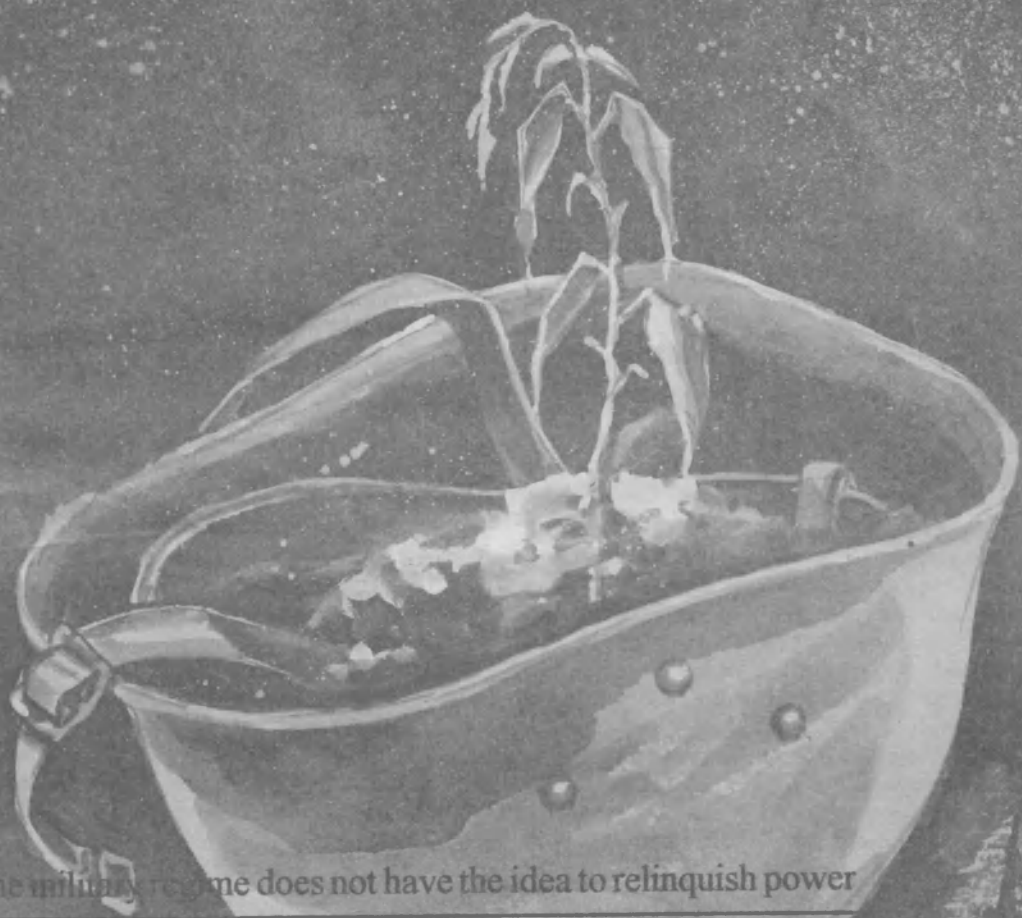


DAWN

NEWS BULLETIN



If the military regime does not have the idea to relinquish power
or if it concentrates to cling on it, the people in Burma will suffer
more ruthless and deceitful suppression of Slorc.

DAWN

NEWS BULLETIN

Vol.4 No.5

October, November 1993

AGENDA FOR PEACE IN BURMA

The world today is moving on the trend to global peace and national reconciliation at its climax and many decades-long conflicts in the world came to an end through sincere and genuine peaceful solutions. The sounds of the guns become ceased and the question of peace talks has been raised louder than before.

Burma is lack of peace since there has been no peaceful solution to the political problems, existed between the democratic forces and the military junta. Armed conflict which accelerates the civil war has been existing as no solution has been sought. If these political problems are settled by political means, there is no doubt for the restoration of internal peace.

Absent of war does not mean peace. Peace can be restored only when the political problems are solved. Ceasefire is only one of the necessary steps in the process of peaceful discussion in solving the political problems. Ceasefire is yet meaningless, and genuine peace could rarely be restored unless there is aspiration for political negotiation.

Slorc interprets ceasefire as the restoration of peace. (Slorc undermines peace by introducing ceasefire) To reach ceasefire agreement, Slorc is concentrating on partial and selected approach to the ethnic revolutionary forces. Wa, Palaung, Kokang and Pa-O minorities which reached ceasefire agreement with Slorc were pushed to the corner of national convention by stating that they can discuss the political issues there.

Other remaining ethnic minorities have been offered special privileges — allowing them to maintain control their territories. Slorc is also diverting the attention of the international community by echoing their propagandised exercise of ceasefire and stability in the country aiming to justify their rule. It is certain that such activities of Slorc are no more than for their survival from the crises. At the moment, Slorc is also approaching the grass-roots of ethnic revolutionary forces in order to reach separate agreement. Moreover, Slorc has been attempting to divide the alliance between the ethnic revolutionary forces and 8888 pro-democracy groups. Divide & Rule policy or selected approach is the mainstream of Slorc's tactics.

In Burma, restoration of Democracy and human rights, and recognition of and guarantee for the rights of the ethnic minorities are remained as 2 major problems to be solved. Civil war could no longer exit if decades-long political problems are solved in a sincere attitude. Slorc's present tactic is offering a bit of their rights (privileges) to different ethnic minorities, and creates discrimination among them. Long-lasting peace and genuine freedom can never exist where restoration of democracy and respect for human rights are deterred.

If Slorc is sincere enough for the restoration of genuine internal peace, announcement of nationwide ceasefire, unconditional release of Daw Aung San Sun Kvi and all other political prisoners, withdrawal of all injustice laws and orders, agreement to discuss the major political problems and meeting with all democratic forces on the basis of access to freedom and equilibrium must be sanctioned.

After learning lessons from the abortive peace talks in Burma's history, three major conditions — three-party meeting, (1) Ethnic revolutionary forces and Democratic forces along the borders; (2) MPs elected in the 1990 election and political party leaders led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and (3) Armed forces from Burmese army, and these meetings must be held in a third country to which Special Envoy of the UN Secretary General can monitor and all the process of the talks must be released to the media (freedom of media) — are needed in seeking long-term peace. If Slorc is honest, and doing for the sake of the people, it must accept these conditions and should accept collective rather than selective peace talks.

All of us must attempt for the restoration of genuine peace which guarantees the interest of the people. Peace can be restored only when democracy and human rights are respected and the rights of the ethnic minorities are fully guaranteed. Coexistence of arms at hands does not mean the state of genuine peace. Such state guarantees neither the interest of the people nor their free and developed social standards. In seeking solutions to these problems, we must concentrate on collective approach.

FIFTH YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE ABSDF HELD



With the aim to encourage its members in the struggle for democracy and human rights, the fifth anniversary of the formation of the ABSDF was held on November 1 at its Central Headquarters (Dawn Gwin). Present at the ceremony were Chairman Dr Naing Aung and Central Committee members to the Front, members of the ABSDF from Salween, Ye Kyaw, Saw Hta, Thay Law Hta, Thay Baw Boe and Moe Kae camp, representatives of the democratic organisations and other invited guests. In his speech, Chairman Dr Naing Aung emphasised the founding day of the ABSDF as the landmark in the history of Burma on which the Front raised the flag of fighting peacock in the liberated area and opened the new page of the history. "In Burma where the political system is unstable, safety and justice are not guaranteed, we cannot dream for the development of the country," stressed the Chairman. To achieve those the ABSDF is upholding the National Politics and struggling for the interest of the people in order to make them to liberate from their sufferings. He said, "On this auspicious occasion, I would like to urge all of you to maintain the burning spirit and unity which is of great importance for all of us and to gear the spirit of fighting peacock and to keep in mind that the dignity of the country and the hope of the people are on the shoulders ABSDF." The Chairman concluded his speech with gratitude to all the friends of the ABSDF at local and international level which support the Front to stand on his feet.

A photo exhibition which reflected the activities of the ABSDF, and games, stage show, Burmese traditional dance, short play and opera were also included.

Similar activities were also held at Working Group (Southern), Huay Sedi and Aung Hum Rai camp. At the southern office, Secretary (1) Aung Htoo presided over the ceremony which was attended by 120 peoples. The 5th anniversary declaration of the Central Committee and message from the Chairman were read out.

MESSAGES OF FELICITATIONS

"Your strength and commitment since 1988 is an inspiration for us all. We will continue to offer our unqualified support in our united struggle for freedom and democracy for Burma."

