

the world's first woman prime minister when initially elected in 1960 and for her leadership of the Third World's Non-Aligned Movement, went into opposition and was replaced as head of government by United party leader Junius R. Jayewardene. At this election the United party also obtained a huge parliamentary majority sufficient to change the national constitution at will. And this it did.

During the last five years major constitutional changes have been made. A presidential system was imposed on the parliamentary framework and Jayewardene assumed extraordinary executive powers as the new president—without being elected to the office. Laws were modified, new local and national government systems were introduced, judicial changes were made—all through the parliamentary process and with the aid of the huge majority obtained at the '77 election. A penalty for political defections was introduced, so that a member of the National Assembly could be expelled instantly if he decided to quit his party. This was obviously an intimidating measure, since the bulk of Assembly members belonged to the governing party. Replacements are appointed, and no by-elections take place.

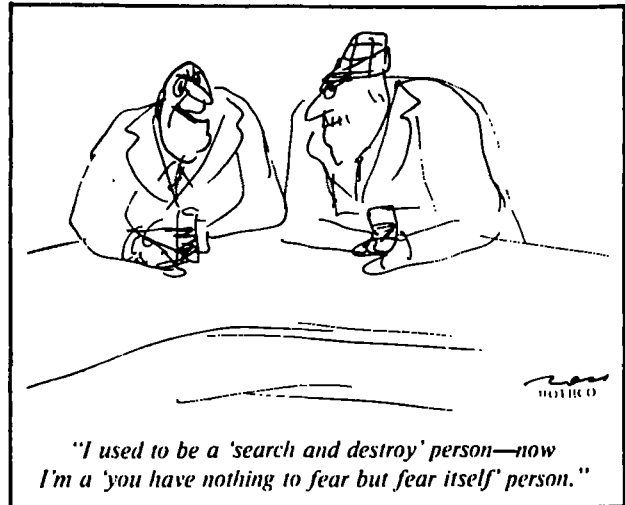
Apart from structural changes, another fearsome action disenfranchised political opponents of the government. Mrs. Bandaranaike was deprived of her civic rights, was banned from contesting elections for several years, and expelled from the National Assembly by majority vote. Her alleged crime was an undefined "abuse of power" during her tenure in office. But the parliamentary majority did not stop at sidelining the nation's most distinguished citizen, its leader on and off for twelve years. It legislated political leprosy, with heavy penalties for contamination: Any political appearance or support by Mrs. Bandaranaike of any candidate for public office will immediately disqualify that candidate.

The important point here is that all these actions and many more were accomplished by legitimate procedures with appropriate parliamentary endorsement. Democracy and a majority democratically elected were used to institute a variety of draconian measures. It seems as if democracy can subvert democracy if the spirit of the process is not maintained.

Protected in this way, the existing government then held a national election on October 20, the first in five years and the first election for an executive president. The incumbent Jayewardene had held this position by parliamentary appointment since 1978, and his chief opponent, Mrs. Bandaranaike, was banned both from the contest and from any form of campaigning. Bandaranaike's Sri Lanka party had to select another challenger—an insipid shadow with little public appeal. A fully democratic election then took place, including free electioneering (except by Sirimavo Bandaranaike!), open public meetings, and all the other accoutrements of democracy. President Jayewardene was returned to office for a six-year term, polling 52 per cent of all votes.

Three observations are appropriate in the context of these occurrences. First, the responsibility of Western governments. In the past five years, the United party government of Sri Lanka has flung open the island to foreign investors. Multinationals and other corporate interests have responded to this "attractive" climate. Western governments, notably the United States and Britain, have increased aid in expression of support for the policies of the government. When Western governments endorse governments whose free enterprise policies they find congenial, are they not also contributing to the political performance of those governments?

Second, there is a real danger that the appraisal of Sri



Lanka's election as a triumph for democracy may encourage other nations to use democratic procedures to curtail democracy. World opinion does sometimes matter, and superficial endorsements are potentially dangerous to freedom in many nations.

Finally, is there not a sinister element of the double standard on issues of human rights? Extensive campaigns are mounted by Western nations over questions of human rights in Marxist states. Communist governments also raise fierce cries when the liberties of their allies are abridged in non-Communist states. Yet, when the rights of independent Third World leaders and citizens are restricted, there is little outrage. Protest at political victimization should have no ideology but that of freedom.

