

If you are a true Sri Lankan, Then, it should chill your spine.

John Kerry is the Chairman of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (US)

This is 'Part A' of the analysis in John Kerry's Report on Sri Lanka

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Stunned by the unexpected annihilation of the terrorists in Sri Lanka and fearing consequently a grave threat to US security interests in the region, the US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations (SCFR) hastily scrambled two of its staff members to visit the island nation in the first week of November 2009 with a mandate to evaluate the fall out of the terrorist debacle on US policy in the island and geopolitical, in the region; the two member team were required to make recommendations immediately to stem the alarming deterioration of US leverage on the island.

Arriving in the island at a time when security sensitivity remained high, the evaluating team travelled the country during their weeklong stay with the approval and support of the Sri Lanka Government.

In reciprocation of this courtesy it is to be expected that the report would be couched in veiled parlance. On reading the report one cannot but be taken aback that, coincidentally, LTTE fortunes have a direct correlation to US policy on the island and to US geo-strategic interests in the region.

Foreign policy objectives

On December 7, 2009 John Kerry, the Chairman of the SCFR, circulating the two member report among the rest of the committee members, makes comment by stressing the strategic importance of Sri Lanka to the US particularly, as the report emphasizes, the geopolitical location of the island; he goes on to add the need to maintain a strategic alliance with the island and the need to re-evaluate US foreign policy in the wake of the military defeat of the LTTE.

It would appear that the US , placing reliance on a fundamentally flawed assumption of the military invincibility of the terrorists, laid all their strategic chips on the LTTE, sadly ignoring other foreign policy tools that were at their disposal. As the report states, Rajapaksa did the unthinkable and the unexpected; his achievement was one of the few instances in modern history in which a terrorist group had been militarily defeated.

When finally Washington realized the vulnerability of the terrorists, in the face of the rolling Government juggernaut, and the fragility and folly of their chosen 'single agenda' policy option, desperate attempts were made, finally at the level of the White House, to rescue and salvage US interests by endeavours that included attempts at coercing Sri Lanka to negotiate a truce with the terrorists.

Much of the chagrin with Rajapaksa flows from his recalcitrance to comply. US foreign policy collapsed in the waters of the Nanthikadal lagoon.

Washington admittedly cannot be too happy with Blake who is seen as the chief proponent of the failed policy which has created a temporary power void for the US in the immediate region.

The report is extremely critical of his single agenda policy which has resulted in shortchanging US strategic interests in the region. Wearing his new hat, Blake, it is to be anticipated, would have his time cutout, repairing the damage to US interests in the region, perceived as his

responsibility, and further, initiating action to vindicate his previous miscalculations.

Team mission

It was in this backdrop that the special team from Washington was dispatched to Colombo . Their mission: To make recommendations to prevent further erosion of US security interests in the island and increase US leverage in Sri Lanka for securing longer term US strategic interests, expanding the number of tools available at Washington 's disposal.

Serious dichotomy of views

The urgency of the mission also suggests a serious dichotomy of views in Washington . On one side of the coin Blake, described in certain circles, in oxymoronic terms as the smiling 'Ugly American', pursuing the failed hard-line policy of all stick while on the flip side, a breath of fresh air from the new Obama administration, wishing to engage in more-carrot-and-less-stick policy.

The visiting team did a quick situational analysis, weighing the ground situation, the strategic importance of the island, the weaknesses and consequences of US policy hitherto pursued, the strengths and vulnerabilities of Sri Lanka State , the US strengths in the island and the tactical options at the disposal of Washington .

The report describes Sri Lanka as being located geographically at the nexus of the maritime trading routes connecting Europe and the Middle East to China and the rest of Asia .

All of China's and Japan's energy resources from the Persian Gulf, as the report identifies, transits Sri Lanka and the island has the potential to control or impede the free flow these resources to China, an emerging global power, or to Japan, a strategic partner of the US .

Free flow of trade

Furthermore, half of the world's container traffic passes through Sri Lanka and the island has again, as indicated before, the potential to control or impede the free flow of trade in the Indian Ocean .

The island lends itself naturally to be an effective choke point, the control of which provides a strong bargaining platform in global rivalries; shades of Somalia where sea terrorists, often referred to as pirates, directed by some unidentified power, impede shipping in the Arabian Sea of the Indian Ocean .

In fact the report makes reference to some acts of piracy off one of the myriads of islands that lie to the West of Sri Lanka.

New great game

The US , as the report explains, has a competing interest with India and China in securing this maritime route; Sri Lanka says the report, is a key piece in a larger geopolitical dynamic, commonly described as the new Great Game.

