

BULLETIN

VOL. 2 NO. 1





DAWN

NEWS BULLETIN

PUBLISHED BY THE
ALL BURMA STUDENTS' DEMOCRATIC FRONT

Vol. 2 No. 1

January

1990

UNFREE AND FARCE ELECTIONS

WHO NEEDS THEM?

"If you plant beans, you can not expect to harvest rice. If you paint your house with green paint, you can not expect it to be white. The point is, what you start out with will determine what you end up with. Elections which are not built on a democratic process of free campaigning, free speech, and free and open discussion of the issues, can never evolve into a democracy which is controlled by the people and serves them. If the military of a country is truly committed to democracy, they must step back from the election process and allow the people to freely determine their own leaders and representatives. When the military rules the streets before the elections, you can rest assured that they will continue to control the country after the elections are over. Rule by guns can not give birth to democracy, and that is a fact all military dictators must learn when they talk about building democracy in their country."

Today, Burma is ruled by the military as it has been for over 26 years. Soldiers are stationed on almost every street corner, guns at the ready, watching the every move of the people. What are they stationed there for? Perhaps it is to protect the people from democracy, for that is the only thing the people are actively seeking.

When the medical university in Mandalay was opened in October, it too was heavily guarded by armed soldiers. They were there to see to it that the students sat passively in their classes, and did not voice the true feelings in their hearts. However, the military presence did not silence the students. They protested, and the university was closed again, only one day after it was opened.

Throughout the country, people have continued to seek ways to call out for democracy. In every instance, they have been arrested, imprisoned, and sometimes permanently silenced. The prisons are filled with students, monks, working people, political party leaders and members, and professionals who have dared to say that freedom of speech, the press, assembly, and the right to a happy life are important to the Burmese people.

Under these circumstances, we ask, does the world really believe that free and fair elections can be organized? Why are some countries waiting to see how the elections will turn out before making a public statement regarding human rights in Burma? Why are other countries rushing into the country to invest in "quick profit" schemes as though the Burmese people are free and happy?

The elections which the military dictatorship is planning to exhibit to the world in May of this year can not be free and fair. They are unfree and farce elections, and we call on all people who truly love freedom and democracy to join with us in condemning them. Only when we can prepare for these elections in a democratic way, can we expect the results to be a democracy of the people.

"Dawn", PO Box 1352 GPO, Bangkok 10500, Thailand

ELECTIONS

In July of last year, Aung San Suu Kyi, the most popular of the opposition leaders and daughter of independence hero Aung San, was placed under house arrest for allegedly trying to divide the army. According to a Burmese government spokesperson at the time, Aung San Suu Kyi would not be able to run in the elections as long as she was under house arrest.

Her possibly candidacy was also recently challenged by Laban Grong who would be standing against her in the Rangoon area. Laban Grong is a member of the National Unity Party which represents the present military government. Laban Grong said Ms Suu Kyi was not eligible because she was "entitled to the rights of a foreign citizen and had links with a rebel students group." She is married to a Briton but holds a Burmese passport.

However, in a strange turn of events, the election authorities turned down Laban Grong's objection and indicated that Ms Suu Kyi could, indeed, run in the elections. The problem still remains that she is under house arrest and therefore can not actively campaign. Some observers say that the issue may not be finished yet. The decision taken by the election sub-committee can still be appealed.

In a related incident, leaders of the Kachin Independence Organization, one of the minority groups which has been struggling against the Burmese government for the right to self-determination for many years has expressed their support for Aung San Suu Kyi if she runs in the elections to be held this May.

This has added special significance because Laban Grong and another National Unity Party member, Ding Ra Tang who have protested Aung San Suu Kyi's right to run in the elections, are also Kachins. They, like a few members of some of the other minority groups, have always served as Ne Win's token minority members of parliament in order to give the world the impression that the government of Burma is a union of all the various ethnic groups. These people do not, however, represent the Kachin people in parliament, nor have them been freely elected by the Kachin to represent the Kachin State.

Ne Win has been able to stay in power so long because he has become expert at the "divide and rule" game which dictators around the world make use of. By using some members of the minority groups to serve him, he can try to split the unity of the minority groups and thus weaken their resistance. In the same way he uses the poor as his soldiers, paying them salaries and giving them other bonuses, to put down any rebellion of the rest of the poor in Burma who have insufficient to eat, no jobs, and no hope for the future.

All of this points to the fact that the elections can not be free and fair. There is too much confusion created by Ne Win and Saw Maung, and they are doing everything they can to insure that the elections, if actually held, will be won by them and their NUP party. These elections will be unfree and a farce, and that is why few, if any, of the Burmese people believe in them.

Press Release of the KIO

"The Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO) strongly condemns the activities of Labang Grong and Dingra Tang, two Kachin nationals in Rangoon, who have objected to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's running in the general election in Burma in May.

By telling two of their Kachin puppets to raise the issue about Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's contesting the elections - and being fully aware of her indisputable popularity - Gen. Saw Maung and his cohorts in the SLORC are deliberately trying to stir up anti-Kachin sentiment among the Burmans. The KIO strongly condemns this divide-and-rule policy and deplores Labang Grong's and Dingra Tang's willingness to play along with it.

