



DAWN

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WE ARE NOT THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

WE JOIN THE PEOPLE TO RAISE A UNITED VOICE!

There is a story about a leader of a country who feared for his power. His country was filled with poverty and disease, and his people were getting more and more dissatisfied with his rule.

So he devised a plan to distract them. He told them that a neighboring country was planning to invade, and if the invasion was successful, the people would all be enslaved, tortured and even killed. Therefore, everyone must rally behind him to help protect the country from destruction.

His plan worked for awhile. The people, fearing enslavement by the neighboring "enemy" forgot about being hungry and sick. They allowed their taxes to be raised for the "national defense". All were willing to sacrifice for the "good of all".

However, one day some of the more critical thinkers in the country, decided to make a visit to this neighboring "enemy" and see if negotiations could be arranged.

Much to their surprise, this "enemy" was no enemy at all. The neighboring country was content to live peacefully and in harmony.

It was then that these few critical thinkers realized that their leader was only tricking the people in order to preserve and protect his own power.

They quickly returned home and informed the people of the real situation. Upon hearing the truth, the people denounced their leader, and a new era began for their country.

The story may be an old one, but it is still a reality today. For the past 28 years the Ne Win leadership has tried to convince the Burmese people that the ethnic minorities are only separatists who wish to destroy the union. Their propaganda has been, to a large degree, successful. Much suspicion has been created between the ethnic tribal groups and the Burmans. This should be seen for what it actually is - a divide and rule policy by Ne Win to distract the people from the real issues facing the country.

A united people are a powerful people. All dictatorships fear this unity. The people of Burma will unite in the task of rebuilding Burma into a peaceful and democratic nation.

The truth will make us free!

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

DAB STATEMENT

For the past 28 years, the BSPP, under the control of Ne Win, has been telling the ethnic Burmans that the various minority groups living along the border areas of Burma have the intention of destroying the Union in order to establish their own separate independent states. By using the schools and education curriculum as well as the mass media, the BSPP has been rather successful in spreading this misinformation.

Suspensions and tensions have thus been created between the ethnic Burmans and other ethnic groups. This has set up a situation where the civil war can be prolonged, the people weakened through division and Ne Win's authoritarian rule over the country insured.

Following the May 27 elections, the military rulers have refused to turn state power over to the NLD. One of their reasons is that the minority groups are still trying to destroy the union, and the military must first solve this problem before power can be turned over to the NLD.

Ne Win and his BSPP (now known as SLORC and NUP) have used this tactic much too long to divide and rule the people. In June of this year, the Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB which is an alliance of many of the ethnic minorities, monks, students and other nationalist groups held a meeting and produced a statement outlining their true intentions and goals. This statement is meant to inform all the people of Burma as well as friends around the world, what the truth is.

POLICY STATEMENT OF THE DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE OF BURMA (DAB) ON ESTABLISHMENT OF A FEDERAL UNION OF STATES

In view of the Saw Maung military junta's intensification of its false accusations of the DAB as bandits and destroyers of the Union, the DAB deems it necessary to clarify its position as follows:

1. Since time immemorial, Burma has been a land composed of different nationalities. Civil war and revolts have been raging in the country as a result of the nationalities having to struggle for their historical rights, equal opportunity, democratic freedom and human rights, denied by successive ruling dictators. It is our historical duty to establish a genuine federation to resolve the various problems plaguing Burma and endeavor to set up a modern and advanced nation.

Following the 1988 mass uprising, Buddhist monks, students and thousands of civilians came to join hands with the revolutionary forces of the ethnic nationalities. In time, they became aware of the bitter experiences, various sufferings and injustices of the nationalities. As a consequence, they came to accept the nationalities' just struggle against the military dictatorship for the establishment of a "Federal Union of States."

Previously, they rejected the concept of Federalism due to years of subjection to false propaganda under the BSPP regime. The national struggles currently occurring all over the world firmly support this concept.

Uniting the various indigenous nationalities, Buddhist monks and students, the DAB which came into existence after the 1988 uprising, has been fighting against the military dictatorship for full democratic rights and the establishment of a Federal Union of States based on:

1) The equality and self-determination of all the nationalities; b) The federation of states including a Burman state; c) A multi-party political system guaranteeing full democratic freedom, social justice and human rights; and d) A legislature consisting of a national assembly and people's assembly, by which the power is shared between the central government and states.