When next we read that democracy is alive and well in Sri Lanka, let us remember that it is indeed alive and it may be well, but it is also in chains.

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EXCURSUS 3

Mark A. Bruzonsky on FEZ, THE U.S., AND ISRAEL

Contrary to many press accounts, the Arab summit at Fez, Morocco, in September was a decided turning point in the history of the Arab-Israeli confrontation. It may, in fact, have far greater impact on the future of the Middle East than even the Israeli invasion of Lebanon and attendant atrocities. And for this, President Reagan's September 1 speech outlining U.S. policies for the region—essentially those first enunciated in U.N. Security Council Resolution 242 and the 1969 Rogers plan—can take a good deal of the credit.

At Fez the Arab world, collectively and without significant dissent, agreed publicly to Arab-Israeli negotiations leading to a full peace settlement and acceptance of Israel as a legitimate state in the region. Continuing condemnations of Zionism and occasional outbursts notwithstanding, this is the contemporary reality.

There were hints of this at the Baghdad summit of 1978, after Egyptian President Sadat had embarked on his inde-

pendent course. The intention is now more clearly set out, and only those who do not wish to see will miss it. The Fez declaration should be interpreted as a willingness to negotiate directly with Israel and to achieve a peace settlement based on Israel's withdrawal from the territories it occupied after 1967, to see the creation of a Palestinian state in association with Jordan, and to come to a political compromise over a united, open city of Jerusalem. It is as clear an Arab call for settlement of its historic grievances with Jewish nationalism as could have been contemplated.

Fez validated Sadat's farsighted vision of the possibility of an Arab-Israel peace even as the ministers were ostracizing Sadat's chosen successor and continued to reject Egyptian participation in Arab summits. Image and reality still conflict in Arab politics—but then the same can be said of the situation within the U.S. and within the Jewish world. In the former, the image is of an unshakable alliance between Washington and Israel; the reality is tension, growing schism, and disenchantment. In the latter, the image is of a world Jewish community that continues to offer fealty to Jerusalem's policies; the reality is growing disillusionment with the current Israeli government and the nature of Israel-diaspora relations.

True, America's latest efforts are in the form of mere words and are viewed with traditional skepticism by Arab leaders. Yet there are appreciable signs that Washington has nearly exhausted its patience with Israel, whose policies are continually at odds with America's view of its own economic and political interests, and signs too of a public opinion, chastened by the summer's events in Lebanon, that is more willing to see the "Arab side" and to consider America's broader interests in the Mideast.

The ball is now in the Arab camp, and it would be well advised to deal first with the much-trumpeted issue of "recognition of Israel," which has evolved from a matter of principle into a roadblock to political progress. Having done all but recognize Israel anyway, there is little more to lose, and the gains from removing the roadblock may well be considerable—including a considerable shift in world Jewish opinion. Certainly, Arab elites and masses alike

realize that the concept of a Jewish national state has triumphed and will not be destroyed.

Israel's leap into Arab politics through its military assault against the Palestinians in Lebanon has produced a remarkable result: greater, not lesser, Arab willingness to follow a moderate course and seek political accommodation. Whether this was achieved by intimidation or enforced a growing realism is unimportant; the result is the same. Yet the effect is probably transient, as is the ability of the pro-American regimes in the area to continue in the American embrace without being able to show anything for it. The Egyptian government is already displaying signs of desperation.

Washington was right, then, to put both Israel and the Arabs on the spot at this crucial time. However hard they will have to swallow, the Arabs—who might prefer that the PLO take the lead—can further the goals they enunciated at Fez by following Sadat's example and clearly recognizing Israel *prior* to the opening of negotiations. Sadat's genius lay in his appreciation of the psychological underpinnings of Israeli intransigence. His failure was in allowing Egypt to be maneuvered into the separate peace he himself had constantly denounced. Here he was outflanked, as was Jimmy Carter, by a Revisionist Zionist ideology he little understood—one that, as enunciated and implemented by Begin and Sharon, exploited Arab divisions, refused to consider the issue of Palestinian nationalism, and developed a high form of religious and nationalist zealotry of its own.

Today, a bold Arab policy of recognition and firm insistence on a comprehensive plan for peace offers the best hope for reversing Sadat's error. If the Arabs can pursue such a rational course, it will then be up to the U.S. to make good on its policies, as reconfirmed on September 1. Nothing else would do. And the applause from Jews both inside and outside of Israel will be louder than expected.

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COMING

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