

DAWN

NEWS BULLETIN

SEPTEMBER 1989

NO. 17



BURMA
NOT FOR SALE!
By Burmese People _____



DAWN

NEWS BULLETIN

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ALL BURMA STUDENTS' DEMOCRATIC FRONT

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THE DAY IN BURMESE HISTORY WHEN MILITARY MIGHT ATTACKED HUMAN RIGHTS

September 18, 1989 marks the first anniversary of the military coup which attempted to crush the spirit of the Burmese people as they called out for justice, human rights and democracy. We say "attempted", because the yearning for freedom and participation lives within the hearts of all people, and it can never be crushed. It can only be subdued for a short while. Today, even though thousands of people have been killed, thousands of others languish in prisons, opposition parties face harrasements, and thousands of young Burmese live in exile, that spirit crying out for freedom is still very much alive. During these days, we look back to the bloody days of September and are challenged once again to commit ourselves to the struggle for justice and human rights. We call on friends around the world to open their ears to this cry from Burma, not just for the sake of the Burmese people, but for the sake of the world. If the powers of peace and justice can finally unite, and gain the courage to act creatively, we can win against the forces of oppression, and then the world will truly become a better and more just community.

"On the evening of September 18, when the military declared a coup, they also declared a curfew. We ignored the curfew and continued our demonstrations. That night, the police killed three of our friends. We knew then that the killing was going to start.

"We continued our demonstration on the 19th and the army moved in with heavy weapons and began shooting at the people. Eighty seven people were killed on that one day!"

From VOICES FROM THE JUNGLE

"DAWN", PO Box 1352., Bangkok 10500, Thailand

SEPTEMBER 18,1989 PRESS RELEASE

A DAY FOR RENEWED COMMITMENT

Students of the ABSDF living in camps along the Thai/Burma border commemorated the first-year anniversary of the Saw Maung military coup which shattered the dreams of the Burmese people for democracy. The student banner, the Fighting Peacock, was lowered to half mast as a symbol of mourning and the students paid their respect to all those who gave their lives during the democratic uprising. During the ceremony, a letter concerning the violations of the human rights of the Burmese people by the military regime was signed by all the students. This letter will be sent to Amnesty International.

The students then unanimously demanded:

1. The release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, U Tin Oo, the two most popular leaders of the National League for Democracy, as well as all other political prisoners.

2. The end of all arrests of opposition leaders and student activists.

3. An immediate end to the brutal and inhuman torture of political prisoners.

4. The end of martial law.

5. A guarantee of the basic democratic rights such as freedom of speech, freedom of assembly and freedom of the press.

6. That the international community apply political and economic pressure on the military regime in order to push for the restoration of genuine democracy in Burma and internal peace and national reconciliation.

All of the students are determined to continue their struggle for democracy despite the harsh life in the jungle. Pro-democracy slogans closed the ceremony.

HEADLINES FROM THE NEWS - SEPTEMBER 18.1988

"EXPLOSIONS IN RANGOON AFTER ARMY STAGES COUP"

"ANOTHER NE WIN MAN NOW IN CHARGE"

"BURMESE ARMY RESUME KILLINGS"

"MASSACRE IN BURMA"

"BURMESE ARMY CLEARS CENTRES OF REVOLT"

"RANGOON REGIME'S ROAD TO VIOLENCE MAY BE SUICIDAL"

"LAST GASP OR END OF DEMOCRACY FOR THE BURMESE?"

ABSDF EDITORIAL

The 18th of September is the day on which the dreams of the Burmese people for democracy were shattered by a military coup. It has now been one year since the military regime seized state power at gun-point. With sorrow in our hearts, and with tears in our eyes, we can still hear the voices of our comrade students, mourning in pain and demanding democracy. We can still see clearly in our memories, the young students in green longyi, hoisting the student banner, the Fighting Peacock, as they were cut down by the bullets of the brutal military.