2. The immediate formation of Burma as a Federal Union of States of the indigenous nationalities, based on the principles of federation mentioned above, will be the main condition for the cessation of civil war

and restoration of peace. Ignoring the need for establishment of a genuine federation and pursuing the policy of total annihilation of insurgency and armed suppression of the legitimate political and national rights of the nationalities is not the correct way of seeking a solution to the cessation of civil war and the achievement of peace. Accordingly, to achieve internal peace, we must concentrate our efforts on the establishment of a genuine Federal Union of States.

3. The policy of the DAB is not secessionist. The Saw Maung military junta is giving publicity to the so-called three tasks of the Burmese armed forces which are:

- a) Protection of the integrity of the Union;
- b) Protection of the national unity; and
- c) Protection of sovereignty.

In order to achieve the three tasks, there must be recognition of the democratic system guaranteeing the democratic rights of all the citizens. If it is recognized, a new Federal Union of States must be established in order to restore internal peace. The new Federal Union of States shall be a stable foundation for a united and strong sovereign nation.

The federal system which has been demanded and fought for by the indigenous nationalities does not mean secessionism. It is not destruction of the national unity. It is the union of all the indigenous nationalities in a federation with unity.

In order to continue their hold on power and privileges, the military dictators have been shamelessly telling lies to frighten the people by saying that the revolutionary organizations of the nationalities are secessionists or destroyers of unity.

The DAB, comprising of the Buddhist monks, students, Burmese at home and abroad, and nationality organizations, is working to establish a fully democratic, genuine and just federal union. The DAB solemnly declares that it will never destroy such a federal union nor secede from such a union.

Central Committee
Democratic Alliance of Burma
June 15, 1990



The DAB solemnly declares that it will never destroy such a federal union nor secede from such a union.

EDITORIAL

WHAT HAPPENS NOW THAT THE ELECTIONS ARE OVER?

On May 27, the Burmese people left no doubt in the minds of the world what kind of leadership they wanted. Giving the NLD an overwhelming two thirds of the votes, they clearly said that there is no longer a place in Burma for a ruling military. Fed up with almost 28 years of being ruled by military men who have no idea how to develop the country's economy, or its social and political structures, the people are ready and anxious for change.

Their elation over their use of the elections to express their feelings, however, is quickly turning to frustration and anger as they see the military using stalling strategies to prevent the turn-over of power. It is becoming more and more obvious to the people that the SLORC does not wish to allow the people to run Burma, and thus democracy is still a misty dream floating somewhere on the distant horizon.

During the month which has passed since the elections, SLORC has thrown out a variety of road blocks to the democratization of the country.

On May 31, Gen. Saw Maung, chairman of SLORC, gave a nationally televised speech in which he said, "If asked whether our duty is completed or not, the answer is no! Why? It is necessary to understand that we are responsible for the enforcement of the rule of law and ensuring regional peace and tranquility until a government can be formed according to law. Another thing is that we'll never allow the emergence of political turmoil as in 1988."

In itself, this statement may not seem important to many people, but linked to events following the elections, it takes on a more sinister meaning. For example:

1. The time taken to make an official announcement of the election results was extremely long (finishing one month after the actual balloting);
2. SLORC announced that the time needed by the new government to write a constitution and organize a strong government should take at least 2 years;

3. SLORC indicated that they would decide the policies regulating the process of power being handed over to the elected government.

The Burmese people have quickly begun to suspect that SLORC has no intention of giving up power.

According to a Far Eastern Economic Review, dated 21 June 1990, and written by Rodeny Tasker and Bertil Linter, well-placed sources in Rangoon say that senior officials from the Directorate of the Defence Service Intelligence known as the DDSI (Burma's secret police and the country's main organ of power) met in early May to map out various scenarios for the election, including one in case the National League For Democracy (NLD) won. That plan is now being put into practice, the sources say. The plan's first priority is to delay the transfer of power, which could be achieved by the refusal of the ruling State Law and Ordering Restoration Council (SLORC) and the nine-man military cabinet under it to step down until a new constitution has been drafted and approved, preferably by referendum. (Dawn Note; Ex-Col Kyi Maung, the chairman of the NLD, said after the election that the NLD will set up the new constitution within two and a half months. He also suggested that they could use the 1947 constitution. However, on the 19th of June, Gen Saw Maung gave a speech in which he said that the newly elected government should not use the 1947 constitution and should draw up a new constitution which they must spend a lot of time on.)

