Statement 26 (8/98)

1. The General Secretary and a member of the NLD were not able to accomplish their mission to Basssein, Irrawaddy Division which they commenced on 24-7-98. Yesterday (12-8-98) they set out again for the same purpose.
2. They are individuals whose movements are not restricted. They have peacefully and quietly travelled on a public road without the slightest intention of causing any disturbance whatsoever. The purpose of their journey was to visit the NLD parliamentarians and their families who have been wrongfully arrested and confined by the authorities after the 27 May, 1998. Supporting and comforting the oppressed is in conformity with the duties of leaders and their social obligations. No person suffers or is disadvantaged by such a journey. It is the result of the political consciousness of a political party.
3. However they have again been barricaded and their car has been moved to the little wooden bridge at Htantabin township, Pandaing village near Anyasu. This action by the authorities is entirely without any legal justification and legal authority and under no "rule of law". Moreover, it is in direct contravention of Article 3 and 13(1) of the Declaration of Human Rights. As Burma is a member of the family of nations it has a responsibility to respect and adhere to those provisions.
4. The little wooden bridge on which the car has been placed is constructed for the purpose of pedestrian travel. Whether it can withstand the weight of the motor vehicle is unknown. Should the bridge collapse under the strain and damage, injury of any nature, or loss of lives result, the responsibility lies on the heads of the authorities.
5. It is undeniably the duty of the authorities to permit the General Secretary and her party to proceed on the journey. The authorities have consistently proclaimed that peace and prosperity have been restored to the country. They have even changed their name from State Law and Restoration Council to State Peace and Development Council. Therefore to assert that for security reasons the General Secretary and her party have been prohibited from proceeding on this journey has no credence. It is a deliberate operation to prohibit the General Secretary from performing her normal political activities.
6. For the above reasons, the National League for Democracy emphatically denounces the illegal actions of the authorities.

Central Executive Committee  
National League for Democracy

Rangoon  
August 13, 1998