Labang Grong of the NUP is supposed to run against Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Bahan-1 Constituency in Rangoon. By ordering the Elections

Commission to reject the objection raised by Labang Grong, the SLORC is obviously hoping to show the international community that the elections will be free and fair." At the same time, hundreds of Bahan residents are being forcibly evicted from their homes and sent out to shanty-towns on the outskirts of Rangoon. The strategy appears to be this: the SLORC will allow Daw Aung San Suu Kyi to run in Bahan Against Labang Grong, but they will make sure she loses so they can tell the world that "isn't this what we have always said? The people do not support her."

We urge the people to expose these manipulations by the SLORC. We urge the people not to be fooled by this divide-and-rule policy. Remain united, regardless of nationality, against the SLORC - for the restoration of full democracy, peace, and federalism in Burma!"

M. Brang Seng Chairman KIO
January 12, 1990

FOREIGN INVESTMENTS

CANADA

Since 1984, Petro-Canada International Assistance Corporation, a Petro-Canada subsidiary has provided technical assistance to the state oil company of Myanmar. Petro-Canada is a Canadian government corporation.

Officially, this assistance is not on a government to government basis, and thus the Canadian government claims that it is only a commercial transaction which is not subsidized by the Government of Canada.

However, according to a report in the Straits Times of Singapore on November 9, Petro-Canada Resources, the national energy corporation, "is wholly owned by the government of Canada and is the largest Canadian-owned oil and gas company." That surely puts a big load of responsibility for what Petro-Canada does on the shoulders of the Canadian government. The military dictators of Burma see it in the same light. "At a time when many donors have adopted a wait-and-see attitude, Canada has continued its assistance to the economic and social development of Myanmar. A friend in need is a friend indeed" said Rear Admiral Maung Maung Khin."

Canada has officially spoken out against human rights abuses in Burma which is much appreciated by the oppressed who live under the heels of the military, but we doubt that the Saw Maung regime is much concerned about these criticisms. Such criticisms must indeed be easy for Saw Maung/Ne Win to listen to while Petro-Canada provides them more money for military operations against the people through this oil deal.

ACTION-ACTION

Write letters to: M. Welsh, Acting Director, Asia Pacific South, Relations Division, Department of External Affairs, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0G2, CANADA. Express your concern over Petro-Canada's oil dealing with the military regime in Burma, and ask them to withdraw their contracts until after truly free and fair elections are held in which the people actually elect their own government.

The Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) which is the largest Burmese resistance group, threw its support behind a call by dissident students for a boycott of all contact with the present Burmese regime. They said, "countries that have dealings with the Rangoon government installed by Gen Saw Maung could face adverse consequences. The DAB firmly warns these countries that dealings with the hated military junta of Rangoon are only short-term and will not be excused by the people."

(Nation, January 12, 1990)

A new Thai company, Thai-Myanma Fisheries (1990) is being planned to enter joint fishery ventures with Burma.

This will be the only organisation permitted to make fishing industry deals involving Thailand. The company initially registered capital of 25 million baht (US\$1 million). The new company has 500 trawlers with 40,000 tons of gross capacity.

(Bangkok Post, January 13, 1990)

There is also a report that Burma has reduced the size of its permits to Thai logging companies to 1,000 metric tons of logs per month. This is substantially below the previously allowed 5,000 metric tons per month.

Some sources suggest that this is due to pressure from Greenpeace which wants Burma to cancel forest concession to Thai companies. Pressure to end the rape of Burma's forests must, however, be kept up.

(Bangkok Post, January 15, 1990)

"Rangoon entered into a joint venture with a Hong Kong firm to market and produce photographic and stationery materials Friday, Radio Rangoon said.

Myanmar-Cheung HK Ltd. was set up with an investment of \$2.3 million by the Hong Kong-based Cheung Enterprise Ltd and the Burmese state-run stationery, printing and photographic stores trading firm, the radio said in a report monitored by AFP in Bangkok."

(Bangkok Post, January 14, 1990)



Children in village schools have little chance for higher education. If ABSDF can supply three teachers to this school, a highschool class can be organized. Pencils, notebooks, and text books are also lacking, yet the students are eager to learn.



These children are the future of Burma. Having to grow up in the middle of a civil war with little chance for a good education and never enough nutritious food, their personal development to take over that future is not sufficient. We must make it our duty to help them, because they must have equal rights for development as any other children.

Two ABSDF medical workers give treatment to a woman suffering from paralysis. For some of these village people, ABSDF is giving them their first experience in medical care. It is something they appreciate very much. Insufficient medicines and equipment prevent ABSDF from doing more.



THE 1988 UPRISING REVISITED

(continued from "Dawn" #24)

9th May: The government-appointed Inquiry Commission states that 3 students were killed during the March riots, 625 arrested and 141 are still in custody. Aung Gyi writes a 40-page open letter to Ne Win, reiterating the need for economic reforms.

13 June: A memorial service was planned for those killed in March, but it does not materialize. Some students set a dead-line: if a thorough and accurate report on the March events was not released before 17 June, "there will be trouble."

15 March: Demonstrations and meetings begin again, mainly at Rangoon University (main campus).

16 June: More demonstrations on campuses all over Rangoon. Maung Maung Kyaw and Moe Thi Zon and others gave speeches.

17 June: The demonstrations on the campus continue. RU suspends classes. The demonstration and the meetings move to the Institute of Medicine (1) on Prome Road.

