

No one countered Vasantha Rajah's pro-LTTE campaign in Canada. (1995, October 20) *The Island*.

THE ISLAND 20 Oct 95

No one....

(Continued from page 1)

strategy to the Canadian government on Sri Lanka.

Mr. Rajah reportedly addressed a meeting at the University of Ottawa at which Kenneth Mulder was also a speaker, in addition to making two appearances on television on October 14 and 15. According to the letter, on the latter occasions, Mr. Rajah had presented a strong argument for Eelam which was "very damaging to Sri Lanka". Amongst some of the remarks he made was that government forces are engaged in genocide against Tamils in their "homeland" and that devolution is merely to "pander to international opinion".

Mr. de Silva criticises the Sri Lankan mission in Canada, strongly on the grounds that there was never any presence by members of the mission to counter the statements made

by Mr. Rajah. He states also that there was no effort made by the mission to request equal time on television to present the actual facts of the case.

A spokesman for the Foreign Ministry told "The Island" that while he conceded there is certainly weakness on the part of some missions abroad to effectively counteract LTTE propaganda, it would be helpful if independent organisations of Sri Lankan expatriates such as the SLUNA work in cooperation with these missions in order to fortify them and support the common Sri Lankan cause.

He added that some missions have genuine financial constraints and run on shoestring budgets. Others find the task of defeating the LTTE propaganda system too challenging largely because they are extremely organized and supported by

enormous funds. That is why the missions need the cooperation of independent organisations rather than their constant criticism", he said.

Mr. de Silva has in previous correspondence to the President stated that "if there are no people with ability in the foreign office, why not enlist the help of media consultants to do the job and keep the ineffective, inarticulate bureaucrats in Sri Lanka".



gation, Power and En- government had rejected Board, they alleged. in this case.

No one countered Vasantha Rajah's pro-LTTE campaign in Canada

by Namini Wijedasa
An association of Sri Lankans in Ontario, Canada, has written to

president Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga, complaining that the Sri Lankan mis-

sion in Canada did nothing to counter a massive propaganda campaign in support of the LTTE carried out by former Rupavahini Chairman Vasantha Rajah recently and thus save the face of the Sri Lankan government.

A Foreign Ministry spokesman however explained that Sri Lankan missions abroad are kept fully informed of what is going on in Sri Lanka on a day to day basis and LTTE propaganda is certainly countered when and where necessary. "A good example of this is the fact that none of the foreign governments has come out with anything adverse against the Sri Lankan government which is now engaged in a military, adversive against the LTTE despite the latter's repeated efforts to sell their line", he said.

The Sri Lankan Un-

ted National Association (SLUNA) has pointed out to the President that during this Eelam sponsored campaign, Mr. Rajah accounted for his credibility by stating that he has been a "close associate and confident of the present President of Sri Lanka".

Mr. Rajah reportedly promoted Eelam to the Canadian public and Parliamentarians in public meetings, individual meetings with MPs facilitated by no less than the Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons and an appearance on TV.

Furthermore, the President of the Association i. de Silva in his letter said that Mr. Rajah's introduction at meetings stated that he can provide valuable information, hints and

(Cont. on Page 4)

World highlights

MOSCOW — President Boris Yeltsin blasted NATO expansion plans and ruled out letting the alliance move nuclear weapons up to Russia's borders. He also announced plans to sack Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, who is admired abroad but accused at home of letting the West ignore Russia over Bosnia and NATO.

ZAGREB — Croatian President Franjo Tudjman assured U.S. peace envoy Richard Holbrooke he would not attack Serb-held Eastern Slavonia while peace talks were in progress.

ZAGREB — Russian peace envoy Igor Ivanov said he was confident NATO and Moscow would solve their differences over who would command Russian troops joining a future Bosnia peace force.

BAGHDAD — The U.N. food agency recommended that the U.N. Security Council should release Iraqi assets frozen abroad, saying only foreign exchange could sustain the food rationing system which had saved Iraq from famine.