The victor here is Sri Lanka. It is true that President Mahinda Rajapaksa provided the political leadership and concomitant motivation to defeat the terrorist Velupilai Pirapakaran (VP). The President’s brother, as Secretary of Defence, was the goal-oriented strategist and the provider for the security forces so that the chiefs of the security forces were enabled to easily galvanize the men and women under them into the superhuman effort to destroy VP and his formidable cadres. Behind all these brave and valiant soldiers were the people of Sri Lanka. They (most of them) supported the war to the finish. They paid the taxes and bore the economic hardships caused by the prosecution of war. They sacrificed their young and old to war. They waited with bated breadth for the hourly news from the warfront. They rejoiced at good news and lamented the bad news. Most of the Sri Lankans wanted an end to VP and his terrorism. When the end came it was natural and spontaneous for them to rejoice openly. This is why, to me, it was a Sri Lankan victory over terrorism. It was not a victory over Tamils, though the incorrigible sympathizers of LTTE are still trying to paint it as such. There was no war between the Tamils and the Sinhalese. Many Tamils, other than a few LTTE acolytes in the north, would have been relieved that a cruel oppressor had been removed. As we saw on TV, some Tamils did openly rejoice in May 2009 by holding street parties in Colombo and even in the North and the East.

By inference, therefore, anyone who is trying to do anything to resurrect or to otherwise perpetuate the memory of VP and what he advocated is acting in a way detrimental and damaging to the interests of sovereign Sri Lanka. Apparently, Sri Lanka has many enemies. They are unable and unwilling to accept that terrorism in this small country has been vanquished and now there is sanity as well as peace throughout the country, notwithstanding petty political squabbles and economic hardships. These anti-Sri Lankans have now embarked on a project to vanquish the victor with malicious allegations, biased investigations and stage-managed TV documentaries.

Who are these not-so-hidden enemies? First and foremost there are the LTTE sympathizers overseas. Some others are economic refugee Tamils hankering after the dream of Eelam paradise, to which, they would not return even if given on a platter. There are also many Tamils who took the advantage of Sri Lanka’s free education and emigrated to greener pastures. They are now driven by the pure racist idea of supremacy of Tamils over the Sinhalese and therefore the unsuitability of any Sinhalese to rule them. They cannot bear the rule of the ‘inferior Sinhalese’ over them even though there have been no pure Sinhala only cabinet government in our recent past. They want to be out on their own and have their own exclusively racist Eelam. The fact is that none of them would want to abandon their comfortable lives in the non-pure Tamil west and return to a pure Tamil Eelam in this country. This is why it is incorrect to call them "Diaspora Tamils". This is also the reason to class them all as LTTE terrorists and LTTE sympathizers and ‘foreign Tamils’ who have severed their links with this country. Relatively rich
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as they are, they are now prepared to use their wealth to internationally damage the political and economic interests of our country as revenge for the defeat of the LTTE. This is the only option left to them as they know very well that Eelam cannot now happen in Sri Lanka even in their dreamtime. They are a vengeful lot who cannot be totally ignored because of the power of their wealth which can open many influential doors (auro quaeque ianua panditur) and give them access to some powerful politicians in the world. Given this burning desire for revenge, it is very doubtful that they will be prepared to participate in any rebuilding and reconciliation work. Their propaganda ought to be countered incessantly with truthful information about this country. The projection of the good image of our country should be an unceasing activity by all of us.

If and when some expatriate Tamils do come forward to help in the rebuilding of the country, their bona fides should be thoroughly scrutinized, so that we would not be saddled with crooked persons with hidden agendas. There should not be any secret deals with any of them. There can be only open and transparent commercial dealings with them. We should learn from the lessons of one such "philanthropist" New Yorker, who is now facing criminal charges over there for crooked financial dealings.

There are also some western politicians who pander to the block votes of the LTTE sympathisers in their constituencies and are not prepared to stand by principles of justice and fairness. Some of these politicians are alleged to be recipients of monthly retainers from LTTE paymasters. These politicians are a dangerous lot because what they say and do get wide publicity and get accepted as the truth, given the lukewarm responses dished out by our embassies. They goad their governments and other western governments into enacting sanctions against this country. It is here that our anti-LTTE Sri Lankans expatriates could render an enormous service to their motherland. They have got to organize themselves and tell those politicians the truth and let it be known that they too have votes. They should lobby those politicians intensely, and failing this, they should join their political opponents and defeat them at elections. A few Labour MPs in England who helped the anti-Sri Lankan pr-LTTE demonstrators in May last year are today ex-MPs!