20 June: 5-6,000 students stage a peaceful protest in Rangoon. Buddhist monks are seen attending rallies at RU.

Demands: reinstate the dismissed students and punish the guilty for the March killings. The government's economic policies are also criticized. Posters attacking Ne Win appear, mentioning his Swiss bank accounts. Workers at the textile factory near RU (Hlaing campus) stage a strike in sympathy with the students. The university area is sealed off by the police and army units at 6:00pm.

21 June: Thousands of students march from the Institute of Medicine (1)'s Prome Road Campus down towards central Rangoon, shouting slogans. The column is stopped at Hanthawaddy intersection where Lon Htein units fire teargas and rifles. The crowds fight back with jinglees (poisoned darts) and the Lon Htein flee. Clashes between the police and civilians continue all day. 80 civilians and 20 Lon Htein are killed. The authorities declare a 60-day ban on public gatherings - 21 June to 19 August - and a 6:00pm-6:00am curfew is imposed on Rangoon. The Institute of Medicine (1) and the Institute of Dental medicine in Rangoon also suspend all classes.

22 June: The Institute of Medicine (1) suspends all classes. Many students move to the historic Shwe Dagon Pagoda.

23 June: Students, defying the ban on public gathering, set up a strike center at the historic Shwe Dagon Pagoda. Thy unrest spreads to Pegu, 50 km north of Rangoon, where at least 70 people are killed. Unrest is also reported from Moulmein and Prome. The Institute of Medicine in Mandalay suspends all classes.

1 July: The curfew is shortened to 8:00pm-4:00am. Several curfew violators are shot by police and army units.

7 July: The BSPP announces that an extraordinary party congress will convene on 23 July and the state-run radio says that all the students who were arrested in March now are going to be released.

9th July: The authorities lift the curfew in Rangoon, along with similar restrictions in Pegu, Prome and Moulmein. It is also announced that students who have been dismissed from their universities can now apply for re-admission.

12 July: Emergency measures introduced in Taunggyi, Shan State, following clashes between Buddhists and Muslims - which the students claim were instigated by the authorities to divert attention from the main issues.

16 July: Similar communal clashes are reported from Prome where a ban on public gatherings also is imposed on the following day.

18 July: Min Gaung, minister for Home and Religious Affairs, is "permitted to resign" in order to accept responsibility for the admitted deaths of 41 arrested demonstrators who suffocated in prison vans outside Insein Jail in March. This is the first time the authorities admit that more than two people had died in March.

19-20 July: Riots are reported from Ne Win's hometown Paungdale east of Prome.

21 July: The director-general of the People's Police Force (PPF) in Rangoon, Thein Aung, is "permitted to retire" and the PPF commander, Pe Kyi, is demoted and transferred.

(from OUTRAGE by Bertil Linter)

CLEANING UP RANGOON

Following the 1988 military coup, thousands of houses inside Rangoon were forcibly moved outside of Rangoon.

First about 200 houses from Pha-Sa-Pa-La, which is near the War Office in Mingalar Taung Nyunt Township were moved. After that 100 houses from KyanDawe behind the Burmese Broadcasting Service, 500 to 600 houses from east of Shwedegon pagoda near Yaekaesei, 100 houses near Shwegondyi traffic point in Bahan township, 100 houses near Tar Mhwe circle near Tar Mhwe cemetery in Tar Mhwe township, about 20 houses near Kar Mar Yout traffic circle close to Hlay Dan market in Kar Mar Yout township, over 100 houses from Man Yan Kone township at the corner of Prome road and Kyatmayoure road, 20 houses from Saw Bor Kyi Kone and all of the houses situated between 10th mile on Prome road and Saw Bor Kyi Kone were forcibly moved out of Rangoon. More than 1,500 houses involving over 10,000 people from inside Rangoon were forcibly moved out by the military.

Many of these people were moved to one of four places outside of Rangoon. Those people who have worked in the government service for at least 10 years were moved to Dagon Myothit, beyond Thar-K-Ta. Some houses were already constructed here and the people received a one-room house for which they have to immediately pay 15,000 kyats (US\$214) to the military. The remainder is cut from their salary each month. However, all government workers do not qualify for these houses since their are many criteria which they must meet. Others people were moved to Hlaing Tar Yar which is beyond the Hlaing river, Wai Bar Gyi which is beyond North Oaklapa and to Oak Pho which is near Hlaw Kar, south of Rangoon. They have to pay 5,000 kyats (US\$728) to the military to get these new houses. Most of the people who were moved out of the city, are very poor. They survive on a day to day basis. It is impossible for them to even save a small amount of money each day. How can they possibly give 15,000 kyats or 5,000 kyats to the military regime to get the new place? All of these people also work inside the city. After they were moved to the outskirts of Rangoon, they have to use at least 5 Kyats a day for their transportation to come to work inside the city. Daily workers get only about 15 or 20 kyats daily. How can they buy food, medicine as well as pay for these new homes? The price of all basic goods has skyrocketed, e.g one pyi of rice which is about enough for a family of five for one day cost 15 to 25 kyats.

