

FONSEKA Vs. RAJAPAKSE

The Issues Before Us

S L Gunasekara

By The Same Author

The Indo Lanka Accord – An Analysis

Tigers, `Moderates' And Pandora's Package

A Tragedy Of Errors

The Wages Of Sin

Abomination

The Report Of The Eleven `Pundits'

Where Angels Fear To Tread

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this book to the revered memory two great gentlemen who belong to one of the rarest types of sons of Sri Lanka, **genuine patriots**, who had no hidden agendas, and served their Motherland **solely for the purpose of serving Her**, with no thought of reward for themselves or any other objective,

my good friends and respected senior colleagues,

The Late HERMAN LEONARD DE SILVA P.C.

And

The Late ELANGA DEVAPRIYA WIKRAMANAYAKE
Retired Solicitor General

INTRODUCTION

The race for the Presidency has begun. On the 17th December, 22 participants comprised of two 'horses' namely Mahinda Rajapakse and Sarath Fonseka and 20 assorted 'lame donkeys' handed in their nominations. Even before the nominations however, the deplorable mudslinging match between the forces supportive of Fonseka and those supportive of Rajapakse began, and is now gathering momentum as it goes on. Thus, whoever wins the race, the Country has already lost, for whichever candidate the mudslinging may ultimately 'benefit', the damage it will do to the Country will surely be irremediable.

The real issue at this election is whether the Country will benefit more by the victory of Rajapakse over Fonseka or whether it will benefit more by the victory of Fonseka over Rajapakse. All other issues are of no importance.

Seeking to capitalize on the perceived split in the nationalist forces who supported the military defeat of the LTTE that is perceived to have arisen as a result of this contest between Fonseka and Rajapakse, some of the communal minority parties have already commenced 'auctioning' their favours.. Thus, Douglas Devananda has, according to the newspapers put forward ten demands, the obvious unspoken premise that underlies those demands being that the support of such party will go to the candidate who makes the 'highest bid'. However, while there is no official confirmation of that fact from Devananda, I was happy to hear Minister Susil Premjayanth saying at a seminar of the SLFP Lawyer's Association which I addressed on the 12th December, that Devananda had put forward no conditions and that he had given his unconditional support to President Rajapakse against General Fonseka. He said this while I was on my feet speaking about the demands said in the newspapers to have been put forward by Devananda. I trust Minister Premjayanth said what he did say with due responsibility and respect for the truth.

Be that as it may, both candidates must realize that if either were to give in to demands of racist political parties and, for example, accede to a demand for the recognition of a part of the territory of our multi-racial land as the 'homeland' of one to the exclusion of the others, merely to gain some votes to tip the scales in his favour, he would betray the Country and the People and set at nought the victory gained by our armed forces over the LTTE at immense sacrifice.

All these racist parties of the 'minorities' who make such demands fraudulently maintain that their demands are made to settle what they claim to be the 'ethnic conflict'. My oft repeated view on this matter is that there is no 'ethnic conflict' in Sri Lanka where Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims and Burghers and members of all other races live together in peace and amity when they are allowed to do so by the communal politicians. It is the racist politicians such as those who claim that a particular part of this Country is exclusive homeland of one particular race who create and promote ethnic discord – for such parties will have no political existence but for such discord, and they are perfectly willing to 'wade through slaughter to the perceived 'throne' of political power' regardless of the damage they cause to the Country and the suffering they cause to the People by their unconscionable antics to achieve their ambitions.

The task of the President, whoever may be elected, is not to appease any community, be it the Sinhalese, the Tamils, the Moors or any other, but to give to this Country a fair and just Government giving pride of place in all matter to merit and not to parochial considerations, and bring to fruition the memorable words of President Rajapakse at the end of the 'war' that there are no minorities in Sri Lanka but only one Sri Lankan Nation. In uttering these words Rajapakse was, knowingly or unknowingly, repeating the idea expressed long before independence by that great lover of Sri Lanka, the late Rev. W S Senior, a former Chaplain of Trinity College Kandy, in his immortal poem "*Ode To Lanka*":-

“And most shall he sing of Lanka,

In the brave new years to come,

When the races all have blended and the voice of strife is dumb,

When we rise to a single bugle: march to a single drum.”

Neither Rajapakse nor Fonseka is a 'lily-white angel'. Both have faults as any human being has. Thus, whether the People elect one or the other they will be appointing a fallible human being with manifold weaknesses. It will be for the People, whether supporters or opponents of either candidate to band together to ensure to the full extent of their ability, that such faults and weaknesses of the winner do not damage the Country and its People.

What this country needs is a stable Government which is able to give to the People peace, order and good government. The question at issue therefore, is which of these two is more capable of giving and/or likely to give the People what they need. The purpose of this book is to focus attention on this particular question. Of course, in doing so I have had to touch on some other related issues that have arisen in this election.

I make no bones about the fact that I support President Rajapakse, not because he is an angel or a saint which he certainly is not, but with my eyes open and knowing some of his faults, because it is my conviction that he will be better able and far more likely to give leadership to this Country and face our foreign foes than Fonseka. Accordingly, while I will use my best endeavors to be objective, it will only be natural that the reader would discern my partiality towards Rajapakse. I make no apologies for this - for where this election is concerned, no person whomsoever who has any interest in this Country can be unbiased and I am no exception to that rule.

CHAPTER ONE

CREDIT FOR WINNING THE WAR

i) The Rival Claims

The Military defeat of the LTTE on the 18th May 2009 saw all patriotic forces of this Country inclusive of members of all races and religions who inhabit it, rejoicing over our deliverance from evil. From that day onwards, bombs were no longer exploded in buses, trains and crowded city centers: Tamil children in the North were no longer kidnapped; money was no longer extorted from Tamils in the guise of 'taxation'; our youth did not die on battle fields: whole families sleeping in their humble abodes were no longer slaughtered because of their race or ethnicity: people were able to go about their normal avocations without fear of being dismembered in the course of the day by a bomb or some other explosive device.

Such rejoicing which was described by some of our enemies in the West as being some untoward 'trumphalism' was only natural. It would have been highly unnatural if such rejoicing was not there.

This victory however, was marred firstly, by rival claims to the lion share of the credit of the victory. The first of these claims, I believe, came in the course of a radio or television interview with General Sarath Fonseka where he claimed that the credit or almost all the credit for that victory belonged to the Army which he led. The very dignified and temperate response of Admiral Karannagoda, the then Commander of the Navy which followed soon, bore a refreshingly stark contrast to the crude attempt by General Fonseka to 'hog' the credit for the victory.

This was followed or preceded by a spate of posters, banners and cut outs put up by some disgusting sycophants of Rajapakse extolling him as the great king [*'Maharajaneni'*], of course with pictures of the unlovely features of those self serving political swine who stooped so low as to engage in this kind of abject sycophancy with a view to gaining some benefit therefrom, in some corner. I do not accuse President Rajapakse of putting up these posters, billboards and so on, but I do fault him for not cracking the whip on these sycophants and casting them out of his fold or disciplining them in some way.

ii) **“Selling the War”**

On the other hand, those shameless servants of the west and appeasers of the terrorists in the United National Party led by the serial loser, Ranil Wickramasinghe attacked President Rajapakse and the Government for seeking to gain political advantage by ‘*selling the war*’. Whatever his faults may be, nobody can take away from President Rajapakse the fact that he was the first President to give fully committed and whole hearted political leadership and support to the Armed Forces to defeat the LTTE militarily. Whatever the efforts of General Fonseka, of Admiral Karannagoda, or Air Chief Marshall Gunatileke may have been, none of them whether singly or together, could have defeated the LTTE but for that political backing. If President Rajapakse had, as his predecessors did, sought to appease the LTTE by stopping the war, there would have been no victory. Thus it was surely churlish of Wickremasinghe and his fellow appeasers to accuse Rajapakse and the Government of ‘selling’ the war for political gain – for any government is surely entitled to lay before the People its achievements with a view to persuading the People to re-elect that Government to office, and re-uniting this Country by eradicating terrorism was surely the greatest achievement any government could have achieved.

It must here be recalled that the United National Party led by Ranil Wickramasinghe sought to ‘sell’ at the General Elections of 2004 and the Presidential Election of 2005 the ‘*peace*’ which they did not achieve!! Thus, according to the peculiar ‘logic’ of the UNP, if such it can be called, it was permissible to ‘sell’ the ‘*peace*’ which they never won and impermissible to ‘sell’ ‘the war’ which was in fact ‘won’. !!!

iii) **The Debate About ‘Credit’ For The Victory**

While a debate on the question of who was entitled to the greatest amount of credit for winning the war is distasteful as I said some time ago in an article published in the Island newspaper entitled ‘*This Damned Nonsense Must Stop*’, The debate having commenced and become a key election issue, I cannot ignore it or wish it away.

Looking at the matter dispassionately, the ‘war against the LTTE was essentially a land operation and the final stages an infantry operation, and hence had to be and was spearheaded by the Army led by Fonseka. There is,

and can be no dispute that Fonseka gave exemplary leadership to the Army in those operations.

However, the Army could not have achieved, and did not achieve this victory by itself. It needed and received in ample measure, support from the Navy, the Air Force, the Special Task Force and the Civil Defence Force to which leadership quite as exemplary as that given to the Army by Fonseka was given by Admiral Karannagoda, Air Chief Marshall Goonetilleke, DIG Nimal Lewke and later DIG Sarathchandra and Rear Admiral Sarath Weerasekera respectively.

Apart from the necessary and vital contributions made by these forces to the victory, were the contributions made by the civilians of whom those made by the families of our troops who encouraged them no end while suffering untold anxieties at home must take pride of place. There were also monumental services rendered by the Tamil Informants who braved the threats of slow and agonizing deaths in the event of detection by the LTTE to serve the Country; the Buddhist Monks such as the late Chief Incumbent of the Tantirimale Rajamaha Vihare and The Ven Kudahalmillawe Rathanasara Thero, the Chief Incumbent of the Chethiyagiri Rajamaha Vihare of Padavi Parakramapura to name but two, who, disregarding all risks to life and limb, prevented the wholesale ethnic cleansing of the Northern and Eastern Provinces and the areas abutting them by giving the much needed leadership to the residents of villages that were attacked and/or were in danger of being attacked by the LTTE, and giving them the strength to remain in their villages and face all threats posed by the LTTE for the sake of the Country. There were also the broad masses of the Country who suffered the travails of a soaring cost of living, maladministration and a host of troubles without agitation so as *'not to rock the boat'* and divert the attention of our troops from the task of defeating the LTTE.

Although the victory was therefore attributable to a combined effort of the entire nation and not to any particular individual or organization, it must be borne in mind that even the exemplary leadership given by the Commanders, the commitment and bravery of the troops of all ranks, the support given to them by their families and all the contributions made by the civilians could not possibly have brought about the victory had not President Rajapakse given the green light for the recommencement of military operations against the LTTE and accompanied the giving of that green light with providing the armed forces with the necessary manpower, motivating the people to enlist,

giving the forces the ammunition and other equipment needed to win the war and resisting all pressures brought by the powerful nations of the West to stop the war and declare another disastrous cease fire at the point of victory which would have saved the LTTE and deprived us of the fruits of victory.

iv) **The Greatest Contribution To The Victory**

To my mind the person to whom the greatest amount of credit must go for our country's victory over the LTTE was neither Rajapakse nor Fonseka but Velupillai Prabhakaran, the undisputed leader of the LTTE. Why do I say this?

At the Presidential Election 2005, Velupillai Prabhakaran prevented the Tamils living in bondage in the areas controlled by him from voting while it is common knowledge that in previous elections he had thrown his weight behind Wickremasinghe and the UNP. It is also common knowledge that having regard to the small majority by which Rajapakse defeated Wickremasinghe in 2005, Wickremasinghe would in all probability have been elected President in that year if Prabhakaran had allowed the Tamils to vote and/or encouraged them to vote for Wickremasinghe.

If Wickremasinghe had won that election, Sarath Fonseka would have become a retired Major General in mid December of that year and exited from the scene: the appeasement of the LTTE would have gone on apace: no military operations would have been launched against the LTTE and we would, hence have seen no victory: the LTTE would have got stronger and we, weaker; the Interim Self Governing Authority which the LTTE demanded [or the same thing in a different form] would have probably been granted; and the probabilities are that Vellupillai Prabhakaran would, today, have been 'alive and kicking', and ruling at least the significant part of the North and the East which he was 'ruling' at the time of the Election of 2005 or more. It is also possible that he would, by now, have had his own separate state.

