# 'HR as a weapon' - Island Editorial

Thursday, 28 May 2009
Last Updated Thursday, 28 May 2009

"It's like someone turned on the kitchen light late at night, and the cockroaches started scurrying. We finally got them out where we can find them and kill them". "[They were like] sheep, flushed from a pen ... bewildered and terrified, jarred from sleep and fleeing their bunkers under a hell storm of fire. One by one they were cut down by attackers they couldn't see or understand. Some were literally blown to bits by bursts of 30mm exploding cannon shells."

This was how thousands of defenceless combatants offering to surrender were butchered in a war. Was that crime committed in the recently concluded Sri Lanka's war on terror? No! It is a graphic description of how the US Air Force and the US and British troops massacred Iraqi soldiers after the latter had given up fighting in the first Persian Gulf War. (The two quotations concerned find themselves in Newsday and the Colombia Journalism Review respectively.) One may get some idea of how the western countries treat their prisoners of war! In Iraq alone hundreds of thousands of civilians have so far perished in war. In 1996, former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, in an interview with CBS, when it was pointed that over half a million children had died due to invasion of Iraq, had the temerity to say, "We think the price is worth it." Today, the US is shedding tears for civilians caught up in strife! The US-led forces are unleashing hell on Afghanistan, where thousands of civilians continue to die. In 2007, President Hamid Karzai wanted US air strikes stopped forthwith owing to mounting civilian casualties. "While the enemy has killed hundreds of civilians this year, a similar number of civilians have been killed by American forces," he said. But, US air raids continue in his country against his wish! This month, an air attack on an Afghan village killed over 100 people including many children. Anti-terror operations conducted by the Pakistani army at the behest of the US have left 2.4 million people displaced and thousands of civilians dead. Even pro-American CNN has had to report that their living conditions are worse than 'hell' and that they are being made to eat food unfit even for cattle! It was only the other day that British PM Gordon Brown stressed in Afghanistan the need to step up anti-terror operations in that country so that the streets of London would be safe. President Barack Obama is committing more troops to a never ending war in Afghanistan. It is against this backdrop that the US-led human rights campaign to harass Sri Lanka should be viewed. Nothing explains why the world has come to be plagued by terrorism than what is going on in Geneva, where the West has ganged up against Sri Lanka in a bid to spoil her victory over 'the world's most ruthless terrorist group'. Terrorism thrives on such duplicity. Ironically, the US, which once used terrorism to frighten countries perceived to be hostile into submission, is now using human rights as a bludgeon to achieve that objective. Britain, in spite of its history of committing gendercide and genocide in this country to quell rebellions against its empire - in 1817/18, the British army massacred over 30,000 males including children in Wellassa and resorted to the scorched earth policy to put down an uprising in that part of Sri Lanka - is also campaigning for a human rights probe by way of punitive action against Sri Lanka for not heeding its call for sparing terrorist leaders trapped in Mullaitivu. This kind of stinking human rights record of the countries that have joined forces against Sri Lanka in Geneva may have prompted Ambassador Dayan Jayatilleka to lash out at 'colonizers' at Friday's meeting on the Swiss-EU draft resolution on Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka's friends in the UNHRC answered her critics eloquently and adequately. Egypt said there were 'double standards' at the council as it addressed Sri Lanka and not Palestine/Afghanistan/Iraq. Thailand questioned the UNHRC's wisdom of having a special session. China wanted Sri Lanka commended for her transparency and inclusiveness and Japan called for international assistance to Sri Lanka. Dayan was spot on when he said there was no need for a special session as the conflict was now over and nobody was dying. The outcome of yesterday's hang-Sri Lanka campaign was not known at the time this comment was written. Whatever it may be, no one will ever be able to bring the LTTE back to life. Miliband, Clinton Kouchner and others will have to settle for some perverse pleasure at Sri Lanka's expense. What they ought to realise is that they themselves will be victims of their policy of promoting others' terrorists while fighting theirs, as we saw when the satanic forces they had nurtured in Afghanistan came home to roost in London and New York. Courtesy : The Island Courtesy: defence.lk