Looking back at this year, the political developments in Burma seem anything but hopeful. The military regime has continued to abuse the human rights of the people, and the opposition parties and students activists inside Burma have continued to be suppressed. Along the border, the military regime has launched severe military campaigns against students camps and the ethnic minority territories. As our democratic movement progresses at a very slow pace, the ghost of fascism rapidly and steadily grows bigger and bigger. Now the military dictators bitterly oppress any dissident oppositionists who dare to criticize them.

Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo have been placed under a one-year house arrest. Nearly all the NLD (National League for Democracy) offices have been closed down and student leaders Min Ko Naing, Nyo Tun and Ko Ko Gyi have been arrested. Sources say that at least 2,000 dissidents are now in detention. They are subjected to various inhuman tortures that include beatings, cigarette burns, electric shock, standing in knee-deep water for long hours, beating while hung upside down from the ceiling, rolling the shins with batons and confinement in small cells etc. Recently it has become known that 500 political prisoners were taken to combat zones where the army is fighting ethnic minority groups, and there they were forced to serve as porters. They were forced to carry very heavy loads of arms, ammunition and food for the army. Those who could not carry their loads were beaten and kicked. They were usually half-starved. Some of them died along the way.

Once all the voices of the opposition are silenced, the Saw Maung regime will hold elections. These elections will be like a runner in a race who runs

without competition. How can we believe that free and fair elections are a possibility under these conditions. There are elections, and then there are farces posing as elections. Ne Win is very clever and has plenty of experience in making use of the second type of election.

Following the 1974 constitutional plot to gain absolute power, the Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP) became the only legal political party in the country. Since then, elections (actually selections) have been held in 1974, 1978, 1982 and 1986. Every election has proven Ne Win's ability to play dirty. Only one candidate is provided for the people's choice, and these candidates are carefully selected by the BSPP Central Committee members. Two ballot boxes are provided for voting. The white box is for votes agreeing to the selected candidate, and a black box is for a no vote. The black box is usually hidden in a back corner of the room, and even if voters do find it and register their votes as a no, the black-colored votes quickly change to white when the boxes are taken to the BSPP center. These centers are given the responsibility of seeing to it that at least 75% of the votes are positive for the selected candidate. This means that every candidate selected by the BSPP becomes a member of the Parliament without the true consent of the people. Through this process, the BSPP has now only abused the work "socialist", but has also driven Burma to ruin during the past 27 years.

Now they are once again using their games to abuse the word "democracy". The democracy they are advertising to the world is not democracy for the people, but for their own National Unity Party, and any other political party which accepts the influence of the military. The events of the past year suggest that now they are trying to develop the "Burmese Way to Democracy", which is only their policy for keeping total control.

Now let us look briefly at the development of the democratic forces along the border. What have we been able to accomplish during the past year?

We formed the All Burma Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF) on the 1st of November, 1988. Then we joined with the ethnic revolutionary forces under the umbrella of the Democratic Alliance of

Burma (DAB). Now there are about 3,000 students in the Karen, Karenni and Mon areas, 1,500 in the Kachin area and over 1,000 students along the India/Bangladesh border. All of these students are under the banner and leadership of the ABSDF and taking active part in the implementation of the programs of the ABSDF such as the Democratic Educational Movement, Grass-root Level Democratic Movement, and the Rural Development Program. We have already opened a Jungle University in Thay Bow Boe camp where some of the students are studying political science, English, Thai and others are attending basic medical training. The aim of the educational movement is to upgrade the political ideology and educational level of students and to implement a form of democratic education. After evaluation, the program will be extended to all the people living in the areas controlled by the ethnic minority groups.

We regularly publish 'DAWN' news bulletin in English every 15 days, and "Voice of the Peacock" news in Burmese every month as part of the Democratic Education Movement. Now many of the students are going to villages and doing organizing work by distributing the news bulletins, explaining the aims and objectives, political lines and the stand of ABSDF. They also exchange the views on the analysis of the political situation in Burma and the rule of the people in the democratic movement with the villagers in small group discussions. We serve the people by helping in their daily work, providing medical care for the sick and teaching their children. We intend to intensify this work in the future when we receive enough financial assistance.