Potential to destabilize India

The Washington report also identifies the potential of Sri Lanka to destabilize India ; it states that the communal tensions in Sri Lanka Sinhala-Tamil or Hindu-Muslim, have the ability to undermine stability in India , particularly Tamil Nadu, home to sixty million Hindu Tamils.

Two thirds of coastline

Unfortunately for the US , the structure of their foreign policy in this region, based on the invincibility of the terrorists, crumbled dramatically when Rajapaksa annihilated the terrorists.

If the LTTE had succeeded, the US would have gained control of two thirds of Sri Lanka coastline, enabling them to secure Persian Gulf energy resources to Japan, interfere if and when the need

arose, with the flow of these same resources to China, selectively interfere with free trade in the Indian Ocean and undermine stability in India by provoking Tamil and Hindu sentiments in Tamil Nadu.

The Sea Tigers, the naval arm of the defeated terrorists, which had alarmingly become a very potent force, had the hallmarks of a nascent 'pirate' organisation.

To make matters worse not only did Rajapaksa destroy the cornerstone of US policy in the region but he was, as the report identified, responsible for the country's drift towards China (and the non Western world), considered one of the biggest challengers to US hegemony of the world.

All this threatens US National Security interests and Rajapaksa is considered a threat to US National Security.

US policy, the report states, has to be re-charted. **A regime change is considered imperative; Rajapaksa must go.**

The problem however is that Rajapaksa is popular across the length and breadth of the country and his Government's annihilation of the terrorists has made his popularity soar. **As the report identifies, there is no political leader in the country to match his popularity. Wickremesinghe, in the report, has been identified as a very close ally of the US who has consistently urged the US to take Sri Lanka to the war crimes tribunal.**

As the report admits, Wickremesinghe lacks the charisma to battle Rajapaksa nation-wide. Fonseka is identified as the only individual who perhaps could challenge Rajapaksa's popularity nationally, having been the Commander of the troops that defeated the terrorists.

Engagement of Fonseka by the US

Blake engaged Fonseka at the height of the war. He persuaded Fonseka to apply for Permanent Residency in the US which would lighten Fonseka's financial burden of educating his children. Fortune smiled on Fonseka when out of a 6.4 million applicants, Fonseka was one of the chosen few of a mere 50,000 to be accorded permanent residency in the US .

It is not clear what prompted Fonseka, just prior to setting off to the US in September 2008, tell Bryson Hull of Reuters "The Tigers will go underground rather than fight to the last man." This was contrary to the thinking of the troops on ground, battling the terrorists and the Rajapaksas who were determined and confident of defeating the terrorists totally.

Was Fonseka coerced to say this or was Fonseka out of step with what was happening on the battlefield? In November 2008, when the Army was bogged down in a do or die battle for Killinochchi and Muhamalai, and the future of the war in Fonseka's mind, was not clear, the Commander of the battling troops left his Motherland and his troops, dying in their hundreds at the time, to tour Washington on his being accorded permanent residency of another country.

This created adverse morale repercussions within the Army; fortunately for Sri Lanka , Fonseka was far removed from the battlefield. Was the timing of the visit sheer ignorance or was he already being influenced by Washington ? Fonseka is perhaps the only permanent resident of the US , with perhaps the exception of Pakistan 's Musharaff, to be accorded such a reception in Washington .

Fonseka returned to the country after over month. Immediately on his return, in December 2008, he made that now infamous speech, quite inappropriate, unexpected and uncalled for, about corrupt politicians, political jokers and LTTE links in Tamil Nadu, which embarrassed the Rajapaksa Government no end and nearly provoked Delhi, who had

resisted US pressure to intervene in the Sri Lanka offensive, to reconsider their decision.

Was Fonseka naive or did he make that calculated statement at the behest of his adopted country? Is he a captive of his own doing or is he a loose cannon? This statement provoked a sharp retort from Neduraman who warned the Government of Sri Lanka that the actions of Fonseka suggest that the nation may witness Army rule in the near future which would be disastrous for Sri Lanka-India relations.

Creation of the rift

Rumour Street had it, from about early 2009, that Blake had urged Fonseka, notorious for an inflated ego, to increase the strength of the Army. Fonseka complied by pressing the Government, in the aftermath of the war, to increase the strength of the Army to 300,000 (It is presumed that this is his opinion even at present).

Rumour Street also had it that the same sources leaked it to the Government that they had intelligence that Fonseka was planning a military coup.

The rift was created and the first step for a regime change had begun. In the meantime whispers to both sides, from the different mouths of the same source, continued and the rift widened.

Reportedly, it was conveyed to the Government that Fonseka, still in uniform, was harbouring Presidential ambitions and to Fonseka that he could easily be the top honcho, barring his safety; it was suggested to him that if he made an implicative confession, to his country of adoption, regarding the conduct of the war, that would serve as his life insurance; this, he was apparently assured, would be released only if some harm were to befall him.

