NLD Statement 175/1999:

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

NLD Statement 175 (12/99) (translation)

1. We have received news relating to the cancellation of arrangements for a wedding reception of the son of a certain Sergeant stationed at Rangoon Division, Dala Township Police Force and the daughter of an NLD member.

2. After the Thrizeya Reception Hall in Dala township had been hired for the occasion, the bridegroom's father received a phone call from the military intelligence on the night of 1st December, 1999 inquiring if the bride-to-be had any relatives in the NLD. He confirmed that the wedding was to be held on the 5th December 1999 and said that he was not sure about the relatives being NLD members. However, he didn't think it was probable because the bride was a member of the civil service. He was then told that at a meeting Daw Aung San Suu Kyi had mentioned that she would be attending the ceremony and this information had been transmitted by the central military intelligence to their township section.

3. The parties concerned were keen to avoid any misunderstanding so they went and explained matters to the military intelligence. They admitted that one of them was an NLD member and the spouse was a civil servant. No NLD member had been invited. All invitations were out. Then the military intelligence required secrecy of all the things that had transpired and insisted that they go themselves to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and prevent her from attending the wedding. This was agreed to because they did not want any disruption to the arrangements. They were also required to report back after completion of the task.

4. Despite the above, on the morning of the 2nd December, the bride-to-be tearfully informed her parents that wedding arrangements had been cancelled and invitations had to be revoked.

5. On 3rd December, the military intelligence told the Sergeant that the case was not closed as yet and asked if they had met with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as yet. The Sergeant thought that since the wedding had been cancelled on the 2nd and invitations recalled there was no need to proceed further in the matter. But they insisted that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi be contacted.

6. From the above it appears that the authorities are so consumed with fear that they panic as soon as they get a bit of news and without inquiry or justification will disrupt and prevent people from performing their traditional cultural ceremonies regardless of the sorrow and disappointment to the prospective bride and groom and their relatives and parents. This should not happen.

7. This disruption to a wedding ceremony reflects a total absence of fellow feeling and is an extremely mean exercise.

Central Executive Committee
National League for Democracy
Rangoon 17 December 1999