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**DAWN**

**NEWSLETTER**

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# DAWN NEWSLETTER

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## IN BURMA, THE PRACTICE OF DEMOCRACY IS A CRIME

THOSE WHO WISH TO PARTICIPATE FREELY IN DEMOCRATIC  
ELECTIONS, FACE ARREST AND PUNISHMENT

It is a sad but true reality of history, that the task of correcting the problems in society generally fall upon the young who, although they lack experience, have the idealism necessary to dream new dreams and believe that those dreams can become reality. Thus it is the youth of a country, who willing sacrifice the luxuries provided them in order to give their lives to building a new and better society, who are the new heroes of our day. We must honor them, and we must join with them to rid our societies of injustice and oppression.

### FROM NE WIN TO NO WIN

When General Ne Win resigned as head of the Burma Socialist Programme Party in July of 1988, the Burmese people hoped that things would improve. General Ne Win, himself suggested a public referendum to determine if the people still wanted the country to continue with a one-party system, or if they wanted to establish a multi-party political system. Was it possible that the dictator of 26 years was actually willing to let the people make a decision for once?

Probably not. Perhaps he just wanted to suggest to the people that he had a good heart, knowing very well that the Burma Socialist Programme Party would not allow such a referendum to take place. And that is exactly what happened. Sein Lwin replaced Ne Win, and the dictatorial powers of the government over the people continued.

Since then, there was the brief rule of Dr. Maung Maung who was suddenly replaced by General Saw Maung through a military and bloody coup. He now rules the country with an iron fist.

Despite the promise of elections in 1990, few people actually believe that such elections are possible. The military still controls everything, and they will never relinquish power. You see, we have simply moved from Ne Win, to no win, and now it is finally the duty of the Burmese people to stand up and determine what direction Burma must go so that finally **WE WIN!**

"DAWN", P.O. Box 317, Rajdamnern Post Office, Bangkok 10200, Thailand

## ARMED FORCES DAY

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March 27 is Armed Forces Day in Burma. It is suppose to be a day of celebration, but actually it is only a day for the government to advertise their use of armed force against the Burmese people.

During the Second World War, General Aung San and the "Thirty Comrades" had sided with the Japanese in order to drive the British colonial power out of their country. They did this believing that the Japanese would allow Burma independence. However, it soon became clear that the Japanese were harsh task masters, and were willing to use Burma and the Burmese people for selfish gain only.

On March 27, 1945, General Aung San, in a sudden and surprise move, switched his army to the side of the Allies. By August, the Japanese were defeated, and signed their surrender in Rangoon on the 28th.

Armed Forces Day was established in remembrance of this tactical move by Aung San which resulted in the defeat of the Japanese, and the eventual independence of Burma from all colonial powers.

Each year, on this day, the military parades through Rangoon, showing off their fighting power. Speeches are made in the central Revolutionary Park, and a grand party is held in the evening to which all foreign dignitaries are invited.

This year, Armed Forces Day took on a different nature. It became a day for the Burmese people to protest the use of violent armed force against students and working people during the August and September strikes of last year, and the continued arrest and torture of people who speak out for human rights. Few people lined the streets to view the military parade, demonstrations against the government took place throughout Rangoon and Mandalay, and six major countries boycotted the grand party held that night to which Ne Win himself made an appearance.

In order to make the day a "success", the military forced some people into the streets to present the passing soldiers with flowers.

However, soldiers were warned not to eat any sweets which people might offer them in fear that they might contain poison. This simply illustrates how little Saw Maung can now trust the people he claims to have the right to rule over.

The arrests of major student leaders was carried out previous to Armed Forces Day to try to stifle dissent, but this too proved to be unsuccessful.

The appearance of Ne Win at this party - his first appearance since giving up chairmanship of the ruling party last year - was seen as very significant by many Burma watchers. It seems to indicate that Ne Win still sees himself as playing a leading role in Burmese political affairs, and strengthens the assertions by many critics that it is Ne Win who still runs the country from behind the scenes. If that is the case, little has changed during the past year, and few changes can be expected in the future.

One of the great ironies of Armed Forces Day this year was the relationship between Japan and Burma. The day is a celebration of the Burmese people turning against Japanese imperialism, but this year it was like a celebration of the Burmese government once again turning back to Japan for comradeship. The Japanese have recently recognized the brutal Saw Maung regime, and have agreed to resume aid to the country. This aid basically falls into the pockets of the military which will use it to further suppress popular dissent in the country. So the grand party on the night of March 27, 1989 was a celebration, not of Aung San's rejection of Japanese imperialism, but of Saw Maung/Ne Win's invitation to Japanese imperialism to once again return to Burma against the will of the Burmese people!

## HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES

In early March, a group of Burmese and Karen villagers were forced by the Burmese military to serve as porters. For four days they carried heavy loads of rice and military equipment through the jungles. Young girls and pregnant women were included in this group of porters, and they were forced to carry bags of rice weighing approximately 50 pounds. They also had to carry their own food supplies as the Burmese military did not supply them with any food.

Weak, tired and hungry, they finally escaped at 3 a.m. one night. Throughout the night they quietly moved through the jungle until they finally arrived at Kya Inn village. Here they met with members of the ABSDF to whom they recounted their story.

More and more stories are coming in about the plight of the porters. In one area, ABSDF members came across several porters who had been wounded during a fire fight. Too weak to walk, the Burmese soldiers had pushed them over the side of a small cliff and left them for dead. When the ABSDF team discovered them, they had already lain at the foot of the cliff for several days and were dying from thirst and disease. Their wounds were infected and covered with flies, and some had become infected with worms.

If the Burmese military truly wants to help build democracy in the country, and truly is planning to arrange free and fair elections, then how can they treat the Burmese people in this way? These are simple rural people who certainly pose no political threat. If the military wants to win the hearts and minds of the Burmese people, they must change these cruel tactics, and show that they are one with the people.



This 33 year-old Karen woman was forced by the Burmese military to carry 50 pounds of rice for four days through the jungle. She is 7 months pregnant. She was with a group of about 20 porters which included one other pregnant woman and girls as young as 16.



A group of porters in Kya Inn village who escaped from the Burmese military. Some of the porters are girls as young as 16 as well as pregnant women.

## DEAD LINE

March 31, 1989 is a dead line. For many Burmese students living inside Thai territory, it may literally become a "dead line". It is on this day that the Thai government has said they will close down the repatriation centers set up to send Burmese students back to Burma, and will begin to treat all students caught inside Thai territory as illegal immigrants. Although they have not said specifically what they mean by this, it could mean that the students will be arrested and sent back, against their wills, to Burma. If this happens, the students face detention and possible death from the Burmese authorities. It is, in fact, a "line of death!"

Actually, on November 22, 1988, Thailand granted temporary refugee status to the Burmese students who were fleeing in large numbers from the brutal Burmese military. This was seen as a sign of friendship and support to the Burmese people.

This friendship was to also have its "dead line". On December 14, 1988, Thai Supreme Commander General Chavalit, made a visit to Burma, and gave de facto recognition to the Saw Maung military dictatorship. He was received by the Burmese regime as 'the first dignitary to visit us'.

The result of this visit was the end of Thailand's friendship with the Burmese people, and the

beginning of their friendship with the military dictatorship. The result has been disastrous.

A repatriation program was established through which some students were forcibly sent back to Burma. Saw Maung promised to pay Thailand 5,000 baht (about US \$100) for every student they could "convince" to return home. International outcries helped slow this program down.

Economic doors to investments in Burma by Thai private and government companies were also thrown wide open by Saw Maung following this visit. The mad rush by logging and fishing companies to get at the teak and marine wealth which Burma holds brought in millions of dollars to the Saw Maung military which he uses to further suppress the people.

The recent arrest of Min Ko Naing and other student leaders in Rangoon should prove that it is not safe for students living at the border to return home at this time. All of these students are seen as a threat by Saw Maung and Ne Win, and they would most certainly like to see all students safely behind bars.

This "dead line" should be changed to a "life line" by allowing the students temporary refugee status as once promised by the Thai government.





## FROM INSIDE BURMA

During the mass people's strike and demonstrations which took place in August and September 1988, several individuals suddenly were pushed into the limelight. They were the spontaneous leaders who helped give electricity to the movement which was seeking to bring a new light to Burma. Following the bloody coup of September 18th which was Ne Win's way of extinguishing this new light, many of these "leaders" moved into the jungle areas to reorganize for the struggle for democratic rights. A few, however, chose to remain in Rangoon to fight both openly and underground against the military dictatorship. One of these students was Min Ko Naing.

Min Ko Naing (a pseudonym in Burmese which means "Conqueror of Kings") has continued to organize the people for full participation in their country's future. He has done this in a legal and peaceful manner.

However, in March of this year, the military arrested Min Ko Naing along with several other student leaders. This is the first arrest of well-known student leaders since the coup last year.

The government claims that Min Ko Naing and his friends broke the law by making speeches critical of the government and by violating the ban on public gatherings.