Fortunately for Sri Lanka, Prabhakaran ensured Wickremasinghe's defeat and hence his own defeat and long overdue death. Rajapakse was elected. One of the first things that Rajapakse did was to cause the then Army Commander Lieutenant General Shantha Kottegoda to retire prematurely and to appoint Major General Sarath Fonseka to that post and thereafter gave him four extensions of service. It was also President Rajapakse who, with

no cooperation whatever from the United National Party [*or from its pet political IDP Mangala Samaraweera*] which sought at all times to decry and denigrate the military operation being conducted by our forces against the LTTE, gave the necessary political leadership and material assistance to vanquish them militarily.

Thus, whatever the capabilities of Rajapakse, of Fonseka, of Admiral Karannagoda, or Air Chief Marshall Gunatilake may be, none of them could, jointly or severally, have defeated the LTTE but for this significant contribution made to that defeat by Velupillai Prabhakaran by preventing the Tamils under his bondage from voting in 2005.

Thus, the person most responsible for the defeat of Velupillai Prabhakaran and the LTTE was Velupillai Prabhakaran himself.

CHAPTER TWO

THE “I” DISEASE

Whatever the adjectives that may be used by friends and foes of Fonseka to describe him, one that could never be used by anybody is “modest”.

The hyper-inflated ego of Fonseka (*the “I” disease*) was made manifest by paragraph 2 of his letter of retirement wherein he stated:-

*“During **my** command of three years and seven months, **the Sri Lanka Army** managed to eradicate the terrorist movement having apprehended an unbelievable stock of arms and munitions and decisively defeating the LTTE and its murderous leadership, which Your Excellency is obviously aware of. **I** would not be exaggerating to state that **I** was instrumental in leading **the Army to this historic victory**, of course with Your Excellency’s political support, which helped to materialize this historic action. Though the field Commanders and all members of the **Army** worked towards this goal, it is with **my vision, command and leadership** that this task was achieved.”*

The sum and substance of this paragraph is that it was the Army under the leadership of Fonseka, acting in accordance with his vision and under his command and leadership that achieved victory over the LTTE. The necessary implication of these words is that the Navy, the Air Force, the Special Task Force and other members of the Police Force and the Civil Defence Force acting in accordance with the vision, and under the command and leadership of their Commanders made no contribution to that victory. It is also of interest to observe that Fonseka’s passing reference to the assistance given by Rajapakse.

“..... of course with Your Excellency’s political support which helped to materialize this historic action.....”.

ignores in its entirety, the salient fact that not one shot could have been fired at the LTTE, no operations could have been recommenced against them, and the victory could not have been won but for the fact that Rajapakse took a political decision to go ahead with the ‘war’ and refused to succumb to the overwhelming pressure brought to bear on him by certain affluent western

states [to whom Fonseka's political sponsors/patrons such as the UNP pay obeisance and refer to respectfully and in awe as the "*International Community*"] to declare a ceasefire etc to which the UNP would necessarily have succumbed.

A few days after tendering his letter of retirement, Fonseka, in a letter to the troops he had formerly commanded in the Army, deviated somewhat from the above position taken up by him and acknowledged briefly the fact that the Navy, Air Force, Police and Civil Defence Force had contributed to the victory. Thereafter, however, he reverted repeatedly to his stupid contention that credit for the victory must go to him and the Army he commanded alone. Thus, to take but one example, as reported in the *Daily Mirror* – [a paper sympathetic to Fonseka] of the 22nd December 2009, he has said, at the Matara District Convention of the UNF on the 20th December 2009 that "*just as **he** saved the country from LTTE terrorism **he** would save the country from the dominance of the Rajapakse family as well*" and, that "*just as **I** won the Military Campaign **I** would win my campaign against nepotism and corruption*"

Ready as Fonseka has been to grab credit for the victory for the war to the exclusion of the other service commanders and personnel of the other forces and even his Commander-In-Chief, one searches his speeches in vain to find any acknowledgement of the fact that the victory over terrorism would have been wholly impossible but for the political will of Rajapakse to continue military operations until victory was won, whatever obstacles may be placed in his way and whatever pressure might be brought to bear upon him by foreign or local forces including those perfidious western countries whom Fonseka's sponsors call the "*International Community*". This is hardly conduct becoming of a responsible statesman, or an officer and a gentleman, to whom truth and fairplay are sacrosanct.

While considering Fonseka's evidently unquenchable thirst for credit for the victory over the LTTE, it is also pertinent to consider his demands for himself even in retirement. In his letter of retirement he has, at paragraph 5, requested President Rajapakse to provide him with:-

"a sufficient security (sic) which includes trained combat soldiers, a suitable vehicle with sufficient protection (bullet proof), escort vehicles and dummy vehicles for my conveyances (sic) due to the fact

that I am considered as one of the highest priority targets by the LTTE, which they are yet capable of achieving. (sic)”

Thereafter Fonseka refers to the security provided to Admiral Karannagoda after retirement, ignoring however the fact that Karannagoda still functions as the National Security Advisor to the President and the Secretary to the Ministry of Highways and is not, like him, a retired officer with no official standing but only a thirst for power, and goes on to say

“I do further request that a suitable protected government resident (sic) be made available for me to live in. Also it is requested that approval be granted for me to continue occupation of the present official residence of the Commander of the Army: ‘the General’s House’ in Baudhaloka Mawatha until I am provided suitable married quarter” (sic).

Having made these demands, Fonseka later made evident what he meant by “*sufficient security*” by claiming an entitlement to **600 soldiers and 12 security vehicles including 2 bullet proof vehicles as well as to having roads closed when he passed** for the sake of his security !! In short he demanded that an official residence be provided to him in retirement, that over approximately Rs 20,000,000.00 of public funds be expended per month to provide him with security, and that the general public whom he pretends to want to serve should be inconvenienced no end by the roads being closed each time he steps out of such residence !!!

None of these matters enure to the benefit of Fonseka or his credibility. While it is not disputed that he is entitled to a reasonable amount of security having regard to the fact that he was one of the principle contributors to the defeat of the LTTE, and that his life would therefore be under threat, there is no way in which one could justify the demand for 600 troops to guard him, 12 government vehicles inclusive of 2 bullet proof vehicles, the right to occupy the house of the Army Commander (*leaving the Army Commander without the house to which is entitled*) and demand that he should have an official residence provided by the government even after retirement..

Fonseka’s inability to be frank and forthright about those who contributed to the victory for the war, and in particular, the contribution made by Rajapakse just because he now wants Rajapakse’s job, and his exorbitant demands for himself, to my mind bespeak an almost wholly self centered

man who believes that nobody other than he matters, and that whatever he wants must necessarily be given at the expense of the public. These are hardly the qualities of one who could be a responsible democratic leader with liberal values. Indeed **when these are his demands on the public purse while holding no office, one dreads to even imagine what his demands would be if he is elected President !!!**

CHAPTER THREE

BETRAYAL

i) Gotabhaya Rajapakse

Despite the fact that Gotabhaya is the brother of the President and his appointment as Defence Secretary, on the face of it, appeared to be an act of nepotism, this, to my mind was one of the best appointments made by Rajapakse.

There is no gainsaying the fact that although Gotabhaya did not fire a single shot at any Tiger after he left the Army in or around 1990, the 'war' could never have been won but for the services rendered by him as Defence Secretary in, *inter alia*, coordinating the efforts of the three services at a time when General Fonseka and Admiral Karannagoda, the Commanders of the Army and the Navy were not even on speaking terms over some personal disputes.. Thus, but for Gotabhaya there would have been a little chance of coordination between the Army and the Navy without which the war could never have been won.

Gotabhaya besides having so coordinated and/or, as one newspaper described it, been the 'General Manager' of the 'war effort', was as outspoken and decisive as the late Ranjan Wijeratne who, to my mind, was the finest Politician in charge of Defence (as Deputy Minister) since the commencement of the terrorism of the LTTE.

The reports about the animosity borne by Fonseka towards Karannagoda appear to be well supported by the observations made by Fonseka in respect of the security afforded to Karannagoda, describing him as a retired Commander of the Navy rather than as a Public Officer, currently in service as the National Security Advisor to the President and the Secretary to the Ministry of Highways, in contrast to the security afforded to him, a purely retired Service Commander.

The fact that Gotabhaya Rajapakse is the *bete noire* of Fonseka for reasons undisclosed is confirmed by the snide references made to him by unmistakable innuendos as one who departed this country fifteen years ago and functioned as a 'Computer Operator' in the United States etc.

ii) Allegations Made To The Sunday Leader

As reported in the Sunday Leader (a paper evidently supporting the candidature of Fonseka and virulently opposed to Rajapakse) of the 13th December 2009, under the by line of its Editor Fredrica Jansz, Fonseka has said, *inter alia* that Gotabhaya Rajapakse instructed the then Brigadier Shavendra De Silva who was commanding the 58th Division of the Army in Mullaitivu that all LTTE cadres must be killed and not allowed to surrender and, that on the night of the 17th May the desperate efforts of three senior LTTE leaders to save their lives failed as they were instead shot dead as they prepared to surrender to Government forces. These LTTE leaders were clearly Pulidevan, Nadesan and Ramesh.

This news report created revulsion for Fonseka among the public, including myself who had immense respect for him up to that time, and had that respect being converted automatically into wholesale contempt upon reading that report of the ‘exclusive interview’ with Fonseka. That report was published in a paper that was supportive of Fonseka and wholly antagonistic to Rajapakse. It had been written by Fredrica Jansz, one of Sri Lanka’s most highly respected Journalists of long experience, and a strong commitment to ensure that her reports were accurate. It is pertinent in this connection, to observe that Fredrica Jansz had earlier been employed by International Alert and dismissed from that NGO because she had written some articles to, I believe the Sunday Times, which were critical of the LTTE. While I do not agree with many of her views, the journalistic credentials of Mrs. Jansz speak for themselves, though.

Fonseka must necessarily have become aware of the adverse fall out of what he had said to Fredrica Jansz and, at a hastily convened press conference on the 14th December 2009 said, *inter alia* :-

- a) that he personally led the war during the final phase from May 17th to 19th during which period no LTTE leader tried to surrender to the Army by coming forward raising a white flag;
- b) that for all the happenings in the battle field from the beginning to the end of the war, he was responsible as the then Army Commander who closely observed and monitored the war and gave necessary instructions ;

- c) that the Military maintained its discipline in the war and no field Commander acted in contravention of any international covenant ; and,
- d) that he will not betray the Army.

Having said these things, Fonseka sought to explain his perfidious statement by saying that he heard from a Journalist who was with the 58th Brigade in the war that there was a telephone call from Gotabhaya Rajapakse to the 58th Brigade, [or Division?] Commander Shavendra De Silva about attempts by some LTTE leaders to surrender, and that there was no need for anyone to give such calls since he was conducting the war as the Army Chief. He further said that the LTTE leaders Pulidevan and Nadesan died in a close pitched battle.

Thereafter, Fonseka went on to allege that he had been misquoted by Fredrica Jansz and that while *“no terrorist had come waving a white flag to surrender during the last battle against the LTTE in the Wannu and no soldier had violated international laws in fighting the war”* his opponents were engaged in a mudslinging campaign based on the story in the Sunday Leader **“misquoting”** what he said. Thereafter, he said that *“I don’t believe that the Journalist who wrote the story had any intention of slinging mud at me”*.

Fredrica Jansz is not a Journalist who could have mistaken a statement that some unnamed Journalist had told Fonseka that a telephone conversation had taken place between Gotabhaya Rajapakse and Shavendra De Silva wherein Gotabhaya Rajapakse had allegedly told Shavendra De Silva about attempts by some LTTE leaders to surrender, for a statement that Gotabhaya Rajapakse had purported to order the then Brigadier Shavendra De Silva not to accept the surrender of any LTTE cadres but to kill them, and that the trio of Pulidevan, Nadesan and Ramesh were so killed near the Nandikadal Lagoon on the night of the 17th - 18th May 2009. Thus, Fonseka had clearly uttered a deliberate falsehood in his interview with Fredrica Jansz – for since, as Fonseka says no leader of the LTTE sought to surrender, it was clearly impossible for any leader of the LTTE to have been shot dead while seeking to surrender under a flag of truce.