We have built up solidarity with supporters of the

Burmese struggle, and continue to seek for international political and economic pressure on the military regime.

The ABSDF has often called on all democratic countries not to recognize the military regime and to withhold all economic aid and trade relations.

What is the importance of this economic blockade? At the time of the military coup, the regime had only about \$3 million in foreign currency. It was impossible for them to continue the civil war and the oppression against the dissidents. Why now have they been able to attack the ethnic minorities and student camps along the border with such ferocity? They occasionally fire more than 1000 artillery shells per day into the camps. Each shell costs approximately 7,000 to 8,000 baht. This means that they spend close to 7 million baht per day only on artillery shells. Where does all of this money come from?

It is clear that there are some countries who are more interested in their own economic benefits than in democracy, peace and human rights for the people.

We hate war, terrorism and any kind of violence. We want to solve the political problems through political means, but the non-violent movement is not powerful when it is used only by one country. It becomes powerful only when it becomes a world-wide movement of people who are courageous enough and willing enough to tackle the issues which spring from their own country. This is the only way international solidarity for peace and justice can truly grow.

The ABSDF wishes to express sympathy to the family of Nai Nonla Raman, vice president of the New Mon State Party. Nai Nonla is one of the best known Mon guerrilla fighters. He died of a heart attack while addressing a ceremony to mark the anniversary of the pro-democracy uprising in Burma on August 8. He will be missed by many friends including the ABSDF students.



ECONOMIC TURBULANCE

THIS CIVIL WAR MUST END

Every week I read in the newspaper about new economic concessions the Saw Maung regime is selling to other countries such as Thailand, Japan, South Korea, Malaysia etc.

We must not forget that the Saw Maung regime killed thousands of unarmed students, working people and monks who were demanding democracy in Burma. He came to power through a military coup on September 18, 1989--not from the will of the people.

A "Far Eastern Economic Review" article on March 13, 1989 stated that Burma had only about US\$ 10 million left in its coffers. Some sources suggested that the amount was even less.

Saw Maung was in deep trouble due to the bad national budget at that time. With only this small amount of money available, he could not continue his oppressive manipulation over the Burmese students and people, nor could he continue his fight against the ethnic minority groups along the borders. At that time, most foreign countries also were condemning his bloody crushing of the people's democratic movement, and had cut off their economic support of him.

But then Thailand started to make contacts with Saw Maung to buy concessions in logging and fishing. This happened after the Thai Supreme Commander General Chavalit met Saw Maung and called him a "dear brother" in December of last year.

Shortly after that visit, the Saw Maung government granted 21 Thai timber concessions to 17 Thai companies for logging in the Burma ethnic areas ("Nation", March 19, 1989). On the 8th and 17th of March, the "Nation" reported that Burma was granting fishing concessions to four Thai companies, as well as to four companies from other countries. According to the report, the Thai firms will pay Burma an annual US\$ 800 per ton of fish caught.

At the 35th press conference given by the Information Committee of the Union of Burma in Rangoon on April 19, 1989, a government spokesman said that, the government received over US\$ 17 million as deposits for fishing licenses, and

expected to earn more as and when fishing works progressed.

On July 21, 1989, the Burmese newspaper, "The Working People's Daily" reported that 77 foreign companies attended the competitive bidding of the Myanmar Timber Enterprise. Eleven of the companies were from Thailand, 21 from European countries, 17 from Japan, 10 from Hong Kong, 13 from Singapore, 2 from South Korea and three from India. Altogether 2.672 million US dollars were realized from the sale of teak logs on that day.

On March 15, 1989, the "Bangkok Post" reported that "Burma has sold 184 lots of jade worth US\$ 5.4 million during the 26th Gems, Jade and Pearl Emporium which began March 6 to 14. Hong Kong's Hunt Tat gold and silver jewelry company has been the biggest buyer in this years auction".