In Rangoon, some of the people are opened a small shop in their houses to earn the extra money they need to pay their food expenses. After they were

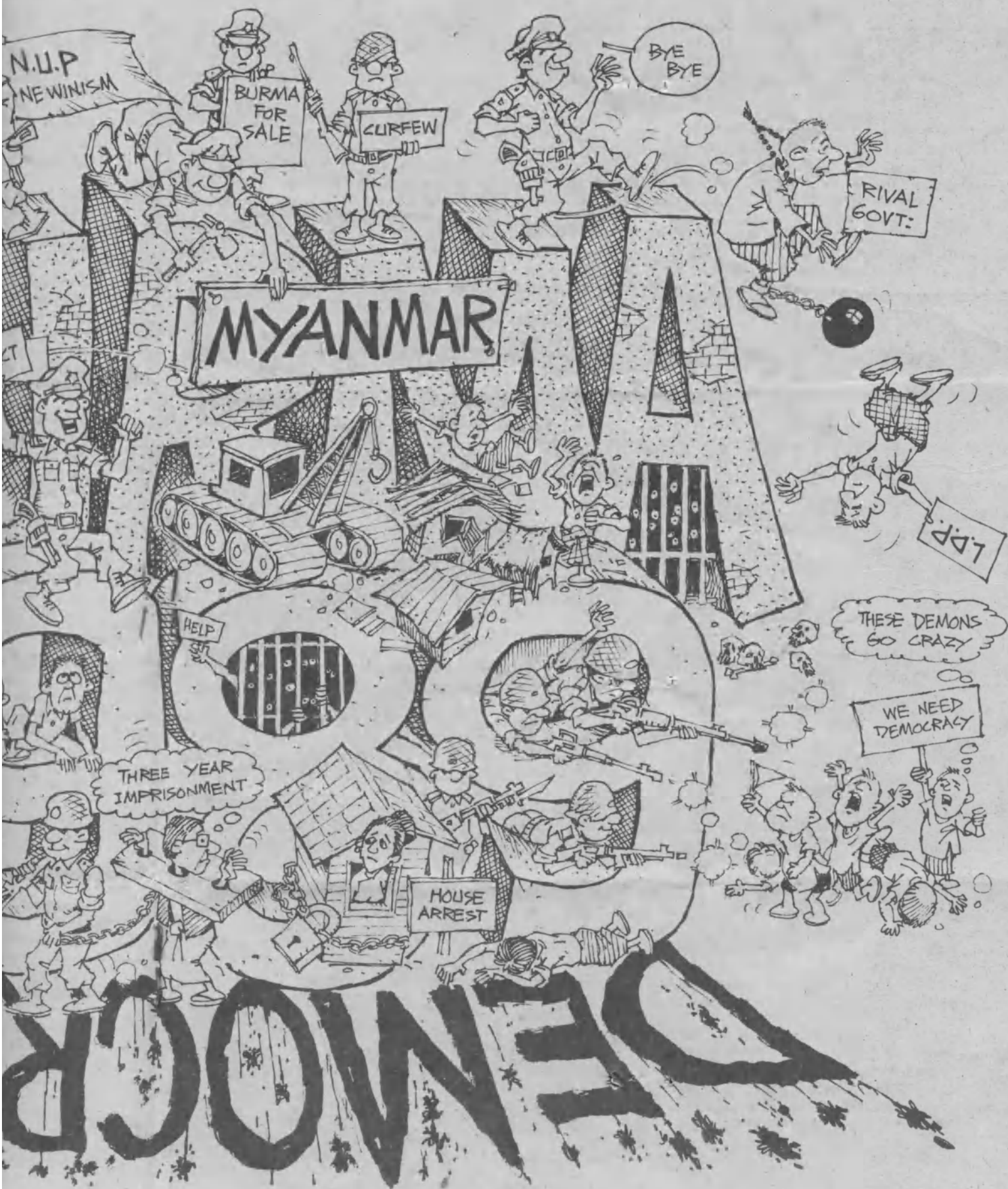
moved out of their old houses, how can they get this extra money? The houses from KarMarYout and Mar Yan Kone township are very expensive. You cannot buy one even if you have enough money to pay over 500,000 kyats (US\$72,857). These houses are legally registered houses.

When the people were evicted from their Rangoon homes, the military did not give any compensation to them and they were not given a place to move.

All of the people who were forcibly evicted from the city met with many problems. However the military regime did not take any responsibility for them. At the same time the people were given only a short time to move. If the people did not move by the deadline given by the military, the military would enter their houses at night, carry the people outside the city and simply leave them in the open fields. After the deadline, if the people still had their property in their old houses, they cannot go back and claim it.

The military gave some reasons why they move the people. They said it was necessary to evict the people in order to clean the city and to widen the roads. One resident from Rangoon reported to "Dawn" that the real reason to evict the people was to help the military "protect their power over the country". He added that if there will be demonstrations against the government again, the people will not be able to gather or to hide easily and the military will be able to arrest the demonstrators with less trouble. Many of the houses near the monasteries were also moved. "Dawn's" Rangoon resource said the reason for this is very clear, because during the pro-democracy uprising in 1988, several thousand monks joined with the people. Therefore, the military regime wants to move the people who live near the monastery away to isolate them from the monks. Another person from Rangoon told "Dawn" that while the military forcibly moved the people from Rangoon, the military is buying up many empty houses in Rangoon. He said that during the 2nd week of December 1989, a student from Rangoon suddenly appeared on the road at the center of the city and gave a speech. Within only a few seconds military troops filled the streets in the area as well as the newly-built pedestrian bridge. He claimed that is why the military has built many pedestrian bridges in Rangoon. All of these friends reported that it is completely untrue that Rangoon is very clean, beautiful and quiet. That is only superficial. Many people are facing great problems for their survival and there is tension all over the city. People do not want to be evicted from their homes and their lives.