This should come as a great shock to those governments which see Gen. Saw Maung's promise of elections in 1990 as a sign that the country is

moving towards democracy. Freedom of speech, and freedom of gathering are essential if free and fair elections are ever to be held. Saw Maung has proven that in Burma today, as has been for over 26 years, the practice of democratic freedoms is illegal, and those who dare try to involve themselves in a democratic process are treated as criminals.

Those countries which have already recognized the Saw Maung government, and are providing aid directly or indirectly, such as Thailand and Japan, should now rethink their position. **Democratic freedoms do not yet exist in our country.** As long as we are not allowed to speak or to meet together, we can not campaign freely, and we can not develop our ideas on democracy. Thailand and Japan should now make it clear to Saw Maung that they are ending their economic involvement in Burma and withdrawing their recognition of his government, until the military steps down and allows an interim government to truly begin the process of organizing honest elections. This is the responsibility of all countries and governments which sincerely respect human rights.

We call on all friends to write letters calling for the release of Min Ko Naing and all the others who are being held in prison without trial. Your campaigns for human rights in Burma are essential to protect the lives of all those who are willing to take a stand against injustice. Please do not remain silent. Your individual voice can influence your government's policy towards the Burmese people.



## INSIDE BURMA

On March 19, 1989 several students who had just arrived in the jungle camp from Rangoon were interviewed. A summary of what they reported is written here.

"The military has now moved onto the streets in very large numbers. They are everywhere. Organizing any kind of protest is now extremely difficult. They control all movements of the people. However, "hit and run" demonstrations still continue to be organized by the students. These are small demonstrations which break apart as soon as the military arrives, and then regroup in another part of town.

We do not know how many people have been imprisoned or killed since the arrests are now done at night after curfew. However, many members of opposition parties who were trying to campaign have been arrested. Free campaigning for the coming elections is impossible. This means that the

elections will be totally controlled and totally undemocratic. Hundreds of more people want to leave the cities and join the students in the jungles. If they can get past the military they will surely come.

Since Gen. Chalavit, (Thai Supreme Commander) visited Burma and opened the door for economic involvement of Thai companies, other countries have also made a rush for Burma to get their hands on some of our valuable resources. All of this economic involvement and diplomatic relations has hardened Saw Maung and made him more confident in his oppression of the people. Things have gotten worse and worse for us. These Thai companies and companies from other countries are helping pay for the imprisonment and torture of the Burmese people. We would like all of these companies to withdraw immediately, and let the Burmese people solve their problems first."

During the past few weeks, many student leaders have been arrested. This indicates a lack of democratic space needed to work towards free and fair elections in 1990. Below are the names of some of those arrested.

- 1) Min Ko Naing (date of arrest uncertain)
- 2) Ko Ko Gyin (date of arrest uncertain)

### Arrests made on March 21, 1989

- 3) Mya San, 23 years old
- 4) Yan Aung, 17 years old
- 5) Min Aung, 25 years old
- 6) Kyaw Zaw Oo, 25 years old
- 7) Min Shwe, 23 years old
- 8) Aung Mya Oo, 22 years old
- 9) Thit Lwin, 23 years old
- 10) Aye Min, 20 years old
- 11) Yin Min Kyin, 24 years old
- 12) Me Sang Sang Myint, 23 years old
- 13) Soe Thein

- 14) Ko Ko Oo
- 15) Moe Myat Thu, 21 years old

### Arrest on March 27, 1989

- 16) Tin Htay
- 17) Si Thu Tun
- 18) Win Myint Than

Please write letters to the Saw Maung government (address given on last page) asking about the welfare of these students and requesting their release. We are much concerned about their welfare, and believe that international attention to their case can provide them with some protection. Your help is much needed.

## FROM THE INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### 3 ACCUSED OF RAPING BURMESE STUDENT

MAE SOT, Tak Police have arrested three men, including a policeman, suspected of having gang-raped a Burmese student here Wednesday night.

A group of angry Burmese students took to the street in this border town shortly after learning of the rape.

Police said they arrested three suspects yesterday, one of them a traffic policeman of Mae Sot district police station.

They were charged with gang-raping, assault and false imprisonment, Mae Sot police said.

THE NATION: March 25, 1989

### ILLEGAL ENTRY CHARGE TO BE FILED AGAINST BURMESE GIRL STUDENT

THE Burmese student who was allegedly raped by three men including a traffic policeman in Mae Sot on Wednesday night may be charged with illegal entry into Thailand, a senior police officer said.

In a telephone interview from Bangkok, Tak police chief Pol Col Amphon Ngarm-chit said Sandra Thwin, a 24-year-old final-year law student from Rangoon University, would be charged according to the Thai immigration law if it is found she illegally entered Thailand.

