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

STATEMENT 110 (11/98)

Contents of the letter dated 20 November from the Chairman of the National League for Democracy to the Chairman of the State Peace and Development Council on the subject of "Agricultural land in Htan-gone Sub-Township of Kanbalu Township, Sagaing Division" are reproduced for everybody's information.

(BEGINNING) "1. This information on the subject matter received by us from the persons concerned is being forwarded to you for necessary action. The effected villages are Kaing-yoe, Tha-yet-taw, In-lae-gyi, Gyi-bin-tet, Koon-bin-gone, Ma-gyi-gone, Su-tat, phoke-gone, In-daing, Nget-pyaw-daing, Kha-ong-daw, Pay-gyo, In-gar-daunt.

2. The circumstances are as follows:-

(a) On 3 November 1998 at 15:00 hours, two agents of persons who desired to purchase land illegally and a female cook accompanied by a sergeant and three soldiers from the Supply and Transport Battalion of the army based near the ShweBo Regional College arrived at the area.

(b) Without delineating the land and without a sale deed, and without payment of the real value, a document was presented for signatures.

(c) Out of fear, the villages fled their homes but were pursued by the sergeant and his group who arrived at the house of U Chit Way at Tha-yet-taw village where by threats and interrogation levelled at the children they discovered that he was hiding there. U Chit Way was threatened and beaten with the butt of the gun and dragged out of the house, then forced to sign the illegal document.

(d) Then they captured and held the children as hostages which made the parents more terrified and involuntarily sign the documents.

3. Being extremely aggrieved by the above intolerable operations, about 900 villagers gathered together and demonstrated their disapproval in the night (23:00 hours). What happened next is set out below:-

(a) The sergeant and his group and soldiers of the Htan-gone outpost were surrounded by the people.

(b) Soldiers from Zigone(Htan-ta-bin township), members of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) went in their motor
vehicles to their rescue but were prevented from reaching them by road
blocks. When this failed, ten young girls stood in front of the vehicles
and stopped them. The villagers resorted to sling shots and the
soldiers responded by firing their guns in the air before they
retreated.

(c) On 4 November a party of 12 soldiers from Zigone township and some
members of the USDA group and a member of the District SPDC arrived at
the village to assist the sergeant and the representatives of the
illegal purchasers and put pressure on the villagers. Because of the
strong resistance by the villagers, the illegal activities of the
authorities has been temporarily averted.

4. We send you this information so that appropriate investigations can
be made and punishment meted out to those who have been indulging in
these illegal activities.(END)"

Central Executive Committee
National League for Democracy

23 November 1998