On March 13, 1989, the Japanese government announced that they would extend diplomatic recognition to the Saw Maung regime, and suddenly resumed its aid to Burma. This Japanese aid to Burma may amount to as much as US\$ 800 million. The Japan Burma Association led by Mrs. Yoshiko Otaka who is a member of the Lower House of Parliament and wife of the Japanese ambassador in Burma has been involved with the Saw Maung regime as well. About 120 Japanese companies and aid projects have already become involved with Saw Maung according to Burmese sources in Japan.

South Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan and other countries have also made many business contracts with the Saw Maung regime. Now you can see that the money-hungry Saw Maung government has received much foreign currency from selfish countries, and it is this money which has refilled the coffers of the military.

It is with this money that the Saw Maung military has been able to occupy 5 Karen camps since the end of 1988. Heavy fighting continues over the strategic camps of Wan Kha and Pha Lu. On some days the Burmese troops shoot 2000 to 3000 artillery shells into the camps. Each shell costs at least US\$ 100. It is clear that Saw Maung now has money to burn.

Inside Burma, how has all of this foreign money helped the people? Has the economy improved?

Now almost all necessities such as fish, rice, and oil, have become much more expensive than before the coup. Transportation costs have also gone up. Government workers have been given a salary increase, but the common people can not cope with the rapid inflation. The government, however, can always print more and more money for their own use.

How about politics? Has the regime allowed the political parties to organize the people? The Saw Maung regime has now arrested at least 1000 political members of the National League for Democracy Party, and have placed Aung San Suu Kyi and U Tin Oo under a one-year house arrest. Mr. Aung Lwin who is the information officer of the NLD has also been detained. Three student leaders including Nyo Tun and Zaw Zaw Aung of the All Burma Federation of Students' Union were arrested according to a "Bangkok Post" article of June 29th. A future election, even an unjust one, seems impossible to us now.

I would like to ask you some questions.

When will this civil war end?

When will Saw Maung show an interest in peace? When will the Burmese people get free and fair elections and true democracy?

Can you give us an answer to these questions?

These answers depend, to a large degree, on the business contracts between Saw Maung and the foreign governments and companies. These countries and companies should be aware that they are supporting Saw Maung in his oppression of the Burmese students, working people and ethnic minorities.

I would like to say to these countries and companies, "Get out of our waters and our forests until we have achieved democracy and human rights. Do this if you have any concern for human rights and justice."

To all friends around the world, we need your help to pressure governments and private companies to leave our precious resources alone. You can do this as it is your democratic right. Please stand with the Burmese people in their just struggle.

Burma. Singapore Firm in Joint Venture

"Burma, which shunned foreign involvement in its economy for more than a quarter of a century, yesterday announced a joint manufacturing venture with a private foreign company.

The new company, Mynmar-Singapore International Limited, was formed August 18 and has a authorized capital of 50 million Burmese kyats.

It is the first manufacturing joint venture announced between the new Burmese government and a private foreign firm.

The new trading company will manufacture and market construction and electrical goods, stationery, and printing and photographic goods.

Its 5,000 shares will be divided equally between the Singaporean company SKS Marketing Limited and Burma's military government.

Some foreign governments including the United States and members of the European Economic Community cut their financial assistance in protest to the military crushing of the democratic uprising last year, but others, mainly Asian countries, have cooperated with the new rulers.

NATION
August 20, 1989



LET IT BE KNOWN
THAT INJUSTICE
STOPS HERE!



THE ENVIRONMENT

Statement by the Karen National Union (KNU)
June 26, 1989

WAR AND IVORY IN MODERN BURMA

In ancient times, Burmese armies used elephants to carry their troops into battle with other nations. Today, Burma kills elephants in order to finance its war with other nations of the country and political dissidents.

We, the Karen, are an indigenous tribal people of Southeast Asia. Millions of us live in Burma, in cities, in valley towns, and in forest villages. We respect the natural environment, due to beliefs passed down to us from our ancestors. Unfortunately in Burma our forest environment is besieged by the troops of the military dictatorship of Ne Win and Saw Maung. This regime, which does not hesitate to kill unarmed students, protestors and tribes people, is on a rampage to gain control of our forest home as well as our trees. An appalling feature of their campaign is their greedy trade in endangered species. They care about wildlife even less than about human rights, which is to say not at all. Tiger and leopard skins and tortoise shell products have been dealt in openly.

