

## **The Right to Protect Our Way of Life**

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It is clearly evident now (if not has always been) from the conduct of some western governments that the pressure exerted by them on the Sri Lankan government has nothing to do with a) their desire to appease the Tamil minority in their electorates, or b) their concern for the Sri Lankan Tamil refugees/hostages or c) their misconception of what is really happening in Mullativu or d) their intention (at least not overtly) to pillage, as done in the colonial times.

It is none of the above.

It is also abundantly clear that these western governments fancy an unqualified moral authority over us. (They already have an asymmetric power in economic and political spheres).

Given these scenarios one can only infer that the west's overall objective is to maneuver itself into a position of power such that it will be able to manage our affairs in every possible sphere there is. Having done this half successfully for centuries the west knows that a sovereign nation can not be managed against the will of its people. The only way to achieve this permanently in the long term is to force a nation to assimilate into the western way of life thus putting it squarely in west's frame of reference and vulnerable to interference. (It is easy to take an aim at a target when the target is moving at the same (frame of reference) speed as you are). To achieve this goal, first, a nation must be rid of its control over its people's way of life. That is what is going on today.

The way of life of a nation is the embodiment of the Jathika Chinthanaya of that nation. It is what gives a unique identity and what determines how a nation conducts its affairs and binds people of different ethnicity, culture, creed and status to a nation. (It can be argued that the way of life is a holistic property of a nation whereas culture is an individual's property). In short, it is what keeps the integrity of a nation, not just between its people but between people and its world view, people and its economy, people and its politics and etc. A nation without a grip on its way of life severs these relationships and allows it to be divided and ruled.

The way of life is a dynamic process therefore to protect it means to be in charge of how it changes over time in response to internal and external stimuli. As long as a nation is in control of its way of life it will be able to manage its own affairs (economic, political, etc); in harmony with its neighbors and the world at large. Being in control of its own way of life makes a nation an active and contributing member of the world's society as opposed to a passive non-contributing one and is fundamentally critical to the well being of a nation. Apart from these practicalities it is hypocritical to disregard the emotional attachment that people have towards their way of life. These attachments are particularly

critical to a society that considers both individual's and the society's rights as equally important. Therefore every sovereign nation has a right to protect what it considers as its people's way of life as long as it does not interfere with the same right of the other nations. It is the state's responsibility to protect this right.

A nation's way of life can be engineered, microscopically by exerting pressure on its culture and macroscopically by exerting pressure on the state. The west exerts pressure on the Sri Lankan state through its relationship with the LTTE. Similarly the pressure on our culture has been there for decades both in a passive sense through mass media and education and in an active sense through unethical conversions and through various non-governmental organizations and right groups. If we let it, in the long term these external forces will make us more "user friendly" to be managed by the west.

Foxes and Milibands may come and go but at the end of the day what we are against is not these characters nor the Thamil Diaspora nor the ordinary citizens of the west but the knowledge created in the western chinthanaya; the same chinthanaya for instance, that led Charles Darwin (*The expression of the emotions in man and animals*, London: John Murray, 1872) to theorize that men of civilized culture (e.g. Englishmen) expressed their emotions such as fear, sorrow and anger less exaggeratedly compared to those of uncivilized cultures (e.g. Natives of Ceylon). Since he did not qualify his assessment of civilness of cultures we could infer that in turn he believed that men who expressed less emotion (for whatever reason) belonged to civilized culture. No matter how irrational or unsubstantiated, theories like these were quickly legitimized in the 19<sup>th</sup> century England as an excuse for their colonization project. These theories linger on even today because of the control that the west has on knowledge. Therefore it is not a coincidence that even some anglicized Sri Lankans lament that Sinhallas cling to their culture emotionally as if emotion is a trait of the "saveges". A century after Darwin's death we were introduced to yet another doctrine in the name of R2P which has the same disparaging effect on militarily less powerful nations. In between these there have been numerous others. It is these types of pieces of knowledge created by the west for the advancement of the west that exert force on our way of life. Without these theories Foxes and Milibands of the west are powerless. We have a right to protect our way of life and it is the duty of our state to exercise that right.