Once a new constitution, acceptable to SLORC, is drawn up, the military government would hand over its duties to an elected cabinet -- but only once a series of conditions are met.

The first condition is that the new government must not restructure the armed forces or transfer any officers. (Note: Since Gen Ne Win took power against the people's government on March 2 1962, many of the high ranking military officers have been most responsible for the breakdown of the country's development, corruption, massacres in 1962, 1974 and 1988 and the development of links with the

(EDITORIAL...continued)

opium production in Northern Burma, the Golden Triangle, Khun Sa, etc.)

The second condition is that all contracts signed between the military government and foreign interests be honored. This is specially aimed at placating those Thai businessmen who rushed into Burma to sign fishing and logging deals shortly after the military takeover in September 1988. (Dawn note; Since the coup, the SLORC has made contracts with over 300 foreign companies, especially Thailand. Even after the election, SLORC has still signed contracts with foreign companies. Many of the contract are long term. There is much corruption within the SLORC and among the current military leaders.)

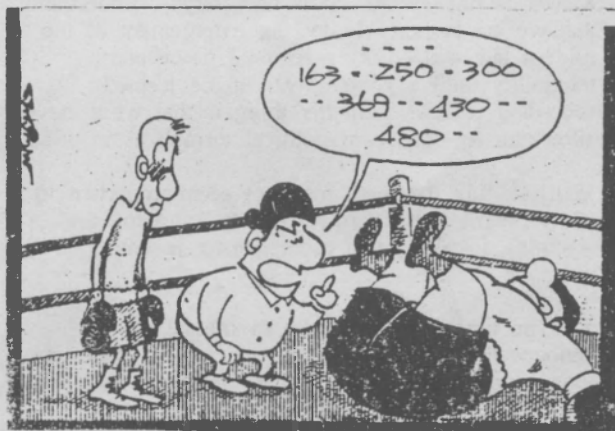
The third condition is that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the NLD's popular general secretary, be disqualified from playing an active role in Burmese politics. This, the sources say, will be done by referring to clause 74(1)(i) of Burma's 1947 constitution (which SLORC will not let NLD use as a starting point for their takeover of state power), which states "any person who is under acknowledge of allegiance or adherence to a foreign power, or is a subject or entitled to the rights and privileges of a subject or a citizen of a foreign power....shall be disqualified for being chosen and for being a member of either chamber (of the parliament)." Aung San Suu Kyi is married to a British subject. However, observers said this attempt to deny Aung San Suu Kyi a political role reflected her position as the most outspoken critic of the SLORC and one of the few Burmese politicians whom the military has been unable to manipulate. She was put under house arrest on 20 July 1989 for "up to one year," and is therefore eligible for release next month. (Dawn Note; Sources in Rangoon said that SLORC has a plan to try Aung San Suu Kyi in a Military tribunal before the 20th of July 1990.)

The forth condition would bar any new government from entering into peace talks with Burma's ethnic insurgents. From the DDSI point of view, such negotiations would reverse the military's present advantage in Burma's civil war and, by extension, undermine the rationale for maintaining the country's 200,000 strong army. The army's central position in Burma's political and economic life has long been justified by its counter-insurgency role rather

than any perceived external threat. With peace, stability and the federal structure advocated by the NLD, the army's strength could be reduced to a 20-30,000 strong border security force. Clearly, the military is unwilling to accept such a diminished role.

While this scenario may ensure Burma's fundamental power structure remains unchanged, observers say it is unlikely the NLD could agree to these terms without losing its current, massive electoral mandate. It is also uncertain whether the international community would accept such a deal. "We'll give the military two to three months to hand over real power to an elected government. If the SLORC does not agree to anything more than cosmetic changes, there'll be concerted international pressure," a Rangoon-based Western diplomat told the Review.

It is, however, not only the international community which will initiate pressure against SLORC if they continue to keep their grasp on power. The Burmese people have had enough of the military and their games. The elections were one small step for the people towards democracy. They will not willingly take a step backwards. If SLORC does not move soon to start a power transfer process, uprisings will most likely once again take place throughout Burma. This should not be necessary. SLORC, Ne Win and the military leaders should recognize their defeat and step down with dignity.