Why then, did Fonseka make the above quoted statements to the Sunday Leader ??.

The only ‘reason’ that suggests itself is that Fonseka, consumed with hatred for Gotabhaya Rajapakse, made that statement to denigrate him regardless entirely, of the damage he was therefore, necessarily causing to the Army in particular and the country in general.

iii) **Misquoted ?**

As observed above, Fredrica Jansz could never have mistaken that which Fonseka told her and written the article in question on a mistaken notion of what Fonseka had said. Similarly, Fonseka himself has absolved her of any malicious fabrication by saying categorically that he does not accuse her of trying to sling mud at him. Besides, Fredrica Jansz being the Editor of a newspaper that was supportive of Fonseka and virulently anti Rajapakse could have had no conceivable motive to fabricate the account of her interview with Fonseka .

Secondly if, as Fonseka said in his press conference on the 14th, all that happened was that some unnamed Journalist had told him that “*there was a telephone call from Defence Secretary Gotabhaya Rajapakse to the 58th Brigade Commander Shavendra De Silva about attempts by some LTTE leaders to surrender*”, that was not a matter that would have been worth even mentioning in an interview with a newspaper – for it is a statement of no news value whatsoever.

Thirdly, if indeed a Journalist had told Fonseka such a thing, there can be no doubt that he would necessarily have questioned Shavendra De Silva about what Gotabhaya Rajapakse is alleged to have told him, and also about what action, if any, Shavendra De Silva took in consequence of what Gotabhaya Rajapakse is alleged to have said – for Gotabhaya Rajapakse as Defence Secretary had not the remotest right to give any kind of order or instruction to any soldier be he a private or a general, and no responsible Army Commander would have tolerated any such thing. If the anonymous Journalist indeed told Fonseka what he is alleged to have said, it would necessarily have put Fonseka on inquiry as to what Gotabhaya Rajapakse has told Shavendra De Silva and obliged him to take necessary action in that regard. However, Fonseka does not even claim to have questioned his subordinate Shavendra De Silva about this incident in any way whatsoever: nor has he yet complained of Gotabhaya Rajapakse having interfered in the conduct of the war.

The conclusion therefore is irresistible :-

- a) that no incident such as that described in the Sunday Leader of the 13th December happened ;
- b) that Fonseka had therefore uttered a deliberate falsehood to Fredrica Jansz ;
- c) that Fonseka's subsequent attempt at 'damage control' only piled falsehood upon falsehood ; and,
- d) that Fonseka uttered the falsehoods which were reported in the Sunday Leader of the 13th December to Fredrica Jansz because of his visceral hatred for Gotabhaya Rajapakse, and some hope (vain or otherwise) which he had, of garnering some support from the Tamil voters by uttering them, wholly regardless of the damage he would necessarily cause to the Army and the country by so doing.

The damage was not long in coming and today the country is faced with the questions from the United Nations about the false accusations made by Fonseka.

iv) **Previous Betrayals**

The interview with Fredrica Jansz reported in the Sunday Leader of the 13th December 2009 was not the first or the only occasion on which Fonseka had deliberately insulted and/or betrayed the Army. There were at least two occasions on which he had done so previously from the time of his retirement from the post of Chief of Defence Staff.

Thus, in an exclusive interview given to Fredrica Jansz of the Sunday Leader after his retirement and reported in the Sunday Leader of 22nd November 2009, Fonseka alleged that the 12 Commandos who had been assigned for his security whom he had not handpicked, were all "new men" who had been assigned to him and could be "*an assassination squad - may be they are trying to assassinate me*".

By this statement which Fonseka has not denied, contradicted nor challenged to date, he has said, essentially that only soldiers whom he handpicks can be trusted, and that others and/or those whom he describes as “new men” in the Army, even from an elite unit like the Commando Regiment, were capable of murdering him in the guise of guarding him !!

At the press conference held by Fonseka announcing his candidature on the 29th November 2009, he is reported in the Daily Mirror of 30th November as having said that every Head of State had advocated the eradication of the LTTE, **but that the Army had lagged behind** therefore it was not right for any politician to claim for himself the credit for the victory.

Similarly, the Island of the 30th November 2009 reports Fonseka as having said, at the press conference held on the previous day that *“Rajapakse’s predecessors too, had tried to defeat terrorism though they never succeeded due to the failure of the Armed Forces.....”*

Accordingly, in an attempt to belittle the massive contribution of Mahinda Rajapakse to the victory in the war by giving the Armed Forces a volume of political and material support which they had never had before towards that end, Fonseka sought to insult the Army and the other Armed Forces by virtually saying that while all other Presidents/Heads of Government had also had the political will to defeat the LTTE, the LTTE was not defeated because of the incompetence or weakness of the Army and the other Forces. In making these shameless and untruthful allegations against the Armed Forces Fonseka ignores entirely questions such as :-

- a) the subservience displayed by J R Jayawardena to India by halting the Vadamarachchi operation at their behest while our forces were on the point of victory ;
- b) the disastrous cease-fires promulgated and implemented by Ranasinghe Premadasa, Chandrika Kumaratunga and last but by no means least, Ranil Wickremasinghe for whom Fonseka is now a proxy holder;
- c) the gifting of arms, ammunition and other equipment to the LTTE by the Premadasa Government;

- d) the gifting of sophisticated broadcasting equipment to the LTTE by the Ranil Wickremesinghe Government; and,
- e) the betrayal and condemnation to death of over 600 police officers serving in the East by the Premadasa Government of which Ranil Wickremasinghe was third in command on the 11th June 1990.

Does Fonseka for a moment consider any of these wholly despicable acts against the national interest as having been expressions of a political will by those 'leaders' to defeat the LTTE ?

Can Fonseka honestly compare the gutless spineless unconscionable conduct of these four charlatans to the conduct of Rajapakse in giving all the necessary political backing and facing the threats and intimidation leveled at him by powerful countries of the West without flinching and not find those four charlatans wanting in every respect?

How then can Fonseka say with even an iota of respect for the truth that *“Rajapakse’s predecessors too, had tried to defeat terrorism though they never succeeded **due to the failure on the part of the Armed Forces**”*.

It is important to emphasize the fact that Fonseka has not, to date, retracted any of these observations which he has made which were reported more than a month ago, or contended that any of them was wrong or that he had been misreported despite the great importance of the contents of those reports. In the background of these circumstances the claim of Fonseka to have been *‘born again* for the sake of the country’ which he has made in a full page paid advertisement under the heading *“I am one who died and was reborn for the sake of this Country”* published in the Sunday Leader of 20th December 2009 where he says:-

*“I stand committed to protect the good name of my country. I stand ready to accept full responsibility for all under my purview on my watch as Commander and during my career in the Army. **I detest any attempt to betray our Army. I will never engage in this nor will I allow opportunists to degrade the honour of the Army**”*

would surely sound comic were they not so tragic and so patently false.

CHAPTER FOUR

PROMISES, PROMISES, PROMISES

Making promises which they know they cannot honour for the sole purpose of deceiving the People into voting for them is, regrettably, a part of the stock in trade of the professional politician. Thus, we found Mrs. Bandaranaike promising to bring the rice from the moon in 1970; Ranasinghe Premadasa promising to give each person who earned less than a particular amount a sum of Rs25,000/- from the public coffers. J R Jayewardena promised to give each citizen 8 lbs of grain a week in 1977, and Chandrika Kumaratunga promised to reduce the price of bread to Rs3.50 a pound in 1994. It need hardly be said that none of these promises were kept. These are but a token sampling of the type of promises professional politicians have given to People.

The one time professional soldier of repute General Sarath Fonseka has now become a professional politician and in the period of less a month since his exit from an honourable field to a dishonourable field, he has taken to the seamy side of politics, namely the politics of false promises, like a duck taking to water. Even a cursory glance at the promises made by him during this period would show that when it comes to making promises Sarath Fonseka's name like that of *Abou Ben Adhem* leads all the rest.

Thus between the 29th November 2009 when he had his first press conference and the 30th December 2009 he has made the following promises:-

- i) To abolish the Executive Presidency and initiate action for that purpose within six months.
- ii) To weed out corruption.
- iii) To reestablish democracy.
- iv) To restore law and order .
- v) To implement 17th amendment no sooner he assumes office.
- vi) To go even beyond the 13th amendment.

- vii) To do a thorough study of the 13th amendment.
- viii) To increase the salaries of the members of the Armed Forces.
- ix) To secure the future of the children and the family members of the Armed Forces. (Sunday Times -6/12/2009)
- x) To ensure gender equality and to increase the percentage of women engaged in politics from the present 5% to the global standard of 30%. (Daily Mirror -10/12/2009)
- xi) To increase the monthly salaries of public servants by Rs10,000/- each within a month of being elected President. (Island -11/12/2009 and Daily Mirror – 11/12/2009)
- xii) To give a monthly allowance of Rs 2000/- to all senior citizens over the age of 60 (Daily Mirror – 11/12/2009: Island – 11/12/2009. Daily Mirror -30.12.09)
- xiii) To change the Constitution in the same way he won the war. (Daily Mirror – 11/12/2009)
- xiv) To institute legislation to protect the safety and security of Journalists.
- xv) To ensure that the media is free to function without being hounded and killed.
- xvi) To provide houses for Journalists. (Island -16/12/2009)
- xvii) To bring down the cost of living.
- xviii) To redress the grievances of the people.
- xix) To formulate a scheme for Police Officers to retire after 22 years of service if they so wished. (Island – 21/12/2009) ;
- xx) To meet the wage demands of the estate workers. (Daily Mirror – 24/12/2009)

- xxi) To give relief to the Golden Key Depositors. (Daily Mirror - 24/12/2009).

The first and most important matter that necessarily stares one in the face upon seeing this list of ‘promises’ is that inasmuch as the Executive President of this Country is not possessed of any legislative powers and certainly not possessed of the power to amend or change a comma or full stop in the Constitution, the basic and most fundamental promise made by Fonseka namely to abolish the Executive Presidency, is one that he obviously cannot implement even if he is elected to power. Secondly, Fonseka is not even a party leader and will therefore not have at his command a parliamentary group to introduce, support or oppose legislation which he supports or opposes. Further, even the parties that have sponsored him as a candidate because all of them are well aware that none of their leaders has a chance of snowball in hell of winning the election and for no other reason, are united only by their thirst of power and their hatred of Rajapakse. While they have banded together under the slogan “*to abolish the Executive Presidency*”, each of them has vowed to go its own separate way after the Presidential election. Thus, at the Parliamentary election one would find the UNP together with Mano Ganesan and his party (whatever that may be), the SLMC and the political IDP Mangala Samaweera together, and the JVP stoutly opposing them. What then will the Parliamentary Group be that Fonseka would command or control. One must not, however, discount the possibility, having regard the trend of politics in our country, of Fonseka being able to ‘purchase’ the support of members of various parties including the UPFA with portfolios as Rajapakse did with members of the UNP and the SLMC. Does Fonseka then propose to have a Jumbo Cabinet full of ‘*merchandise*’ ???

Even if Fonseka were to resort of making such purchases it is more than most improbable that he could garner a 2/3 majority thereby. Thus, his promise of abolishing the Executive Presidency would remain what it was, a mere promise ; mere hot air.

Judging from the comments made by Fonseka, he has obviously not given any thought whatsoever to how he is going to accomplish or honour the promises he has given. Thus, addressing a meeting of the Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya, the trade union led by the UNP, on the 10th December 2009

Fonseka said “many ask how I am going to change the constitution today. I will certainly do this **in the way I won the war**”.

It has evidently not dawned on Fonseka even by the 10th December 2009 that the war was **not** won by him but by a combined team effort of all the armed forces together with the support and cooperation of the civilians and the political will and support given by the President. Be that as it may it has also not dawned on him that while wars are won with the use of bullets, explosives and other armaments, constitutions cannot be legally amended in such manner. Thus, it is evident that Fonseka has not given any thought to constitutional reform or how he could achieve it. As regards finding the money to give a wage increase of Rs10,000/- per month to every public servant. Fonseka’s sole observation was that “**only Rs.113 Billion** was required to increase the salaries of public servants and that there would be no difficulty in raising the salaries if Rs170 **Billion** could be saved by cutting down on waste.” - Island of 21/12/2009

Fonseka does not mention how or in what manner he arrived at the figure of Rs.170 Billion as being the money lost on waste and how or in what manner he proposes to cut out that waste, particularly if the Executive Presidency is abolished as promised by him, in which event he would not have even the power to grant or issue a dog license.