HUMAN RIGHTS

On the 6th of October 1989, two Burmese students, Ye Yint and Ye Thi Ha allegedly hijacked a Burmese airliner (Fokker F-28) with 88 passengers and crew aboard from Margue Burma to U-tapao air base in Thailand.

Thai Deputy Prime Minister Tienchai Sirisamphan served as the negotiator with the two hijackers, and after 11 hours, all passengers were released. Ye Yint and Ye Thi Ha turned themselves over peacefully to the Thai authorities.

Now they are standing trial. The sentence facing them is 10 years imprisonment and a maximum sentence of death if found guilty.

The two hijackers made only a few demands to the Burmese military during the hijacking. These were the release of Aung San Su Kyi and all other detainees, the withdrawal of the curfew, the removal of all military forces to their barracks, a UN peacekeeping force to monitor the country, the formation of an interim government, and the restoration of the freedom for writing and organization.

These demands are necessary for our country to establish genuine democracy and basic human rights. We are certain that if you could take an honest poll in our country of 42 million people, 99.9% would give these same demands.

But there is completely no freedom and no human rights in Burma today. There is no free and fair court, no independent newspapers and no freedom of speech.

Sources from Rangoon report that one happening that is funny and real recently took place. During the 2nd week of Dec 1989, a bus conductor on one of the city buses urged more passengers waiting at the door of the bus to enter the already crowded vehicle. "Enter the bus! Enter the bus!" he shouted. "There is still a lot of space. If you want you can even build a park!" After that he was arrested by an army intelligence officer who was on his bus at the time. Recently Bri-Gen Khin Nyunt (Secretary 1, of SLORC) has built many parks throughout Rangoon only for show so that the outside world will think that Rangoon is beautiful, clean and quiet.

Under these conditions, how can the people inside Burma express their demands freely? They can not! This is the reason the two students hijacked the plane to Thailand. They have no plan to violate or explode the plane. They just want the world to hear their pleas for justice and human rights.

When they hijacked the plane, there were 15 Navy officers and soldiers among the 88 passengers. When they received the reply from the Burmese military regime that the military would not accept their demands, they told these Navy officers and soldiers "You now can see how much your military leaders value your lives! Now we can kill all of you. Do you remember how many of our students, monks and innocent people were killed by the army during the pro-democracy uprising in 1988? If you were in our position, you would kill us instantly. But we will not kill you." After hearing the two students make this statement, all of the passengers cried.

In this case, it is very clear who is pushing the people to take these kinds of actions. The military regime has always said that the 1988 pro-democracy uprising was created by the Burma Communist Party (leftist element) as well as the rightist elements, and that the people are trying to push a wedge into the army and between the army and the people. In reality, only the military regime creates the disturbances. They are the real culprits who tried to made the misunderstanding between the army and the people and who are pushing the people to hijack planes and take other drastic actions.

Nobody can say that Ye Yint and Ye Thi Ha are the terrorists. They are the innocent people. They are struggling for human rights, freedom and democracy in Burma. Any judge should not try them with the anti-terrorists act.

We, the All Burma Students' Democratic Front would like to appeal to all of our friends around the world to remember them. They simply wanted to alert the world to the serious human rights abuses which abound in Burma under the Saw Maung repressive military regime. They are hoping to get support from you.

We would like to urge you to write a letter to the Thai government to see them as innocent people rather than terrorists. The first hearing is scheduled for January 31st 1990.

Shortly after their surrender, the Thai Prime Minister suggested that if any third country would offer them political asylum, Thailand would be willing to allow them to leave.

We would like to appeal to all democratic governments to consider giving them political asylum.

PRODUCTION ON THE DECLINE

The following chart shows the decline in production of some important commodities in Burma from 1984 to 1989. We received this report from the Ministry of Planning and Finance, Rangoon, so we can assume that, in reality, things are much worse than this.

<u>Period:</u>	<u>Cement(ton)</u>	<u>Plvwood(000sq ft)</u>	<u>Paint(gallon)</u>
1984-85	299,374	31,145	324,745
1985-86	410,779	30,402	248,745
1986-87	451,522	50,827	252,213
1987-88	394,313	58,665	138,991
1988-89	310,398	48,225	172,455

<u>Period:</u>	<u>Batteries(000)</u>	<u>Soap(ton)</u>	<u>Paper(ton)</u>
1984-85	81,914	40,640	18,386
1985-86	19,405	42,198	19,737
1986-87	15,715	33,305	13,901
1987-88	15,040	23,472	8,241
1988-89	8,283	7,066	8,804