A highly controversial trip to the US was arranged in November 2009 with Blake choreographing the moves.

The much publicized statement of Fonseka to a newspaper recently, is reportedly a transcript of a recording that was made in the US which found its way into the island in the pouch of a roving envoy, this, reportedly again, was played to a journalist who had the privilege of listening to it but not permitted to take a copy.

Through a grapevine it was leaked that the journalist does not have a copy of the recording.

One conceivable danger is that if a stone is thrown by the adopted country at Fonseka at any time, it would be construed that Rajapaksa was responsible for the stone giving justification for the incriminating statement to be publicized and Rajapaksa running against a wave of public emotion; a classic case of three birds with one stone.

US moves in the Sri Lankan election

US manoeuvres in the Sri Lankan election is to effect a change in Sri Lanka 's geopolitical position. This calls for a regime change and the ouster of Rajapaksa.

To this end they have instructed the non charismatic politicians to keep out of the fray; they have successfully divided a country which eight months ago was united; they have been able to weaken the Rajapaksa team by corrupting one of the team with a permanent residency; they have been successful in fielding against Rajapaksa, Fonseka, a candidate who has a trifle more appeal than the old political war horses of the Opposition.

The battle is how to present a coarse, humourless General as an erudite individual of some refinement and polish and to dent Rajapaksa's unbelievable popularity in the country.

To this end, as carried by the Asian Tribune, a massive USD 140 Million has been pumped into the country through conduits that include NGOs which the Kerry report has identified as being friendly to US interests.

US expectations from Fonseka

Mavil Aru in Sampur was the beginning of the end for the terrorists. There has been much bafflement at reports that the previous status quo in Sampur, located on the Southern rim of the Trincomalee harbour and considered ground vital for the control of the harbour, is being restored.

There are indications that the essence of the Wickremesinghe CFA agreement of 2002, which concede control of the North and the East and nearly two thirds of the coastline of the island to the terrorists, is being reintroduced; the CFA enabled the terrorists to build up their illegal state infrastructure which resulted in thousands of soldiers having to lay down their lives simply to dismantle it.

Also there are indications that Kumaratunge's infamous and ill fated Post Tsunami Operations Management (PTOM) of 2005 which gave equal status to the terrorists and the government of Sri Lanka in the management of Tsunami related funds, and created that insidious mechanism-referred to as 'Co-Chairs' (EU, Norway, US, and Japan) which eroded our sovereignty and legalized these countries to interfere at will with the internal affairs of Sri Lanka, is being surreptitiously brought back.

On the last occasion the JVP with Rajapaksa fought against it and had it thrown out at the Supreme Court.

This time however the JVP, heavily dependent on Japan for their funds, appear to be consenting partners.

Rumour Street has it that the US has instructed Fonseka to deny the Indians the Uranium rich soil stretching along the coastline of

Mullaitivu and to give access to the US to mine this monazite for a pittance.

The news on the grapevine is also that Fonseka on the dictates of the US has agreed to allow the Norwegians access to the recently staked area, abounding with mineral resources, on the sloping continental shelf off the coast of Sri Lanka .

Considering the strong link between **Blake and the Diaspora, it is not surprising that the political arm of the terrorists is supporting Fonseka** who time and time again has insisted that Sri Lanka belongs to the Sinhalese and who insisted that the Tamil persons in the IDP Welfare Centres should be detained indefinitely as there were 20,000 terrorists hiding among 280,000 civilians.

Executive Presidency

The Kerry report has identified the Executive Presidency as one of Sri Lanka 's strengths which enabled it to overcome the terrorists and which Rajapaksa refuses to dismantle. At the moment the three eggs of Executive, Legislature and Judiciary are in three baskets. The dropping of one basket will not crack the other two eggs. To weaken the Sri Lanka State that it may never in the future do the unthinkable of defeating an invincible terrorist group, the US through the NGOs are attempting to put the two eggs of Executive and Legislature in one basket so that when the legislative egg breaks, the executive egg will automatically break..

The battle lines are drawn for January 26 the battle is not between **Rajapaksa and Fonseka** but between **Sri Lanka and the US** . On May 18, 2009 Sri Lanka won an historic proxy war on the banks of the Nanthikadal lagoon defeating the scourge of terrorism and the threat of neo colonialism. On the 26th, the battle is even more crucial; Sri Lankans have to defeat the neo colonialist if they are to protect their victory at Nanthikadal.

The sovereignty of Sri Lanka is being challenged and is at stake; the battle is even more difficult than on May 18, with the US

throwing in 140 Million US dollars, buying up one of the key players of May 18 and having the historical comprador class doing, as usual, their dirty work.