THE NATION: March 26, 1989

### TOP BURMA STUDENT LEADER UNDER ARREST

BURMA's military rulers have arrested one of the country's most prominent student leaders and warned that anti-army protests will not be tolerated.

Min Ko Naing, a leader of a 1988 national uprising for democracy which toppled the 26-year-old socialist government, was arrested on Thursday, a government spokesman said yesterday.

"It was found that he and his accomplices were organising and inciting disturbances, especially on Armed Forces Day, and were committing acts contravening law and order," he said.

The spokesman said although some authorities wanted to avoid any bloodshed "others advocate harsh reprisals to nip (disturbances) in the bud. The military have no desire to shoot, but at the same time it does not want to let anarchy prevail again," he added.

To Burma's still restive population, Min Ko Naing, a nom de guerre meaning "one who topples the king", is probably the best known leader of the 1988 student revolt.

"Ming Ko Naing is a non-violent demonstrator and he is the student leader in Rangoon. We demanded the military regime of Saw Maung to immediately release him and another four students they arrested earlier," said Htun Aung Kyaw, a leader of All Burma Student Democratic Front (ABSDF) yesterday.

Bangkok Post: March 25, 1989



### BURMA DISPERSES PROTESTERS, 2 HELD

BURMESE soldiers dispersed anti-government protesters and arrested two of them, bringing to 17 people detained in the last week including a key student leader, official Burmese radio said yesterday.

About 100 students chanting anti-government slogans were marching along a main avenue on Saturday when about 1,300 members of security forces confronted them and forced them to disperse, according to the radio broadcast monitored by UPI in Bangkok.

Two students were arrested, the radio said.

BANGKOK POST: March 27, 1989



## PROTESTS ERUPT ON BURMA ARMY DAY

SCATTERED protests broke out in Rangoon and Mandalay yesterday as Burma's military rulers staged a big army parade in the capital, Western diplomats said.

The diplomats, contacted from Bangkok by telephone by Reuters, said there was at least one incident of shooting in Rangoon as security forces on trucks suppressed small student-led protests.

They said reports reached Rangoon of a bigger demonstration in the northern city of Mandalay attended by several thousand people singing pro-democracy songs. The singers were applauded and given flowers and drinks by well-wishers on the pavement.

More than 3,000 troops paraded through Rangoon in an annual ceremony marking the anniversary of the fight against Japanese occupation at the end of World War II.

"There were a number of small-scale incidents in the city," said one diplomat. They involved groups of between 10 and 50 people, mostly students, who chanted pro-democracy slogans and scattered when approached by security forces.

BANGKOK POST: March 28, 1989

## NE WIN MAKES FIRST APPEARANCE

Burma's leader for 26 years, U Ne Win, made his first public appearance yesterday since relinquishing chairmanship of the ruling party last year.

He attended an armed forces day dinner, which was boycotted by ambassadors from the United States, India, Britain, France, Italy and West Germany. All other heads of missions attended.

U Ne Win stepped down as head of state in 1981 and left the chairmanship of the ruling Burma Socialist Programme Party last July 23.

Of 28 resident foreign embassies in Rangoon, six - the United States, Britain, France, Italy, West Germany and India - have not resumed normal relations with the Burmese government since last year's violent suppression of demonstrations. - AP

THE NATION March 28, 1989

We salute those countries who have taken a stand with the people of Burma by boycotting the armed forces day dinner. This is a show of solidarity with those who are struggling for justice and human rights. We urge you to hold to this course so that Burma might soon experience peace.

ABSDF

## ARMED FOR DEMOCRACY

The millions of dollars expected to pour into Burma as a result of the sale of timber and fishing concessions to foreign companies by the government will go towards buying arms and ammunition for the Burmese army, diplomatic sources in Rangoon said. The Burmese Government has given the impression publicly that it is selling concessions in order to provide funds to bolster its woefully depleted foreign-exchange reserves. But the diplomats say the cash will be immediately used to help pay for a build-up of military supplies, so that the army will be well equipped to handle any future agitation for a more democratic form of government. Nearly all of the timber concessions have gone to companies from Thailand, while concessions to fish Burmese waters have gone to a range of neighbouring countries.

FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW, March 16, 1989



The Burmese people love their country and their country's resources. To sell off these precious resources to foreign investors might be acceptable to the people if the money earned were used to provide food and medicines. But Guns! Who can eat guns? What disease will guns cure? Stop raping our country's resources which only makes it possible for the Saw Maung military to further imprison and kill us.