Last May (2009) some western governments asked us to stop the war. Two European governments sent their Ministers here to deliver this demand to the government. UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, too, got involved in this perfidious endeavour by sending his envoys to convey his demands. This was rightly rebuffed by the Sri Lankan government. This non-compliance was taken as an insult by some ministers of some neo-colonial governments. Imagine the misery we would have been enduring today had we accepted their demands and allowed them to save VP and his top cadres! Ever since, these governments have sought ways and means of punishing the country for decapitating the LTTE. Economic sanctions and unsubstantiated Human Rights violations are the weapons now used against us based on manufactured evidence by LTTE friendly NGOs and INGOs. We cannot stop them making all sorts of outlandish allegations against us. We can, however, show them and the world the truth by challenging the "evidence" produced by these biased and self-appointed prosecutors.

For instance it has been alleged that 20,000 were killed by our forces during the last days of fighting. With this number of people the Dambulla Stadium could be filled to its capacity! Well, who counted this round figure of 20,000? Why not 19,999 or 20,222 or any other figure one can
think of? The last is what had happened here. Where is the huge incinerator necessary to burn all those cadavers? Or alternatively, where are the mass graves to bury all those bodies? Almost 400,000 (both North and the East) walked away from LTTE’s imprisonment as hostages towards the government positions while the war was raging. We all saw how the inhuman LTTE shot them in the back and even sent suicide cadres to registration centres to kill the IDPs and frighten the others. To-date we have not seen or heard from any IDP, publicly or secretly, accusing the security forces of inhuman treatment, let alone murder of 20,000 persons. Even those with the so-called white flags, if any, could have been shot in the back by the LTTE cadres as they did the ordinary fleeing people. In any case the onus is on the accusers to prove beyond any doubt the guilt of the security forces. This they cannot do therefore accusations are hurled willy-nilly in the hope that they will stick and sanctions could then be imposed on this country. Vengeance they want on the whole nation for defeating the terrorists and non-compliance with their absurd demands!

On top of these, we now have UNSG’s panel to rake through our affairs and manufacture the excuse to move the Security Council against us. The government is right in refusing visas to these lackeys of the UNSG. I hope the government will remain firm on this and not backtrack due to international pressures. They will, no doubt, submit a damning report on our security forces whether they come here or not. This report will be based on unsubstantiated hearsay evidence and malicious rumours. The UNSG and some of his top aides appear to be afflicted with a sort of malignant anti-Sri Lanka phobia, as if this country is about to shatter world peace at any moment. The UNSG has here ignored his own country where world peace could be really ended any moment. His attention is urgently needed there and not on Sri Lanka. Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, have you not seen or heard of the war-preparations in the two Koreas and the boost given to the morale of South Korean army by the 60th year celebrations of the end of Korean War?

My unsolicited advice to all Sri Lankans, here and abroad, is that they should not co-operate with this panel in any way. They have imposed themselves on us against our declared wishes. Therefore they do not need our cooperation to do their inevitable dirty work on Sri Lanka. Let not a single Sri Lankan hand be soiled in producing this filthy output!

The government, of course cannot, rest on its electoral victories. It has got to fight the LTTE’s propaganda war more vigorously. There should be prompt responses to all accusations by anti-Sri Lankans. Every damaging statement made by them should be challenged immediately and where necessary factually refuted. The government has also got to end the perception that it is a media persecutor. True democracy demands that we have a free media, even one that is opposed to the government of the day, but one that operates within the confines of the law. (Do look at the way Fox news, which is hostile to Obama, operates in the US). The government has also got to give wider publicity to the development work it has so far done in the devastated war-torn areas and the present work-in-progress. Finally, the resettlement of the vast number of LTTE-victimized people has not had the impact it should have had on Sri Lankans as well as foreigners. More than the monetary cost the propaganda value of this enormous exercise appears to have been ignored by the government. Comparatively there appears to be greater publicity and awareness of development work in Hambantota than in the Vanni.
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~ .island.lk ~ By Durand Appuhamy