In contrast, even within the stresses of a frontier war, the KNU has outlawed since 1978 the hunting of hornbills, elephants and rhinoceros. Some of Asia's last examples of endangered species thrive in our liberated zone, Kawthoolei, including tigers, tapirs, rhinoceros, wild ox, leopards, hornbills, peacocks and wild elephants.

The Karen people are now particularly concerned with the elephants. Asian elephant populations during the last part of the 20th Century has dwindled even more than the African elephants, whose plight is now arousing world attention. The Asian elephant is in immediate danger of extinction, and ivory from Asian elephants is supposed to be banned, although the trade continues in reality.

To us Karen, elephants are "man's best friend". We befriend and train elephants. We do not hunt them to kill and eat and take ivory. We train them to help us in our work, and treat them with kindness and respect. They are like the family members. For centuries they have hauled logs, in non-intensive and non-destructive forestry that is a

contrast to the current situation with bulldozers creating havoc and erosion throughout our forests. The Burmese Army way is to bulldoze roads and kill our valued elephants. In the colonial period, British poet Kipling wrote "Elephants a-pilin' teak...where the silence hung so heavy you was half afraid to speak....". But now our forests are full of the destructive noise of chainsaws, bulldozers and logging trucks, taking our timber to profit the regime. It is also full of the sound of Burmese heavy artillery fire as they fight our Karen resistance, pounding the forest to splinters in an effort to claim and sell it.

The Burmese Army is killing our elephants. As recently as April 1988, the BANGKOK POST quoted a tribal elephant tamer that "One Karen guerilla-controlled jungle in Burma, opposite Mae Sot District, literally abounds in wild elephants." This is the very area that has been subjected to a massive Burmese Army offensive from January 1989 to the present. It is no coincidence that in its efforts to get foreign exchange, the Burmese government recently announced sales of \$25,000 US worth of ivory to foreign firms, which was from the death of elephants in the war zone. They use the foreign exchange gained to buy ammunition to kill our people.

The Burmese Army uses guns to invade Karen territory and rob ivory. It sells the ivory to get dollars to buy more guns. It uses the guns to invade Karen territory to rob our timber. It sells the timber to buy more guns.

The end result?

No more forests
No more elephants
No more Karen nation
No more political opposition
Many more guns for the Burmese for more atrocities.

We appeal to the whole world to stop the killing, enforce trade restrictions, embargoes, sanctions against the Burmese ivory trade.

WE PLEDGE THAT WHEN DEMOCRACY AND PEACE FINALLY COME TO BURMA, WE KARENS WILL BE THE FIRST TO WORK FOR THE SURVIVAL OF THE BELOVED ELEPHANTS AND OTHER ENDANGERED SPECIES AND PROMOTE THE PROTECTION OF THE TROPICAL FOREST ENVIRONMENT.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

The Burmese Army must be reformed. Its real duty is to protect the people of the country but instead of this, for 27 years it has been working as the watchdog of a handful of military officers. Since the student massacre of July 7th, 1962, right until June 19th of this year, the army has been killing unarmed civilians.

There can be no argument in favor of keeping the Army as it stands. The soldiers should all be allowed to return home, as is their wish. The people will be in no danger if the Saw Maung army is disbanded. All their problems can be solved politically.

We believe in the setting up of a federal system of government, under which each state will have their own army. This way no single army general will be able to gain control of the whole country. The current military regime, desperate to hold on to power, is spreading propaganda that we wish to "split" the country. This is completely untrue. The ethnic groups within the DAB want to stay in the future federal union. There will be no split. The country will become more unified and secure.

Only once the so-called "Myanma Army" has been completely reorganized, and a federal system of government has been set up to ensure full democratic rights for the people of Burma will peace come to the country.