## INFLATION

Inflation has been an important factor in the economic problems facing the populace in the 1970s. During the early 1960s the Rangoon consumer price index was relatively steady, officially increasing by perhaps 2 percent per year. With 1972 considered as 100, it was 76.5 in 1965. By 1970 it was 91.0 and was increasing by almost three points per year. By 1974 it had reached 156.9; in 1976 it peaked at 252.6, after which it declined slightly and once again rose to 252.6 in 1979. These figures represent for the most part prices that are controlled by the government. If goods were available at all times in sufficient quantities, the data might be accurate. But acute shortages have existed for many commodities, with unofficial or black market prices often double or more official prices. The inflationary picture presented is thus an optimistic one.

### BURMA'S ROAD TOWARD DEVELOPMENT, David I. Steinberg

Despite this tremendous inflationary rate, salaries did not increase for over 12 years. This was one of the causes for the unrest which broke out in 1988. Recently, the government has given some civil servants a 100% pay raise in order to calm down economic frustrations. However, even this pay raise hardly makes it possible for a family to purchase the necessities for the household.

## OPPOSITION SAYS OVER 160 HELD IN BURMA PROTESTS

Burma's military rulers have arrested more than 160 dissidents following a series of sporadic anti-government protests in Rangoon and Mandalay last month, a leading opposition figure said yesterday.

Aung San Suu Kyi, head of Burma's largest opposition group said that more than 60 people had been arrested in the capital and over 100 in Mandalay since March 14, when the latest round of student-led protests began.

Under existing military laws, a curfew remains in force and gatherings of more than 5 persons are forbidden, effectively making illegal any mass political activity.

"I think these latest arrests indicate we are still a long way from the basic freedoms to take us to free and fair elections," Suu Kyi said.

Suu Kyi estimated that more than a thousand people had been detained for political activities since September and said many were held without charge and had no access to legal representation.

"A lot of the people in prison have no contact with the outside world at all," she said.

"Everything that is going on here is totally opposed to any idea of justice," she said.

Suu Kyi said the latest arrests and the unexpected reappearance of reclusive former strongman Ne Win at a army dinner on Monday had convinced many students a new wave of repression was likely.

THE NATION, April 1, 1989



## MARINE LIFE IN DANGER

Burma is a country with a long coastline. Along the coastline live millions of members of ethnic minority groups, such as the Arakan, Mon, Karen and the unique Salongs. These people survive on fish caught using primitive methods. They use sail and paddle boats to go out into the sea to fish, as well as search for oysters and shells. They have no access to 20th century technology, and thus have helped preserve one of the world's richest fishing grounds.

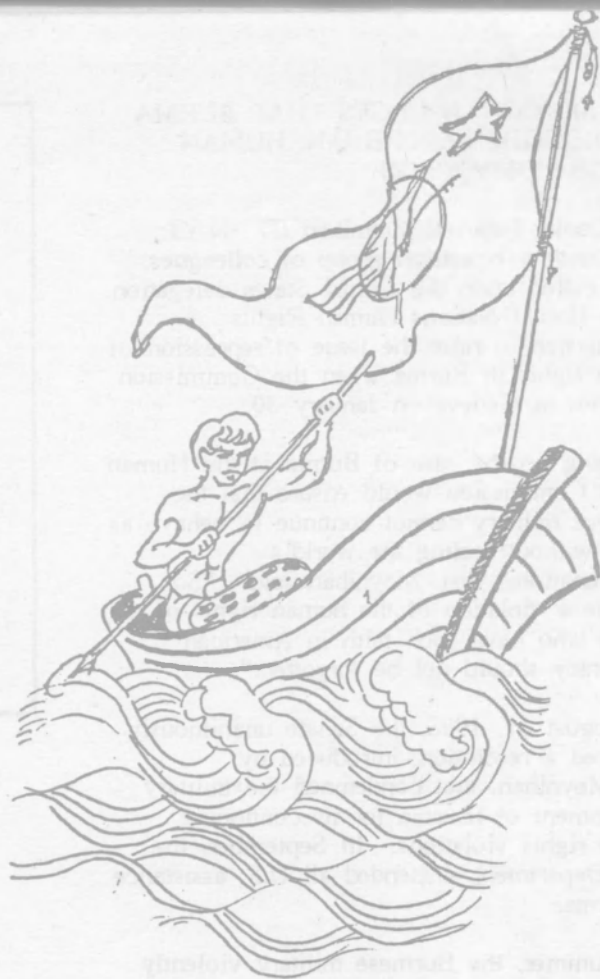
But now these people's livelihood is being threatened by the Saw Maung military regime, who has been making contracts with other countries to fish in these waters. A single company has been publicized as signing a contract to fish for 250,000 tons of fish at a rate of 70 US\$ per ton. With the Saw Maung regime having made fishing deals with 6 countries, and with an expected minimum of 3 companies in each country signing similar contracts, that would mean 4,500,000 tons of fish disappearing from Burma's waters. Each company would be using a fleet of trawlers to get fast profits, and in their wake will be left huge expanses of barren water. With the marine life will disappear the livelihood of millions of Burma's coast dwellers.