A VOICE FROM TIANAMEN

This will was written by an unnamed 15 year old boy and mailed to his family 1 month before his death in Tianamen Square. We salute his courage and his dedication. In this age, it is the youth who become the new heroes even though they do not wish it so. Let all of us, young and old, draw courage and inspiration from this young boy, and join him in committing our lives to justice, and human rights.

LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT OF A 15 YEAR OLD BOY

I hear the call of democracy. It is ringing in my mind; I can feel the sparks of freedom, they are burning in my heart. Like our thinkers of the past who dared to dream,
I must follow in their steps.
I, too, am prepared to bleed,
and I will give my life, as they did,
for this, our beloved land.

The past is over. After five thousand years of feudalism, we must break out chains.
The past is finished. After forty years of tyranny, we must abandon our chains.
For this, I have become a willing seed.

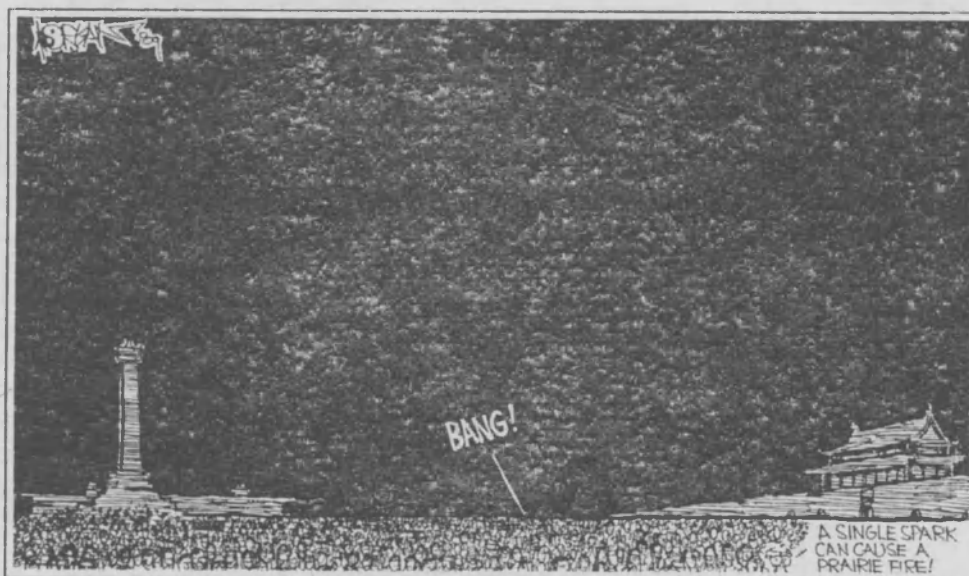
Goodbye forever, my mother, my country;
I shall go to plant democracy in this, our beloved land. Thank you for nourishing me, for bringing me up,
for making me what I am.
I give to you my love, I leave to you my respect.

Goodbye forever, my mother, my country;
I have become a spark.
I am a fireseed who shall go to ignite the light of freedom. May it glow forever to reflect the virtue of my countrymen.

Goodbye forever,
my mother,
my country.

May 4, 1989 Tianamen Square

Translated by John and Ching Yee Smithback



PHOTOS



Top left: A porter shows off his scars after escaping column.

Top: Two refugee children face an unknown future c understand or want.

Top right: ABSDF medical students provide much ne

Bottom right: Life in the jungle is simple and difficu

Bottom left: Monks in Mandalay are confronted by a "kill" orders.





PHOTOS



s scars after escaping from a Burmese military
 an unknown future created by a war they neither
 ents provide much needed medical care to villagers.
 is simple and difficult. There are no luxuries.
 y are confronted by armed soldiers with "shoot to



A BRIEF LOOK BACK

July 19, 1947: Aung San, the architect of Burma's independence, is assassinated by gunmen who break into a meeting of the pro-independence Executive Council, the country's interim government.

January 4, 1948: Burma becomes independent. U Nu is prime minister. Insurgencies break out in areas where ethnic minorities are predominant, seeking autonomy from Rangoon. The Karens emerge as the strongest of the minority guerrillas to fight the central government, which also faces an armed communist insurgency.

1951: First general elections. U Nu re-elected prime minister.

1956: U Nu resumes office, but security deteriorates as factionalism and friction between political parties mount.

1958: U Nu steps down again, offering the armed forces chief, General Ne Win, the leadership of a caretaker government.

