

'Secret plan' to resolve ethnic crisis. (1995, May 14). *The Sunday Times*.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

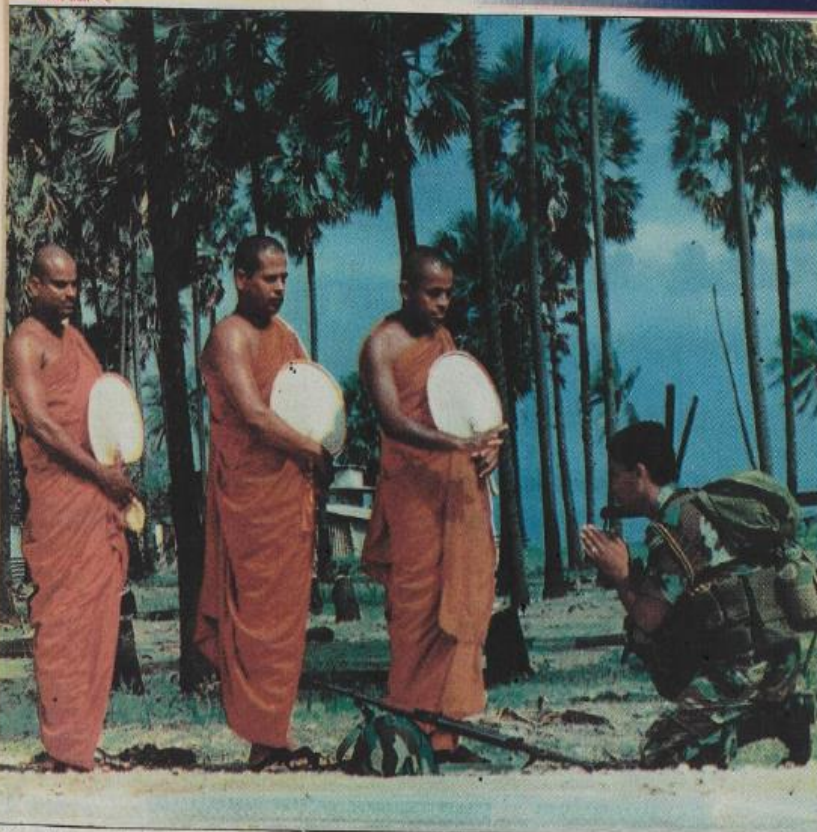
SUNDAY, MAY 14, 1995

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We wish our readers a Holy and Peaceful Vesak



Farewell to arms: In the glorious tradition of Emperor Asoka and others who gave up arms for the way of the Dhamma, a soldier at Palaly lays his guns and beret aside to renew his commitment to the way of the Lord Buddha in the glow of the Vesak full moon. Pic by Dilantha Hettige.

'Secret plan' to resolve ethnic crisis

A "secret course of action" to combat the LTTE, is being worked out by the Government, Deputy Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte told Parliament on Friday.

Speaking during the debate on the extension of the State of Emergency, Col. Ratwatte said the details of this course of action needed to be kept confidential.

"The prudence of the government's decisions and plans in this regard will be evident to the whole country soon" he told Parliament.

The Minister said the Tamil people of the country had supported the Government's peace process and the Government was willing to offer a political package with a high degree of devotion with a view to ending the conflict.

"It is none other than those who have unleashed the forces of violence, terror and fascism to thwart the peace process and to inflict grave damage upon it that are manifestly identifiable as the enemies of the Tamil

people's wishes" he said.

Meanwhile Opposition Leader Ranj Wickremesinghe speaking at the debate said the peace talks had broken down, hostilities had been resumed and the armed forces caught unprepared.

Therefore, at this critical juncture we have a duty to perform by the nation in examining these events. Blaming the LTTE alone will not suffice, you knew whom you were dealing with, he said.

"Previously the Indian government and the then Sri Lanka government had talks with the LTTE. These talks broke down and there were armed conflicts between the security forces. It is in this background that the PA at the last general election promised to have talks with the LTTE to bring peace," he said.

Mr. Wickremesinghe said that the peace talks were stuck on modalities and rehabilitation. While the government had promised Rs. 40 billion for rehabilitation, not a single cent was voted

ceiling was imposed on Government expenditure which made this a dream.

The President has still to give us an explanation on these matters. The answers are not given even today, otherwise this case will go by default in the international fora.

He said that there are two charges made by the LTTE to which the government must reply. Otherwise they must allow Sri Lanka's case to go by default in the international community.

The LTTE alleges that the level of the peace delegation was never upgraded to a political-ministerial level. "We cannot accept the position that this was the most experienced delegation that Sri Lanka could field. In the earlier talks we had Ministers taking part and those who took part on the LTTE side were also senior members," the Opposition Leader said.

He expressed his concern about the soldiers in Pooneryn, Elephant Pass and Vettikalikerny and said "our thoughts are with