(Maise Warburton, International Co-ordinator, Australia Burma Council)

"The 8.8.88 Burmese students uprising which challenged the dictatorial regime inside Burma has given tremendous inspiration and courage to millions of youth and students in Asia-Pacific... We are confident that the ABSDF together with the Burmese people through militant struggle will achieve democracy, human rights and social justice in Burma. And once again ASA reiterate its commitment to support peoples democratic struggle of the Burmese people." *(Rajan Bhattarai, ASA Secretary)*

"The mission you have chosen is the most honourable one: fighting for the freedom for yourselves and for others. ... As our brothers and comrades, you have proven us the commitment that you have for the people and the country. You have been playing the most important role and the mission in the history of Burma. You will be recorded in the history. Let's make a pledge on the fifth anniversary of forming of ABSDF: Today! We will fight for the freedom for Burmese people until our last moment. Let's build a cause for the peace day by day."

ABSDF ON THE MOVE

(Kenneth Oo, Secretary, All Young Burmese League)

"All of you have reason to be proud of your accomplishments... For these five years you have been a beacon of hope for millions of oppressed Burmese. Today that light shines ever more brightly because you have so successfully overcome many obstacles, both internal and external, which threatened your organisation. We congratulate ABSDF not only for surviving these five difficult years, but also for adhering so strongly to the principles of democracy. We appreciate your many accomplishments, your indomitable spirit, and your excellent organisation. We support your goals and respect your methods."

(Ken and Visakha Kawasaki, Burmese Relief Center-Japan)

"The Executive Secretariat of the IUS believes that the struggle of the students and people of Burma for Democracy will be more effective and stronger in future days, and that ABSDF will lead the way as they have been doing for the last five years. In this very day we once again would like to reiterate our full support and solidarity to ABSDF, all of its members, Burmese students and to all the struggling people in Burma."

(Nasir Ud Duza, IUS Secretary for Asia and Pacific)

"The NLD (LA) would like to convey its great respect to the members of the ABSDF which has been fighting against Slor regime and bearing all the difficulties. We honour all the members of the Front who sacrificed their lives in the fight for the restoration of democracy and human rights in Burma.

(Organising Committee, National League for Democracy (Liberated Area))

* Message of felicitations were also sent by ABYMU, DPNS, KNLF, NCGUB.

ABSDF REP. PARTICIPATES SEMINAR ON PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Dr Thaug Htun, Member of the Central Executive Committee of the ABSDF (Foreign Affairs), participated the seminar on the "Regional Systems for the Protection of Human Rights in Asia, Africa, America and Europe" held in Strasburg, France from 3-8 October 1993. This seminar sponsored by the Friedrich-Naumann-Stiftung, German Foundation, discussed on the issue of the universality of Human Rights and cultural diversity and the implementation of the human rights in different socio-cultural contexts. Present at the seminar were some members of parliament from ASEAN countries, officials from United Nations Centre for Human Rights, African Commission on Human Rights, European Commission of Human Rights, Centre for Justice and International Law, European Court of Human Rights, ASEAN Parliamentary Organisation and Human Rights activists from Brunei, Burma, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Austria, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Taiwan and Vietnam.

Dr Thaug Htun took part in the presentation of legal system and human rights situation in Asian countries and presented the human rights and political situation in Burma. During the six-day seminar, regional systems of human rights protection within a comparative perspective in Asia, African, Europe and the Americas were discussed. Some issues on the "Human Rights Protection", "An ASEAN Charter on Human Rights" were raised and recommendations and evaluation on these specific issues were presented in the closing session.

In the resolution, the seminar supported the ideas of setting up of regional human rights mechanism in Asia and decided to call next conference before the ASEAN ministerial meeting in 1994.

REFRESHER TRAINING AT MINTHAMEE

Six-week long refresher training course No (1) was opened on September 9 in Minthamee Camp of the ABSDF. At that training, ABSDF's policy, constitution and laws were lectured by Central Committee members of Southern Working Group. At the closing session of the training Camp leader Zaw Than urged, "Members of the camps must always find their ways for progress. This training will help improve ways of thinking, strengthening the spirit of fighting peacock and in adhering the discipline." "Developments today must be effective than yesterday and developments of tomorrow must be better than today," he added. He also asked the members of the camp to work in harmony and collective. After that three outstanding students at the training were awarded.

RELEASE AUNG SAN SUU KYI

BIRDS GOING TO FLY IN THE NEW ERA

In October, the Information Department of ABSDF started distributing a series of the Revolutionary songs composed by Maung Doe, Wa Lone, Lu Bo, Khin Maung Win (Salween), Khun Pat Htar and students from ABSDF (Northern Burma). Vocalists in that series are Htoo Maw, Aung Zaw Min, Sarviyo, Lu Bo, Ko Dauk, Hla Thein, Khun Pat Htar, Kyaw Kyaw (Kachin), San San Myint and Mi Sue Pwint, and the cover was illustrated by Sitt Nyein Aye.



A CALL TO ACTION

January 4, 1994

Burma's Independence Day

Worldwide Demonstrations for Freedom and Human Rights in Burma

Inside Burma, citizens cannot openly demonstrate without risking arrest or worse. They can only show their solidarity with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi by placing themselves under "Voluntary House Arrest" on January 4.

Without Freedom, Independence has no meaning!

Outside Burma, Burmese and Friends of Burma can and must demonstrate their support for democracy and freedom in Burma. Let's plan many different events for January 4.

- Expose Burma's lack of freedom under Slorc military junta.
- Protest Slorc's selling off country's natural resources to finance its brutal civil war.
- Call for immediate release of all political prisoners, including Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.
- Demand a stop to dams on the Salween and Moei Rivers and the pipeline through Three Pagoda Pass.
- Pray for peace in Burma and an end to religious persecution of Buddhist monks

Inform the local media of your plan and send a report after the event. For international coverage, fax all your press releases both before and after the event to some or all of the following:

British Broadcasting Corporation
44-71-379-0975
Atten: Mr Derek Brooke Wavell
(BBC Eastern Service)

Voice Of America
1-202-619-3548
(Atten: Burma)

ABSDF
66-55-531952

Democratic Voice of Burma (Norway)
47-22-11-4988

Kyodo News Service (Japan)
81-3-5573-8082
Atten: Mr Zaw Win Maung (World Services Section)

ABSDF PRAISES THAI HOUSE COMMITTEE

The ABSDF on October 11 stated its appreciation on the decision of the House Committee revealed by Palang Dharma MP Dr Sutin Nophaket that the ASEAN should set conditions – the immediate and unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all other political prisoners and prisoners of conscience, an immediate nationwide ceasefire and the cessation of all violations against the human rights of the ethnic minorities, a guarantee that all ethnic nationalities will be allowed to live in safety and in peace, and the turning of political power over to the winners of the 1990 elections in Burma – on Slorc's acceptance as a member of the ASEAN.

This move obviously could reveal and reflect the will of the grass-roots in Burma who have been suffering from different forms of suppression under the successive military boot-heel for more than 3 decades. Moreover, it also reflected the UNGA Resolution 47/144 of December 18, 1992 and UNCHR Resolution 1193/59 of March 3, 1993."

Concerning Slorc's convention, "Slorc is driving toward rubber-stamping a constitution tailor-made for the military regime by holding self-imposed propaganda exercise of sham national convention. The monopolised command politics and militarisation policy have been included at gun point in the Constitutional appraisal laid down in September 1993. These facts clearly point out that Slorc is trying to invent the so-called *Burmese Way to Democracy* or continue to rule the country under the disguise of Democracy," said the ABSDF

Regarding the realities inside Burma, "This trend to Democ-

racy is beyond the realities both in notion and in practice, as the gross human rights violations and various forms of oppressions, and injustices are still cloudy in Burma. The market oriented economy which does not base on the concepts of fundamental democratic rights have plunged the country into the circle of economic crises. In this stage, people's social life is deteriorating to impoverishment because foreign debt is very lofty, basic commodities are at skyrocketing price and the GNP is decreasing while the inflation rate is very high. These are the results of Slorc's denial of basic needs in exercise of the market economy and mismanagement rather than the lack of knowledge," the ABSDF added.

The proposal for the inclusion of Slorc in the regional body seems the ASEAN itself recognises Slorc's policy and practice. "If this recognition is part of the aims and objectives of constructive engagement policy practised by neighbouring countries, it will have to be very controversial to understand "Asian Style Democracy," pointed the ABSDF.

"Even though there may be self-interest of respective countries in order to meet their needs in market economy, the drive of that process which drowns the people of host country to be suffered from oppression and the erosion of the natural resources is no alternate than the meaning of 'Destructive Involvement'," the ABSDF said.

The ABSDF believed that until or unless these conditions are met, the invitation of ASEAN to attend the meeting of the regional body is no more than to be the culprits who are driving more nails into Burma's coffin. The statement urged, "It is time for ASEAN that its consideration should base rather on human rights

and the rights of individuals than the benefit of the military regime in Burma."

The ABSDF concluded that it saw the Parliamentary Committee's move as a long-term bilateral benefit for Burma and Thailand, and urges the committee to maintain and continue ahead this move for progressive achievement.