February-March 1960: Elections give U Nu a landslide victory, but unrest and secessionist threats mount. Non-Buddhist Burmese are outraged when the government amends the constitution to proclaim Buddhism the state religion. The Buddhist majority becomes restless when another amendment guarantees the right to practice and teach all religions.

March 2, 1962: Ne Win seizes power in a military coup. A few weeks later, he sets the country on "the Burmese Way to Socialism."

July 7, 1962: Dozens are killed as the army crushes anti-government student protests in Rangoon.

May 1974: Troops fire on protesting workers in Rangoon, killing dozens of people.

December 1974: Hundreds of demonstrators are killed as troops and students clash in Rangoon during the funeral of U Thant, the United Nations' Burmese secretary general. Martial law is proclaimed.

November 1981: Ne Win steps down from Burma's presidency, but retains the chairmanship of the ruling Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP).

September 1987: The government demonetizes banknotes, sparking off student demonstrations.

December 1987: The UN General Assembly approves least-developed country status for Burma.

March 1988: A fight in a teashop between students of the Rangoon Institute of Technology and locals leads to student demonstrations. Troops fire on the students.

June-July 1988: Ne Win announces his retirement as BSPP chairman. August 3, 1988: Martial law is proclaimed in Rangoon. Thousands march through the city center, defying a ban on demonstrations.

August 8, 1988: A general strike goes into effect and mass demonstrations are held nationwide. The following day, troops kill scores of demonstrators and arrest thousands. The confrontations continue throughout August and into the first half of September.

September 18, 1988: The army, led by General Saw Maung, seizes power. The coup is followed by widespread repression. Thousands of students flee to insurgent-held border areas. The junta promises free and fair elections.

July 20, 1989: Opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of Aung San, and fellow pro-democracy leader Tin Oo are put under house arrest. Tin Oo is subsequently sentenced to three years in jail for sedition.

November 7, 1989: The military government announces general elections for May 27, 1990.

December 29, 1989: U Nu is placed under house arrest.

(A Brief Look Back....continued)

Population: About 38 million, of which 72 per cent are Burman and the rest Karen, Shan, Kachin, Chin, Kayar, Mon, Arakanese, Indian and Chinese.

Area: 678,576 sq kms (262,000 sq miles) of which 12 per cent is cultivated and 48 per cent forest. Bounded by Bangladesh to the west, India to the northwest, China to the northeast, Thailand and Laos to the east and the Bay of Bengal and the Andaman Sea to the west and south.

Capital: Rangoon, population about 2.5 million (1987).

Armed forces: About 170,000 men.

Economy: Annual per capita income: \$190 (1986). GNP \$8.35 billion (for fiscal 1987 ended March 1987 at official exchange rate of seven kyat to dollar)>

Main economic sectors: Agriculture, minerals, forestry and light industries.

Main exports: Rice and rice products, teak and other hardwoods, metal and metal ores.

Main imports: Machinery and transport equipment, basic manufactures and fertilizers.

(compiled by Agence France-Presse, Reuter)



In Massachusetts, USA, a small group of university students got together to study the situation in Burma. They paid special interest to human rights issues, and collected news from "Dawn" news bulletin as well as from many other sources. Their concern for this country, little known to the American people, inspired them to hold a sale of collectable items such as old books, household items, clothing etc. The money they earned from this sale was sent to help and encourage those Burmese young people who are working for peace and justice in Burma.

Their activity may seem simple, or even insignificant to many, but to us it is an example of good, creative solidarity. Not only did they raise some money, but they also had opportunity to talk to all those who came to buy. In these discussions they could spread the word about human rights abuses inside Burma, and encourage others to get involved in working for peace and justice.

These hands, stretching across the ocean, are an important encouragement to us. We believe that, together, we can bring about an end to civil war.

Our special thanks to you, our friends in Massachusetts.

ECONOMIC ACTIONS

The Burma Peace Foundation based in London England, is encouraging individuals and organizations around the world to write letters to companies investing or planning to invest in Burma, asking those companies to withhold their investments until after a clear and definite transfer of power to the NLD. They suggest the letter might be as follows:

Dear Chairperson:

We understand that your company has an interest in Burma. Our organization is concerned to encourage the establishment of a just social, political and economic order in that country. The recent elections indicate a massive popular rejection of the military regime and overwhelming support for the main opposition party, the National League for Democracy, which will no doubt form a government as some point in the future. The NLD has asked companies not to invest in Burma, on the grounds that such investment would simply prolong the lifetime of an unrepresentative and cruel regime.