<u>Period:</u>	<u>Yarn(000lb)</u>	<u>Cotton Fabrics(000yd)</u>	<u>Gunny Bags(000)</u>
1984-85	49,964	85,992	37,993
1985-86	26,008	66,057	32,277
1986-87	22,536	55,754	33,970
1987-88	25,545	43,292	27,371
1988-89	12,378	19,698	14,977

<u>Period:</u>	<u>Fertilizer(metric ton)</u>	<u>Beer(gallon)</u>	<u>Sugar(ton)</u>
1984-85	157,128	889,769	64,746
1985-86	280,627	1,281,422	53,023
1986-87	304,943	907,903	57,418
1987-88	296,268	369,444	37,316
1988-89	215,087	255,674	28,303

<u>Period:</u>	<u>Tin Concentrates</u>	<u>Tungsten Concentrates</u>	<u>Refined Lead(ton)</u>
1984-85	1,016	410	7,469
1985-86	878	336	5,807
1986-87	737	132	4,377
1987-88	322	47	4,350
1988-89	127	33	3,979

<u>Period:</u>	<u>Refined Silver(000oz)</u>
1984-85	491
1985-86	421
1986-87	439
1987-88	817
1988-89	315

REPORTS FROM THE VILLAGES

FIELD REPORT FROM THREE PAGODAS PASS MEDICAL VISIT TO RURAL VILLAGES

I am from the Three Pagodas Pass Camp No. 102. I am working in medical and health care. When I was in Rangoon, I attended the Institute of Medicine 1 and was completing part 1 of the course.

I would like to explain briefly about the health of the villagers who we have visited in villages not too far from our main camp.

On the 8th of September, 1989, we went to Kyarineseiky township in the Mon State to visit the villagers and give them whatever help we could. In this township there are about 24 villages with a total population of more than 12,000. They have to struggle very hard for their survival. This area suffers from continual fighting between the New Mon State Army and the Burmese military regime. Because of this on-going war, no one has helped the people improve their health situation. They are the innocent victims of the civil war which the Burmese military has so violently inflicted upon the people.

In this township, there is not even a Regional Health Committee, so there are no medical staff who can help the people with their medical problems. At one time there was one Regional Health Committee in TaungPaut village, but since four years ago, they have had no medical staff to do the work. At the same time, the Mon State Party cannot even support basic medical personnel for the area.

When the people have serious medical problems, they seek help from people who have no medical training at all, but who want to practice medicine. These "quack" doctors do not know how to diagnose diseases properly. They simply know that one medicine lowers temperature, one stops headaches etc. The people accept them because they have no knowledge of what a doctor should know or how the doctor should practice medicine. If someone knows how to give an IV injection, then that person becomes a doctor. I have seen many injection abscesses in the villagers because the so-called "doctors" did not use sterile needles and syringes. Sometimes they mix the medicine with cold water which is not pure. I saw one 40-year-old woman from KyawtPout village who had an injection abscess in the buttock. After one month, her thigh and foot were also infected and covered with

abscesses. Finally she was sent to Kyarineseiky hospital.

If you check the people who have a fever, at least 90% of them are suffering from malaria and the other 10% suffer from bacterial infections. Many of the malaria patients die because there are no expert medical doctors. Sometimes the patients die because the local "doctors" do not understand about chloroquine resistance, and give chloroquine tablets to the malaria patients for treatment even though it will not do any good. Many of the people get cerebral malaria and die because there is no proper treatment. Most of them are in their middle ages.

In one case a malaria patient received injections of dextrose saline mixed with glucose (3 ampules), B6 (2 ampules), B12 (2 ampules), Bx (1 ampule), B1 (1 ampule), Bonpyrin (3 ampules), Novalgin (3 ampules), Atropine (1 ampule), Niketamide (2 ampules), Chlorophenicol (2 ampules), Chloroquine (1 ampule), and solu-cortef (1 vial). Sometimes they also receive the penicillin injection because of having a cough. These patients must sometimes pay more than 7,000 kyats (US\$1000 on the legal market) for their medicines. In order to pay this amount, they must sell all of their property, and still they do not recover. A buffalo is very precious to the farmers. Without their buffalo, they can not easily do their farming. However, when they are very sick they sometimes even have to sell their buffalo to buy the medicine. If the treatment does not help they not only lose their buffalo, but their health as well. This destroys their future completely.

Most of the children who die, suffer from chest infections and malaria. I saw some whooping cough cases, but I do not have much knowledge about that kind of case. Nearly everyone in the village has scabies. I saw many kinds of diseases such as hypertension, gastritis, chronic malaria, anaemia, chronic chest infection, helminthic infestations and gynecological diseases.

I have no experience in treating some of these diseases. Also, I can not stay long in one place and I do not have enough medicine to help the people. Even if I give only a temporary treatment, I worry that they will become resistant to the medicine and this will be very dangerous for their future.

I think it is essential that ABSDF take responsibility for the health care of these villagers. The villagers now are starting to trust the students and ask for us to give them health care. The best thing we can do is to open one medical unit in one of the central villages, and then work out to the other villages from there.

We need many things:

- 1) more people trained in village health
- 2) regular supplies of medicine and instruments
- 3) money to build a medical unit or clinic
- 4) money to help circulate the medicines.

