Now that the LTTE is Crushed - Some Advice for the "Western Powers"

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(By: Stephen Long - Los Angeles, California) I just returned from a lengthy visit to Sri Lanka, and I witnessed first-hand the Government's splendid victory over the LTTE terrorists. Every day I read with great interest the many comments and opinions that were written on the conflict by both Sri Lankan and international journalists. From my perspective, I can assure you that the Government acted with restraint and compassion throughout the entire ordeal. I also saw that the so-called "Western Powers" were totally misinformed on the situation, which resulted in their passing a hasty judgment that condemned the Government's conduct toward the IDP's and the human shields still trapped in the No Fire Zone. Having said this, I am grateful for US Congressional Representative Heath Schuler of North Carolina for his support of the Government's relief efforts yesterday, and for accurately reporting what he saw with his own eyes in the IDP camps in the North. I'm sure his report will go a long way towards correcting misperceptions in America. A couple of things I could never understand: The first is why were the "Western Powers" so interested in preserving the life of the terrorist leader, Prabhakaran? Secondly, why was the US Ambassador, Robert Blake, feeding his boss, Hillary Clinton, such erroneous and false information that lead to her "disappointment" with the Sri Lankan Government, and her eventual condemnation? I'm sure the answers to these questions will eventually surface over time, but examining them here is not the focus of this article. I would like to offer some advice to the "Western Powers" in regards to re-examining their policy and approach to dealing with Sri Lanka: During the thirty-year conflict many people of all ethnicities left Sri Lanka to seek greener pastures in Western countries. There are approximately 300,000 of them in Canada, 200,000 in the US, and another 300,000 in European countries. Many of these immigrants used the "political asylum" card, and as we have later discovered, many of those were lying about the persecution they claimed they received at home. I'm not singling out only the Tamils in this respect; Sinhalese and Muslim immigrants also played the same hand. Now that the war against the LTTE is over, the "Western Powers" need not accept any more immigrants from Sri Lanka who attempt to seek political asylum. This should come as a great relief to many of those countries who now find themselves embroiled in protests from two fronts: caught in the middle between trying to please new political constituents, and simply doing the right thing by protecting Sri Lankan embassies, places of worship, helping out with the IDP's in the North, etc. Secondly, drug trafficking was one of the primary ways the LTTE raised money to finance its war in Sri Lanka. A little-publicized story a few years ago even revealed that the LTTE had attempted to dig a tunnel from British Columbia in Canada down to Washington State, through which it would smuggle drugs into America. Now that the war is over, the LTTE drug trafficking should cease. There are still LTTE front organizations in the Western countries, however, and I suggest you put an end to them just as Canada banned the World Tamil Movement. Many members of these organizations still have the LTTE dream in their heads, and perhaps they need to be taught that the dream was really a nightmare, and that their donations had actually helped to fund death and destruction instead of their mythical Eelam. The LTTE, as it has been revealed, was closely associated with a variety of extremist groups in other countries, and they helped each other train their cadres in the fine points of suicide bombing, guerilla warfare, and weapons use, among other things. They also assisted one another in the smuggling of weapons. Now that the LTTE has been crushed there should be fewer light aircraft, submarines, tanks, and other weapons smuggled from other countries. I know it may only make a dent in the huge international illicit weapons trade, but every little bit counts. Still, don't give up on "following the money trail," and do your best to expose those who supplied the LTTE with weapons until they are prosecuted in every country. I suggest that Senator Patrick Leahey and Hillary Clinton stop listening to the rubbish of Bruce Fein, the mercenary former Deputy US Attorney, Washington lobbyist, and spokesperson for various LTTE front organizations in North America. He is reportedly being paid $100,000 a month to tell lies about the GOSL and the Rajapaksa brothers, and currently works for an American organization called "Tamils Against Genocide". Just to show you where his morals are, while he condemns the actions of the GOSL against the LTTE terrorists, he also represents the Turkish Government and condemns the actions of the Kurdish terrorists against the government. It's the same issue - and he gets money from both sides from two clients. Very clever. Mr. Fein is hardly a credible, unbiased source of information, and when he calls on influential policy makers in Washington, I suggest they lock their doors. It is obvious that both Senator Leahey and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton have been "pitched" by Mr. Fein, since their leanings on the Sri Lanka issue are toward his point of view. I'm sad to say that it appears they have paid attention to this materialistic Beltway prostitute, and the GOSL has suffered unfairly as a consequence. I suggest they start investigating how Bruce Fein can represent banned terrorist front organizations and get away with it for nearly two years - and still be a practicing member of the American Bar Association. In regards to prosecuting Defence Secretary Gotabaya Rajapaksa, Presidential Advisor Basil Rajapaksa, and Army Commander General Sarath Fonseka for genocide in the international courts, I think the "Western Powers" should give up this ridiculous pursuit. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Navi Pillay of South Africa, wants to investigate this silly allegation, but she should stop and listen to her comrades who supported Sri Lanka in the UN resolution last week in Geneva. Perhaps she has been listening to Bruce Fein, too. I suggest that the UN and the "Western Powers" start concentrating on how they can help the IDP's in the North - seriously and quickly - and accept the fact that the authorities in Sri Lanka simply did what they had to do to rid their country of a terrorist scourge (the same that they would have done on their own turfs.) I think it's time the media in Western countries takes an honest, serious look at the great progress Sri Lanka has made on a number of fronts - in spite of dealing with a 30-year war against terrorism: the elections and massive re-development programs in the Eastern Province, the appointment of a former child soldier for the LTTE as Chief Minister for the Eastern Province, the Government's excellent health care and educational systems, the rehabilitation and appointment of former LTTE chief "Karuna Amman" as Vice President of the largest political party in the country, Sri Lanka Freedom Party, the rapid rebuilding of tsunami areas (and compare this to post-Katrina New Orleans), and many others. While they're at it, the Western journalists can show the world how beautiful Sri

Lanka is, and what a great place it is for tourists. Lastly, the "Western Powers" should be very careful about pushing Sri Lanka too closely into the arms of China, Russia, Pakistan, India, and other neighbors in the Asian region. A close relationship with China, for example, developed during the war against the LTTE when the GOSL couldn't get arms anywhere else. Now China is building a US $1 billion seaport in Sri Lanka's south, and is financially helping the Government care for the IDP's in the north. The "Western Powers" should be thinking about the balance of power in the region, and figuring out ways it can mend some fences with the GOSL - fast. The "Western Powers" don't seem to understand that every country has to have friends and allies in order to survive, and if they are abandoned by the West, then they have no choice but join the camps of China, Libya, and its Asian neighbors who are perhaps more friendly and sympathetic to their needs and goals. The policies and neo-colonial interests of the "Western Powers" need to be examined closely by all parties from this point forward. Everyone should learn to respect Sri Lanka as a democratic, free, sovereign nation that deserves a decent place in the international community. Give Sri Lanka a break. Stop wasting time trying to make an enemy, and concentrate on making a good friend instead. Courtesy: defence.lk