We believe that by entering into discussions with representatives of the NLD, when this becomes possible, and freezing or postponing investment until such discussions have taken place, companies such as your own could play a positive background role in the speedy transfer of power, and enhance the prospects for a long-term relationship between yourselves and the future government.

Yours sincerely,

We encourage our readers to take this kind of action. It is very important now. Past issues of Dawn list many of the companies which are now investing or planning to invest in Burma. A strong letter campaign might encourage them to wait until there is a more democratic climate in the country.

The military regime continues to hang on to power because they have the financial ability to keep their army supplied and active. The May 27 election was a clear voice from the people that they no longer want the military running their country. Thus an economic boycott to weaken the military's hold over the people would be a boost for the democratic movement.

PEPSI COLA

The American company, Pepsi Cola has signed a contract with a company in Burma to begin distributing their product. They will also build a bottling plant in Burma.

In a country listed as one of the 10 poorest countries in the world, soft drinks such as Pepsi are simply not appropriate. Nor is it appropriate to begin distribution and production under the present oppressive military system. Signing a contract with a private company in Burma rather than directly with the brutal military regime does not lessen the seriousness of the issue.

The primary target group for Pepsi in Burma is the youth. This is their primary target group throughout the world.

Therefore, we call on the youth of the world to join us in a boycott of all Pepsi products. We call on students in schools and universities to request that all Pepsi products be removed from their campus.

Pepsi's investment in Burma is a support for a regime which came to power through the arrest, detention and murder of more than 8000 young people who were peacefully demonstrating for democracy. If Pepsi truly cares for the youth of the world, they should be helping isolate this brutal youth-killing regime, and rather wait for a democratically elected government to be installed before discussing investments in Burma.

As young people of Burma, we call on our young brothers and sisters all over the world to stand with us and call for Pepsi to withdraw immediately from Burma. We are the target group for Pepsi, and therefore we have power. Now, let us use it for the cause of justice!

BOYCOTT PEPSI

POST ELECTION NEWS

STRAIGHT TALK FROM SLORC

May 29: Burma's martial law government conceded yesterday that the leading pro-democracy party, the National League for Democracy, (NLD), had scored a major election victory and promised to relinquish power as soon as a new constitution was approved.

A military spokesman, Kyaw Sann, said, "Any government that is formed according to the constitution will be strong and stable. It is totally up to the elected members [of the new legislature] They can move as quickly as they like and take power."

Col Y Htut, another military spokesman said the new parliament also would decide whether the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council would continue to exist. He said the army would abide by the new constitution.

Government officials were adamant that SLORC's mission was accomplished and now the elected parliamentarians would decide among themselves what type of system, or administration, they would pursue.

However, Deputy Foreign Minister U Ohn Kyaw said that the new parliament's rule remained undetermined. "There must be some boundary, some rules, and SLORC will set these," he said.

Col Ye Htut said the parliament would write the constitution, decide whether to adopt it directly or hold a referendum, and a government would then be formed.

May 31: Saw Maung said that the military would "continue attending to the country's need for security, transportation and food. Whoever interferes in our carrying out our tasks of preventing disintegration of the union, perpetuating national sovereignty and protecting national unity will not be tolerated."

June 3: The military government on Friday clarified its plans to hand over power to the opposition party which won Sunday's elections, saying no referendum or further elections would be necessary -- only the passage of a new constitution.

Kyi Maung, acting president of the victorious National League for Democracy, said his party would have the new constitution ready within two and one-half months.

June 6: The military has said new legislature must first pass a durable constitution, and then form a strong government under the new constitution. Only then will the ruling junta, the State Law and Order Restoration Council transfer power, a spokesman for SLORC said on Friday.

He added that since the new constitution should be a durable fundamental law of the land, it is preferable to have it approved by the whole people in a referendum.

June 16: Burma's pro-government party, humiliated by an opposition landslide in last month's army-run elections, has protested that the National League for Democracy won by fraud, diplomats said yesterday. They said the complaint, lodged by the NUP with the Election Commission on Thursday, has added to growing doubts in Rangoon about whether the military government would accept the ballot results and step down.

