetime of a Parliament became possible. They claim that if Parliament were dissolved and general elections held whenever the Government was outvoted (at least on some major issue) in Parliament, eventually the

BRIDEGROOM'S PRICE

BY V. SUBRAMANIAM
Saiva - Pulavar

As if the millions of evils from which the Tamil Community is suffering are not sufficient, a new evil of a very formidable and demoralising character in the form of Bridegroom's price (paradakhna வரதட்சிணை in India) has appeared amongst us. The rich and the poor who have the good fortune of having sons, have been shamelessly extorting money and concessions from the parents of the brides irrespective of the means and circumstances of the latter, taking undue advantages, of the Shastric injunction that girls should be married before they attain puberty. In the age when Smritis (ஸ்மிருதிகள்) were written, the practice of demanding a price for the girl to be married was known as Kanya-sulka prevailed in the lower strata of society (among the Brahmins). Our saintly Law-givers condemned it in strongest language as "the sale of human flesh"; and declared that the girl so purchased and married was not Dharma Pathini (தர்மபத்தினி) and that she was unfit to associate with her husband in the performance of holy sacrifices. Compared to Vara Dakshinai Kanya Sulka was a lesser evil. If our great Rishis had to deal with the exorbitant demands now made for bridegroom's price and their consequences, they would have treated it as a graver evil than Kanya Sulka.

The obligation of husband to protect his wife is imperative and accepted by all nations, civilised or uncivilised, and no sane man can be found who would ever think of disputing it. The general custom has been to make valuable presents to the bride in the shape of ornaments and costly clothes or money by the bridegroom's parents. Until very recently it was considered very dishonourable to ask for anything on account of the bridegroom. It is even inconsistent with the general and imperative obligation of the husband and our hoary customs to demand even a dowry from the parents of the bride for the maintenance or use of the girl.

If the money (Varadhakshani) now demanded takes the form of investment for the special use of the bride there can be no serious objection to it. But almost all those who ask for Varadhakshani take it for the use of the bridegroom or his family. A person who is in debt, bargains for it to raise funds to discharge his debts. Another person means to recoup by it the expenditure he has incurred on his son's education. A third person takes it nominally for his son but with the object of using it for his daughter's marriage. The amount payable is fixed with reference to the necessities of the bridegroom and his parents without any consideration for the means and circumstances of the bride's parents. The unfortunate father of the girl who is in fear of her advancing in age is driven to make most unscrupulous and ruinous

Marriage is a solemn and irrevocable contract lasting for life, giving rise to a world of perpetual and important duties, requiring the assistance of virtues for their proper discharge. A contract of this high character and importance should not be based upon sordid and squalid considerations which naturally blind the parties to its noble as-

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THOUGHTS TO BE TREASURED

அர் அறிவார் எல்லாம்
அகன்ற நெறி அருளும்
பேர் அறிவான் வராத இன்

Who is there that can know (God) if the Omniscient Lord does not appear and gracefully bestow infinite Grace?

- Tiruvartupayan.



தமிழ்நாட்டில் இன்றைய நிலைமை
தமிழ்நாட்டில் இன்றைய நிலைமை
தமிழ்நாட்டில் இன்றைய நிலைமை
தமிழ்நாட்டில் இன்றைய நிலைமை

Hindu Organ

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 27, 1970

STUDENTS ON A ONE-DAY STRIKE

Striking a very realistic note, the students of the Northern Peninsula demonstrated their solidarity when they assembled in a massive march to the Jaffna Esplanade last Tuesday in protest against the new method of admissions to the different Universities of this country. Steering clear of party affiliations and ideological leanings, the students maintained a lofty level of disapproval of the decisions of the Minister of Education in the matter of admissions to the Universities. Special mention must be made of the thoughtful precaution the demonstrators had taken in issuing a warning to political leaders not to mar the noble efforts of the students by attempting to draw the red-herring of politics across the track. It was a students' affair, pure and simple.

A student is a person who studies in order to qualify himself or herself for some occupation or who devotes himself or herself to some branch of learning or is under instruction at University or other place of higher education or technical training. The endeavour then is both necessary and legitimate. And every student knows that merit will win and therefore expects that excellence in studies would be the sole criterion for entering into higher fields of education or for obtaining employment. Denial of this universal method of evaluation in the matter of selection for learning or work will certainly be unreasonable.

Speaker after speaker at the protest meeting re-

iterated the only aim of the demonstrators as a protest against the denial of justice. No student demanded or required political help. The cause of the students was just: all that the students asked for was justice.