As regards the other promises, apart from the promise to constitute the Constitutional Council and to implement the 17th Amendment within a month of election to office, there is not one of them which he would be capable of honouring whether or not the Executive Presidency is abolished. Thus Fonseka has glibly made promises without thinking or explaining how he intends to achieve any one or more of them.

Although the abolition of the Executive Presidency is the basis on which the various parties supporting Fonseka including the JVP and the UNP are cohabiting and is hence the corner stone of his campaign, Fonseka made evident the fact that he had no intention of honouring that promise by saying at a meeting of members local bodies of the JVP on the 7th December that he will “not be a ceremonial President” but “will have powers as President according to the agreement which he has got into” (with the opposition parties– Daily Mirror – 7/12/2009).

It is significant to observe that the agreement that Fonseka said he has with the opposition parties has not yet been disclosed to the public. The deceit incumbent upon contesting an election as a candidate sponsored by several parties with whom he has an agreement without disclosing such agreement to the people whose votes he seeks appears to be a wholly lost on Fonseka.

After addressing the JVP Unions Fonseka addressed the UNP Union – the Jathika Sevaka Sangamaya on the 10th December 2009. In the course of that address he reiterated that he would not be a ceremonial President but would have some powers to monitor the actions of the Government to determine whether they are directed towards the betterment of the people. Such powers of ‘monitoring’ can only be executive powers.

The people have still not been apprised exactly what the powers are that Fonseka claims he will retain. In any event, what is obvious is that Fonseka has no intention whatever of abolishing the Executive Presidency even if he has the ability to do so, and that the maximum he intends doing is to amend the powers of the Presidency to an extent not yet disclosed to the people.

If Fonseka was serious, sincere or truthful about the promises he made and did not merely make them for the sake of winning applause or support, he must have had a belief that they were promises which could be honoured. If Fonseka had such a belief, it must also follow that Sri Lanka has an extremely strong economy even after the ravages of the war, and that having regard to such strength of the economy the promises he made were capable of being honoured. **What bigger compliment could anybody pay to the handling of the economy by Rajapakse ??**

CHAPTER FIVE

CORRUPTION AND NEPOTISM

i) Introduction

Corruption and the covering up of corruption by the Head of Government has been endemic in Sri Lanka from the time of Independence and even before. Those of my vintage or above, would recall how in the early years of independence, no less than six hundred and ninety seven audit queries were raised by the then Auditor General Alan Smith of Oliver Earnest Gunatileke, the erstwhile Civil Defence Commissioner who became Cabinet Minister in the first Government of the late D. S. Senanayake – a person who to my mind is the non-pareil of Sri Lankan statesmen. Despite his eminence and probity, D S Senanayake dispatched O.E.G. to London as High Commissioner to save him from exposure by Alan Smith.

That nepotism was very much present at the re-birth of our country as an Independent State in 1948 was manifested by the unlovely sobriquet “Uncle Nephew Party” which was justly earned by the then ruling United National Party.

From that time onwards we never ‘looked back’, and whatever else declined corruption and nepotism soared with every Government increasing in geometric progression, the abuses of the last. It is only fair to add, that there was lull in nepotism during the Government of the late S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike from 1956 – 1959 since he made it a point to keep his own relations as well as those of his wife at more than arms length !! Regrettably his successors including his widow and daughter did not follow Bandaranaike’s exemplary practices in such matters.

It does not follow from this that corruption or nepotism should be excused or over looked on the ground of the existence of precedents. However the allegations of corruption now being exchanged by the contending parties and/or those supporting them at the forthcoming Presidential election must be viewed in the light of this circumstance and also of the circumstance that experience has shown that some who were the most vociferous ‘defenders of morality’ and ‘crusaders’ against corruption became, on assuming power, corrupt to the core.

Thus, in considering the issues of corruption and nepotism, one must necessarily bear in mind the indisputable fact that most of our professional politicians are in politics not for the sake of the betterment of the Country but for the betterment of themselves and their families, financially and otherwise; that words and promises are among the cheapest of the 'commodities' that one can find in our Country today; and, that 'honesty' in public life, like 'virginity' is often the result of a 'lack of opportunity'. It is pertinent to observe in this regard that the former Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunge who has now struck high moral ground and announced recently that she will back the candidate who will not rob is one who as President :-

- a) sabotaged the Permanent Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery and Corruption by purporting to order the then Chairman, Mr. T. A. De S. Wijesundara to resign (which is something she had no right whatsoever to do) and by withdrawing all police officers attached to the Commission therefrom ;
- b) alleged that an unnamed businessman had offered her a bribe of Rs.50 Million while she was the Prime Minister and protected him by not naming or making a complaint against him ;
- c) alleged that a Judge of the Supreme Court had taken a bribe and/or was corrupt without naming him and/or making a complaint against him and thereby protected him;
- d) accepted a 'gift' of 1 ½ acres of land from the Government of which she was the Head on the supposed ground that it was being given in lieu of her pension the total quantum whereof would have been a mere minute fraction of the value of that land; sought and obtained the allocation of No:27, Independence Avenue as a residence for herself, and, *inter alia*, a staff of 63 including 5 butlers and 1 cook for her residence apart from numerous vehicles and security staff after her retirement. These demands of Kumaratunge for benefits from the public purse after retirement are similar to those made by Fonseka which are referred to in Chapter One.

ii) **Corruption**

Corruption, to my mind, connotes the misuse and/or misappropriation of public assets for one's benefit, the misappropriation of public property be it in cash or kind, accepting bribes and/or commissions for the performance of official duties, securing or disbursing the benefits of contracts etc not on the basis of merit but through the use of connections or influence; or looking the other way while others including even a 'low-life' character like a convicted rapist pardoned and made a Justice of the Peace on political grounds engaged directly in acts of corruption through his affinity with a politician in a position of power or influence.

In this background both Rajapakse and Fonseka are certainly corrupt in that both have used public assets for their own purposes while not being entitled to do so.

Apart from such acts of corruption, there are various allegations of corruption leveled against both Rajapakse and Fonseka. The allegations against Fonseka center around certain alleged Defence contracts alleged to have been entered into by a company in which his son-in-law has a material interest as well as an allegation relating to the use by him at State expense of a satellite telephone which was entrusted to him when he was the Security Forces Commander Jaffna, to communicate with Army Head Quarters when other means of communication failed, to speak to his daughters in United States at a cost of over Rs.2.0 Million while depriving his successor as Security Forces Commander Jaffna of the use of that telephone.

The allegation against Rajapakse, on the other hand and his family and extended family are 'legion' and would, if true, render Rajapakse and his family the owners of practically all the prime lands in Colombo and several other prime proprieties in various parts of the country. Unproved allegations such as those made against Rajapakse and his family are easy to make and are reminiscent of allegation made in the past against, for example the late Gamini Dissanayake who was alleged to have owned apple orchards in Australia and the late T. B. Ilangaratne who was alleged to have owned a luxury hotel in Switzerland.

The allegation against Gamini Dissanayake notwithstanding, he later became the leader of the Parliamentary Group of the United National Party, the Leader of the Opposition, and the Presidential Candidate of that party for the

election in 1994. Those allegations were wholly unproved and there was not even evidence that he owned a single apple in Australia, leave alone an apple orchard.

The allegations against T.B. Ilangaratne were founded upon the dubious ‘evidence’ of several persons who claimed to have visited a five star hotel in Switzerland, seen a portrait of Ilangaratne hanging above the reception desk and being told by the Receptionist on inquiry who that person was, that he was the owner of such hotel !!! The utter falsity of such allegations against Ilangaratne (who was indisputably a Minister who rendered services to the working class which had never ever been equalled by any Minister whether before or after him) were proved to be false in that he died a virtual pauper.

While the allegation against Fonseka are specific those against Rajapakse and his family are both wide, general and unspecific. The question arises as to why the allegations against Fonseka have surfaced only now and why he was appointed Army Commander if there was any such truth in the allegations inasmuch as the Defence establishment must necessarily have had knowledge thereof at the time of such appointment.

Thus, the allegations or corruption against Fonseka and Rajapakse remain unproved and it would be for the Permanent Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery and Corruption and not for the voters to investigate and arrive at findings thereon.

It is pertinent in this connection to advert to the allegations made against Rajapakse in respect of the “Helping Hambantota” bank account in 2005. While the Supreme Court gave Rajapakse a clean bill of health in that regard, the allegations were hardly pursued after the election, even on political platforms, and indeed two members of the Parliament of the UNP who were ‘baying for his blood’ on that score accepted cabinet portfolios under him and one of them is presently a prominent member of the despicable ‘*Maharajaneni Club*’ !!

iii) **Nepotism**

Nepotism, to my mind means the appointment of relations or friends (whether school friends or otherwise) to various posts, not on the basis of merit or suitability but on the basis of kinship or friendship as well as the use of one’s official powers to pay off personal debts and obligations. Thus,

while the mere fact of relationship to or friendship with a person in a position of power will not disqualify such person from being appointed to an office for which he is otherwise suitable, the essence of nepotism would lie in the appointment of unsuitable persons for reasons of friendship or kinship.

Many are the allegations of nepotism made against Rajapakse. Most of them are as unspecific as they are wide – for example it was once alleged on a political platform that there are about 300 Rajapakse relatives living off the public purse. This cannot be checked without the names or descriptions of such persons which make them identifiable being disclosed. I recall that at the General Election of 1977, the United National Party published a booklet entitled “The Family Tree” identifying by name the various relatives of the Bandaranaike/Ratwatte family who were in positions of power. There having been no such identification of relatives except for a handful in the instant case, these allegations remain what they are, unsubstantiated allegations.

The main focus of the attacks on Rajapakse on the score of nepotism is the appointments of Gotabhaya Rajapakse as Defence Secretary and Basil Rajapakse as Senior Advisor to the President and various other posts. There certainly can be no gain saying the fact that Gotabhaya Rajapakse has, by his conduct proved himself to be a highly competent Defence Secretary whose services to the Country will leave an indelible mark on the history of our Land. As regards Basil Rajapakse while the former President makes snide references to him as “*Mr. Ten Percent*”, no specific allegation of corruption has, as far as I am aware, been proved against him as yet. He is, however, reputed by friend and foe alike to be an achiever who gets things done, and the rapid reconstruction and a development of the Northern and Eastern Provinces which anybody who travels to those areas can see for himself bear witness to the fact that despite being a relative, he is competent, and that accordingly, his appointment to such posts cannot be faulted unless some allegation of corruption is proved against him.

There are two instances of nepotism of which there can be no doubt and for which Rajapakse, to my mind, cannot be forgiven. The first is the special exemption given to his nephew to function as the Basnayake Nilame of a particular Devale while holding office as Chief Minister of the Uva Province. I can see no reason why he should have been singled out for special treatment, and the conclusion appears to be irresistible that the only reason why he was so singled out was his relationship to Rajapakse. The

other is the arrest and detention under the Prevention of Terrorism Act of some journalists of a JVP newspaper for having allegedly trespassed on the premises of Rajapakse's sister to photograph her luxury house. Criminal trespass is a compoundable offence. How such an act of alleged trespass could be deemed to be an offence under the Prevention of Terrorism Act defies the imagination. These, to my mind, are classic cases of nepotism and the abuse of power.

Where Fonseka is concerned, however, the general public are hardly aware of who his relations are, and not having had the opportunity of making any appointments outside the Army, there can be no responsible allegations of nepotism against him.

The question of nepotism will really arise only if and when a person has the opportunity of appointing or giving favoured treatment to his relatives. Until then, any person would necessarily remain 'virgin' on that score.

CHAPTER SIX

GOING BEYOND THE 13TH AMENDMENT

One alarming promise made by Fonseka is his promise to go beyond the 13th Amendment. This promise has been made at a time when frantic attempts are being made by both camps to garner the support of the parties representing the Tamils and the Muslims. Rajapakse on the other hand has made quite clear the fact that the ‘solution’ he proposes to the ‘National Question’ will be a ‘home grown’ solution. Such a solution would clearly exclude the 13th Amendment which was indisputably ‘made in India’.