THE ALLIANCE BULLETIN
July 1989



Why do we stay in the jungle where we have to face so many hardships? Before we left our homes and our schools inside Burma, we already knew that we would face these hardships. In all truth, we are facing a thousand and one problems -- not enough food, medicines, clothing etc. We have been unable to solve all these problems despite help from friends around the world.

However, we never care that the food, medicine and clothing are insufficient. Our main mission is to end the rule of the military government and to save the lives of the Burmese people. Then we must establish an interim government and build up democracy in Burma.

We are not concerned about our own welfare, but think about the good of the entire people in the Union of Burma.

If our friends truly love the Burmese people, they must be willing to work together with us in harmony rather than work in their own way with their own plan. The Burmese government is now getting much economic and political help from other countries. Together we must find some way to stop this. We can only do it by working together.



SUPPORT FROM FRIENDS

PRESS STATEMENT BY SENATOR JEAN JENKINS

Australia, July 25, 1989

"WA Democrat Senator Jean Jenkins today welcomed a statement of "Concern and regret": issued by Foreign Affairs and Trade Minister Senator Gareth Evans over detention by the Burmese Government of Opposition leaders.

The leader of the National League for Democracy, Aung San Suu Kyi and its chairman, General Un U were placed under house arrest on 21 July.

Senator Jenkins said she was in constant touch with members of Perth's strong Burmese community who had already expressed concern about their country's ability to hold effective general elections by May, 1990 as planned by the military regime of Burma (now officially called "Myanmar).

"If Australia wishes to be seen as a champion of democracy in the region, I would expect stronger condemnation of the concept of locking up one's political rivals," Senator Jenkins said.

"It is to be hoped that Senator Evans will learn from the mistakes made over the Fiji take-over and let the world know that Australians are not really so half-hearted over human rights and democratic freedoms.

"Also, while Prime Minister Hawke is revelling in his new-found "Green" mantle, he and Senator Evans should make a careful examination of the rape of Burma's teak forests and fisheries by fast-buck merchants who may include Australians," Senator Jenkins said.

"What is happening in Burma is one of the great tragedies of our time--a disaster for both its people and the environment. Yet, as with the Pol Pot regime, our Government is blandly accepting it and our media are trying to pretend nothing is amiss.

"I feel quite ill when I walk around Parliament House and see fittings crafted out of Burmese teak--the gift of a wicked and corrupt regime--which may soon be a souvenir of Burma's magnificent forests.

"I urge all Australians to boycott the purchase of any hardwood products labelled "Made in Thailand", as they are products of deforestation in Thailand, Burma and Indochina," Senator Jenkins said.

On August 8, 1989, the Youth Council of the National Council of Churches, Japan held a gathering to support human rights in Burma and also accused the Japanese Official Development Assistance (ODA) program and other companies which have invaded Burma.

A statement was made urging the Japanese government to:

1. Freeze economic assistance until free and fair elections have been held and to restrict activities of companies such as making trucks which will be used by the army, or paying for logging/fishing concessions which help the Burmese military buy weapons.
2. Recognize the ABSDF as the leader of the Burmese students on the border and express humanitarian concerns for their lives.
3. Express concern for the freedom of speech, publishing, and public gatherings, and especially protest to the Burmese government about the house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi and urge the release of all political detainees.

ACTIONS

1) Write to your government, urging them to support a boycott of all hardwood products which originate in Burma as Senator Jean Jenkins of Australia has suggested.

2) Write to: Hino Motors Co. Ltd, Nihonbashi 1-7-17, Chuoku, Tokyo, Japan. Urge them to stop exporting truck parts to Burma which are likely to be used by the army.

United States Committed to Championing Burmese Rights

(From the text of Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Richard Schifter's testimony before the House Panel.)

"The United States response, following the bloody suppression of the demonstrations last year was to suspend all economic and military assistance to Burma. We have repeatedly expressed our concerns about human rights violations in Burma directly to the Burmese authorities and also in our public statements on the subject.