The Saw Maung regime is clearly not content with just killing those who rose up against them last year. They are now seeking to starve out the entire coastal population. The whole ecological cycle of our coastline is in danger. Please help us by not dealing with the Rangoon military government.

THE ALLIANCE BULLETIN, March 1989

## MUTED HARPING

No sizeable country is more dependent on Japanese aid than Burma. Even last year, when troops battled students in the streets, Japanese grants and loans to Burma totalled 35 billion yen (US\$278 million) - the equivalent, in a normal year, of roughly a quarter of the country's capital investment. Since other major powers have been excluded for years from direct influence in that hermit-like country, Japan's policy towards Burma is uniquely important. And it gives an indication of how Japan will exert its growing influence in the rest of the world.



Back in September, the Japanese Foreign Ministry said it was "vital that free and fair elections be held" and said that it intended to closely follow developments in Burma." Official contact between the two governments effectively ended and Japanese businessmen were discouraged from visiting the country. Japan's 19 aid projects, which had already been hit by financial problems and by the political unrest, swiftly ground to a halt. Along with the US and West European countries, the Japanese ambassador declined to attend Burma's independence day celebrations at the beginning of January.

From this point onward, opinions vary as to how Japan came to recognize the Saw Maung regime on 17 February. The official version is that recognition was a purely legalistic, technical matter. Only two conditions have to be fulfilled: that the new government has effective control of the country and that it is observing international laws. The Japanese Ambassador to Rangoon, Hiroshi Ohtaka, reported in mid-February that both conditions had been met, said a Foreign Ministry official, and that therefore contacts with the government could resume.

FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW, 16 March, 1989

**SEN. MOYNIHAN URGES THAT BURMA  
BE BROUGHT BEFORE U.N. HUMAN  
RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Sen. Daniel Patarick Moynihan (D. -N.Y.), along with a bipartisan group of colleagues, today called upon the United States delegation to the United Nations Human Rights Commission to raise the issue of repression of human rights in Burma when the Commission convenes in Geneva on January 30.

"Bringing up the case of Burma at the Human Rights Commission would ensure that the Burmese military cannot continue to behave as it has without feeling the world's condemnation," Sen. Moynihan said. "So massive a violation of the human rights of a people who have such faith in American democracy should not be forgotten."

On August 11, 1988, the Senate unanimously approved a resolution, introduced by Sen. Moynihan, that condemned the military government of Burma for its continuing human rights violations. In September, the State Department suspended all U.S. assistance to Burma.

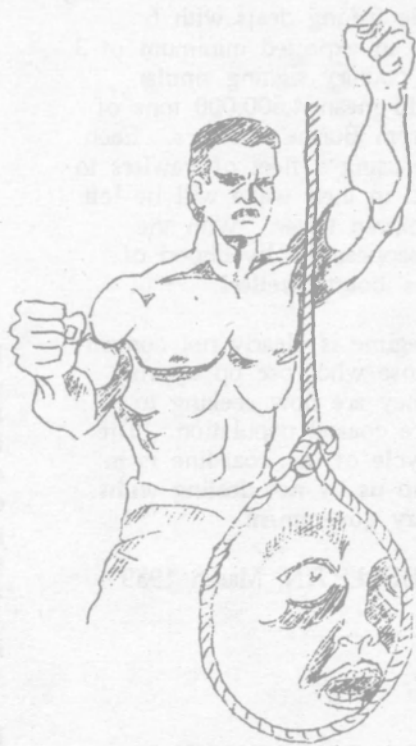
Last summer, the Burmese military violently suppressed pro-democracy demonstrations. Over 3,000 civilians were killed by troops, who fired into crowds with machine guns, recoilless rifles, and mortars. Over 6,000 civilians, escaping from the violence, have fled to the Thai/Burmese border.

For the past 40 years, the Burmese military has waged a civil war against various ethnic minority insurgent groups who control Burma's frontiers. In an August 1988 report, Amnesty International found evidence of "a consistent pattern of unlawful killing and ill-treatment of members of Burma's ethnic minorities by security forces."

Press Release by Sen. Moynihan's office,  
January 26, 1989

The ABSDF is aware and appreciative of the work which Sen. Moynihan and friends from other countries have done to raise the issue of Burma at the UN Human Rights Commission meeting. The result of these efforts was a call by the Human Rights Commission on the Burmese government to ensure freedom for its people. This has encouraged us a lot.