What is most frightening about Fonseka’s promise is that it is evident from his own statement, at his first press conference on the 29th November that he himself is really unaware of the provisions of the 13th amendment – for he has promised to “do a thorough study of the 13th amendment no sooner he assumes office” (Daily Mirror – 30/11/2009). Thus, Fonseka in order to woo the minorities (who he evidently presumes to be in favour of the 13th amendment and/or greater revolution) has promised to go beyond the 13th amendment without really knowing what the 13th Amendment contains, and to implement it in full or to go beyond it. To my mind this does indicate that in a desperate bid for power Fonseka is willing to win at any cost. (*Honding Ho Naraking Ho*). The most sinister circumstance that has succeeded this irresponsible promise of Fonseka is that the ubiquitous Rauf Haqueem (*a member of the Government of Chandrika Kumaratunga, then of Ranil Wickremasinge and thereafter of Mahinda Rajapakse and one who went on a ‘Pilgrimage’ for an ‘audience’ with Prabhakaran to Mullaitivu where he signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the terrorist Prabhakaran*) is still attempting to woo the support of the lackeys of the LTTE called the Tamil National Alliance, and that Fonseka himself is having some discussions with those lackeys. The details of such discussions not having been disclosed there is room to fear the worst.

How far will Fonseka go to win the support of these loathsome lackeys of the LTTE? Those lackeys themselves have made no bones about the fact that their minimum demand is for a federal state. There is, therefore, a manifest duty cast upon Fonseka in these circumstances to act with transparency and inform the people truly and explicitly:-

- a) what he means by going beyond the 13th amendment ;

- b) how far beyond the 13th amendment he is willing to go ;
- c) what exactly he proposes to do to go beyond the 13th amendment ;
- d) whether he will seek to dismantle the unitary character of our constitution and convert it into a federal constitution ; and,
- e) whether he will re-merge the Northern and Eastern provinces.

These matters on which Fonseka must necessarily level with the people well before the 26th of January 2010.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONSPIRACY ??

i) **The Allegation**

'Conspiracy' has been a favourite word among politicians ever since the murder of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike in 1959. It is now used by them *ad lib* to describe any course of action taken by any person or body of persons which any group of politicians do not like. This, of course, does not mean that all such 'conspiracy theories' are false.

The entry of Fonseka into the presidential race has evoked many allegations of having been a result of conspiracy of anti-national forces within and without Sri Lanka to destabilize and undermine the Country.

This allegation has lost much credence by reason of the fact that many of those who make it are unabashed sycophants of Rajapakse such as members of the odious '*Maharajeneni Club*'. There is, on the other hand some evidence to suggest that there may well be some truth in this allegation. Let us examine the evidence.

ii) **The Evidence**

Fonseka is a citizen who has every right to contest the Presidency just as much as any other. The fact that he was the Commander of the Army and the Chief of Defence Staff and that he is contesting his Commander in Chief do not, by themselves, convert his conduct in seeking to contest the Presidency an act of treachery or the result of the conspiracy.

It is, however, the circumstances under which Fonseka precipitately retired and decided to contest his Commander in Chief and the identities of those who support him that lend credence to the 'conspiracy theory', and expose the lack of *bona fides* in Fonseka. Such credence is further nourished by the different reasons given by Fonseka for his retirement and decision to contest, and of course, the allegations made by him thereafter against Gotabhaya Rajapakse and the Army.

iii) The Letter Of Retirement

The fact that Fonseka's retirement was politically inspired and the result of prior concert with the political parties openly sponsoring his candidature and acting as his virtual 'political co owners' was made evident by the fact that Fonseka's letter of retirement was, in all likelihood, drafted not by him, but by some political party, presumably the United National Party. This is borne out by the fact that while what was purported to be Fonseka's letter of retirement was published in the internet one day before the letter was actually tendered, and a comparison of the text of the two letters makes evident the fact that six of the eight paragraphs of the letter of retirement are identical in both letters; very significant additions have been made to two paragraphs (paragraph 5 and 6) in the actual letter which was submitted. It would be grossly defamatory of Fonseka to even suggest that he himself released to the public through the internet, the letter of retirement he proposed to tender to the Head of State the day before he tendered it. Such is not, the conduct of an officer and a gentleman. Further, the pre-published draft of the annexe to the letter in which were set out what were purported to be his reasons for retirement contained sixteen paragraphs while the annexe actually tendered contained seventeen, while two paragraphs of the original pre-published draft were wholly omitted (paragraph 12 and 16) and replaced by two new paragraphs in the letter actually submitted.

iv) Politics In Uniform

Thus, there can be no doubt whatever that the original draft published in the internet on the day prior to the retirement of Fonseka had been prepared for him by one or more political parties sponsoring him, and that he was, therefore, co-habiting with them and planning his retirement and subsequent candidature while he was a serving officer in the Army, his sanctimonious utterances that he would not indulge in politics while in uniform notwithstanding.

The fact that Fonseka's protestations to the contrary were false, and that Fonseka has in fact being engaged in political negotiations with political parties about his own political future even before he retired is further confirmed by a statement made by Fonseka at a meeting of the National Bikkhu Front on the 11th December 2009 that he had brought diverse parties together (Daily Mirror – 12/12/2009) since the parties in questions came

together to sponsor Fonseka **not after** he resigned **but before**. It must therefore follow of necessity that Fonseka had been engaged in politics while he was still a serving officer of the Army.

v) **Reasons**

The purported reasons given by Fonseka for his retirement in the letter actually submitted are :-

- a) that various agencies are misleading Rajapakse about a possible coup which led to a change in command of the Army (despite his request to be in command until the 60th anniversary celebrations) and that consequent to this ‘coup theory’ the Government of India have been alerted and that Government had place its troops on high alert on or about 15th October 2009. (India however, has flatly denied this contention about India having placed its troops on high alert) ;
- b) that the present Army Commander (who Fonseka says was facing a disciplinary inquiry) was appointed as Commander of the Army while he had recommended that another officer, namely Major General G A Chandrasiri, the present Governor of the Northern Province be appointed to that post ;
- c) that he was appointed Chief of Defence Staff which was a post with basically no authority except for mere coordinating responsibilities and that he had been misled as to the authority to be vested in the Chief of Defence Staff prior to his appointment ;
- d) that the Secretary of Defence had said at a meeting of Service Commanders subsequent to his appointment as Chief of Defence Staff that “if operational control of all three services is granted to the CDS, it would be very dangerous” ;
- e) that Rajapakse had stated at the first Security Council meeting after 18th May 2009 that there was “ a strong public opinion is in the making to say that the country is in possession of too powerful Army. (sic) which will lead Sri Lanka to another state like that of Myanmar (sic)” ;

- f) that the present Army Commander had, immediately upon appointment, transferred senior officers who had made considerable contributions to the war effort as well as some junior officers who had worked with his (Fonseka's) wife in the *Seva Vanitha* Army branch ;
- g) that the government had not considered the proposals he had made **during the war** that the compensation payable to the next of kin of officers and men killed should be increased to Rs500,000/- ;
- h) that Army headquarters was "***bold enough***" while he was abroad to change the unit from which soldiers were deployed for security at the main entrance from the Sinha Regiment (Fonseka's parent Regiment), to those from other units, despite the Sinha Regiment having performed such functions for four years, and that the Secretary Defence had replaced the Sinha Regiment troops guarding the Ministry of Defence with troops from the Gajaba Regiment (which, incidentally, was Gotabhaya Rajapakse's parent regiment) ;
- i) that news items and rumours that were detrimental to him were instigated by some persons (unnamed and unidentified by Fonseka) and identified him as a traitor ;
- j) that the Army which he transformed from '*an Ordinary Army*' to a "*highly professional outfit*" is now losing its way ;
- k) that the resettlement of IDPs is being done in an *ad hoc* manner without proper infrastructure facilities and that IDPs are living in appalling conditions ;
- l) that "troop requirement for the resettlement is grossly insufficient"; and
- m) that so far no constructive action had been taken to methodically rehabilitate the approximately 10,000 LTTE cadres who had surrendered.

These purported reasons do not bear examination. Reason 'a' has been denied by the Indian Government. Purported reasons 'b', 'c', 'd', 'e', 'f',

‘g’, ‘h’, ‘i’ and ‘j’ bespeak a bruised ego, conflicts of a personal nature and an overwhelming desire for power. Fonseka’s contention that he was misled about the powers of the Chief of Defence Staff is wholly untenable in that those powers were clearly spelt out in the Chief of Defence Act under which he was appointed, which was both debated and passed in Parliament. It is scarcely credible that Fonseka accepted such office without reading the Act to determine what his powers and functions would be – for that is not the conduct one would ordinarily expect of a responsible officer. If, of course, Fonseka had not cared to read the Act but blindly accepted office upon some assurances about powers and functions of his new job he would surely be a person who is wholly unsuitable to hold any responsible position. I certainly would not be so unkind as to presume that Fonseka had acted in so wholly irresponsible a manner despite whatever he says.

Fonseka’s professed concern about the IDPs and the rehabilitation of surrendered cadres of the LTTE appear to have been political motivated statements in that even Fonseka does not even claim to have raised these purported concerns while he was either the Commander of the Army or the Chief of Defence Staff and there are hardly any references to such matters in his subsequent speeches, interviews and so on.

What is most significant about the purported reasons given by Fonseka for his retirement is that there is **no mention** therein about :-

- i) Corruption ;
- ii) Nepotism ;
- iii) Suppression of the media ;
- iv) The lack of democracy ; or
- v) The order alleged to have been given by Gotabhaya Rajapakse to Shavendra de Silva

despite the fact that the matters itemized as i) to iv) constitute the foundation or main plank of Fonseka’s campaign for the Presidency. Indeed Fonseka has actually removed all references to such matters from his letter of retirement in that paragraph 16 of the draft letter of retirement which was publicized on the day before he retired stated :-

*“The peace dividend the whole country expected at the conclusion of the war has yet to materialize. The economic hardships faced by the people have increased while **waste and corruption** have reached endemic*

proportions; media freedom and other democratic rights continue to be curtailed. The many sacrifices the Army made to end the war would not have been in vain if we can usher in a new era of peace and prosperity to our Motherland”.

vi) **After Thoughts**

After Fonseka tendered his letter of retirement he gave several purported ‘reasons’ for having ‘fallen out’ the Rajapakses and retired which were not mentioned in his letter of retirement. Inasmuch as these purported ‘reasons’ if true, would have constituted cogent reasons for resigning, it is not merely more than passing strange but highly significant and even sinister that he did not mention them in his letter of retirement; and more so that he did not retire and/or resign at the time of the happening of the said events if indeed they happened. In the circumstances, the conclusion appears to me to be inescapable that Fonseka, having realized that the purported ‘reasons’ for his retirement which he gave in his letter of retirement and the annex thereto were wholly unimpressive and unconvincing, set out to fabricate fresh reasons, thus :-

- a) in an interview with Fredrica Jansz on Friday the 4th December 2009 (Sunday Leader – 6/12/2009) Fonseka said that the cause of the ensuing and ever widening rift between Mahinda Rajapakse and Gotabhaya Rajapakse was the fact he vetoed a proposal for the purchase of Artillery Shells to the value of US Dollars 300.0 Million **days after** the war had ended ; and
- b) in an interview with an Indian magazine ‘Outlook’ which asked him why he quit the post of Chief of Defence Staff so soon and decided to contest Rajapakse, he said, *inter alia* :-

“I realized the level corruption in the country the lack of justice for the people. I’ve realized that this Executive Presidency was doing a lot of damage to the country, a lot damage to the principles of democracy besides I have not seen any infrastructure development in this country in the last few years. Some of the roads and bridges that were built had been planned by the previous Government. The war can’t have been a reason for stopping development”.

