

## **WHY BLAME THE POLICE?**

Many people in Colombo are criticizing the Police for having transported Tamils who were temporarily resident in Colombo to where they hail from, having been misled by articles in both the national and international media. They little realize that both the national and international media are heavily influenced by vested interests and are also misguided by the relentless LTTE propaganda, which is very clever at making the truth stand on its head.

Some people I met said this was a stupid act on the part of the Police while some others said that the police had no authority to act in such a high handed manner. When I informed them that the Police acted in such a manner to protect innocent lives of people in Colombo, they thought I had gone crazy. When I explained to them what made the Police to act in this manner, there was nobody who disagreed with my explanation.

This article is therefore meant for those whom I have not met and still keep criticizing the Police. They should by now know that a lorry with over one thousand three hundred kilograms of C4 explosives was apprehended at a Police check point. Had it found its way to Colombo and had it been exploded as planned by the LTTE, a substantial area in Colombo would have been completely destroyed and the amount of innocent lives that would have been lost would have been colossal.

However, what they do not know is that not one but two such lorries had been dispatched to Colombo by the LTTE, to destroy life and property. The second lorry remains still undetected. There would have been at least a few among the Tamils who were temporarily residing in lodging houses who were either informants or even hard core members of the LTTE, sent to implement this despicable act that would result in unthinkable destruction. Not knowing their identity, the Police did the next best thing of sending all the temporary resident Tamils in lodging houses back to where they came from. The Police were only taking preemptive action, to avoid a major disaster and were by no means involved in an exercise in ethnic cleansing, as suggested by the LTTE.

The city of Colombo as per latest population census has a population of 377396, which consists of 128789 Muslims, 125456 Tamils, 117090 Sinhalese, 3380 Burghers and 2681 persons belonging to other communities. These figures show that the LTTE propaganda of Tamils being discriminated against is a blatant lie, because even in the capital of our country there are more Tamils than Sinhalese. Would this have been so if there is a so called ethnic war in this country?

The Police after a through investigation found that there were approximately 30000 Tamils residing temporarily in lodging houses and that about 350 of them had no valid reason to be in the city of Colombo. It was these people that the Police transported in buses back to Vavuniya and Batticaloa, where they hail from. No permanent Tamil resident in Colombo was made to leave the city and it was in fact for their very protection that the Police took this course of action. Therefore, I was deeply saddened to see the political leadership letting the Police down, when they had in fact acted in good faith.

When the Police and Security Forces act in good faith and take preemptive action of this nature the political leadership should have the courage and the back bone to give them all the necessary support to maintain their morale, so that they would give of their best to protect the lives of innocent people. If the politicians call such Police action high handed and take disciplinary action against those concerned, just to please the media and foreign countries with vested interests, the explosives will find its way into the city and there is an immanent possibility of a major catastrophe in Colombo, engineered by the LTTE, in the near future.

It should also be understood that the Police action in this instance was not an exercise in ethnic cleansing, unlike what was put into practice by the LTTE in Jaffna, where no Sinhalese civilians now reside. They subsequently did the same in parts of Vavuniya and I personally witnessed Muslims leaving the Cheddikulam area taking with them whatever valuables they could carry, after they were given marching orders by the LTTE to leave the area within twenty four hours, way back in 1990. The LTTE next attacked and terrorized the Gomarankadawala divisional secretariat area where twenty three Sinhalese villages were made to leave the area in an LTTE effort to link the Northern Province to the Eastern Province. Their intention was to establish a continuous land mass linking the North to the East, inhabited by only Tamils. The international and local media that are criticizing the Police today were more or less silent when actual ethnic cleansing was taking place in this country, at that point of time.

Therefore my request to all the patriotic people of this country and our political leadership is to allow the Police and the Security Forces to do their job, because they know what they are doing better than the critical international and local media or foreign countries with vested interests. The Security Forces and the Police have and will continue to give of their best to protect innocent civilians, if we give them the necessary support. The members of the Security Forces and the Police have sacrificed much of their sweat, blood, tears and toil and sometimes even life and limb to eradicate LTTE terrorism from this country. Therefore when they take preemptive action such as this, please support them and do not criticize or let them down, if you want to see an end to terrorism.

Lt Col.A.S.Amarasekera  
14<sup>th</sup> June 2007.