ABSDF MESSAGE OF FELICITATIONS

ABSDF Chairman Dr Naing Aung sent message of felicitations to IUS Council meeting held in Brazil from 19-24 October and ASA Sub-Regional Meeting held in the Philippines from 1-3 November. The Chairman expressed the hopes of the ABSDF that the future be flourished with the pleasant environment, right to education which will pave the way to development, warm human environment that coexist with solidarity and responsibility, sustainable economic development and just political system.

Excerpts from his messages:

"Today, we, the students and youth, must have the rights to develop a society in which we are going to live, and at the same time, must dismantle the barriers of the past and present and must bear in mind that spirit of solidarity is of great importance for all of us."

"With the end of the cold war, the balance of power change to the other side and the question of universal perspective become very imperative. In this juncture, we are aware that humanity is of great importance for the peoples of the world."

"We must be for love, faith and peace. Although fundamental democratic rights and basic human rights are neither alienated to

our Eastern cultural values nor Buddha's philosophy, the diversity of the concepts between East and West has been raised because the dictators in the former countries interpret the Universal perspectives as western culture. All of us are duty-bound to fight for the existing of fundamental democratic rights and for the promotion and protection of human rights as we are practising universalism. There are many concrete evidences that diversities of cultural values should not apply differences of rights to be existed because universalism is rooted in many pluralistic cultures. We will achieve ways and means for humanly progress from the environment that we are going to practice."

"After the cold war, there should be no approach based on the east-west bloc, the peoples of the world should only approach the conflicts of the oppressors and the exploited, aiming at global democratisation. ... The fight against the oppressors is the universalism that we believe.

"We must start with our single step of respective struggle.... In the global stage, we must attempt for the emergence of the basic concepts where there is no discrimination of rich against poor, mighty against weak, and where basic environments of justice, freedom and peace are flourished."

MESSAGE TO PARTICIPANTS OF BURMA STUDY/ ACTION WEEKEND

ABSDF Chairman Dr Naing Aung sent message to the gathering of Burma Study/ Action Weekend held in Kyoto on 6-7 November. He said, "As an organisation which opposing the dictatorial military regime, we are aware that we need help and support from our international friends in our struggle to relieve the suffering of

our people. There is nothing which can stop our belief in hoping for your support, by knowing that they belong to world family who love freedom and peace." Chairman urged the gathering to be with the movement until democracy and human rights are achieved in Burma. Moreover, for cooperation and action to liberate Burma, he wished to the gathering to have understanding, friendship, comrade spirit and trust.

ABSDF RESPONDS SLORC'S REPEATED BLATANT LIES

On October 15, the ABSDF responded Slorc Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw's speech delivered on October 12 at the UN General Assembly. The statement said, "his speech is only a composition of repeated blatant lies which are beyond the realities happening in Burma."

"Slorc is still denying the internationally-accepted Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Order which prohibits from gathering of more than five people is still imposed, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is still under house arrest and other 2,000 political prisoners are still remained in prisons of Burma. The media is under the control of Slorc and denial to freedom of expression is still continued. Although Slorc claims that it had already accepted over 40,000 refugees from Bangladesh, more than 200,000 are still in that country while other 30,000 are along the Thai Burma border," ABSDF statement added.

Any military controlled government could no longer practice democracy and human rights. So long as the military and its machinery remain in power, fundamental democratic rights and basic human rights will rarely be guaranteed. Economic and social development repeated by Slorc are only

to propagandise the international community in order to justify their legitimacy and not for the benefit of the people. Now Slorc is practising so-called divide and rule policy. The more it denies civil and political rights of the people, the louder it raises the issue of developments in economic and social sectors. Developments cannot benefit any country if it is under the boot-heel of the military regime. Because of these developments, more people have been subjected to various forms of human rights violations.

Concerning Slorc's ruthless tactic of dividing the rights of minorities from the fundamental democratic rights and freedom of expression in order to divert the attention of the international community, the Front believes that all these rights are indivisible and one can no longer exist without the other.

Regarding the groups which reached ceasefire agreement with Slorc, the ABSDF emphasised that these flimsy agreements could neither prevent the civil war from reoccurrence nor pave the way for the restoration of genuine peace in Burma.

The ABSDF fully understand that Human Rights is composed of different cultures in pluralistic perspective and it is the issue of universality. Human Rights should not be interpreted by the ruling class as they wish to.

Regarding the military in Burma, the ABSDF said, "The military is neither the guardian nor the saviour of the country." The statement concludes with the beliefs of the ABSDF -- so long as the military regime and its machinery exists, there is no chance for the restoration of democracy, genuine peace can never be restored, and human dignity, protection and promotion of human rights will ever be deterred.

FIRST DAB CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD

First DAB Central Committee meeting within the scheduled term of the First DAB Congress was held at Manerplaw on August 16-19 and attended by 16 member organisations. At that meeting DAB Chairman Gen Saw Bo Mya of the KNU presided over the ceremony while Nai Han Tha from NMSP and Myint Zaw from DPNS acting as secretaries.

In his opening speech, Gen Mya said, "In fighting against the military dictatorship, the importance is the unity. Whatever we are working must be for the interest of the people and for their benefit. We, as revolutionaries, are duty-bound for the prosperous, well-being, peaceful country and for the establishment of the federal union. We, therefore, need to work collectively."

Members to the DAB Central Committee discussed the 14-point agenda and the results were affirmed by the Chairman.

ABC 8-8-93 COMMEMORATIVE SERVICE

Canberra — Approximately 300 friends of Burma attended the commemorative service outside Slorc embassy in Yarralumla. The service was held to mourn the death of some 10,000 Burmese people in Burma where the pro-democracy activists were mowed down by the military in 1988.

Sir William Keys spoke of the success of the ABC and urged all Australians to support the pro-democracy movement of Burma for the sake of the Burmese people and the security of the region.

Mr Jim Snow spoke on behalf of

the Australian Parliamentary Friends of Burma when he said that the Australia was the only country in the world where the expatriate Burmese were prepared to work together for the sake of their country. He further stated that the Australia Government was committed to the course of the Burmese people and that the Australian Parliamentary Friends of Burma would be encouraging tough action against Slorc to ensure the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners. Dr Alan Smit spoke of the history of military dictatorships and stressed that their legitimacy was never long lived. His closing remarks brought a tone of hope to all us, "the military must return to the barracks." It was reportedly known that Representatives of all ABC Member Organizations sent statements and the Service was covered broadly by the media.

(Source: ABC)

BOYCOTT PEPSI COLA

In August 1993, Marc Purcell from Burma Support Group in Victoria, explained that student organizations have been actively campaigning and lobbying to have Pepsi Co. close down their Burma operation due to the fact that the revenue earned by Slorc is being used to prop up the military junta in Burma.

The ABC joined the campaign and called on all its members and Senators of Australian Parliament, Unions, NGOs, organisation and individuals to protest Pepsi Co's presence in Burma.

(Source: ABC)

THAI-BURMA MEETING HELD

On August 22, the Thai-Burma NGO meeting was held at the

office of Project for Ecological Recovery (PER) and Towards Ecological Recovery and Regional Alliance (TERRA). NGOs present to the meetings were Burma Rights Movement for Action (B.U.R.M.A), Coalition for Peace and Development, Villagers' Group for the Conservation of Watersheds (Ubon Ratchatani province), Chiang Mai-based World Wildlife Fund Thailand, PER, TERRA and official from the Tung Yai Wildlife Sanctuary in Kanchanaburi province.

The participants agreed, "The logging concessions are a key issue for the environmental campaign in Thailand, apart from the concessions being a source income for Slorc, they have destroyed the forests and natural resources of Burma which was one of the largest tracts of prime tropical forests left in mainland southeast Asia." As a part of this issue, a public seminar was proposed to organise for the Thai public in cooperation with academics at Kasetsart University and conservation groups such as Seub Foundation to focus on the impact of the Thai logging concessions on Thai-Burma watersheds.

Other environmental issues focused at the meeting were the natural gas concessions and the proposed hydroelectric dams on the Salween and tributaries, and participants agreed to have regular discussion on these issues.

The general campaign for democracy in Burma and the problems that the ethnic minorities face now and in the future were also discussed.

The last point raised in the meeting was the need to have regular opportunities to meet and reflect upon the issues and campaign strategies. The participants agreed that there is a need for better coor-

dination and communication between groups working on Burma, to include groups not present at the meeting who are also working on human rights/ environmental issues or refugee relief services along the border. The meeting also revealed a need for greater exchange of information and experience.

It was reportedly known that participants hoped that the meeting reflected a spirit of cooperation and commitment to strengthening the Thai-Burma environmental campaign.

NO AID TO SLORC

The ABC on August 27 called on all Members and Senators of Australian Parliament to lend their support and ensure that there will be no government money going to the areas of Burma occupied by Slorc because some NGOs are considering joining World Vision and entering into contractual agreements with Slorc to give aid while the possibility of Australian government's consideration on providing funds is also clung on.