The genuineness of the grievances of the striking students was clearly seen in the method of protest; there was no shouting, no uproarious outburst. That the students know how to conduct themselves in such circumstances is a welcome sign. It is also a warning to our politicians who waste their energy in tall talk and commonplace challenges

RAMANATHAN THE REAL LEADER

Now more than ever before, the Tamil speaking people think of Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan and his equally illustrious brother Sir P. Arunachalam and console themselves with the reflection that in the past they had patriotic leaders who brought glory not only to their own community but to the country as a whole. In the nineteenth century and the first quarter of the present century the Tamil Community enjoyed the rare privilege of having been guided by a long line of large-hearted leaders who equipped themselves with the necessary learning, cultural and religious training. In addition they derived inspiration from the leadership in other countries. They were not merely statesmen; they were scholars; and they were spiritually well advanced. Hence patriotism became a matter of paramount duty for them.

Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan along with his revered brother maintained the magnificent tradition of patriotic service for which their forbears were well known and served their country and their country men with deep devotion. Sir Ramanathan's contribution to the general welfare is best reflected in the shrines, the schools and the societies which were established by him. Education, primary and higher, engaged his best attention. He persevered to preserve the tradition of religious practice in the context of education. In political agitation he relied on profound thinking, proper understanding and patriotic perspective. His stature was certainly significant for he provided the country with real leadership.

Hon. S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike's Political Testament

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people would vote some Party or another into power with an absolute majority. This of course is a possibility, but it appears to me to savour of wishful thinking.

"It is equally possible for more or less the same position to be repeated time after time at General Elections, particularly when parties are not divided solely on wide political and economic issues but where other considerations such as those of race, religion, etc., enter into the picture. Meanwhile the steadily weakening democratic machinery may, as it has done in certain other countries lead to some form of military dictatorship.

"If the danger is, as I am inclined to think, that democracy itself may disappear owing to the failure of the machine, then surely it is wise to consider modifications of the machine in order to place on a sound footing the principle of Democratic Parliamentary Government.

"I have already referred to the Executive Committee form of Government of which we ourselves had experience for fifteen years. Another form is the American system, where power vests, to a great extent, in the hands of the President, who is elected by popular vote once in four years. Another form is the Swiss system which has worked satisfactorily for many years. I do not propose here to make a detailed examination of these different systems, but merely suggest possible alternatives for the consideration of the Select Committee, if there is acceptance of my general line of argument.

"Another point to which I wish to draw attention in passing is that the British system is, in effect, a dictatorship clothed in democratic forms. I am not saying whether this is good or bad in achieving effective Government. I am merely stating a fact.

"In the first place there is the dictatorship of the Party which has obtained a majority at the elections, without the Opposition or even the back-benchers of the Government having any important voice in the conduct of affairs; secondly there is the dic-

tatorship of the Cabinet over the Government Party; and thirdly, there is the dictatorship of a small Inner Cabinet over the Cabinet.

"Our own previous Executive Committee System, or some other like the Swiss system, particularly when it is combined with the referendum, in fact, not only provides a broader and more stable base for the principle of democracy, but implements more fully the very spirit of democracy."

The foregoing passages are taken over from the memorandum submitted by Mr. Bandaranaike in January 1959 to the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee to Revise the Constitution. The memorandum itself is in the nature of a political testament to the nation by the late leader, who as we are aware, died in September 1959, (the same year). The present Constituent Assembly is the successor to the Joint Parliamentary Select Committee. It is trusted that the Assembly as well as the general public would seriously consider the entire memorandum which is found at pages 439 to 444 of the volume of Mr. Bandaranaike's speeches and writings.

Let us follow the Ideals of Navalar

Saiva Samaya Apiviruthi Sabhai of Nayanmarkaddu celebrated the Gura pooja of Sri La Sri Arumuga Navalar in the premises of Sri Raja Rejeswari Amman Temple on 21-11-70. Mr K Sokkalingam, B. A. presided over the meeting. Lectures were delivered by Messrs S. Kertbigesan, S. Retnasabapathy Iyer and M. Kathiravelu.

The speakers emphasised the fact that Navalar led a life according to his preachings. He was a spiritual Guru to all. The only gratitude which the people could show to him was to lead a life according to his preachings. Otherwise the performance of a Gurupooja in his name served no useful purpose.

Mrs. S. Ratnasabapathy recited hymns from Satkurumanimalai.

Reviewed News

Back-Bench in Bitter Criticism

Chilli at Rupees Fifteen per pound is a situation that will be hot for any Representative of the People. It was a significant surprise that attention to the hot feelings created by the sudden rise in the price of chilli was drawn by the Government M. Ps. in the back benches.

Demonetization only caused a heart burning in the hoarders but the soaring cost of chilli has induced a heart burning even among those who belong to the group that has the power to curb this chilli crisis.

Chilli cultivation has increased several fold yet chilli is scarce to the consumer. Why? Is this scarcity artificial? Traders know when and where to strike!