June 20: Gen Saw Maung, on Monday, stressed that his government will not be rushed into handing over power to the civilian opposition that won the national elections on May 27. He said that first a new constitution must be drafted and emphasized that it will be a complicated and lengthy process.

June 22: Slorc says that final results of last month's election in Burma will be delayed because bad weather has hampered access to remote areas.

June 23: An editorial in yesterday's WORKING PEOPLE'S DAILY ruled out opposition plans to rush through a constitution.

It has been said that the constitution [of 1947] was written in three months and 23 days only. Certain people are saying nowadays that it can be done in much less. In our opinion, this is the height of irresponsibility or else of crass ignorance."

A spokesman for the ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council told a news conference it had made arrangements to meet with representatives of victorious political parties, but had set no date. "We are merely waiting for the right and proper time to hold a dialogue between the SLORC and the political parties," the spokesman said.

NE WIN'S COLONIAL RULE

The 27th of May 1990 became one of Burma's great historic days. On this day, the 28 year-old Burmese military regime, ruled by a one-party military dictatorship (the Burma Socialist Program Party), could no longer stop the people's demands to hold a multi-Party democracy general election. People all over the country joined the struggle for democracy, freedom and human rights by casting their votes for the National League For Democracy party.

The 27th of May 1990 can be compared to Burma's "Union Day", when the "Panglong agreement" was signed on the 12th of February 1947.

In 1885, Burma had totally become a British colony. To end this colonization, the Burma Independence Army, led by General Aung San, national hero of Burma and father of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi (now the General Secretary of NLD), fought against the British in Dec 1941 with the Japanese Army. After that victory, Burma became a Japanese colony and the Burmese National Army, again led by General Aung San, declared war against the Japanese on the 27th of March 1945. Following the defeat of the Japanese in 1945, Burma returned to British colonization.

General Aung San continued his struggle to get independence from the British. At first the British government did not want to give Independence to the whole country. They wanted to divide the country into a mountain region and a lowland region. But, on the 27th of January 1947, General Aung San* signed an agreement in London with British labor prime minister Clement Attlee, promising full independence for Burma "within one year".

On the 12th of February 1947, Gen Aung San travelled to Panglong, in the Shan State, and signed an agreement with leaders of the Shan, Kachin and Chin, paving the way for their joining the proposed Union of Burma under a federal constitution. They also demanded that the British government give independence to a unified Burma rather than a nation divided into mountain region and lowland region.

Following General Aung San's assassination, U Nu, the AFPFL's vice president (now the patron of the League for Democracy and Peace Party), travelled to

London in October 1947 and a second agreement was signed with Attlee. Burma became independence at the auspicious hour of 4.20 am on the 4th of January 1948.

The events surrounding the Panglong agreement are really quite similar to the elections, on 27th May 1990. Through the Panglong agreement, the different ethnic groups of Burma showed the British that we are united want to get independence and freedom for the whole country. The voice raised by the people through the May 27, 1990 elections is no less clear and precise.

On the 2nd of March 1962, Gen Ne Win took power away from the people's elected government and Burma became Gen Ne Win's military colony. Since that time, the Burmese people have been fighting against the Gen Ne Win military and demanding for freedom. From the beginning of 1988, the students and the people bravely asked for freedom and the transfer of power to the people from the 26- year-rule by the one party military rule of Gen Ne Win's BSPP government.

This forced the BSPP to call an emergency congress on the 23rd of June 1988. During this emergency congress, Gen Ne Win said we wanted to know if the people who are against the BSPP are a minority or a majority. He suggested a referendum on the issue of the one-party system. That proposal, however, was rejected by the congress. This was a very strange move because the BSPP congress had never gone against a proposal of Gen Ne Win in the past. Usually the congress would discuss everything before the congress even started so the actual meeting was only a rubber stamp ceremony of what Gen. Ne Win wanted.

The uprisings in Burma grew stronger and the people constantly demanded for freedom. On the 19th of August 1988, the Congress set up a commission, headed by the chairman of the Council of People's Justice, U Tin Aung Hein, to ascertain 'the desires and aspirations of the people'. The people were angered even more and said that the government should already understand the desires of the people. The commission closed after only one day and tens of thousands of people demonstrated in front of the commission office in Rangoon.

On the 24th of August 1988, Dr Maung Maung promised a referendum on the issue of a one-party or a multi-party system. But demonstrations were still going on and strongly demanding that the BSPP government be dissolved.