The ABC in its report said, "aid to the Slorc at this time would be irresponsible and not in the best interests of the Burmese people."

ABC stressed that dealing with Slorc will give legitimacy to the regime which will use the existence of the NGOs to con the people of Burma into believing that the international community is now accepting that Slorc are there to say. Moreover, the aid will give hard currency to Slorc allowing them to buy weapons, will end up in the hands of the military, not benefit those for whom it was intended, and NGO assistance to Slorc means that Slorc are able to stop addressing the issue of social services.

THE GONG OF BURMA: CAMPAIGN FOR SOLIDARITY



September 1993; New Delhi, India

A programme to express solidarity with the Movement for Democracy in Burma and provide glimpses of the social, cultural and political milieu of Burma entitled "The Gong of Burma" jointly organised by the India International Centre and Manushi (A Journal About Women and Society) was held on September 3-5. Prominent among those present included former Foreign Secre-

tary Mr Jagat Mehta, former Chairman of the University Grants Commission Prof. Yashpal, Manushi editor Ms Madhu Kishwar, former diplomat I.P. Singh, MP George Fernandes, Dr Malavika Karlekar from Centre for Women's Development Studies, Dr Baladas Ghoshal from Jawaharlal Nehru University and Ko Soe Myint from India-based Burmese Students League (BSL). The discussion was chaired by MR Kuldip Nayar and the speakers focused on the political situation in Burma, its



MOVING TOWARD DEMOCRACY

historical background, movements for democracy and the plight of the large number of refugees leaving the country. Slorc became the focus of condemnation of all the speakers. The participants called upon the international community to collectively put pressure on Slorc and to abdicate power in favour of democracy.

Ms Kishwar said, "I see the Burmese scenario as a human rights issue." Dr Ghosal said, "The movement in Burma rarely succeeded unless there was support from external quarters, as well as pressure from domestic groups." He felt Burma had never really experienced democracy.

Mr I.P. Singh dwelt on the democratic movement in Burma and said what had taken place in Burma for a short while was a total revolution, and one reason it had failed earlier was owing to lack of unified leadership. Dr Malavika Karlekar drew parallels between Ms Benazir Bhutto, Mrs Indira Gandhi and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. The British Commissioner to India, Sir Nicholas Fenn, who previously served in Burma, called Slorc as a group of "isolated, ignorant and afraid." He said, "There was no easy answer nor any short cut to the road of freedom." He advocated direct UN action against Burma, like it was done in Iraq.

Ko Soe Myint, representing the BSL, stressed that only a concerted international effort could help to oust the junta in Burma. Ko Soe Myint said the sad fact was that although many nations disliked the repressive rule in Burma, yet they kept trade links with the regime. These included United States, Japan, Germany, India, Hong Kong, Korea and the Netherlands.

The indomitable spirit of the Burmese people was visible before the

discussion began. Before the discussion began, the hall reverberated to the tune of Martin Luther King's song "We Shall Overcome" which was sung simultaneously in Burmese, Hindi and English. A slide show was proceeded by Lady Susan Fenn.

A cultural programme and an exhibition of paintings by Sitt Nyein Aye was also on at the Centre. That exhibition was inaugurated by Ms Maneka Gandhi. The paintings are basically reflections of his love for Burman and hatred of the military rule. All the proceeds from the sale of paintings will go to the BSL which has been playing an active role in the movement for democracy. Students' hand-made picture cards describing their anguish and plight were also sold at the center.

(Reported by BSL)

BURMA: DAY OF ACTION

On September 13, the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), the international freedom of Expression community and ITSS designated September 18, the fifth year of the imposition of martial law and control of the government by Slorc, as a day of action for freedom of expression and workers' rights in Burma. IFJ urged its members to send letters to Slorc representatives protesting against the lack of media freedom and workers rights in Burma, to write to their government asking it to support a strong resolution condemning the situation in Burma at the 48 UN General Assembly and to meet Slorc representatives in respective country to express dissatisfaction with the situation in Burma.

(Source: IFJ)

INDIA-BASED STUDENTS RALLY

September 18,

On September 18, about 50 people composed of Burmese students, members of the political parties in India and Indian students staged a protest at Jantarmenta, New Delhi, to mark the day on which the military regime in Burma took over power 5 years ago. Democratic Youth Front of India (DYFI)

Chairman and MP Mr M.A. Balay, Communist Party of India Secretary Mr Mohamard Salim, YUVA Janadadal Chairman Dr Sunilam and Janadadal Party Secretary Mr Yadav Reddy were among those who showed up. It was reported that the activists gave a protest letter to the embassy of Slorc.

(Reported by BSL)



DEMONSTRATION AT THE UNGA

A demonstration denouncing Slorc's delegates to the United Nations General Assembly, organised by the Burmese Student Activists (US Chapter) was held in the front of the United Nations Building, New York city, from 11 to 13 October. That three-day demonstration took place every morning even under heavy rains in the US. The demonstrators, including Burmese students and expatriate Burmese from five states, holding portraits and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and placards asking UN to take stronger actions on Burma.

During the demonstrations, copies of an open-letter to the Secre-

tary-General of the UN, Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali, was delivered to the UN delegates. The Burmese students asked the UNGA to address the deteriorating situation in Burma, to pressure Slorc to hand over power to the elected government, to impose an international arms embargo, trade and investment sanctions; and to call for the unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and other political prisoners and to seek solutions to pressure Slorc's partners to cease persecution of the Burmese students.

Statements from the different organisations were also read out

by the Burmese students. Students urged the UN delegates not to recognise Slorc's delegates and blatant lies. Their shameful "National Convention" is only the political ploy to get international recognition to their legitimacy and official leading role of the armed forces in the politics of future Burma. The demonstrators strongly denounced the shameful "National Convention" and repression of the Burmese people by Slorc.

On the second day, while Slorc's delegation head, U Ohn Gyaw was giving a speech at the UNGA, the demonstration was joined by Dr Sein Win, Prime Minister of the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma and some of his delegates to the UN. The opening speech was given by Dr Sein Win. In his speech, he mentioned that although Slorc is shamelessly claiming that Burma has been changed and gained the peace and stability within the country, the real situation has not been changed. The people are living under the climate of fear. He urged the UN and other international community to maintain pressure on Slorc in order to transfer power to the people elected representatives, to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and the other political prisoners and to stop the civil war in Burma. UBo Hla Tint, NCGUB minister in charge Foreign Affairs and U Peter Limbin, elected representative of 1990 May election in Burma, also gave the speeches. The demonstration was concluded by chanting the slogans denouncing the illegitimate Slorc's delegates at the international forum.

Burmese student activists also organised similar demonstrations in front of Slorc Embassy in New York in the evening of the same days.

(Reported by Burmese Student Activists - US Chapter)



PRAYER CEREMONY FOR POLITICAL PRISONERS

A prayer ceremony for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all other political prisoners was held in front of the United Nations building at 5:00 pm, on November 12. That ceremony was attended by the Lobby Mission at the UN led by PM Dr Sein Win, expatriate Burmese from USA, UK, Germany, Japan, Australia, Thailand, Burmese student activists in USA and international friends who support the struggle for democracy in Burma. Holding portraits of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and placards asking for the release of all the political prisoners, the gathering was stressed by a Burmese student activist that human rights situation in Burma remains unchanged and many political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi are still kept under detention. Then, a prayer ceremony for those who sacrificed their lives in the struggle for democracy and those who are still kept under detention, and for the motherland was headed by Birmingham Buddhist Vihara Spiritual Director Ven. Dr Rewata Dhamma. After that the Spiritual Director lit the paper lanterns and the activists staged a protest in the Ralph Bunch Park

(Reported by Burmese Student Activists in the USA)

THE INTERNATIONAL BURMA CONGRESS

The international Burma Congress was successfully held between 13 and 14 November 1993 in New York, USA. The two-day meeting was participated by the expatriate Burmese from USA, Canada, Germany, France, Australia, Japan, United Kingdom and Thai-

land, as well as some NGOs and Burma supporting groups based in the United States. Dr Sein Win, Prime Minister of National Coalition Government of Union of Burma and delegate and secretariat mission to United Nations, who are currently lobby at the General Assembly also took part the meeting and presented their strategy and papers on Burma.

On the first day meeting in Marriott Hotel, New York, welcome speech was given by Dr Tyn Myint-U, Committee for the International Burma Congress. Dr Sein Win gave a congress statement on behalf of the NCGUB and student statement was presented by Dr Thaung Htun, representative of the All Burma Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF). "Issues at the United Nations" by Mr James Adam of the International Human Rights Law Group and recommendations for the United Nations was supported by the participants respectively. After that, "Constitutional Crisis", the analysis of Slorc's "National Convention" presented by Mr James Ross, Lawyer Committee for Human Rights, highlighted the need for the UN not to accept it as a genuine political reform. The principles of political defiance in Burma advocated by Mr Robert Helvey, American Friends of Democracy in Burma were warmly endorsed. Sao Harn Yawng hwe, Chairman of the Associates to Develop Democratic Burma presented the "Media information and public relation" and the first day meeting was adjourned after the presentation of "Corporate Withdrawal" strategy by Mr Simon Billenness, Chair, Steering Committee of the Coalition for Corporate Withdrawal from Burma.