However, continued pressure is needed. Saw Maung and the military will not give in to the wishes of the people easily. International pressure stills plays a significant role. We urge all of you to continue writing letters, sending cables and carrying out other campaigns for human rights in our country.



**It is time for us to raise  
the voice of conscience.**

**No one of us can do everything--  
but each of us can do something**



## SUPPORTIVE ACTIONS

..., Feb., 1989

Dear Minister,

We are a group of Japanese citizens who interested in the Burmese people's strong desire for democracy. As you have already noticed Burma's military government had killed thousands of people during and after the coup in last year. This was a terrible violation of universal declaration of human rights and we, peace lovers, will never forget such an event of this world.

Recent events in Burma and its relation with Thailand, however, led us to believe that it is completely unreasonable and unfair for the true democracy developments in Burma. Though both governments denied, the newspapers reported that several Burmese students were arrested after their return following your program and tortured in the prisons. We cannot understand why your government work together in suppressing the pro-democracy people of Burma.

We condemn all your activities against the will of Burmese people including those students who are taking refuge near your border. For us to believe your contribution of world peace and democracy:

(a) *We demand your kind help for Burmese students near the border.*

(b) *We demand your government to review all the cases you had agreed with the Burmese military government who is well-known for killing thousands of innocent people.*

Hoping for your achievement for world peace and true democracy,

Sign:

This is a post card prepared by Japanese friends and sent to A.C.M. Siddhi Savestila, Minister for Foreign Affairs in Thailand. It was made in response to our call for actions protesting the repatriation of Burmese students by force and protesting economic involvement of Thai companies in Burma. This is a very effective way to make your voice heard. We hope that friends in other countries will follow this creative and effective example.

A similar post card was also prepared for Saw Maung. It says in part:

"We are a group of Japanese citizens who are interested in the Burmese people's strong desire for democracy. We welcome your pledge to sponsor elections in the near future and look upon it with fresh hope for a development of genuine democracy in Burma.

Recent events in Burma under your administration, however, lead us to believe otherwise; the brutal killings of unarmed students and civilians, the non-stop violations of fundamental human rights.

We strongly condemn the military's activities ignoring the Burmese desire for democracy. For us to keep our faith in your government:

a) We demand justice, press-freedom, withdrawal of curfew, termination of war and military threats to the students at the border, immediate end of torture and executions in the prisons of Burma, and stop immediately your continuing lawless suppressions of the citizens.

b) We demand that all internationally recognized political prisoners in your prisons must be released immediately."

Burma, after 11 pm  
a cemetery,  
No people, only  
the dogs howling.

After midnight, chances  
are  
becoming porters,  
Instead of free men  
if you go out.

Military spies, are  
everywhere

that husbands and  
wives,  
Cannot sleep in peace  
disturbed by knocks.

Midnight shouts,  
and dawn knockings  
for strangers and guests,  
Make small babies cry  
while elders fume.

There are rampant  
shortages

even of simple things,  
They'd stripped the  
people  
and the country's next  
for the raping.

What in the hell, please  
tell me  
the government's doing,  
Are they beasts with  
souls  
of selfish greed?

Nevertheless,  
the beasts have taught  
even young children,  
To cry out aloud  
with clenched fists  
raised  
"Doh Ay-yei, Doy Ay-  
yei"  
(Our Cause, Our Cause)

Yan Ko Naing

## CALL TO ACTION

The issues which presently face the struggle of the Burmese people for democracy and full human rights are many, and we the students and working people of Burma are committed to confronting these issues until we have realized our goal of establishing a Burma which truly represents the dreams of the Burmese people.

However, we know that international support is an important part of this struggle, and can help us achieve our goal more quickly. We therefore suggest the following issues which international friends can take action on as a sign of solidarity with the people of Burma.

1) Campaigns should be organized to protest the continued arrest of students and working people inside Burma who take a stand for democracy. These people are being held without trial, and many of them are tortured daily and some perhaps have been executed.

2) Letters to support the call of the Burmese people for an interim government which can help pave the way for truly free and democratic elections. The Saw Maung government can not represent the people nor can they organize free and fair elections since they came to power against the will of the people and through much brutal bloodshed.

3) Organize campaigns to support the call of the Burmese people to end economic support to the Saw Maung government and the end to the exploitation of our natural resources (i.e. marine life and teak forests). Economic involvement in Burma, especially by Thailand and Japan, have simply strengthened Saw Maung and his military, and given them more confidence in their suppression of popular dissent. If this economic involvement continues, the struggle for justice in our country will become even more bloody, and many more innocent people will have to die. The people of

Thailand and Japan especially must take action on this issue.

