

Project peace "for a united Sri Lanka" 9. (1993, November 15). *The Island*.

The feedback on these Fact Sheets was very good. During 1985s Commonwealth Day Reception in Ottawa, at the House of Commons West Block, I was introduced to the Deputy High Commissioner of India by Sri Lanka's Minister Counsellor. When the conversation shifted to our ethnic issue, he told me that I should try and contact the group 'Project Peace for a united Sri Lanka' who were producing some excellent Fact Sheets on Sri Lanka's ethnic issue. When probed further, I was told that these were the only worthwhile publications on the subject that were coming out then.

After hearing the good things about 'Project Peace' and our information package, the Minister Counsellor revealed that the Deputy High Commissioner was indeed speaking to the Chairperson of 'Project Peace'.

Defending Sri Lanka's unitary status was not only to be a watchdog over the Tamil Eelamists in Canada, but also to ward off criticism from much of the Sinhalese community as only about 50 percent of the families in Ottawa supported the efforts of 'Project Peace'. My answer to the critics was in the form of a poem which will be in my next book of poetry 'Tears for my Roots' which will be on sale in the spring.

CRITICS IN OTTAWA

Come then, and sharpen your knives and pens,
toss your jealous thoughts, as the juggler's balls
on a summer's day at the Byward Market
will speak more sense than you, who supermen
play hangmen lassoing ropes at my shadow
sitting at Sinhalese dinner tables,
and sometimes playing midwife, wrenching
frozen mouse-brats from the city snow-dumps.
Fearing the bleeding Sri Lankan sun,
the critics telescopes find super-novae
in the faintest blood-coated stars.
You shun my defence of the truth,
but winged with courage and hope
I shall sweep on, a comet, among all you faint stars.

• Surely, it would be unrealistic to expect the government to totally eschew the practice to appoint non-career personnel.