The second day meeting was held at the Macklowe Hotel, NY, and "Political Strategy" advocated by Dr Gene Sharp, Senior Scholar-

in-Residence, Albert Einstein Institution was respectively endorsed. After the round-table reviewing the recommendations on political action, the Burmese participants supported the strategy presented by PM Dr Sein Win and resolutions on the issues raised in the meeting. They have planned to convene an International Conference in 1994 to bring together the democracy groups on the border and overseas.

"Burma Night" dinner and cultural show for U Thant Memorial Fund was held on November 13 at Marriott Hotel, organised by Daw Aye Aye Thant, daughter of late United Nations Secretary-General, U Thant. In her welcome speech, Daw Aye Aye Thant mentioned the current human rights situation in Burma and student situation on the Thai-Burma border. The audiences were entertained with Burmese traditional dances, music and ethnic costume showed by the Burmese student activists in the USA. The song composed in a honour of Nobel Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and Student Union song were greatly appreciated by the audience.

PARLIAMENTARY RECEPTION FOR THE BURMESE COMMUNITY

The Australian Parliamentary Friends of Burma hosted a reception at Parliament House on 7 October 1993 to promote awareness of the crisis faced by the Burmese people. Executive committee members of the Australia Burma Council were invited to meet with members and Senators of Australian parliament and heard the views expressed by the guest speaker, Senator Gareth Evans, Minister for foreign Affairs.

(Source: ABC)

Adoption of US Policy Urged

American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) president on September 20 wrote to US Secretary of State Mr Warren Christopher stating that US companies and the "free" market now subsidise the continued rule of Burma's military regime, and American tax-payer dollars will also be used to help support the economic slavery and political tyranny unless US policy is changed.

AFL-CIO said it was heartened by President Clinton's May 19 call for Slorc to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and all political prisoners, respect the results of May 1990 election, and commit itself to genuine democratic reforms. The AFL-CIO also urged that the President's statement that America stands with the Burmese people in their struggle for freedom be made tangible at the end of the administration's current interagency review of US policy toward Burma.

Citing the previous administration's policy toward Burma, the AFL-CIO pointed out that the Bush Administration, mistakenly believing that democracy follows naturally from capitalism, chose not to adopt strong measures against Slorc, most brutal of regimes, and allowed US-based multinational corporations and US-funded multilateral lending institutions to continue to operate freely in Burma.

Concerning foreign companies' investment are filling the coffin of Burma it said, "It is estimated that two-thirds of the foreign capital collected by the Slorc since 1988 came from ten oil companies including, American-owned multinationals. Some of these compa-

nies have provided funds to Slorc to build access roads for oil development. Reportedly, Slorc has kept this money for other purposes, choosing instead to press-gang Burmese citizens into forced-labour brigades to construct these roads."

Providing with evident documents, AFL-CIO stated that US taxpayer-supported agencies — Asian Development Bank, World Bank and UN Development Programmes — are reported to be interested in funding the construction of the Keng Tung-Tachick (Burma) road, providing economic and land link between Burma, Southern China, Laos and Thailand. Slave-labour brigades composed of political prisoners, including students and trade unions activists have already begun construction.

The AFL-CIO urged the rapid US adoption of five policy measures — the promulgation of an executive order instituting a full trade and investment embargo against the military regime in Burma, support for the democratically-elected National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma's call for the Slorc to be denied a seat at the United Nations, the promotion of an international embargo against arms sales to the Slorc, the exertion of all US pressure to block development projects of any US-funded multilateral institution which would provide funds to, or benefit for, the Slorc and to provide direct assistance to National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma and other groups struggling for democracy and human rights in the country, such as the independent Federation of Trade Unions of Burma.

(Source: AFL-CIO)

UN CHIEF EXPRESSES CONCERN

The United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali told Thailand's Prime Minister Chun Leekpai at a meeting at UN headquarters on October 6 that the Burmese military junta still needs to prove its willingness to return power to the people. UN Chief remarked that progress in Burma was not yet satisfactory, and expressed the concern about the plight of more than 20,000 Muslim refugees who have fled Burma to escape persecution and face obstacles raised by Rangoon in returning home.

SENATE PANEL URGES STRONGER US POLICY ON BURMA

On October 23 a unanimous US Senate Foreign Relations Committee wrote to President Clinton to express concern over human rights abuses and the suppression of democracy in Burma.

The letter, initiated by Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D.-NY), chairman of the Senate Committee on Finance and member of the Committee on Foreign Relations, and signed by every member of the panel, pertained to a review of US policy towards Burma being conducted by the Administration. The letter stated that Committee members are "confident that the coordinated US policy which emerges from this review will result in the strong policy helping to bring freedom to the people of Burma."

In its annual report the States Department stated that the Burmese military continues to use civilian corvee and prison labour in combat areas and noted that porters were placed at the head of

columns to detonate mines and booby traps and to spring ambushes.

The Committee noted the tremendous flow of illegal drugs from Burma and the State Department's report of connections between high-ranking military officers and major drug traffickers. The letter states: "It appears that nothing less than a change in government will produce genuine progress on this front."

In 1991 a similarly unanimous Foreign Relations Committee blocked Senate approval of an ambassador to Rangoon until appropriate actions are taken against Slorcb by the US government. The nomination was never approved and no US ambassador is serving in Rangoon.

"This policy review provides an opportunity for the Clinton administration to show that the struggle of the Burmese people is not forgotten," Sen. Moynihan said. "Wielding power through violent means does not legitimate government make."

(Press Release from the office of Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan)

CHAMARETTE CALLS FOR END TO DOUBLE STANDARDS OVER BURMA

October 25 (Australia) -- Christabel Chamarette, Senator for the Greens (WA) and deputy-chairperson of the Executive Committee of the Australian Parliamentary Friends of Burma said in a press release, "The different responses of the United Nations and United States to the military regimes in Burma and Haiti should be a cause for international shame."

"It seems people will only be helped in their efforts to re-establish democracy if they are on the doorstep of the United States. There is no other explanation which makes sense of the way the major powers are ignoring Burma while they are prepared to put into place sanctions and a naval blockade of Haiti," she stated.

Moreover, she touched the refugee problems that Bangladesh is now an unwilling and impatient host to 220,000 refugees from Burma and another 72,000 refugees are in Thailand, with others in China and India. Thailand also has some 300,000 illegal immigrants from Burma. These massive population movements are the result of most brutal military regime in the world. Its record of human rights abuses, including murder, rape, torture and enforced labour and arbitrary arrest is second to none.

"It should also not be overlooked that the military regime is responsible for shielding a massive drug trade which is now providing up to 80% of the opium and heroin available to drug addicts in the West," said in the press release.

She added, "If the world is prepared to take action on behalf of democracy in Haiti then the people of Burma deserve at least the same international concern. At the very least the Burmese seat at the United Nations should be declared vacant and its Least Development Nation status withdrawn."

"It is time for the world community stood up and demanded an end to the murderous Slorc regime. It cannot be allowed to continue. The same measures now in place in regard to Haiti should be applied -- a complete blockade to back up arms sanctions until such time as Daw Aung San Suu Kyi is released to take up her proper role at the head of a demo-

cratically elected government," Senator Chamarette concluded.

(Source: Media release of Senator Christabel Chamarette)

JAPAN CALLS ON SLORC TO RESTORE DEMOCRACY IN BURMA

Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata on October 30 asked Slorc to pay heed to international calls to restore democracy and free opposition leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest in a forty-minutes meeting with his Slorc counterpart U Ohn Gyaw, who arrived on October 28 on an unofficial visit. He told Slorc foreign minister that the international community views the situation of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as a "symbol" of Burma's resolve on democracy and human rights.

Hata said Japan's new coalition government has "considerable interest" in seeing an early transfer to democratic rule in Burma and greater respect for human rights. Moreover, Hata called on Slorc to clarify the nature and timing of procedures that need to be taken in the future to implement the new constitution.

UN CHIEF URGED TO INCREASE EFFORTS

The International Parliamentary Friends of Burma President Senator Stephen Loosley and Secretary Senator Vicki Bourne in November 1993, wrote to UN Secretary-General Mr Boutros Boutros-Ghali to stress Slorc's on-going grave human rights violations against the people of Burma, and urged the Secretary General to increase his efforts on behalf of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

The president and secretary, on behalf of the parliamentarians around the world, called on Slorc to immediately release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and to hand over government to the democratic representatives of Burma who were elected in May 1990.

