



**AUSTRALIAN TAMIL
MANAGEMENT SERVICE**

Dissent & Opposition

I write in response to the Sri Lanka Guardian article '**Dissent and Freedom from Fear**' by **Shanie**.

The first question that came to my mind was 'What's the difference between Dissent and Opposition?'

Dissent to my mind is to disagree along the same vertical plane. Opposition on the other hand is a view from 180 degree separation. The latter is healthy and attractive as in male and female. Former results in take over when dissident power is greater than ruling power. As per that vertical system – the person/group at the top needs to have aerial view to identify with the whole. That was the case with the hierarchical system. Those regimes that toppled their rulers were part of the same system through which the rulers ruled.

The healthier alternative to this is Opposition. This requires one to complete the picture shown by the ruler but from the 'other' side – with an 180 degree separation – no more no less. When we are not able to produce that 'other half' we are not ready for Democracy at that level.

Shanie discusses the current thinking of students within the University of Jaffna under the heading '**Army beats up Jaffna University Students**'. When I received this message last week from a senior member of Tamil Diaspora – the message came under the heading '*Resistance is beginning to emerge in Jaffna, especially among the students. Please view the u-tube.*'

I did view the matter through u-tube. The student leader stated that the Army had come into the University with the approval of the Administration. If this were true, this confirms that the University Administration and the Army representing the Executive were on the same side. This is likely to happen when one is dependent on the Executive Government along the same vertical plane. This is what seems to have happened with the Chief Justice who is actually dissenting and is not taking the Independent Opposite side to the Legislature. Unless ordinary members of the Legislature take up Opposing positions and present Opposite views their resolutions and laws do not have the spirit of Democracy. This often results in Oppositions dissenting rather than opposing.

Karthigai (Tamil November) month is the month of Muruga – the month in which Muruga was born. Muruga is the presiding Deity of Tamils. It is during this month that Karthigai Flower (Gloriosa Lily)blooms in plenty in Jaffna. This flower is also the flower of the

LTTE. I learnt about all this here in Sydney. In 2006 I was invited to speak at a Sai Center, on Ladies' Day. I was hurting after the Supreme Court of New South Wales dismissed my complaint of unlawful racial discrimination against the University of NSW, the State Government and the Commonwealth. I was in fact thinking of going and staying at the Yoga Swami Aachram in Kilinochchi where my brother in law was already staying. On the morning after the verdict was delivered by the Supreme Court – I had a vision/dream in which I received the message to help Tamils and Muslims. I later realized that that was the solution to the Equal Opportunity pain and loss I was experiencing. That pain would be felt by anyone who had genuinely invested in Democracy but was continuing to live in autocratic systems.

When the Sai Center called me to speak, I felt an intuitive comfort. I shared with the Sai devotees how I felt helped by Swami Sai Baba during this pain. I continued to go there even though that particular center is a distance away from our home. One of the senior ladies brought to me on the day of Karthigai Theepam 2006 a picture of Sai Baba – a big one to be hung on the wall. When we brought the picture home and hung the picture on the wall where there already was a nail – I could see the lamps along the Coast of Coogee reflected through this picture. I felt that Lord Muruga Himself had come home. Later when I got to know that the son of this lady who gave me the picture, was in custody for supporting LTTE and was refused bail – I wrote to the Australian Attorney General and obtained signatures from the Tamil community in support. The President of the Human Rights Commission responded to that communication – expressing support from my side. The LTTE supporter was granted bail during the following hearing. Eventually when this LTTE supporter was released, I was able to identify with my work also. I was able to write because I believed that I had credits with the Australian Justice system. The connection with Lord Muruga helped me use my credit in favor of the Tamil Community. I did not pause to separate the LTTE from the Tamil Community and therefore from Lord Muruga. I just shared the credits I had with the Australian system and that I believed added to the influence felt by the Australian authorities. I do believe that when we work genuinely and independently – the powers work instantaneously. Like with God – surface readers are not able to 'see' the connection. Those who feel would know intuitively and share silently.

As for the Karthigai Flower - I came across this flower when I went to buy flowers for garlands for the Sai Center. It looked beautiful and I bought and took them to the Sai Center. There I learnt that it was the flow of the 'Boys' (LTTE) and another Indian lady said that it was the flower of Lord Muruga and it had 6 petals. It did have. I felt so very comforted feeling that Muruga was with me. Often we forget that we all have Divine powers. These powers work intuitively to balance the system of Natural Justice. To me that fact that Shanie brought the message that the incident happened during Karthigai Theepam celebrations and at the University of Jaffna – meant that I could help through my credits with the University system. The form would evolve as I continue to seek.

The Student Leader who spoke said also that the International Community would help them.