Decrying Demonstration!

It is understood that the Junior Minister of Education, Mr. B. Y. Tudawe, a confirmed Communist has dismissed the demonstration of the school boys in Jaffna as of no consequence as the present Government would not be scared by such threats!

The Junior Minister belongs to a political party that has thrived on demonstrations, strikes and similar expressions of disapproval of actions of the ruling party. It will be idle for him to observe that demonstrations can have no terror for the present Government. Is it to be inferred from this caustic comment of the Junior Minister that as far the U. L. F. Government is contained there cannot be any opposition in the sense the Marxists were when the U. N. P. was in Power? But it is doubtful whether the Premier will endorse this view of the Junior Minister of Education for Mrs. Srimavo Bandaranaike has so far not spoken a word that could be interpreted as indicating such a totalitarian attitude in the affairs of the Government. The Premier has been known to be a firm and steadfast follower of the policies of her husband the late S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. And it is well known that the late Mr. Bandaranaike was a champion of free comment and always followed the democratic method. He was not a Marxist, nor was he ever a champion of Communist conceptions. (Continued on page 7)

Bridegroom's Price

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ous bargains to satisfy the avarice of his would-be-son-in-law and his parents. Uncertainties of life, fluctuations of fortune and divine responsibilities of the bride's father are wholly ignored. If the payment of the stipulated sum would completely discharge the girl's father from all his obligations, natural and legal, to his daughter and her husband it may not be considered as a great hardship. But the parents out of pure love and affection, cannot but continue their solicitude for the welfare of their child, as long as there is life in them, they must be ready to incur heavy expenditure in connection with various ceremonies and also when sickness or distress afflicts her, her husband or her issue, and they should protect their daughter's family in case of poverty or misfortune. Varadaxani in the nature of an additional impost does not even serve as a guarantee for the kind treatment of the girl by her dearly bought husband. From whatever aspect one may look at it, it is an unmitigated social and economic evil and an indefensible innovation of the worst type. Some parents of youths holding a low post either in a commercial firm or even under the government take the opportunity of their son's marriage to relieve themselves of their obligation natural and legal, to educate and bring up their youths by making it a condition precedent to the marriage that the bride's parents should bear not only the cost of the wedding ceremony on both sides, but also the charges of the future higher education and training of the youth to be married. They think little of the contempt with which their own son and daughter-in-law would look upon them. It is impossible for filial affection and gratitude to exist under such mercenary circumstances.

There are instances of youths who are inclined to be idle - Some, altogether neglecting their studies, some, despising their hereditary calling (their father's trade or some other occupation) building their hope of comfortable livelihood on Varadaxani. A peculiarly lucky young man got a lakh of rupees from his

father-in-law for fulfilling his conjugal obligations. Every indolent youth takes this instance as his guide and hopes to make a fortune through his marriage; but generally their hopes end in fiascos. If the practice of exorting Varathaxanai which is now in its infancy, is not at once checked, it is my firm and sincere conviction that the sacred and world-old institution of marriage will lose its dignity and grace, and that out of sheer poverty of the parents of girls, many a maiden may not be married in time.

In this connection there is an apt quotation from the Kayastha - Patrika wherein Justice Mitra has given a graphic picture of the evils of this barbarous practice of blackmailing in marriages. He attributes the low moral nature of the bridegroom's father, avarice and vanity to be the real cause and suggests the remedy in the total subversion of this moral nature by lectures and examples by which he hopes the majority of the people will understand the baneful effect of this despicable practice.

To get rid of this evil practice, men of sterling character and exemplary moral life, men who did not sacrifice their life and powers and aspirations to the Moloch of money-making who will serve as the back-bone of the country should unite and decriy this obnoxious practice by lectures and leaflets.

Reviewed News

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Furthermore he was himself violently criticized by the Marxists.

Weather - A Warning?

The unthinkable distress of East Pakistan caused by tidal waves, perhaps the worst disaster on record, has called for help from every part of the world. It is heartening to note that there has been spontaneous aid from all nations.

Following on the wake of this frenzy of the elements, Tamil Nadu has been subjected to a severe assault by unprecedented rain.

The weather conditions in the world have been changing very curiously with the result that al-

Sri La Sri Navalar Gurupoojah at Sabhai Hall

Speaking from the chair at the public meeting held at the Navalar Ashrama Hall of the Jaffna Saiva Paripalana Sabhai in connection with the Guru Poojah of Sri La Sri Arumuga Navalar, Sithantha Viththagar V. Nagalingam Proctor, President of the Sabhai, deplored the growing tendency among certain enthusiasts to misinterpret and often misquote the Great Navalar and to build a new outlook that could not do the Champion Reformer any good.