The letter signed by them also urged the international community not to accept Slorc-endorsed National Convention as there has been no input from the elected representatives.

(Press Release of IPFB)

Rigoberta Menchu Tum, 1992 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, arrived Bangkok on September 14 and visited to Beh Klaw and Quay K'loat refugee camps in Mae Sot District. She heard many accounts, and received documents and other information to prepare a more complete report.

In a statement released to the international community on September 23 Menchu said, "Among the many stories I heard, one man brought his daughter before me and described how she had been taken against her will from their home by army troops, forced to work for the soldiers for more than two months, and raped repeatedly before being imprisoned under charges of being a spy for the insurgents. She was thirteen."

"Another man described how he and the others in his village were forced into service for Slorc troops. As porters, these men were made to carry heavy loads of supplies to allow Slorc troops to penetrate the jungle and carry out their brutal counterinsurgency campaign against the ethnic peoples. He had scars on his back from the loads he had endured, and shrapnel in his leg from a battle he had survived. He told me many of the people from his region, men, women and children,



RIGOBERTA MENCHU TUM VISITS BORDER

were routinely forced to accompany Slorc troops as porters, that they were beaten, raped, and denied food."

"One woman merely cried, she was too terrorized to speak, even as the camp leaders tried to assure her that I was a friend," said in her statement.

She also met with Burmese pro-democracy activist who stressed that the refugee crisis would persist as long as Slorc military regime retained power and continued its military campaign. These activists demand the release of all political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi — immediately and unconditionally and for the transfer of power to the duly elected government of 1990. She called on the military regime in Burma to meet these demands.

"I am convinced that no country can achieve development while an internal armed conflict exists. A real and lasting democracy must include respect for cultural diversity. Military efforts to exterminate ethnic populations must be

brought to an end," added Menchu.

Moreover she called on the international community to take the necessary measures to insure that human rights are respected in Burma. "An arms and trade embargo against Slorc regime must be maintained until the above-mentioned conditions are met. It is also imperative that closely supervised humanitarian assistance be administered to the non-Slorc controlled parts of Burma. The United Nations and non-government organisations must be allowed free access to the Thai government controlled "safe areas" so as to prevent involuntary repatriation"

She urged the Thai authorities to pay close attention to the situation in Burma and the plight of the refugees along the Thai border. "And I call on the Thai government to live up to its position as a refuge for war victims, rather than seeking to accommodate the oppressive regime in Burma," she stressed. When she returned to Bangkok, she was prevented from

INTERN'L PERSPECTIVES

giving a press conference as scheduled. The Foreign Correspondents Club of Thailand, the intended venue for the press conference, cancelled the event after receiving pressure from the Thai government. "Officials from the Thai government also interfered with my efforts to speak to the national and international press at the airport before departing for Japan that evening... I object strongly to the treatment I received by the Thai authorities in this matter. I think it is a mistake when a government attempts to prevent an open and honest discussion on issues of war, the refugee crisis and human rights," said in her statement.

SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR SUMMARISES HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN BURMA

At the completion of his visit to Burma from 9 to 16 November and in Bangkok and Mae Sot from 16 to 20 November, Special

Rapporteur on Burma Professor Yozo Yokota on November 24 presented his introductory statement to the Third Committee of the General Assembly. The Special Rapporteur said that there are still some 500 political leaders, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi who has been under house arrest for more than 4 years without a trial, in prison or under detention.

"Many civil and political rights are still severely restricted. Particularly, the right to life, liberty and security of person, freedom from slavery, torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment, freedoms of thought, opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association are widely violated and ignored especially in connection with forced labour, forced relocation, political activities including related to political parties and the national convention," added the Special Rapporteur.

Regarding the national convention, the Special Rapporteur stated

that the composition, procedure, and other measures taken in connection with the national convention do not appear to be "necessary steps towards the restoration of democracy, fully respecting the will of the people as expressed in the democratic elections held in 1990, which have been urged to be taken by Slorc in the General Assembly resolution adopted in 1992. "It should be noted with concern that some 20 political leaders have been newly arrested and some of them received severe sentences in connection with the activities related to the national convention," expressed the statement.

His statement also pointed out that many cases of torture, arbitrary killings, rapes and other inhuman treatment against women, and disappearances are taking place most frequently in the border areas by the army in the course of military operations or relocation against ethnic national populations, many of whom are peasants, daily workers and other peaceful civilians.

INTERN'L SUPPORT

COALITION FOR CORPORATE WITHDRAWAL FROM BURMA

The meeting on corporate involvement in Burma held at Harvard University on August 28-29 was an unqualified success; consensus was achieved and several key decisions were made. A draft mission statement for the formation of "Coalition for Corporate Withdrawal from Burma" was approved and a structure, consisting of a 6-person steering committee, working parties, and a network of activists and organisations linked by a quarterly newsletter for the Coalition, was adopted.

The goal of the Coalition is to support the call for economic sanc-

tions made by the Nobel Peace Prize Laureates and all other supporters of the democratic movement in Burma, and the Coalition aims to highlight how corporations worldwide have supported Slorc by doing business in Burma.

As an international network of activists and organisations that seek to support democracy, environmental responsibility, peace and human rights in Burma, the Coalition works out towards these goals by persuading foreign corporations worldwide to cut their ties with Slorc as the regime has managed to stay in power, in part,

because of revenues generated by foreign investments and trade. The regime uses most of the hard currency that it receives from foreign corporations to buy weapons and keep the Burmese people pacified by force. In addition, the presence in Burma of foreign corporations lends Slorc a false sense of legitimacy.

Companies involved in the offshore gas pipeline are targeted by shareholder resolutions and activism while the secondary targets are the remaining onshore oil companies and PepsiCo. The Coalition urges these corporations to disclose information on their business in Burma and withdraw from the country.

**INTERNATIONAL
PARLIAMENTARY
COMMITTEE,
BURMA FORMED**

On 14 September 1993, the Australian Parliamentary Friends of Burma hosted the inaugural meeting of the International Parliamentary Committee, Burma, at which Parliamentarians from Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, the Nordic group, Switzerland and the United Kingdom agreed to form the committee to coordinate international efforts in support of the process of democratisation in Burma. The International Parliamentary Committee, Burma, chaired by Senator Stephen Loosley (Australia) was established with the aim "To promote and support the cause of liberty and democracy for the people of Burma." Australian Senator Vicki Bourne is the Secretary while Prof. Ole Esperson, MP of Denmark, and Francois Boral, MP of Switzerland act as Deputy chairs. Four main objectives -- to petition the UNGA demanding action be taken to secure the unconditional release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi as the Australian Parliament has done this year, to give tacit recognition to elected representatives of the May 1990 general election in Burma including the NCGUB, to encourage all nations to overcome the diplomatic and political barriers which currently prevent cross border assistance and to liaise with their UN missions to ensure that the NCGUB delegation to the 1993 UNGA is received and assisted in New York -- were adopted.

(Source: ABC)

**DEVELOPMENT STRAT-
EGY MEETINGS HELD**

On September 24 and 25, the Norwegian Burma Council (NBC) with the assistance of the Associates to Develop Democratic Burma (ADDB) and the International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICH RDD) convened a seminar in Oslo, Norway.

At that seminar, representatives of international donors and members of cabinet of the NCGUB discussed political developments in Burma and within the democratic opposition movement, and considered the creation of an international fund to provide humanitarian and development assistance to Burmese located within the liberated areas.

Present to these meetings were Prime Minister Dr Sein Win, Health Minister Dr Sann Aung, NCGUB USA representative Dr Myo Thant, Europe representative U Nwe Aung, ADDB Programme Director Harn Yawng hwe and representatives from ICHRDD, Sterken Consulting Services (Canada), Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (Germany), National Endowment for Democracy, Danish Burma Council, Olof Palmes International Centre, DIAKONIA, Swedish NGO Fund for Human Rights, Finnish Burma Council, Norwegian Save the Children, Norwegian Church Aid and Norwegian Burma Council. The donors present committed themselves in principle to the concept of the creation of National Fund for Reconstruction and Development (NFRD) and expressed interest in assisting with the development and initial cost of the NFRD. It was reported that the meetings were most fruitful and led to a number of agreement-in-principle.

(Reported by Norwegian Burma Council)

**BURMA STUDY/ACTION
WEEKEND**

Kyoto, Japan: Over forty activists from six countries gathered in Kyoto on 6-7 November for an intensive Burma study/action weekend focusing on ways of supporting the Burmese democracy movement. The meeting was led by Burmese Relief Center--Japan and three major issues -- refugee relief, opposition to Slorc military junta, and halting proposed projects to dam the Salween river -- were discussed.

The cynical ASEAN and Chinese policy of destructive "constructive engagement" was strongly condemned. Participants specifically targeted the project to dam the Salween river, which will destroy the livelihood of hundreds of thousands of ethnic people and flood vast tracts of tropical forests.

