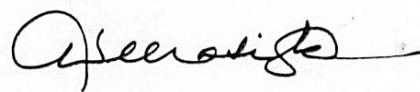


Project peace "for a united Sri Lanka" 11. (1993, November 15). *The Island*.

As a final thought, let me add another kink to this debate. It should be Government policy to appoint a Communications Officer at a senior rank to every Mission abroad from the expatriate community in the host country. This person should have a proven record of professionalism, ethics, skills in communications, a demonstrated ability to establish credibility with senior communications personnel and government officials, previous experience in media and government relations in the host country and excellent oral and written communication skills, and be able to demonstrate executive capacity and leadership skills in a fast-paced communications environment. The Government should provide a quality pay to attract a quality employee, and once appointed not treat the person as a non-entity in the bureaucracy. I can assure you that with such an appointment, the gains for the country would be enormous. There will be a continuum in the thought process on issues that can be related to policies of the host country, a continuum with the media contacts, and not lose four months in trying to familiarize with the media and communications theater in the host country. In a vicious Eelam lobby, such as in Canada, Sri Lanka cannot afford to miss opportunities to tell our story even by a day.

With such an appointment, the Government would be relieved, at least of one headache. This person is not going to stay back as a refugee and embarrass Sri Lanka, nor keep requesting extensions of the tour of duty until the children finish their schooling. This is so annoying to the replacement employee back in Sri Lanka who feels that the person's children are cheated out of the exposure to schools in Canada.

But what is most important is that the expatriate lobby groups such as 'Project Peace' should be in the equation when discussing 'reversing trends of international opinion and countering 'Eelam' propaganda in Canada', and the persons appointed to the Missions should have a sound dedication for the well-being of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka comes first before all other considerations, patronage or no patronage.



Asoka Weerasinghe  
PAST-CHAIRPERSON

PROJECT PEACE FOR A UNITED SRI  
TEL: 613-747-2272