Counterpoint By The Reflector

dence of the people at large about the persons holding the reins of power. Along with that come further developments, which again cannot be called developments, but the same process of deterioration culminating in the loss of hope in the minds of all the people. They will eventually realize the futility of expecting the ideal conditions one would like to live in a decent society. That is the stage at which they get into the fear syndrome in which citizens become infected by a constant fear or immunity to all human needs such as freedom of choice, freedom of expression, and at the end even the freedom to do their daily work as they want.

If one wants to live without being a victim of attack or harassment, one finds the best approach is to keep quiet, keeping their thought to themselves, tolerating everything that is thrown at them. Do not complain, do not show dissent, say yes to everything, and protect your skin at any cost, would be the policy they follow. It would be utterly selfish, but experience will tell them it is the best available in the society they live in. Mind you such men and women did live under Stalin and many other dictators. It is not impossible, though personally boring and even disgusting. People d get used to the worst conditions if nothing better is possible.

With all my misgivings and loss of hope, I still think the situation is not that bad. There is a chance that the country will gradually come back to normal, without the gun-culture or political terrorism that now prevails. Some would even call it state terrorism, which is rather disturbing for in case the politicians of the ruling party are controlling such operations the chances are that they would continue far longer than one would expect. It will end only when the powers that be are satisfied with the status quo, for a little bit of relaxation is to be allowed.

In a country which has recently come out of terrorism after a period of turmoil, it is in a way sad to see another kind of terrorism taking hold of the land. Why did it happen? Who wanted it? Who benefits by it? Do the very people who brought in peace need it for their safety? These are some questions that need be raised in this connection.

One possible answer is that there are some in positions of power who want things done in their own way. They want to keep power to themselves, and would not tolerate anyone encroaching into their territory. Even that may be tolerable in a way if others are not harassed in the process. From what is reported about the Mulleriyawa incident, it appears that someone wanted to sacrifice the lives of a few less important persons to preserve the sanctity of their loved ones.
That is the most disturbing feature of this whole affair. The chances are that all this will be forgotten in a few months and the people would get into the usual happy mood to carry on regardless. Those who unleashed the terror would also look happy and continue the process as and when necessary.

Who is responsible if this type of criminal activity continues? Latest reports saty thyat he sister of the murderd man had spoken to the BBC Sandesaya program in which she blamed the ruling party for her brother's killing. That is the worst indictment that can be made against the ruling party. So far no one in a responsible position seems to have refuted the statement. Whether someone will call it z mischievous lie is yet to be seen. Hopefully the truth will be revealed. But this lady's accusations will reverberate in the press and in the minds of many Sri Lankans for quite some time. That bitterness cannot be erased from their minds for a long, long time.
There is however, a possibility, though a remote one, that there would come a time when these very people would say in unison that enough is enough, and think of telling the rulers to pack up and go home. Whet her they will do so or not the blame and responsibility for this sta5te of affairs has to be shared by them with the two main contenders for power, i.e. the rulers and the opposition. As things are I would place the major share of that re4sponsibility at the door of the utterly ineffective opposition that Sri Lanka is saddled with. The main opposition which is none other than the oldest party of the establishment, called the UNP, has for quite some time been engaged in a boarder warfare with its own factional hegemonies, controlled by petty war lords. Even the most leader of the party has resorted hit and run exercises that rebels are used to. In the process both the leader and the so-called followers are going after the man instead of the ball.
As long as the opposition remains in disarray, Sri Lankans will have to be satisfied with what is delivere4de to them whatever the taste is.

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