On the 10th Sept 1988, the BSPP held an emergency congress and purposed to hold multi-party general elections and cancel the suggested referendum. On the 11th of September, the congress agreed to hold the multi-party general elections and formed the election commission.

During all of this time, SLORC has followed Ne Win's policy to divide and rule the country just as the British did in earlier days. They have continued to claim that the ethnic minorities want to form completely independent states and thus break apart the union. SLORC's purpose in carrying out this farce is to create a division between the ethnic Burmans and the other ethnic minorities. They are, in fact, continue the British plan to create a lowland area and a mountain area, rather than a totally united Burma.

Many difficulties have been met, and many lives sacrificed to reach the multi-party general elections.

Even though Gen Ne Win's military regime has now held the multi-party general elections, they continue to refuse to transfer the power to the people's elected government.

After the BSPP's emergency congress of September 11 1988 decided to hold the multi-party general elections, Gen Saw Maung, defence minister, seized power on the 18th of Sept 1988 and killed several thousand un-armed demonstrators and arrested thousands of people who took part in demonstrations throughout the country. The military issued many laws against the electoral processes such as announcing martial law, curfew, forming military tribunals for easy arrest and prosecution, and restricting prominent opposition leaders from giving speeches, publishing documents and campaigning.

On the 26th of Sept 1988, the BSPP changed their name to National Unity Party and registered with the election commission. This was suppose to give them a new image.

On the 27th of September 1988, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, Gen Tin Oo and U Aung Kyi formed the National League For Democracy party and registered with the election commission.

After the coup, over 200 political parties registered with the election commission. That many political

parties made for confusion among the people and made it possible that the votes would be divided among many political parties so that a coalition government would have to be formed. One opposition political leader said that the NUP, formerly the BSPP and backed by SLORC, had given some money to their people to form many of these political parties. He added that so many political parties could not form a stable coalition government.

On the 30th of October 1988, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi started visits to more than 50 towns and villages in Pegu, Magwe, Mandalay, Sagaing • Division, and Shan State. She received much support from the people. In all of her speeches, she called for unity and strong discipline. Her campaign trips were seem as similar to her father's trip to Panglong in the Shan State and the signing of the Panglong agreement in 1947.

It is very clear that the BSPP government is like the British colonial government which tried many ways to create division in order to keep control. However, the people of Burma are not tricked for long. They want unity and peace for their country, and they will continue their struggle until the military gives up its hold on the country and allows a government elected by the people, to begin the rebuilding process.

The election held on the 27th of May 1990, is not seen as a general election. It is seen as a referendum on the issue of a ruling one-party military dictator or a multi-party democratic rule.

Now, the people of Burma have shown their incredible unity by casting their votes in unity for the National League for Democracy Party even though there were over 200 other political parties, and they had to face many intimidations and no freedom. It means that the Burmese people no longer want to stay under the military regime or NUP (BSPP government).

The NLD won in the elections, not only in the Divisions but also in the ethnic States. At the same time the Democratic Alliance of Burma which is composed of the NDF and other opposition groups, has strongly supported the NLD and has urged the military government to hand over power to the NLD immediately.

The Burmese military regime must finally give power to the people's elected government. We believe that every military dictator has to fall after confronting the people's desire for freedom.

TRANSFER OF POWER

According to a UPI report from Rangoon on June 21, the National League for Democracy defended its plans for a new constitution and said it wanted talks with the military soon on the transfer of power.

The NLD won over two thirds of the votes in the May elections. However, the military regime does not want to turn power over, and has rejected the NLD's plans for a new constitution.

"We are now the elected representatives of the people, so the NLD, as well as the military government, will now have to work together for the good of the people," said acting party leader Kyi Maung according to the UPI report.

The pro-military political party, NUP, has so far won only 7 seats, and this has obviously angered the military which was convinced that they had rigged the elections enough to win a much greater

share of the votes.

Since the people voted so over whelmingly in favor of the NLD, a transfer of power should take place swiftly and smoothly. However, the military has thrown out so many road blocks to the process that many people are beginning to believe that the vote of the people is actually meaningless to the military.

A quick transfer of power could mean a quick end to the civil war which has affected Burma for so many years and could also allow the reuniting of thousands of families who have been divided through imprisonment or exile.

The military can only start regaining some credibility if they heed the demands of the people expressed through the May elections, and quickly begin negotiations with the NLD on the transfer of state power.