Continuing the Sithantha Viththagar placed emphasis on the Great Navalar's teachings which un-

equivocally reiterated the traditional truth that it was transgression to belittle or misinterpret the Vedas and Sivagamas.

Shri K. Arumugam, Vidvan of Vaitheswara Aatheenam, explained at length the great truths revealed in Navalar's works.

Mas. T. Theidhanamoorthy and Mas. P. Ranganpathy of the Jaffna Hindu College spoke on the life of the Great Navalar.

Shri M. Mailvaganam, Religious Propaganda Secretary of the Sabhai, proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman and speakers.

LET US REMEMBER SIR P. RAMANATHAN

(Communicated)

26-11-70 Thursday was Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan's day. The Tamils and the Sinhalese owe a great debt of gratitude to this noble son of Ceylon who was a philosopher, educationalist, philanthropist and politician. His contribution towards the welfare of the people of Ceylon cannot be expressed in words. He tried to build unity among the different races inhabiting Sri Lanka. The Sinhalese will never forget the bold voyage he made to England in the midst of dangers of sub-marines to

most every continent has had some disaster. Has not scientific study advanced enough to predict the sudden change of weather? The vagaries of the weather are certainly unpredictable; yet in this age of science is it not possible to be forewarned?

The present weather conditions in this country are very disturbing. In the Peninsula already the signs of a minor flood are visible. In several places there is undue collection of water without any possible exit for flow. The drains are not functioning properly. The Authorities will do well to watch the situation and get ready to prevent a flood by channelling the rain water to village tanks and ponds. These receptacles, however, require to be deepened.

get justice done to the Sinhalese who were ill-treated by the Colonial Government during the Sinhalese Muslim riots of 1914 and 1915.

The famous Sivan Temple of Ponnambalavaneswarar of Colombo, the Ramanathan College for girls and the Parameswara College for boys are institutions established by him for religious educational and cultural advancement of the people of Ceylon.

He, being a far-sighted politician, established these two colleges so that they might in the future form the nucleus for a Hindu University in the North. His conception of education was that the student should be enabled to adore Parameshwara. That was why he gave His name to that college.

It is a pity that his noble wish of establishing of converting these colleges into a University did not fructify during his life-time nor during that of his learned son-in-law. Dr. S. Natesan, Even after the demise of these noble persons, the attempts made by some Tamil leaders to convert these two colleges into a University were thwarted by the non-co-operation of others. The schools of Ceylon should take steps to celebrate Sir Ramanathan Day so that they may imbibe his virtues and follow in his footsteps.

ORDER NISI

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF CHAVAKACHCHERI

No. 161 Testy

In the matter of the Last Will and Testament of the late Karthigesu Arumugam of Kaithady South Deceased

Thiruppathippillai widow of K. Arumugam of Kaithady South Vs. Petitioner

- 1 Ponnambalam Sanmugaratnam and
- 2 wife Kamaladevi of Kaithady South,
- 3 Arumugam Sooriskumar and
- 4 Arumugam Sandrakumar both of Kaithady South the 3rd and 4th Respondents are minors appearing by their Guardian-ad-litem the 5th Respondent,
- 5 Somalingam Sadacharam of Navatkuli as Guardian-ad-litem of the 3rd and 4th Respondents who are minors Respondents

This matter coming on for determination before A. Sivanandan Esquire District Judge Chavakachcheri on the 5th day of October 1970, in the presence of Mr. S. K. Thiravianayagam Proctor on the part of the Petitioner and the petition and Affidavit of the Petitioner together with the Last Will and Testament No. 18714 dated the 17th day of June 1969 and attested by A. Thuraisingham, Notary Public, and the affidavits of the said Notary who attested the said Last Will and the subscribing witnesses thereto having been read;

It is hereby ordered that the 5th Respondent be and he is hereby appointed Guardian-ad-litem over the 3rd and 4th Respondents who are minors and that the Last Will and Testament bearing No. 18714 dated the 17th day of June 1969 and attested by K. Thuraisingham Notary Public, the original of which is now deposited in Court be and the same is hereby declared proved and that the Petitioner as the sole devisee and Executrix named in the said Last Will and Testament be and she is hereby declared entitled to have Probate thereof to her accordingly unless the respondents above-named or any other person or persons interested in the estate of the said deceased shall appear before this Court on or before the 11th day of November 1970 at 10 a. m. and show sufficient cause to the contrary.

It is also ordered that the 5th Respondent shall produce the said 3rd and 4th Respondents who are minors on the said date, viz the 11th day of November 1970.

Sgd. A. Sivanandan District Judge

Drawn by, Sgd. S. K. Thiravianayagam Proctor for Petitioner.

11-11-70

Extended for 18.12.70.

Sgd. A. Sivanandan District Judge.

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