As in so many other of our actions dealing with human rights internationally, it is important that other nations with some ability to influence the course of events join us in our efforts. We have been pleased to note that a few other democracies have joined us in our expressions of concern about Burmese human rights violations. Earlier this year, the United Nations Human Rights Commission approved a mildly worded resolution, encouraging the Burmese Government to take the necessary measures to assure human rights and fundamental freedoms of the people of Burma.

Aside from our concern about continued human rights violations in Burma, we have been mindful of the plight of Burmese students who have taken temporary refuge in Thailand and near the Thai-Burmese border. We support continued timely humanitarian assistance to ease their stay. Private voluntary organizations are attempting to meet the needs. We believe that those efforts deserve backing and are exploring ways to assist in this effort. Items such as malaria pills, mosquito netting and food remain in short supply.

We are also committed to continued facilitation of travel to the United States of those Burmese who meet the criteria for refugee or parolee status. A number of Burmese have arrived in the United States under parole.

We are pledged, Mr. Chairman, to continue our humanitarian efforts on behalf of refugees from Burma. Beyond that, we are committed to take all the measures we can, to remind the Burmese authorities of internationally recognized human rights standards to urge other democracies to join us in this effort.

September 13, 1989

STATEMENT BY MR. STEN ANDERSSON, SWEDISH MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, ON THE SITUATION IN BURMA

August 8, 1989

The military regime in Burma has placed Aung San Suu Kyi, the leader of the Burmese opposition, and her family under house arrest. Her only crime appears to be that she enjoys considerable popular support. Another prominent opposition leader, Mr. Tin U, has also been placed under house arrest and thousands of others who oppose the Burmese government have been detained as well. These steps are obviously aimed at crushing the opposition before the general elections, which the regime has promised will be held by May 1990. **A prerequisite for general elections is that the opposition must be permitted to work freely and without constraints.**

ONE YEAR LATER, BURMA STILL UNDER IRON RULE

The shocked world has condemned the Burmese government. Countries have boycotted the bully boys in green by suspending or cutting off all forms of aid to the country. But for some, it's business as usual, and never mind the suffering and degradation the Burmese people have had to endure.

Conditions in Burma are far from improving. If anything, they have become much worse. Rice, the staple food, today costs 22 to 25 kyats a *pyi* (eight measures from a condensed milk tin) compared to 16 kyats last year and 8 kyats before the uprising. A US dollar fetches 80 kyats on the black market, compared to an official rate of 7 kyats to the dollar.

Ne Win, 77, the architect of repression in Burma since his coup in 1962, and his cohorts have lorded it over the Burmese people for 27 years by use of the iron fist. They probably have not had enough, but the people certainly have. At present, though, it seems that it will be a while before they will be made to realize this.

(A portion of an editorial from THE NATION newspaper, September 18, 1989.)

HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES

SAW MAUNG USES "LAW" TO RECRUIT PORTERS

Two porters who escaped from the Saw Maung Army at Wangkha revealed to Karen officers that they had been sentenced to labour under Suspect Act 54, Section A.

Ko Kan Myint, aged 32, a labourer with 3 children from Thingankyun in Rangoon, was picked up while walking in the street by police, then sent to Insein Prison, where he was "sentenced" under Act 54, Section A, to work at the border as a porter.

Ko Min Htwe, aged 26, another labourer with 3 children from Hlaing in Rangoon, said local authorities and policemen came to his house on the pretext of conducting a census. He was summoned to the police station, then sent to Insein where he was sentenced under the same act.

THE ALLIANCE BULLETIN
July 1989

RANGOON REGIME MISUSES UNICEF RELIEF SUPPLIES

Arakan and Muslim Liberation Army troops operating in the Mergui and Tavoy areas captured about 300,000 Baht worth of medicines from Burmese Army troops in February of this year. The packaging of the medicine showed that it came from UNICEF, which had donated the medicines last year to the Rangoon regime because of a shortage at Rangoon General Hospital following the democracy uprisings.