How Fonseka can be heard to say that he saw no infrastructure development defies imagination. One of the greatest achievements of the Rajapakse Government has been the tremendous amount of infrastructure development it has achieved even while 'war was in progress'. This infrastructure development included the Hambatota Harbour, the Colombo Harbour expansion project, the Oluvil Harbour, the Norochcholai Power Station, the Sampur Power Station, the Kerawalapitiya Power Station, the development of roads particularly in the Eastern Province, and after the war in the Northern Province, the Upper Kotmale Hydro Power Project and the several road development projects undertaken and being accomplished in other parts of the country as well. Fonseka's contention that these projects or some of them had been planned by previous Governments only shows his lack understanding of the requirements of a country. The requirements of a country do not lie in the making of plans which are not implemented, but in the implementation of such plans.

It is also pertinent to observe in this connection, that while Fonseka does not allege any interference in the conduct of the 'war' as being a reason for falling out with Gotabhaya Rajapakse or deciding to retire and contest the Presidency, Fonseka has later alleged in an interview with Fredrica Jansz [Sunday Leader 13.12.09] that Gotabhaya Rajapakse had given Shavendra De Silva instructions not to accept the surrender of any cadres of the LTTE but to kill them. If indeed the said allegation made by him contained even a fragment of truth, he could not possibly and honourably have remained the Commander of the Army or later accepted the office of Chief of Defence Staff as he indisputably did.

In the circumstances set out above, there can, to my mind, be a little or no doubt whatsoever that the purported reasons given by Fonseka for his retirement are false. This, then, adds further fuel to the gathering flames of the conspiracy theory.

Two important factors integral to the conspiracy theory that need consideration are :-

- a) The identity of those who promoted Fonseka to contest the Presidency as the "common opposition candidate" ; and
- b) The fact that Fonseka's retirement and decision to contest the Presidency followed close upon the heels of his visit to the

United States wherein he had been summoned by the Department of Homeland Security to testify in respect of alleged crimes alleged to have been committed by the Defence Secretary in Sri Lanka.

Let us now consider these matters.

vii) **The Sponsors/Promoters/Political Co-owners**

According to our Constitution, the only persons who are competent and/or qualified to contest a Presidential Election are those who are voters and are nominated by a recognized political party, or have been Members of Parliament. Accordingly, Fonseka who was never a member of Parliament had of necessity to find a political party to nominate him. Fonseka has now filed his nomination paper from a relatively unknown party which was formerly the Democratic United National Lalith Front led by Srimani Athulathmudali of which such ‘illustrious persons’ as the infamous Karunanayake who evidently believed that Elephant Pass was located somewhere in Pamankade was a leading member. It is presently led by or said to be led by one Ariyawansa Dissanaike whose claim to fame, as far as I am aware lies solely in the fact that he was the defeated candidate of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party for the Polonnaruwa District at the general election of 1989 wherein he secured a ‘colossal’.... preference votes which constituted % of the total number of preference votes polled by members of his party and% of the total number of preference votes polled by members of all parties who contested. One does not know whether Fonseka even knows or has spoken to the leader the party which nominated him and/or whether he is even a member of that party.

Like a man who is legally married to one woman but cohabits not with her, but with some other mistresses, Fonseka while having been nominated by this relatively unknown party, cohabits with another coterie of political rejects, namely the United National Party, the Sri Lanka Muslim Congress, the party headed by Mano Ganeshan by whatever name it may now be called, the ‘make believe’ party called the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (*Mahajana Wing*) purportedly led by the political IDP Mangala Samaweera, and the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna led by Somawansa Amarasinghe.

The very fact that none of these parties, and, in particular, the United National Party which was founded 62 years ago has seen fit to nominate one of its own, either its leader or any other member as a candidate leaves no room for doubt that every one of them knew that neither the leader nor any other member of any of their parties or alleged party had even a chance of ‘snow-ball in hell’ of coming even a close second to Rajapakse at the forthcoming Presidential Election.

This, obviously, posed a severe problem to them – for if they did not engage in the futile exercise of putting one of their own forward to contest the Presidential Election and stayed out of it altogether, those parties would have lost even the minimal support which they now enjoy and become in all respects, a part of the history of our land. Thus, to avert the catastrophe of going into wholesale oblivion, these parties, and in particular Mangala Samaweera, who was wholly incapable of even winning a seat in Parliament at the forthcoming General Election in the absence of an alliance, moved heaven and earth to forge an ‘alliance’ for their own survival. The result of these endeavors, based solely on a lust for power coupled with a visceral hatred of Rajapakse was the United National Front. However, even the members of that particular ‘Front’ realized that whatever the arrangements may be among themselves, they would become history and be unable to make any impact at the Parliamentary General Election if they failed to either secure the Presidency for one of their number or promote from outside, a candidate who appears to be capable of defeating Rajapakse.

With none of their number including their leaders such as Wickremasinghe having any chance whatever of coming even a close second to Rajapakse at the forthcoming Presidential Election even with an electoral agreement with the JVP, they had to cast around for a candidate to sponsor who enjoyed the confidence and/or the respect of the people which none of those parties including their leaders or members enjoyed. Finding an apparent rift between Fonseka and Rajapakse, they dovetailed upon him and misled him into retiring from his post as Chief of Defence Staff and contesting the Presidential Election, not because they thought that Fonseka could ‘deliver the goods’ or give this country peace, order and good Government but wholly and solely for their own political survival.

In this endeavour they had, of necessity, to enlist the support of the J.V.P. Inasmuch as the policies of none of the constituent parties including the imaginary party of Samaweera were compatible with those of the J.V.P.,

they had, of necessity, for their own survival to hit upon some common program. Having been unable to hit upon such a program they hit upon the empty slogan “the abolition of Executive Presidency” **but without having any idea about the system that should be implemented to replace the Executive Presidency.**

We therefore have parties to a *‘marriage of convenience’*, namely the members of the so called United National Front cohabiting with the JVP, the policies whereof are diametrically opposed to their’s in order to promote the candidature of Fonseka to secure their own survival.

It is indeed tragic that a war hero like Fonseka should be so used as a tool, a front or a puppet by such a set of discredited politicians.

Yet, Fonseka, wholly blinded by an apparent visceral hatred of the Rajapakses is blind, whether purposely or otherwise, to these facts and seeks to contest the Presidency on the manifest fiction that the parties promoting him are doing so for the benefit of the Country having reposed confidence in him, while many of them had reviled him while he was leading the Army in a heroic battle against the LTTE. Poor man. As I warned Fonseka’s former superior, the late Major General Janaka Perera, the UNP will use him and then cast him aside as one would cast aside a cigarette butt.

The next issue that arises for consideration is what of Rajapakse? What support does he have? .

Rajapakse, it must be remembered is the leader of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party as well as of the coalition known as the UPFA. While I seriously doubt whether many of those in the UPFA are committed to following the policies of Rajapakse, the fact remains that they have done so for the last crucial four years. Whatever their personal beliefs (if any) may be, they have, for good reason, bad reason or no reason, given their unstinted support to Rajapakse to prosecute the war. None of them had in any way, made any statement or done anything to hinder the war effort. Their affection for their posts and the perks and privileges that go with them and those which they have acquired outside those to which they are legally entitled have evidently been a powerful incentive to giving Rajapakse such support. Thus, despite the manifold faults of Rajapakse, he has with this motley crowd of supporters led the country to a historic victory over terrorism, successful repulsed efforts by the most powerful of States in the world including the

world's only major power the United States of America to cripple our war effort and, at the same time developed our country to an extent hitherto unseen.

There are, no doubt, faults, some of them severe, in the administration of the country, which include in particular, faults in the spheres of health and education. However, faults in particular aspects of the administration would always be there to be seen in any administration and would not, necessarily be a cause for throwing out the 'baby with the bath water', the baby, in this instance being Rajapakse.

It is pertinent, in this connection, to observe that while this country, for the first time in its history as an Independent State had a **negative** growth rate during the regime of Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunge who appears to be throwing her weight behind Fonseka, Rajapakse, has at a time of a global recession and a time of war achieved a growth rate of around 4%.

These are matters that the one must necessarily consider in deciding whether to dethrone Rajapakse and enthrone Fonseka and hence, the motley crowd of decrepit politicians behind him, or continue with 'known devil' Rajapakse who has, not by words but by deeds, achieved so much. We are therefore caught between a highly respected war hero whose achievements on the war front prove him, to have been, indisputably, an Army Commander who led his troops in battle in an exemplary manner and a Head of State whose leadership of the State in the last four years produced unprecedented results.

Which of the two is more component to do the job?

Fonseka comes with the backing and/or support of a bunch of proved failures, not one of whom has a record of achievement which is even scarcely comparable to that of Rajapakse. A comparison between the development projects commenced and/or concluded during the regime of Wickremasinghe when there was a 'phony peace' and those those embarked upon and successfully completed by Rajapakse during his regime when the war was in progress leaves Wikremasinghe with 'egg on his face' and provides further evidence as to why he ran away from contesting the Presidential elections and preferred, instead, to support Fonseka who was not even a member of his party.

To my mind, the chief problem of Rajapakse in this election is the identity of those who are around him such as the synthetic 'Doctor' Mervin de Silva and the members of the '*Maharajaneni Club*'. A man is judged by the company he keeps, and there is a colourful Sinhalese saying which amounts to saying that he who sleeps with dogs wakes up with fleas. Both Fonseka and Rajapakse are, in this campaign, sleeping with 'dogs' (I say this with my apologies to those who are genuine dogs) and will, therefore, get up with fleas. All I ask of them is let not those fleas infect and/or afflict our Country.

viii) The White Sahibs

What would have happened to the war effort if Mahinda Rajapakse had succumbed to the virtually unbearable pressure exerted upon him by the United Nations, the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France, Norway and the European Union to stop the war and declare a ceasefire?? There would then have been no defeat of the LTTE, and we would still have been a country where bombs were exploded every now and then in buses, trains and crowded city centers, where the flower of our youth was dying and being dismembered on the battle field; where Tamil children were being kidnapped on a daily basis and whole villages of Sinhalese and Muslims were being slaughtered by terrorists because of their ethnicity.

Even the bitterest opponent of Rajapakse cannot help being suffused with admiration for him for the way in which he withstood these pressures brought to bear on him by white men who evidently still consider us to be vassals and developed close ties with countries such as China, Iran and Libya which were willing to help and did help us when our so called 'friends' from the democratic west refused. Though Rajapakse is being roundly criticized by Fonseka's sponsors for having antagonised the west and developed friendships with countries ruled by dictators such as China, Iran and Libya, the question that must be uppermost in our minds is not the internal affairs of other countries but whether they helped us or not when we needed help— for what is the use of a friend who will not help us when we are in need of help ?

Even after the victory on the 18th May 2009, these same Western States continue with their efforts to undermine us by proposing a resolution calling for a war crimes probe before the United Nations Human Rights Commission; seeking to block the IMF standby facility which we had

sought; and depriving us of the GSP Plus facility which would throw hundreds of thousands of girls from poor families out of employment. These then are the countries that are virtually worshipped by the UNP and their allies in the Front called the UNF who are the principle 'patrons' of Fonseka.

One need not have more than one guess at what Ranil Wickremasinghe would have done in the face of this foreign pressure had he been in Rajapakse's shoes at the time. It is pertinent to recall that his uncle and political patron J R Jayawardena succumbed completely to Indian pressure and called off the Vadamarachchi operation in 1987 when we were on the verge of victory.

Fonseka, more than any citizen should have realized how great the achievement of Rajapakse was in staving off the pressure that came from the Western States. It is more than most regrettable that in his new incarnation as a self seeking politician he has omitted to consider in its entirety the invaluable contribution to this country and the people that was made by Rajapakse by so resisting foreign pressure. It is also evident that Fonseka is veering towards the subservience of Ranil Wickremasinghe and the UNP to the West and to tamely submitting to foreign interference in our internal affairs. Thus, as reported in the Island of 30th November 2009 Fonseka said at his first press conference on the previous day that an international war crimes probe could be conducted provided the "International Community would produce clear evidence including times and places of violation alleged to have taken place during the war".