All members oppose the gross abuse of human rights in Burma, particularly the recently documented use of slave labour for road and pipeline construction and as military porters. The group determined to publicize more widely the junta's regular and systematic violation of fundamental human rights and counteract Slorc's attempts to deceive world opinion by improving its public image. There was unanimous agreement that coordinated opposition to Slorc must continue and must intensify both internationally and within in Burma.

It was reported that participants resolved to increase on-going support for refugees and for those continuing the struggle for democracy by providing food, medicines, medical equipment, educational supplies, and clothing. Future emphasis will be placed on training medical workers, teachers, and agriculturists.

INTERN'L SUPPORT

As part of the "Save the Salween" campaign, T-shirts and cards with a handpainted design of the river were distributed to publicize the issues and raise funds. Letter campaigns, protests, and boycotts were planned to prevent the construction of the dams and save the river, surrounding area, and its people from potential disaster.

Plans were made for coordinated demonstrations to mark International Human Rights Day, December 10, and Burmese independence Day, January 4. The January 4 event, to be held in cities in Japan, Europe, North America,

Australasia, and within Burma itself, will focus attention on the fact that Burma cannot be considered independent until Sloroc military regime transfers power to the representatives elected in 1990 and releases all political prisoners including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi.

At the end of the meeting, Burmese Relief Center--Japan, Burma Youth Volunteer Association and International Network for Burma Relief issued a joint statement.

(Reported by Burmese Relief Center--Japan)

literature critical of the military junta were:

- (1) Ma Thida Doctor, writer, and member of NLD Organising Committee
- (2) Ko Han Sein NLD Supporter
- (3) U Khin Maung Ex-NLD member (Kyauk Thada)
- (4) U Kyaw Than NLD Organiser (Kemmedaing township)
- (5) U Kyi Myint NLD MP (Latha Township)
- (6) Ko Lwin Oo NLD supporter
- (7) Ko Bo Lay Student
- (8) Ko Nay Win Student
- (9) Ko Thet Oo Student
- (10) Ko Tin Tun NLD supporter
- (11) U Win Kyi Ex-NLD supporter

Dr. Aung Khin Sint's associate, Tin Tun Aung, received 2 sentences, one of 20 years and one of 18 years.

HARSH SENTENCES FOR DISSIDENTS

Even though a partial of prisoners whom Sloroc believe not a threat to their rule have been set free since its announcement in April 1992, harassment, arrest and sentence heavy jail terms for the dissidents is still widespread in Burma. Freedom of expression which guarantees to everyone in the Article (19) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers." is totally denied under the reign of the present regime. -- The Editor

On 15 October 1993, eleven political dissidents along with NLD representative and elected MP Dr Aung Khin Sint (See Dawn Vol. 4, No. 4), were given 20-years sentences in a trial held within the Insein prison compound. The eleven dissidents sentenced for distributing

Ma Thida, a medical doctor and short story writer, 27, working in a philanthropic Muslim Hospital, was arrested with ten other political activists on 7 August 1993. All of them were allegedly held without access to friends or lawyers until their trial started on September 27. Sloroc had to change the date of court hearing when many people turned up at the court. On October 15, She was sentenced to 20 years in prison. According to the court sources, another 10 persons who were charged were handcuffed during the hearing and sentences were passed on October 15. Ma Thida was convicted under emergency regulations for among other charges, contact with illegal organisations and distributing prohibited literature. Ma Thida was a close associate of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi before she was placed under house arrest in July 1989.

Ma Thida has become well-known for her short stories and has written novels but they have not been published. Sloroc is now banning her from publishing her latest novel which they had already given permission to publish.



Ma Thida (Sanchaung)

It is becoming ever more obvious that the national convention -- the brainchild of Slorc -- is merely a propaganda exercise aimed at rubber-stamping a constitution tailor-made for the military regime. Reports at that convention presented by the so-called representatives of workers, peasants, civil servants, ethnic minorities, intellectuals and technocrats, echoed in exact wording the statement prepared by Slorc.

Having said that, we must now, however, ignore the great courage Khun Htun Oo of Shan Nationalities League for Democracy showed when he presented his report. We truly appreciate the few representatives of the people who dare to stand for truth in defiance of the regime's proposal to justify its interference in civilian rule. One more glaring example of bravery is the case of Dr Aung Khin Sint who, because of his defiance, was arbitrarily arrested by the regime; making

OVERVIEW OF SLORC'S NATIONAL CONVENTION

it clear once again that Slorc will resort to violence against any delegate who dare to oppose its proposal. In such a volatile situation we must express our grave concern for the security of the democratically elected people's representatives.

Since the beginning of the national convention, ABSDF has pointed out the illegitimacy of the process. The ABSDF drew its conclusion on the basis of the following factors:

1. Sponsorship

The BSPP and the Revolutionary Council are the very entities that seized the state power in 1962 and abolished the 1947 constitution. Being a protégé of these entities, Slorc clearly lacks credibility to sponsor a national convention.

2. 1990 General Election

In accordance with Article (A) in Chapter (1) of *Pyithu Hluttaw* Election Law which states: "*Hluttaw* means *Pyithu Hluttaw*", we fully understand that *Pyithu Hluttaw* to be convened is not a Constituent Assembly. Therefore, giving birth to the *Pyithu Hluttaw* represents the sovereignty of people is inevitable task.

3. Broken commitment

On January 9, 1990, the then Slorc chairman Gen Saw Maung, made the following statement: "We have made repeated statements about state power before. We have said they may form a government according to law when the election is over. Take state power. It is our duty to hold an election so that a government can be formed ----some say that it is necessary to draft a temporary constitution to form a

provisional government to effect a transfer of power and only then to take time and draw up a constitution. In what ways they want to do is up to them — after the elections the parties may do whatever they desire.”

After the election, the National League for Democracy (NLD) party, which won 82% of the seats in parliament convened a meeting of elected representatives at Gandhi Hall on July 28, 1990 and demanded for a parliamentary convention (*Pyithu Hluttaw*) immediately. The current national convention which is not convened by the NLD runs counter to the wishes of the winning political parties.

4. Contradiction with Slorc order 1/90

Article (20) of Slorc Order 1/90 stipulates, among others, that, “... Therefore, in today’s situation the representatives elected by the people are responsible for drafting a constitution for the future democratic state.” The inclusion of the illegitimate delegates as representatives of the masses in the constitutional process therefore contradicts Slorc’s own Order. This is particularly true because these delegates to the convention were actually hand-picked by the regime.

5. Lack of Independent Mass Media

The process to shape the future of a country must have the participation of all strata of people whose opinions should be expressed through an independent mass media. Under a situation where radio, television, newspaper, and media sources are all tightly controlled by Slorc where a rigid censorship law continues to hold, there can be no true participation of the people in the process.

6. Violation of National Law

Article 84 (2) of the 1947 Constitution stipulates that the Chamber of Deputies (*Pyithu Hluttaw*) shall meet within 60 days from the elections are held.

Slorc has proclaimed, after the military coup of 1988 which brought them to power, that all constitution ceased to be effective. But, Slorc’s proclamation that retroactively abolished the constitution has no legality because, under the existing Laws, only the *Pyithu Hluttaw* (Parliament) can annul or suspend the country’s constitution. The 1947 Constitution permits the abrogation only by a super-majority vote of the representative body. Slorc therefore has no legal authority to suspend, amend or annul the 1947 Constitution.

Since the 1947 constitution is still the law of the land, Slorc’s prohibition of the convening of the *Pyithu Hluttaw* is against the Law.

7. Violation of International Law

Slorc has violated the fundamental rule of governmental authority of the International Law. Article 21 (3) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights declares that “**the will of the people, as expressed in genuine elections, is the basis of legitimate governmental authority.**”

Slorc’s failure to implement the results of the 1990 election is also in violation of Article 55 and 56 of the UN Charter that obligates member States to promote “Universal respect for, and observance of human rights [in order to create] conditions of stability and well-being ... based on respect for the principle of equal rights and **self-determination of peoples**”.

The people have already expressed their will in the 1990 general election. The task of Slorc, therefore, is to convene the *Pyithu Hluttaw* which, in accordance with the wishes of the people, will work to truly resolve the political, economic and social crises of our country. The holding of the national convention by Slorc is merely a preparation of political violence against the will of the people. It is illegitimate under both national and international laws and any outcome of such an exercise can never bear any legitimacy.

8. Violation of UN Resolutions

The International community expressed its opinion regarding the process of democratisation in Burma when it adopted UNGA Resolution 47/144 of December 18, 1992 by consensus. The resolution cited that the General Assembly was “Gravely concerned that the Government of *Myanmar* has still not implemented its commitments to take all necessary steps towards democracy in the light of the results of the elections held in 1990”...” Also urges the Government of *Myanmar* to take every appropriate measure to allow all citizens to participate freely in the political process in accordance with the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and to accelerate the process of transition to democracy, in particular through the transfer of power to the democratically elected representatives.”.

