NLD Statement 168 (11/99)

1. We have received information that in the months of July and August of 1999, a total of 77 cows had to be supplied to the army by 36 village tracts in Man-aung township of Arakan State (72 cows at 2 per village tract and 5 cows by the wards in the town) at the price of 20,000 kyats per cow though the real value was 50,000 kyats. Our information is that the village authorities misappropriated the money for themselves and the owners received nothing. The residents were most disgruntled and though reports were made in the matter to the respective departments, nothing has been done.

2. One captain Han Kyi drove into a house in Thama village with the vehicle he was driving and instantly killed a pregnant mother and her two children. Her 8 year old son received serious injuries. No action has been taken against the perpetrator but the boy has been relocated to Ahn township. The residents of the locality are greatly aggrieved.

3. During the months of July, August, September and October of 1999, soldiers from the army units stationed at Gau and Thama villages exploited the residents by forcing them illegally to regularly supply rice, chicken, pigs, goats, cows, fish, prawns and all kinds of foodstuff. Village maidens who went out collecting firewood or vegetables were forcibly raped without their consent and when reports were made no action whatsoever was taken against the offenders.

4. We have heard that in Myan-aung township, for the construction of an irrigation canal embankment near Khone village and another in Za-la-pyin village all residents of the villages in the township had to supply forced labour. In addition they were forced to pay money. A total of ten million eight hundred thousand kyats was collected from 36 village groups (three hundred thousand from each group). The workers were not released till completion of the project.

5. A payment of at least Kyats five hundred has to be made before any complaint is entertained.

6. Sellers of prawns have to supply free of charge prawns that fetch a price of Kyats 7000/- per viss to the army and the Military Intelligence No: (10) stationed at Myanaung township. Motor vehicles have to be supplied on a daily basis for transportation of army personnel. The front compartment of busses is reserved for the army. Even monks are not given that preference.

7. Only one doctor is posted at the Man-aung hospital. When he is absent on other duties, the people are left unattended and suffer much agony. Minimum required for any surgery is Kyats ten thousand. One Maung Khin Maung Yee (age 25) from a village in the proximity of Pankyan Chaung had purchased the required medicines but was unable to pay the fees for surgery so he died.

8. We denounce these illegal practices and exploitation of the people in distant regions like Man-aung by the authorities, as shown above. We urge that the health and advancement of the people be especially attended to.