Fonseka's condition about clear evidence of times, places etc is ridiculous because evidence can be produced only **after** and **not before** a probe. The sum and substance of what Fonseka has said, therefore, means that he would succumb to the sovereign State of Sri Lanka being investigated by a bunch of foreigners whom he describes as being the 'international community' which in turn is only a euphemism for the affluent western states which betrayed us.

ix) Conclusion

When all these circumstances including the circumstances :-

- a) that Fonseka's precipitate retirement and advent into politics came close on the heels of his visit to the United States where he, a 'Green Card' holder had been summoned by the Department of Homeland Security of that country to give evidence relating to alleged war crimes alleged to have been committed in Sri Lanka ; and
- b) That the European Union took a decision to suspend GSP Plus benefits to Sri Lanka shortly after Fonseka made his treacherous statement to the Sunday Leader of the 13th December 2009 (see Chapter 3)

There is sufficient evidence to conclude that Fonseka's candidature has been contrived through a conspiracy by our enemies both within and without the country to destabilise and undermine us. This is particularly so when one considers the identities and past records of Fonseka's principle sponsors in Sri Lanka.

The UNP and its allies in the UNF, namely, Mano Ganeshan's party, the SLMC and the so called Mahajana Wing of the SLFP were parties which made an abortive attempt to defeat the budget in November 2008 while the war was being fought and the JVP having been alleged to have agreed to defeat that budget, later abstained from voting. Had the budget been defeated, there can be no doubt whatsoever that the entire war effort would have been derailed and that our country would have been thrown into a state of anarchy.

This, therefore, was a manifestly treacherous effort by those parties to betray our country. It would be an insult of the intelligence of Fonseka to even think for a moment that he unaware of these facts.

Although the JVP abstained from voting at the last moment and therefore did not make an attempt to defeat the budget, its conduct in seeking to promote the strikes in vital sectors of our country while the 'war' was 'on' does not bespeak a party acting in the national interest.

Further, there was a previous occasion, now almost forgotten, on which they teamed up with the UNP to destabilise the operations against the LTTE. That was when the JVP teamed up with the UNP to vote against and defeat the emergency during the regime of Chandrika Kumaratunge. By reason of that

treacherous act of wholesale betrayal, Chandrika Kumaratunge's Government did not present a motion to extend the emergency which resulted in the emergency lapsing and several LTTE suspects having to be released from custody. This again is something of which Fonseka could not have been unaware.

Thus, every party that supports Fonseka has been *particeps criminis* in seeking to under-mine the war effort and hence our Country.

Yet Fonseka has teamed up with these enemies of our country. Having regard to what has been said above, can this be anything but a result of a conspiracy to undemine and destabilise our Country?

CHAPTER EIGHT

DEMAND FOR A `CHANGE`

Some of the most vociferous and ardent supporters of Fonseka [*that is supporters until such time as he loses when they will join the queue to acclaim Rajapakse and denounce Fonseka*] are the empty headed `socialites` who are said to be the *elite* of the social scene of Colombo [contemptuously named "*the Colombians*" by my good friend Gomin Dayasri] and those shallow specimens of `social climbers` straining at the leash to join their number.

To these `Colombians` and `wannabe Colombians`, anything `made in USA` is good and must be emulated without question. Thinking logically is anathema to the `Colombian`.

The slogan about the need for a `Change` was a constant feature of Barak Hussain Obama's successful campaign for the Presidency of the USA. Thus, the `Colombians` parrot that cry in our Presidential campaign in support of Fonseka who to them, is some kind of alluring new `fashion`.

Being allergic to any kind of logical thought, the `Colombians` fail completely to even consider the fact that the situation that existed in their concept of *Utopia* [the USA] in 2008 and that which exists in Sri Lanka today, are entirely different. The `change` Obama was seeking to accomplish in 2008 was the replacement of the Republican Regime of George W Bush, (*a `leader` idolized by the serial loser Wickremasinghe who `leads` the principal sponsor/handler/promoter/political co-owner of Fonseka*) by a regime headed by himself.

The Republican Regime of George W Bush in the USA had been an unmitigated disaster. It committed unforgivable crimes against humanity/war crimes, by invading Iraq on the fraudulent pretext of there being `Weapons of Mass Destruction` in that Country, and murdering and maiming Iraqis by the thousand; and committing similar unforgivable crimes by invading Afghanistan and murdering Afghans in Afghanistan and Pakistanis in Pakistan on the ground that a Saudi Arabian called Osama bin Laden who had allegedly engineered the terrorist attacks on the USA in 2003 was said to have been resident in Afghanistan !!! By reason of

committing those crimes that regime caused the USA to get a monumental 'hiding' from both the Iraqis and the Afghans, and needlessly sacrificed the lives and limbs of many American youth. On the domestic front' too, that regime was a colossal failure. In short, it was of no use to man or beast, and its pathetic record cried out for a 'change'.

Does the disastrous Republican Regime of Bush bear any comparison to the Rajapakse Regime ?? Decidedly not. Bush embarked upon unnecessary military 'adventures' which were criminal as well as self destructive. America gained nothing from that regime but kept going down the Gadarene Slope. Rajapakse re-commenced military operations that were essential but which his predecessors were too cowardly to launch, against the Tiger terrorists; gave to our Armed Forces a degree of political support, encouragement and assistance that was wholly unprecedented; and had the courage to resist pressure from interfering western countries and INGOs to stop the 'war'. This was 'courage' that his predecessors sorely lacked. This, in turn resulted in the Armed Forces vanquishing the 'military' might of the LTTE. Rajapakse did not stop there, when those same busybodies in the west with their hands dripping with the blood of Iraqi, Afghan and Pakistani civilians had the brazen effrontery to demand that foreigners be given the right to investigate alleged 'war crimes' allegedly committed by our forces, Rajapakse stoutly resisted, stood by the Armed Forces unwaveringly, and maintained our independence and sovereignty.

While doing all this, including finding the money to fund the costly but necessary war which could have been won 22 years ago if Wickremesinghe's uncle and political patron JRJ had but a fraction of the courage and commitment of Rajapakse, Rajapakse continued to develop the Country. Mega projects like Norochcholai, Upper Kotmale, Moragahakanda and the Hambantota Harbour and so many other development projects were commenced. With the end of the 'war', the Northern and Eastern Provinces are seeing development such as they have never seen before: adverse travel advisories are being lifted, and tourism which had struck rock bottom, and empty hotel rooms were the order of the day, has now begun to recover with the current need becoming more hotel rooms !!!

Is there then a need for a 'change' in the form of 'pensioning off' Rajapakse, his achievements notwithstanding, and installing in his place a 'promising' retired general whose knowledge, experience and expertise has been restricted to warfare, and has already, with deplorable and unbelievable

irresponsibility and/or ignorance promised 'everything to everybody', and has only been put forward by his sponsors/handlers/promoters/political co-owners through sheer desperation as a 'proxy' or 'agent' because they know that they are held in such colossal contempt by the People that the nomination of any of their leaders or members for election as President was necessarily doomed to failure.

These discredited political rejects have put poor Fonseka forward, not for the betterment of the Country, but to get for themselves dishonestly, through the prestige of Fonseka, at least some part of the political power for which they hunger but know the People will not give them,.

If these stupid, shallow 'Colombians' do something unprecedented and actually 'think' logically, even for a brief moment, they would realize the patent idiocy of their call for a 'change', and throw in such weight as they have behind Rajapakse.

CHAPTER NINE

WHAT WOULD BENEFIT THE COUNTRY

i) The Issues

I do not, by what I have said in the previous chapter, mean that the achievements of Rajapakse preclude a need for change under any circumstances. A change is good or desirable only if it is for the better – effecting a change solely for the sake of change would be downright stupid.

Would a victory of Fonseka over Rajapakse benefit the Country ? If so, how ?? These are the real issues that now arise for determination.

ii) Provenance

Rajapakse comes before the People with the backing of the coalition which he leads. Fonseka comes before the People, not as a leader or member of any party or coalition of parties, but as a “*Common Opposition Candidate*” which is a euphemism for a ‘*proxy*’/ ‘*agent*’/ ‘*front*’ for a bunch of parties with disparate policies who have only three things in common, namely:-

- a) a lust for power;
- b) a certainty that neither they nor any of their members would command the respect or confidence of the People to an extent that would enable any of them to come even a close second to Rajapakse; and,
- c) an unquenchable desire to thrust themselves into positions of ‘power’ regardless of the People’s lack of confidence in them.

These, then, are the reasons for which they have inveigled Fonseka who, somewhat like the legendary ‘Barkis’, was “willing”, to contest Rajapakse.

They themselves did not believe that Fonseka was capable of giving the Country better government, but saw him as their only means of insinuating themselves into positions of power against the wishes of the People.

Since Fonseka has no party, they presumably think that they can **control** Fonseka !!! – i.e. that the likes of Wickremesinghe, Samaraweera, Ganesan, Somawansa Amerasinghe or Hakeem could control Fonseka !!! A classic case of we the citizens being ‘damned’ if they can; and ‘damned’ if they can’t.

iii) **Achievements**

Rajapakse comes before the People with a solid record of achievement **in the governance of the Country** referred to above.

Fonseka comes before the People with a solid record of achievement in commanding troops in battle.

The function of a Head of State is not to command troops in battle. This is particularly so after the Country has finally won a long drawn ‘war’ against terrorism. The function of a Head of State is to give the Country peace, order and good government which, in turn, includes among other things, developing the Country, increasing productivity, preventing a resurgence of terrorism, and defending our Country and Armed Forces against foreign interference, These are things Rajapakse has already achieved. There is, of course much more that needs to be done.

iv) **The ‘Much More’ That Needs To Be Done.**

The ‘much more’ that needs to be done includes the solving of the day to day problems of the People such as the soaring cost of living, unemployment, the lack of housing, the shortcomings in the sectors of health and education, the entronement of the rule of law, the restoration of law and order, the strengthening of democracy, the protection of the freedom of speech and hence of the media, the elimination of corruption, waste and nepotism.

Fonseka’s inexperience in governance, particularly when considered in the light of the less than pathetic records of his

sponsors/handlers/promoters/political co-owners present to us the prospect of a 'Fonseka Regime' being wholly unable to achieve any of these things. The UNP is a party drenched in corruption and nepotism. Wickremesinghe is its leader only because of the favoured treatment accorded to him by his uncle, the infamous JRJ, and the conduct of the LTTE in murdering its leaders.

Just as much as the giving of patronage, appointments, contracts etc. to the undeserving because of kinship is nepotism, so also is the giving of such things to the undeserving because of friendship, whether in school or otherwise.

It was during the regime of the UNP that State enterprises including profitable enterprises were sold for a 'song' to the detriment of the Country. The wanton 'murder' of the sole organization through which the State was able to cushion the steeply rising cost of living, and give relief to the poor, the CWE, was one of the significant 'achievements' of the short-lived regime of Wickremesinghe. The decaying hulks of the once productive multi-million rupee sugar factories at Kantalai and Hingurana [among the ruins of so many other State enterprises] bear mute testimony to the corruption, waste and sheer incompetence of past UNP regimes.

Yet Fonseka said at his first Press Conference that he would follow the UNP's economic policies !! What, one wonders do the 'Marx Brothers' of qq JVP have to say about this !!!

The greatest act of corruption and misuse of State property committed by the UNP, of course, was by illegally and treasonously handing over more than a quarter of our Country's territory including the bulk of its sea coast to the LTTE to rule as it wished.

Samaraweera, who was virulently attacked by the UNP for corruption, in view of he having used a credit card given to him by the privatized Sri Lanka Telecom PLC, as well as for waste and the misuse of state property, in view of he having refurbished his office at a cost of millions of rupees and installed a lift in his official house to enable his mother to go from the ground floor to the 1st floor (while the old, the young, the sick and the maimed queue up and wait for hours to board buses to go long distances); and Ganesan, who has never had the opportunity of engaging in corruption, waste or nepotism; are but adjuncts of the UNP, and must hence be deemed

to have approved of its rampant corruption, nepotism, waste and misuse of state property. How else could they have joined the UNF ???

The chameleon like SLMC has been a supporter of Premadasa from the Opposition benches, and then a member of the Governments of Kumaratunge, Wickremesinghe and Rajapakse respectively but has no achievements whatever to 'show' for its several sojourns in power; and its leader Hakeem has even debased himself and his party irretrievably, by going on a 'pilgrimage' to Mullaitivu to meet Prabhakaran and signing a MOU with him. Hakeem later attended a meeting of communal minority parties in Vienna, which was sponsored by the NGO called the Tamil Information Centre.

On which side this apology for a party will be after the next election is anybody's guess.