Muruga's specialty is that He established His own kingdom at Palani Hill when He felt cheated by the system of His parents. The competition was to go around the world. Ganesh –

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the elder brother of Muruga went around His parents – claiming that they were His world. That is the vertical hierarchical system – in which those below ‘see’ the world through their leaders / parents. Muruga physically went around the world on His peacock and claimed that He was the winner. Since there was only One prize and it was given to Ganesh – Muruga set up His own kingdom. Tamils are now doing likewise by physically establishing their own places all over the world.

To the extent Tamils keep criticizing the Sinhalese Government along the same vertical plane – they would not be able to establish their own independent opposition to the Sinhalese Government. Once Tamils show their independent view from the ‘other’ side (which is the international side) – on the same matter – they would lead the Sri Lankan government in the system of Democracy. Seeking separate state to rule through majority is to limit both sides to lower level governance. This has distracted Tamils from taking the opportunity to join forces with the Judiciary in the current crisis faced by Sri Lankan leadership.

Shanie complete his article by saying ‘This week, Izeth Hussain, the respected former diplomat, wrote a very perceptive article in The Island arguing why it was necessary for the government to withdraw the impeachment motion now. He concluded his article with a plea:’ *"We are not living under a dictatorship. If we were this article would not be published. We do have a democracy, though a deeply flawed one, which might be called a quasi-democracy. Anyway, we have sufficient democratic space to move meaningfully towards a fully functioning democracy. The Opposition is far more active than during the period from 1977 to 1994. So is our civil society, though it is far from being an ideal one. Above all, the international community is far more favourable to democracy than it was between 1977 and 1994. The alternatives facing us are stark. We can take action towards a stable and fully functioning democracy. Or we can be our own executioners."*

Mr. Izeth Hussain is confirming my own sharing above – about the intuitive powers of civil society. If the Opposition shown by civil society is independent of Government and is showing the picture from the other side – that contribution goes towards Democracy. When the Government’s own investment in Democracy is less than that of the civil society – the Government would lose self confidence and becomes dependent on voters. The status of such a government would be low at the international level. If on the other hand we use dissent along the same vertical plane – as is happening in the Middle East – we would still be using autocracy upside down – as happens when parents become dependent on children. This was the case with LTTE and Tamil Politicians. Every genuine investor in Democracy would naturally be supported by all others who have invested in Democracy. I believe that I was intuitively led by my Hindu faith to register my work at the highest level of governance as per my assessment. My exercise of judicial powers started with the University and went up to the level of Prime Minister. My communications followed by my legal action against Mr. Howard started in 1999. I have never met Mr. Howard in person but my thinking and internal allocation of my credits with governance were registered due to the urge I felt. This I believe, happens because we are all connected through our Truth. I registered mine at that highest level. I learnt later that there were others who did likewise through the social path. In 2007, Mr. David Marr, Herald journalist for example states in relation to ‘Silencing Dissent’ which is a collection of essays about Mr. Howard’s Governance:

*'He came to office in 1996 with a list of people to be targeted and removed from **universities**, government authorities and the public service. In his first week, he sacked the heads of six departments. Those senior bureaucrats who survived Howard's purge were instructed in future to report all calls by journalists to the Prime Minister's press office. The new communications minister Richard Alston was soon lashing the ABC over budgets and bias. And the new men and women in power were deploying a new rhetoric of abuse against the critics they lumped together in a shadowy conspiracy called the left.'*

I did not do any research on Mr. Howard. I went by my own Truth and what I was entitled to as a citizen seeking an Administrative resolution to the pain and loss I experienced at the University of NSW. As a migrant I used my Equal Opportunity powers to register my experience through the legal path. The results came not through the Judiciary but through the migrant population in Mr. Howard's electorate who 'dismissed' Mr. Howard from his position of belief as their representative.

I was able to make such connections and find my own completion. Not one of them happened solely due to me. But because my influence was strong – I was able to make the connection. My belief in my inner voice – led me to register my discovery / protest through the legal system.

Last week I learnt that Mr. Chandra Jayaratne who is also reported to be a Sri Lankan Chartered Accountant (I am one too) – has filed a petition against the individuals in the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) , seeking a 'Writ of Prohibition' and an interim order to restrain the PSC from continuing with its investigations into the impeachment motion against the Chief Justice. I was to a degree able to identify with this citizen's action due to my own legal actions against Prime Minister Howard and other Ministers here in Australia, on the basis of my true belief. I represented myself and Mr. Howard was represented by a barrister. The significance is that no amount of status power can defeat ownership power. If there was no validity to my complaint – an ordinary low ranking lawyer from the Prime Minister's office would have been sufficient. We fear our own weaknesses and hence use high ranking positions/officers/professionals to intimidate the ordinary citizen. But Truth manifests Itself when society needs it most. We just need to observe and know the connection between what happens and our own true contribution. Most of the time we do not need to know. If we listen to our inner voice – we would complete the picture of sovereignty in our own minds. Eventually that's all that matters.

Gajalakshmi Paramasivam 03 December 2012