ABSDF can provide medical training for old and new medical workers. When the training is finished, it will be very important that a steady supply of medicines are available so that we can effectively treat the village people in a proper way.



SHARING WITH THE VILLAGERS

In late November, another group from our Thay Bow Boe camp began the journey into Burma to live with and work with the villagers. The villagers in this area are Karen, and many of them can not speak in Burmese. They are simple peasants who work hard in their rice fields, and who do not want to be bothered by the politics of Rangoon. Yet, they can not escape it. The Burmese military often comes through the area, confiscates their rice and even completely burns down their homes, granaries and places of worship. They can not understand this terrible act, and they hate the military because of it.

In every village we visit, we hold discussions with the people to explain to them what happened inside Burma during the 1988 uprising, and why we students have fled to the border. The people often have never heard of this news. They are very isolated. However, when we told them our story, they were very interested and concerned because they too have suffered under the heel of the military. They offer us their total support in the struggle to build a new Burma.

The villagers feed us when we are with them, and we try to provide them with health care and even some simple health training. We have so few supplies that it is difficult, but they deeply

appreciate even receiving a little medical help as they have no access to good medical treatment.

In one of the villages, we had very good discussions with the teachers. They told us that they want to extend their primary school into a highschool as the children in the village need more education. However, they do not have the means to teach on a highschool level. They requested that we give them 3 teachers to help organize and teach in the highschool. If we can give them this assistance, all of the people in this Division will support us fully. The people do not respond so much to speeches. They only know that the government has never done anything good for them. Therefore, when we offer them very simple help, they respond warmly, because they appreciate it very much.

One evening some village headmen from nearby villages came to talk to us. They are appointed by the military government to be headmen, and so they were afraid of us. They pleaded with us to understand them. They are afraid of the military regime and are afraid to refuse their appointment. They said they support us, but they must be very careful. We understand their dilemma. All of the Burmese people live in fear now, and we must find effective ways of breaking down that fear and building up a new and united Burma.

"The people cry out for love, for help for participation. The problem is, can we hear them, or are their cries lost within the noise of our own fears and selfishness?"

LOGGING CONCERNS



The road used to haul logs from Burma to Thailand.



A Thai sawmill inside Burma, cutting up teak logs.



A truck hauling logs down the new road from Burma into Thailand.

A big road has been built from Thailand into Burma presumably for logging operations. The road is about 50 miles long and enters Burma near Mautung and ends somewhere near Thien Khaw village. About 20 Thai companies use this road to haul their logs out of Burma. They are paying the Burmese government US\$800 a ton, and must also pay the Karen National Union another US\$600. Thousands of tons of precious Burmese logs are exiting Burma along this road.

The road will also certainly serve the Burmese military in the future when they are ready to move into the area.

FROM THE NEWSPAPERS

A Burmese Catholic priest reported on December 29 that Thai authorities had handed over 200 Burmese civilians, including women and children who took refuge on the Moei River bank on the Thai side, to the Burmese authorities. The roundup took place at about 4.30 in the morning.

The priest, who requested anonymity, said all the men were later sent as porters to join the Burmese forces attacking Phaloo and Kaw Moo Ra while the women and children were held at a primary school in Myawaddy, opposite Mae Sot.

The Burmese fled to Thailand six months ago after the government troops gangpressed them into becoming porters for their assaults on ethnic groups. "We though Thailand, being a democracy, would respect human rights," said the priest.

Nation, December 30, 1989

Japan will give 2 million baht for the design and feasibility study of a 6 million baht bridge linking Thailand and Burma (Nation, December 30, 1989). The bridge will be of tremendous use to the Burmese military who can more easily move military supplies into the area, and to the logging firms who wish to quickly move logs out of the area for their profit-hungry owners.

The area in which this bridge is located is a KNU area. We ask the Japanese government to reconsider this grant until the civil war in the country comes to an end and the bridge can truly benefit the people.

U Nu, the last elected prime minister of Burma, and presently leader of the League for Democracy and Peace political party, has been placed under house arrest. He is 83 years old.

During the 1988 uprising, U Nu declared that his government was still the legitimate government of Burma since Ne Win had taken over power through a coup without the consent of the people. This obviously upset Ne Win who likes to think that he, and he alone, has the right to rule every aspect of Burma's existence. With election nearing, U Nu was order to dissolve his "government" or else he would not be allowed to run in the elections.

In response, U Nu wrote a letter to Gen Ne Win which said in part:

"I announced on 9/9/88 that I have taken back power because Bogyoke Ne Win had seized it by force from my hands on 2/3/62. Had he not seized power on 2/3/62 there would have been no reason whatsoever for me to make such an announcement.

As the matter now stands, Bogyoke Ne Win who first did wrong is not called upon to own up his wrongdoing, but I who did nothing wrong am called upon to acknowledge a wrongdoing that I have not committed. I would therefore like to let Bogyokegyi and associates understand definitely that I would never, under any circumstances, yield to such a one-sided demand.

If Bogyoke Ne Win will first publish a letter to the effect that he had done wrong in seizing power from the Prime Minister on 2/3/62, that he is sorry for it, and that he will never again do such a thing, I will announce in writing that the new government formed on 9/9/88 is dissolved as Bogyokegyi and your associates desire."

