

Project peace "for a united Sri Lanka" 3. (1993, November 15). *The Island*.

and he would comment on it. I make the necessary changes and would be down at the post office by 8 o'clock to send it to the Editor of the newspaper by 'Special delivery'. The turnaround time for our replies to help Sri Lanka was roughly two hours. I would like to know from Hussain whether this is a possibility from a career diplomat? Leaving aside the competence of the person, the bureaucratic tie-ups, not wanting to take that risk for the country in case the person makes a mistake and harms his or her career, and the lack of a collective strategy coming down from the competent authority in Sri Lanka to guide these career diplomats, I have my doubts that Hussain could convince me that there was a possibility that a career diplomat could match our efforts.

I had over 100 letters and articles published as Chairperson of 'Project Peace' and there were 37 letters published under the names of its Committee Members, between July 1983 and June 1989, in defence of Sri Lanka. In contrast, there were only 9 letters published under the auspices of the Sri Lanka High Commission. Remember that we were not paid employees of the Sri Lanka Government, and this was purely a yeoman service for our Motherland, not being able to stomach the attempts by the Tamil Eelamist to destroy it. I may have clocked-in at least 25-hours each week during that time working for Sri Lanka, and so would have the other Committee members of 'Project Peace'.

Hussain talks of our High Commissioner who was hounded by the Tamil separatists and the Canadian media in the autumn of 1986 as a torturer and uses this incident to state, "...and yet find that foreign sympathy for the Eelam cause continues because our Government persists in outraging diplomatic norms."

My analysis of the whole incident was that this High Commissioner could have proved his mettle as a disciplined and an excellent diplomat, if not for the gullibility of the Canadians and the media. They swallowed hook, line and sinker the story that was created by the Tamils to detract Canadian opinion and anger towards the Tamils when the 155 boat people landed on the shores of Newfoundland, lying their way into Canada. The majority of the Canadians were seething with anger. It was undoubtedly a case of brilliant strategy by the local Tamils and unfortunately for Sri Lanka. This High Commissioner was at the wrong place at the wrong time. The Tamil spokesperson who was