National League for Democracy
No: (97/b) West Shwegondine Road
Bahan, Rangoon

STATEMENT 83 (10/98)

Extracts from the Chairman of the National League for Democracy's letter dated 29 September 1998 to the Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council on the subject of "Illegal arrests and imprisonment, intimidation and determent are reproduced for information of the members.

1. x x x x

2. x x x x

3. The above arrests amount to excessive misuse of power. Sections under which some arrests have been made are entirely inapplicable while others have been arrested and detained under no provision of law. Such arrests are blatantly illegal. It should be remembered that rust destroys iron and power destroys humans.

4. The members of the National League for democracy are voluntarily participating in a political activity from convictions and beliefs of their own at personal costs and without any hope for any personal gains. Articles 19 and 20 of the Declaration of Human Rights to which Burma is a signatory are being completely ignored by the authorities.

5. x x x x x
   (a) x x x x x
   (b) x x x x x
   (c) x x x x x
   (d) (1) x x x x x x

   (2) At time of arrest, the answer given by the arresting persons to the question of warrants, is that "warrants are not necessary because the arrests were not opium related affiances".

   (3) If arrest of a person who has not committed any offence requires no warrant while a warrant is required in the case of a person committing an offence it means that an innocent person is placed below the level of an offender. An innocent person is given the treatment that is meant for a bad person and vice versa. These activities should never be indulged in.

   (4) The modus operandi adopted in the arrests of ordinary members and organising committee members of the National League for Democracy appears as if the higher authorities have given the arresting persons carte blanche power to do just as they like without need to observe any rules of law or procedure. For example, the military intelligence
personnel are exercising police powers in matters relating to warrants.

6. The people within the country have been given no information about these arrests. Instead, news broadcast and published for international consumption is falsely given claiming that "the persons are being detained for consultations and have not been arrested".

7. In weighing up the events, it is obvious that an excessive misuse of power is being exercised without any compassion or fellow feeling for one's own countrymen and women. The current political, social and economic crisis that the people are facing daily can never and will never be solved by such illegal arrests of the NLD parliamentarians-elect and members. The future is very black for the country and should never happen.

8. Of the thirty articles enumerated in the Declaration of Human Rights, the authorities here are contravening altogether twenty of them. Articles 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 27, 28, 29 are being ignored and contravened in their entirety.

9. x x x x x x

10. If the innocent members of the National League for Democracy who have not contravened any provision of the law are charged and committed to trial and sentenced it will be entirely out of hate and evil mindedness. This will amount to destroying and demolishing the rule of law. The people will gain nothing. It is necessary to return to truth and righteousness. The member of the National League for Democracy including the parliamentarians-elect have been detained and imprisoned for far too long and should all be unconditionally released immediately and we ask that no more illegal arrests be made.

Central Executive Committee
National League for Democracy

Rangoon
6 October, 1998