Statement No. 21 (2/99)

The petition dated 5 February 1999 addressed to the Chairman of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Order by the Chairman of the National League for Democracy is published for information.

START

"Revered Sayadaw.

I respectfully place these facts before you on behalf of the National League for Democracy and the Central Executive Committee.

The reason for this petition relates to Kyakan Abbot, Chairman of the Taungtha township Sangha Nayaka Order who on 30 December 1998 at 1600 hours summoned U Than Myint, Chairman of the NLD Township Organising Committee through a personnel of the Immigration department.

I have been informed that on his arrival at the monastery, the Abbot instructed U Than Myint to resign from his position as chairman and to dissolve the township NLD and that if he did not comply he would face grave consequences. This is not appropriate because it amounts to interference through religious measures in political issues.

The National League for Democracy is a legally constituted political body whose objective is to work for the good of the country. It rightfully claims to be the people's political party by virtue of the fact that the vast majority of the people (who incidentally are the donors of the four essential requirements of the clergy) voted for NLD candidates as their representatives in the 1990 General Elections.

Moreover, we respectfully reiterate that the NLD is not a political party that "uses religion for political gain" which is a prohibition embodied in the law. Similarly, honourable members of the Sangha should practice the precepts pertaining to politics as prescribed by the Lord Buddha in the Scriptures.

I respectfully entreat you to judge whether the political activities of the Taungtha township Sayadaw is appropriate as prescribed in the Scriptures and to admonish him accordingly. I respectfully submit that in your esteemed position as Chairman Sayadaw of the State Sangha Maha Nayaka Order, you instruct and admonish the Sangha Nayaka Sayadaw at all levels (State, Division, Township) to behave and obey the precepts and discipline prescribed in the Scriptures to prevent any untoward happenings in the future. Up to date I have made submissions in respect of Sinbaungwei and Yesagyo townships in Magwe Division.
I pray that your reverend person and all the Sayadaws enjoy health and happiness both in mind and body and may the gospel preached by our Lord Buddha spread far and wide to benefit all mankind."

END

Central Executive Committee
National League for Democracy

Rangoon
9 February 1999