This leaves the JVP, a party known for destruction rather than for construction. How many civilians did the JVP murder in the period 1988-90 for not obeying their orders to strike, turn off lights, close boutiques etc. ? How many members of the Armed Forces and Police and how many members of their families did they murder because those members of the Armed Forces and Police did not obey the JVP's command and resign ?? How many productive factories and how many buses did they reduce to ashes throwing thousands of employees into the ever swelling ranks of the unemployed ??? How many children did they deprive of education and how many patients of all ages did they murder by causing strikes in schools and hospitals ????

As regards corruption, the JVP is a party, the cadres whereof committed numerous burglaries in the period 1988-1990. Burglars are hardly the persons with whom any person of sound mind would team up to battle corruption.

Thus, the company in which Fonseka presents himself to the People and his own penchant for using State property as his own referred to in Chapter 2 above, deprives his repeated promises to wipe out corruption, nepotism, the misuse of State property and waste, of any hint of credibility.

The concrete and visible steps taken by the Rajapakse regime to develop the Country leave room for hope that Rajapakse will, if re-elected, tackle with at

least some measure of success, the burning problems of the People such as those referred to above.

Despite all its achievements, the Rajapakse Regime has been marred with allegations of corruption, nepotism, misuse of state property and waste. While some allegations of corruption remain wholly unproved, some which arise from the misuse of state property and waste as well as some allegations of nepotism are well founded and evident to all who have eyes to see and the will to see, such as, for example, the taking of hordes of 'hangers on' on foreign trips at state expense though the service they rendered to the Country by such hangers on participating in such trips was 'nil'; the *Dansalas* at Temple Trees; the misuse of State vehicles and employees for election propaganda; the favoured treatment accorded to Rajapakse's nephew, who alone, was given the right to hold the post of a Basnayake Nilame in a Devale as well as a political appointment as Chief Minister, and the arrest and detention of some journalists under the Prevention of Terrorism Act for having allegedly trespassed on the premises of his sister to photograph her luxurious house. These are manifestly indelible black marks on the record of Rajapakse.

In addition to these black marks are the allegations of the suppression of the media and hence of democracy by the unprecedented number of murders of and other attacks on journalists that have occurred during the Rajapakse Regime. While evidence has yet to be adduced to prove that Rajapakse was responsible for any such murder or attack, the facts that all such murders and attacks were committed while the ship of state was being steered by his regime; that all but one of the journalists who were victims of such crimes were those who had been critical of the Rajapakse Regime and its handling of the 'war' in particular; and that the perpetrators of such crimes have yet to be apprehended, constitute evidence which points to the complicity of the Rajapakse Regime in such heinous crimes to still the voice of dissent.

Such evidence, while being in no way sufficient to prove that the Rajapakse regime was complicit in such crimes, is more than sufficient to warrant deep suspicion of such complicity. Be that as it may, the available evidence condemns the Rajapakse regime for its woeful failure to protect these journalists as well as those employees of the Rupavahini Corporation who earned the ire of a wholly uncouth synthetic 'doctor' holding ministerial office for a praiseworthy act committed by them not so long ago, and were systematically slashed with razors and other cutting weapons by assorted

thugs at different times and places not long after such praiseworthy acts; and to bring to book the dastardly criminals who committed those crimes.

These, clearly are matters in respect of which Rajapakse must necessarily take, or be compelled to take corrective action by the public. The imperative of *'not rocking the boat'* and thereby impeding the war effort no longer exists.

What of Fonseka ? As in the case of Rajapakse, he too is faced with unproved allegations of corruption. As stated in Chapter..... above, he has, within one month of his retirement both misused state property and by his conduct proved that in his view State property is his to use as he likes.

The likelihood of Fonseka honouring his promise to ensure the freedom of the press and strengthen democracy is non-existent, having regard, in particular, to the parties with which he purports to accomplish this endeavour.

How can the UNP with its putrescent record of the suppression of the media, the assaults on dissenters, the cancellation of the visa of the renowned journalist Paul Harris for having been critical of the ceasefire agreement, rigging the Referendum of 1983, the murder of Richard De Zoysa; its Members of Parliament including Wickremesinghe giving JRJ undated letters of resignation on command like the pack of power hungry lackeys that they were; and acting wholly in breach of the Constitution by giving the LTTE, without a trace of a mandate from the People, the right to rule about a quarter of our Country; or Samaraweera who expressly propounded his horrendous opinion of the media, by saying that a journalist could be bought for a bottle of arrack and ten or a hundred rupees (I forget which) be considered champions of democracy or media freedom ???

As for the JVP, it is a party, the policy of which as regards dissent and criticism was to murder the dissenters and the critics. It is wholly unrepentant about its blood drenched past, in that its members still commemorate annually, the death of their wholly Fascist founder leader Wijeweera [*who, incidentally, was murdered by the UNP Government*]. It is now in the *'democratic process'* only because the destruction by military means of its ability to murder, destroy and burgle left it with no alternative but to purport to be democrats and nationalists for its own survival.

Seeking to strengthen or secure democracy or media freedom with sanctimonious power hungry hypocrites such as these could only be likened unto embarking on a 'temperance' movement with a team of alcoholics possessed of an incurable thirst !!!

Yet this is what Fonseka promises to do.

v) **If.....**

If Rajapakse is re-elected, he will be re-elected at the helm of a coalition of parties called the UPFA which is, in fact the SLFP and a number of 'name board' parties which are mere adjuncts to it, and two ubiquitous parties which have been members of the Governments of Kumaratunga, Wickremesinghe and Rajapakse, the CWC and the UPF. The CWC (which had also been a member of the Governments of JRJ, Premadasa and Wijetunge) has made no bones about the fact that while it will support Rajapakse at the forthcoming election, it will join Fonseka in the event of his winning !! Although the UPF has not said so to date, the likelihood is that it too will go to the winning side whichever it may be – after all ministerial 'jobs' can only be given by the winner and the retention of such 'jobs' depends on pleasing the winner.

The tendency in our Country has been for whichever party wins the Presidential Election to win the Parliamentary General Election too. There is no evidence to indicate that there has been a change in this tendency.

Thus, if Rajapakse wins, the overwhelming probabilities are that he will have under his command a Parliamentary Group which will vote as he wishes. We must not forget that in the last few decades our parliamentarians have mostly behaved like that most entertaining, true to life character in Gilbert and Sullivan's HMS Pinafore, Sir Joseph Porter KCB who proclaimed:-

*I always voted at my party's call,
And never thought of thinking for myself at all.*

Rajapakse does not promise to abolish the Executive Presidency; and it is unlikely that he will do so even if he commands the support of a 2/3rd

majority in Parliament: even if he does so, it will probably be at the tail end of his second term and designed to take effect after its conclusion.

Thus, Rajapakse, if elected, will be in a position to cause the legislation he requires to be enacted and hence to continue with his development programmes that are already under way and initiate new programmes, as well as to effect such changes in the administrative structure of our Country as he deems necessary. In short, he will be in a position to give this Country good governance if he uses his powers wisely.

If Fonseka wins, however, the situation will be entirely different. The pledge on which he has founded his candidacy and campaign is the abolition of the Executive Presidency. It is that pledge that is proclaimed to have caused, for example, the 'Marx Brothers' of the JVP to cohabit with the UNP which murdered its entire leadership excluding its present leader but including Wijeweera in 1989-90. Thus, though Fonseka has later sought to resile from that pledge and contend, to all intents and purposes that he will not abolish the Executive Presidency, but only amend it, he is bound by that pledge to abolish the Executive Presidency.

If he goes back on that basic pledge there is not the chance of a snow-ball in hell of his honouring any of his other pledges.

If he does honour that pledge, he will be wholly without power to honour any of the promises he has given to the People save for the promise to appoint the allegedly 'Independent' Commissions under the 17th Amendment since he is not the leader of any party and will have no 'control' over any parliamentary group.

Who then, will rule the Country ? The probabilities at first sight appear to be that it will be a noxious combination of the UNP and its hangers on together with the JVP – but how will this be possible when both parties have pledged to go their separate ways and contest each other at the Parliamentary General Election. If these two parties do form a Government what will their policies be ??? On the other hand, if one adds to this 'witches brew' a further ingredient of one or more lackeys of the LTTE from the TNA [*on which the UNP expressly insists*], any kind of governance, whether good, bad or hopeless will be impossible and anarchy will necessarily rear its ugly head.

Such anarchy would be the signal for a 'strong man' to throw away the Constitution lock, stock and barrel and impose a dictatorship in the guise of quelling anarchy. This, then, is one of the scenarios that await us in the event of a Fonseka victory.

It is not, however, the only scenario.

Anybody who is serious or genuine about abolishing the Executive Presidency, must necessarily be armed with constitutional proposals to replace it – for one cannot simply discard the Executive Presidency which is an integral part of the Constitution without replacing it with some alternate viable Constitutional provisions. One matter that is patently clear is that neither Fonseka nor his sponsors/handlers/promoters/political co-owners have agreed on any constitutional proposals to replace the Executive Presidency. Even they, no doubt, are aware that constitution making is more complex than dress-making.

All this goes to show that their rhetoric for public consumption notwithstanding, Fonseka and his sponsors/handlers/promoters/political co-owners were at all times well aware that they could never muster a 2/3rd majority to amend the Constitution and **never had and do not have the slightest intention of abolishing the Executive Presidency.**

The next question that arises for consideration is how Fonseka will rule the Country as Executive President if he succeeds in cheating the People and gaining office by breaking his fundamental promise to abolish the Executive Presidency. Of course, Fonseka who is fast learning the perfidious ways of the professional politician has an *ex facie* plausible excuse for not abolishing the Executive Presidency, namely, that his sponsors/handlers/promoters/political co-owners could not muster a 2/3rd majority – which is a fact of which neither he nor his sponsors/handlers/promoters/political co-owners could possibly have been unaware at any time.

Even if the People 'swallow' his excuse, where will he go from there ?? Without control of a party, Fonseka would not be able to get any legislation he desires passed by Parliament: the UNP and the JVP will not see eye to eye on anything except their mutual hatred of Rajapakse which is hardly a basis on which a coherent legislative plan for the governance and development of the Country could be formulated or implemented. Thus,

even as Executive President, Fonseka would find himself impotent with the 'Marx Brothers' of the JVP and the synthetic Americans of the UNP going their separate ways, and the chameleon like SLMC not knowing to which colour to change !!!

Once again, anarchy can be the only result, leaving the gates wide open for a 'strong man' to throw away the Constitution lock, stock and barrel and impose a dictatorship in the guise of quelling anarchy.

Is this what we want ?????

vi) **Then And Now**

One final question that merits consideration is are we better off today than we were at the time Rajapakse assumed office in November 2005 ???

In November 2005, at least a quarter of our Country and the bulk of our sea coast was under the control of the LTTE – nobody, not the President nor any service commander could step into an inch of that territory. The LTTE was murdering whom they wished, when they wished and where they wished. Tamil children were being kidnapped by the LTTE and money being extorted from Tamil civilians by the LTTE on a daily basis. Bombs were being exploded in buses, trains and crowded city centres. Our troops were being murdered willy nilly. The Northern and Eastern provinces were merged and the danger of our Country being bifurcated with the creation of a separate state of Tamil Eelam was ever increasing.

Economically we were at rock bottom: development was only a distant dream [*what development did we see even during the 'phony peace' of the Wickremesinghe Regime ???*] and tourism all but dead. The Northern and Eastern Provinces had ceased to be productive units and a drain on the public purse.

After 4 years of 'Rajapakse Rule', our Country has been re-unified; bombs have ceased to be exploded; de-mining is going on apace; anybody from the South can travel to the North and anyone from the North to the South; soldiers and civilians have ceased to be murdered and Tamil children have ceased to be kidnapped. The extortion of money from Tamil civilians is now history. The Northern and Eastern provinces are de-merged and the threat of

the bifurcation of our Country or the creation of a separate State of Tamil Eelam no longer exists, unless of course, some opportunist betrays our Country to feed his ambitions.

On the economic front, development is progressing in all parts of the Country on a scale hitherto unknown. Tourism is fast rebounding amidst genuine fears of a gross shortage of hotel rooms. The North and East are productive economic units once more and produce from there is now coming into the Southern market.

Unquestionably we are far the better after 4 years of Rajapakse Rule.