The military regime has clearly been hoarding the medicine to use for its troops, instead of to treat the civilian population.

ALL BURMA MUSLIM UNION
news bulletin



Some of the medicines captured by Arakan and Muslim Liberation Army troops from the Burmese Army. These medicines were donated to help suffering civilians, not the military!

VOICES FROM THE JUNGLE

September 21, 1989

As the dry season approaches, the Burmese military is preparing to launch heavy attacks against the student camps on the border. Already the camps in Mae Hong Son area have been taken over, and the students are now scattered throughout the jungle areas. Wan Kha and Phalu are presently under attack, and the fighting is creating serious dangers for the students.

Word has now been received that Burmese military columns are starting to advance on the Three Pagodas and Nat Ein Htaung areas.

Most of the students are unarmed, and defense of the camps is very difficult. Although the students attempted to cry out for democracy nonviolently, the Burmese military continues to use heavy weapons against us, attempting to reach their goal of eliminating the opposition by the end of this year.

At the same time, the Thai government is putting pressure against the students in an attempt to force them back into Burma. All students are being moved out of the Mae Sot area now, and we have received word that the police are making house to house searches for students in Sangkhla Buri.

We need assurances of a temporary asylum inside Thai territory in case our camps are attacked. In truth, we do not wish to live inside Thai territory, but if the Burmese military continues its attacks on our camps, we have no choice. Past experience has shown us that the Burmese military will not take mercy on any students, even if they are unarmed.

Therefore, we need your help to call on the Thai government to assure us of a safe haven in case of attack. We are not initiating this violence. It is the Burmese government which continues to wage a war against its own people. Please use the influence of your good offices to call for an end to this civil war, the start of peace negotiations, and the protection of the students whose lives are now once again being threatened by the Burmese military and the Thai expulsion policy.

ABSDF

I AM COMMITTED TO THE TASK OF WASHING THE PAST 27 YEARS OF GARBAGE OUT OF BURMA WITH MY BLOOD

At 10:45 on the 18th of September 1988, our group of students began marching towards the Secretariat Office in Rangoon. It was raining heavily. On the way, the army tried to stop us and began shooting at us. However, we continued our march. Suddenly, a friend came running up and told me my sister had been shot near the Secretariat building. She was hit in the leg, thigh and hip. When I saw her, another bullet passed through her body. Altogether, 5 bullets hit her. She was still alive and was holding a picture of Aung San, our national hero. Two Red Cross workers in Red Cross uniforms came up to help her, but the soldiers shot them as well. Finally two medical workers were able to carry her to the hospital. She reached the hospital at 11:00 am and although she was unconscious, she was still clutching the picture of Aung San. She died at 2 pm that day. There were over 400 casualties in the hospital from the shooting on that day.

FROM THE NEWSPAPERS

The powerful chief of military intelligence Saturday charged that the embassy of a "major country" gave funds to rightist opposition groups trying to overthrow the military government and said 52 conspirators had been arrested.

In a seven and one-half hour speech to Burmese reporters, Brig Gen Khin Nyunt, who is also first secretary of the ruling junta, lashed out foreign diplomats, dissident groups, student organizations, and foreign media for interference in Burma's internal affairs.

THE NATION, September 11, 1989

The Burmese army has forced as many as 500 political prisoners, most of them students, into "death marches" as military porters in northern Burma jungles, several sources.

BANGKOK POST, September 13, 1989

Burma attached a great deal of importance to the recent visit to Rangoon by a group of Thai top executives and permanent officials who went there as students to attend a special class of the National Defence College, the college director said yesterday.

THE NATION, September 12, 1989

Some 200 Burmese students and civilians seeking refuge in Mae Sot District from the Saw Maung regime face arrest if they have not left by September 20.

BANGKOK POST, September 16, 1989

Trade along the entire Thai-Burmese border is booming, with a turnover of 3,000 million baht expected this year in both legal and illegal trade, according to Tak Chamber of Commerce President Rak Tantisunthom.

BANGKOK POST, September 18, 1989