4) Political isolation of the Saw Maung government helps to weaken his iron-fisted rule over the people, and encourages an atmosphere in which negotiations can take place and an interim government established. The United States, India, Britain, France, Italy and West Germany still have not recognized this government, and we encourage them to continue their boycott. Other countries should be encouraged to withdraw recognition in the light of renewed arrests of student leaders and increased military attacks against minority villages.

5) Letters and cables should be sent to the Thai government urging them not to arrest and repatriate students back to Burma against their will. There is no guarantee that repatriated students will be safe. In fact, we receive many messages from family and friends informing us that many students who were repatriated are under continual surveillance, and many have disappeared. Life is too precious to use as a political tool. We will go back to our homes when it is truly safe, but until then it is against our human rights to force us back into a situation in which we face torture and death.

Send letters to:

General Saw Maung  
Chairman, SLORC  
Rangoon, Burma

## HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATED

(On March 22, Sandar Thwin, a Burmese student living in Mae Sot Thailand, was raped by three men. She has been threatened not to press charges against them. Following is the story as she related it to "DAWN".)

My name is Sandar Thwin. I am 24 years old and am a final year law student in Rangoon University. My husband's name is Win Myint Aung and he is a geologist in the Technical Services Corporation, Rangoon. We have a child whose name is Ko Ko Aung and he is 5 years old.

On 22nd March 1989, we left our house on foot about 4:30 pm and went to the house of some other Burmese students for a discussion about our student affairs. We had a little time to spend, so we went and visited U Maung Maung Than's house. Some other student leaders arrived there, so we held our meeting there. After discussion, we went back to our house on foot at about 7:00 pm. About 7:15 pm, as we were walking home, we met three men whom we thought were policemen. They asked to see our passports. Later we found out that they were Mana Kum-ngarn, a police officer, Thirawat Charn-Prasert, a 26 year old Muslim, and Thaweesak Ruangwat, a 22 year-old Thai man.

Thirawat could speak Burmese well so we explained to him that we were Burmese students and we did not have a passport. My husband told him that we were returning from a student's meeting and I was his wife and also a student. But Thirawat said that they would arrest us.

Then they took us to the police check point. At the police check point, Thirawat and Mana took Myint Than Htu into a small room and asked him, "What is the relationship between the other man and the woman?" Myint Than Htu replied that we were married and were also students. A short time later Thirawat and Thaweesak took my husband and Myint Than Htu to the restroom. When they entered the restroom, Thirawat locked the door. Then Thirawat asked me who could guarantee that we were Burmese students. I replied that I had a friend whose name is Ayutbye and that he lives near the police check point. Thirawat asked me to take him to Ayutbye's house.

While we were talking, Mana and Thaweesak left the police check point by motorcycle. Thirawat then took my by motorcycle past Ayutbye's house. I told him to stop, but he did not, and drove even

faster. I became afraid and suspected that he had some bad plan, so I asked him to stop. He refused. Then I knew what they planned so I decided to jump off the motorcycle. I closed my eyes and jumped.

After that I did not know anything for awhile. When I came to, I felt painful all over my body. I could not understand where I was or how I got there, but I was now in the Golden Key bungalow.

At the bungalow, Thirawat violated me first and then Mana. Before Thaweesak violated me, I heard someone knocking at the door and Thirawat came in. They talked in Thai so I could not understand. Then Thirawat told me that they would send me back to my house. Thirawat drove the motorcycle and I sat in the middle with Thaweesak behind me. At that time, I did not see Mana.

They took me to the middle of a rice paddy field and I started crying and requested that they take me back to my husband. They did not listen and they threw me violently down in the paddy field. In the paddy field, Thaweesak violated me first and then Thirawat did me again.

At last, they took me to the police check point, I did not see my husband there, so I went back to my house by public vehicle as I could not walk.

When I arrived in my house, I did not see my husband, so I was worried and very distraught. I was crying hard and all the students asked me what happened, but I did not want to tell them about my experience as I was too ashamed.

About 15 minutes later, my husband and his friend came back to the house and my husband asked me what had happened. When I saw my husband, I could not control my crying, and then my husband and the students all understood what had happened to me. They were very angry and decided to go to the police stations and take revenge for me.

At that time, three police cars arrived at our house and asked us what had happened. My husband and Myint Than Htu explained everything to them.

At present, because my life is being threatened in many ways, I dare not go anywhere, and only hide in my house. After this case is finished, what shall I do?

I want your dream as the sun...