The letter upset Ne win enough to place U Nu and some of his associates under house arrest, and to forbid them from running in the elections. As the election date nears, there are fewer and fewer opposition parties who will be allowed to take part. This is the free and fair elections which the military regime has promised the world.

A British-born man, Scott Morgan, has been to Burma several times in order to try to work out a deal for a first-class hotel in Rangoon. He is representing Richard Ellis (Thailand Co. Ltd).

He is not simply interested in a small hotel, he wants things to be top class. While looking for property to develop into this fancy hotel, he turned down the world-famous Strand because it was in poor condition.

The kind of clients Scott Morgan is interested in are people who can pay US\$250 per night and will only fly business class or first class.

Does this make sense in a country which is listed as one of the 10 poorest countries in the world, and in which people die daily from the brutality of a military regime? Scott Morgan stop to think if human rights and justice are of any importance at all, and if his commission from all of this is more important that the lives of the Burmese people.

NEWS FROM INSIDE

A Burmese who very recently came from Rangoon reports the following:

"The people inside Burma see the bilateral co-operation between the Coca Cola company from America and the Rangoon military government as a direct encouragement for the oppression of the people. We all know that the military regime will oppress the people more if they can get more foreign exchange with which to buy ammunition and guns. They depend solely on these weapons for their survival.

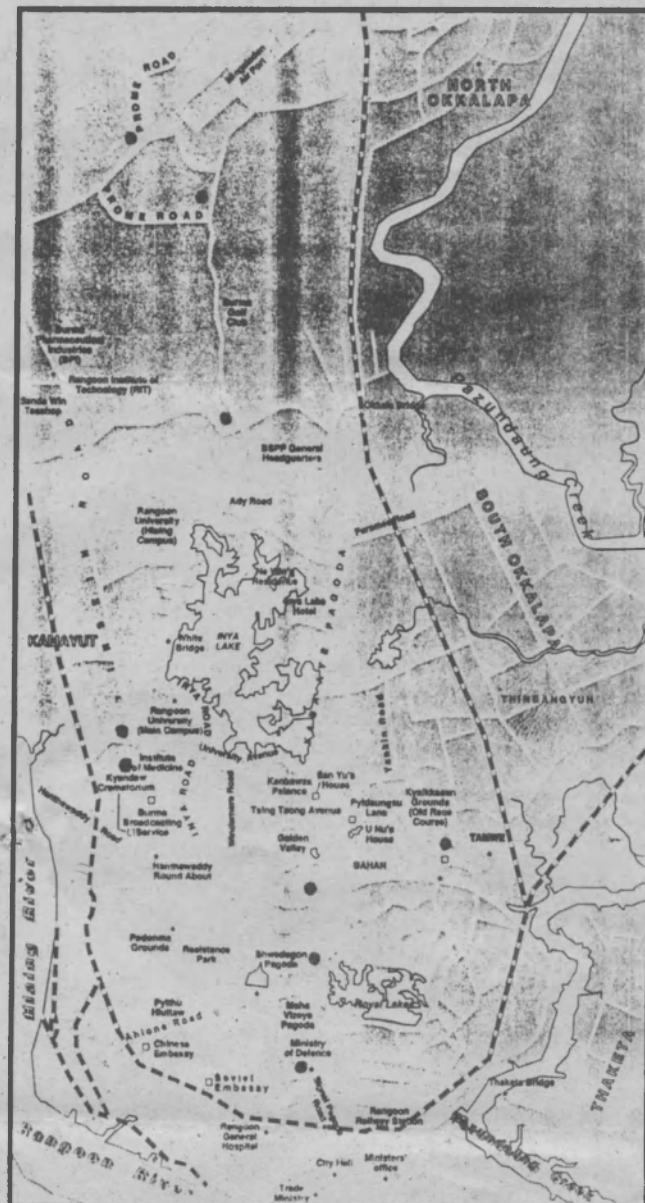
At this time, the Burmese people do not need Coke. Rather, we need human rights and freedom. Any support for the military is an act against the freedoms and human rights of the people.

The Burmese people really believe that the American people respect human rights and freedoms for all people. We think that the American people respect the struggle for democracy in Burma for which we are sacrificing the blood of the students and the working people. This is why we are very worried about this economic investment. We feel you should stop it immediately."

Another report from Rangoon says that the military has built metal fences around all the market places. During past street demonstrations, the demonstrators have run into market places to hide among the people there when the soldiers arrived. The fences are meant to discourage demonstrations. Military security personnel also patrol the markets very carefully. The markets, once a happy place where people could buy and sell, visit and just have a good time, are now more like prisons.

Everywhere in Rangoon, there are military guards. However, they keep hidden so that foreign visitors can not see them easily. Their presence is felt if any small demonstration suddenly breaks out. Several weeks back two students suddenly started giving a pro-democracy speech in the middle of a street. Within seconds, the entire area was surrounded with military, and the students arrested.

In order to further impress foreign visitors with how clean and happy Rangoon is, the military regime has ordered everyone to paint their houses. A recent order also demanded that they paint their cars as well. A thin coat of paint tries to hide the deteriorating situation in the country, just as a thin coat of "democracy" is used to try to hide the brutal military dictatorship which still dominates the country.



O indicates the locations in Rangoon where residents have been forcibly evicted and moved to the suburbs.