The All Burma Students’ Democratic Front calls on the entire people to oppose the illegitimate outcomes of the convention and to go ahead along the democratic struggle and urges the convention delegates who are the genuine representatives of the people to boycott the prejudiced and illegitimate convention. At the same time, we urge the international community not to recognise any outcome of the convention which is against the will of the people as well as the international public opinion expressed through the 2 consecutive UN General Assembly Resolutions.

A Trip To Yaung Ni Oo



Yaung Ni Oo Village

Rising out of the shred of life as a result of the war in Burma, women and children found hope and meaning again for their existence. The writer visited a family camp of the ABSDF, Yaung Ni Oo, and learned about how a group of women and children regain control over their lives and work towards a possible society model that can be relevant for the future of Burma. — The Editor

The meaning of *Yaung Ni Oo* in Burmese is “The Dawn”. It was named with the hope to start a new generation for the future of Burma by nurturing children of the ABSDF. In addition, the Front hopes to Organise the mothers in ABSDF into a productive forces that contributes positively to the struggle. So, mothers and children from different camps were gathered together in a camp near the Salween River. They came from four different ABSDF camps — Kyaik Don, Moe Kel, Paw Pa Hta and Manaplaw. All these areas except Manaplaw were threatened by military offensives during the dry seasons, so families were forced to evacuate every time there was fighting. As a result, the

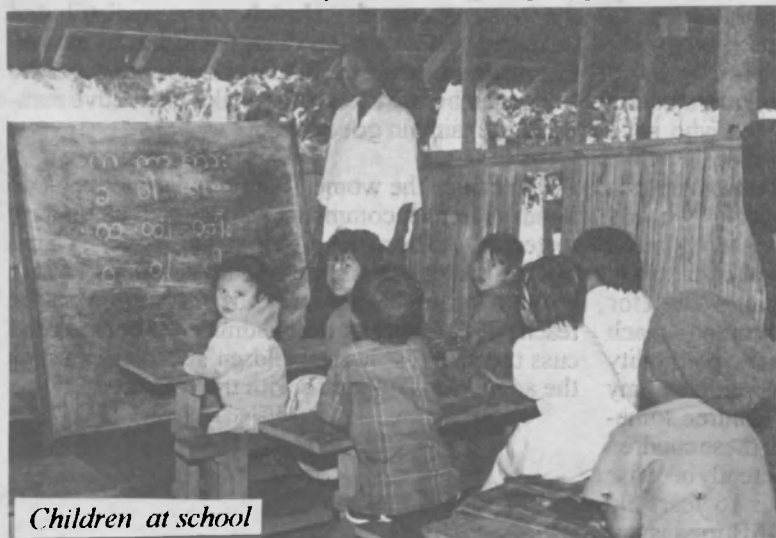
mothers lost their contributions like farms and poultry, and the children were forced to halt their education. After these experiences, the Front decided to organise them in a stable situation in order to help them develop their self-reliance and to provide stable conditions for the education of the children.

“In the old camp, we played family roles providing labour for the camp we live in. We didn’t get the opportunity to look at what we are capable of doing. At times of military attacks, we feel that we are a burden to the camp because they have to evacuate us to safer areas first,” a mother said.

Another mother said that the instability caused by military attacks gives her great worry about her children’s education. She could not feel a sense of self-reliance.

“After I moved to this camp I can see more clearly how my participation contributes to the Front. I feel a sense of pride and satisfaction,” a mother said.

Perhaps it is through these meetings that the women began to see the importance of their contribu-



Children at school

tion, whether big or small, to the smooth functioning of the camp.

Yaung Ni Oo was set up in November 1992. At the beginning, there were fourteen families from Kyaik Don and Moe Kel camps. They were joined by twelve others from Paw Pa Hta and Manaplaw the following year. The latest settlers are two families from Pa-O territory. The administration of the camp is undertaken by one Central Committee member and two camp members of the ABSDF.

The camp collectively owns a goat farm and the responsibility of tending to the farm is rotated. Each family owns a plot of vegetable farm and poultry. The Front provides each family with three pigs and twenty chickens as well as seedlings when they first arrived. The products from these farms are consumed by the families and excesses are sent to other ABSDF camps.

Besides looking after the farms, the women also take turns to cook at the Headquarters kitchen. While they are there, their children are taken care of by other families. The camp also runs a nutrition programme for the school children. Twice a week the mothers will take turns to prepare food that meets the required nutritional value for the children.

From January to April, *Inn* (broad-leaved tall timber tree yielding reddish, resinous wood) leaves fall, and the mothers collect and make thatches for other ABSDF camps to replace those ravaged by water and time. Extras are sold to nearby villages to generate income. In October this year, the camp has started a savings account with the Finance Department of the ABSDF for future development projects. One of them is a weaving project which will begin next year. Four of the women will be sent to the Karens for training and a weaving machine will be set up in the camp where they can train others. They hope to generate more income from this project so that the camp can be self-sufficient.

The camp also runs a primary school and a clinic. The school is managed by two mothers who have taught in Burma. Three subjects -- Burmese, English and Mathematics -- are taught. At the moment, the school offers kindergarten, primary one, two and three classes. There are twenty six children in the school. A teacher said, "I didn't feel bad that I was never properly trained as a teacher because I did it for a livelihood in Burma. When I volunteered to teach the children here, I feel a great sense of responsibility and I started to reflect on how meaningless my education was. I want to give these children something different. I also sympathise with these children -- they had to stop their education frequently because of the war. For instance, a girl who is 16 years old id child in my Primary Three class. If Burma is not

at war, she would be finishing high school."

The school is planning to expand its classes next year. More subjects will also be offered. During the summer holidays, the teachers will be attending a teachers' training course to learn about different teaching methodologies and improve the syllabi for the current curriculum as well as prepare new syllabi for Science, Physical Education and Art. The teachers are not happy with the text they are using at the moment.

The clinic is managed by a medic. It treats only minor ailments. More serious cases are sent to the Headquarters Hospital. The clinic's main programme is to educate the adults and children about personal hygiene.

The medic said, "Primary health care is not thought very carefully by their parents. I need to teach them to be aware of the importance of individual hygiene. We cannot seem them as patients. We need to do more education than treatment that "Prevention is Better Than Cure." I need to be more patient with the children to ensure full treatment of diseases. We give tasks and monitor the families to follow up. Approach different families according to their background knowledge and education level. Some can read and some need direct explanation. Progress: For instance, when we first introduced oral hygiene programmes two months ago, it created a lot of excitement among the children. They even monitor each other diligently to make sure to make sure they do regularly brushing and are proud to be taking care of their teeth .

Central Committee planned to upgrade the clinic to the hospital. The plan will be fulfilled after refresher training for medics be finished later next year."

Educating the adults take different warp. Some of the women can read, so brochures were distributed to them. To other who can't, he has to explain personally. Despite the hard work, he is glad that the camp members are learning to take preventive measures to maintain good health

At the camp, the women hold regular meetings on Sundays to plan communal activities, draw up duty rosters and to bring up problems faced by the camp. The problems are discussed and solutions sought through group consensus. In the meetings, the teachers, parents and camp administrators also discuss the progress in the children's studies and how the adults can cooperate with the teachers.

Ma Thet (601)

Karaoke pop music plays late into the night that only last year was under curfew. Stacks of factory-boxed televisions and videodecks still the storefronts where even blackmarket goods used to be scarce. There's a new atmosphere in Burma, but the changes are not necessarily for the better: the conspicuous consumers calling the songs are all Chinese.

Nowhere is the new Chinese presence in higher profile than Mandalay, Burma's second largest city, historic capital of the last Burmese dynasty, and gateway to the famous World War II Burma Road into China's southwest Yunnan Province. In 1992 alone, an estimated 20,000 Yunnan Chinese set up shop here; an even greater influx is predicted this year. Mandalay also happens to be one of the few destinations currently open to Westerners on the restrictive two-week visa, and very probably the closest tourists will get to the Chinese border, less than 300 kms away.

The appeal of the city is immediately apparent. Comfortably situated on a vast plain between the muddy brown Irrawaddy River to the west and the misty Shan Hill to the east, Mandalay takes things slow. A wide moat and tree-lined boulevards skirt the ornately turreted walls of the Royal Palace, an enormous square at the heart of the city grid. A center of faith, pilgrims spend whole days at the *Mahamuni* Pagoda and other temples around town; Buddhist stupas peer above the low rooftops here and there. Mandalay is the seat of traditional Burmese culture, home of its arts and crafts, as well as the hub of all transport and communications in Upper Burma.

On a visit in early May, the hole city seemed to be under construction. High-rise hotels with name like the Modern, Lucky, Palace and *Pan Cherry* (*pan* meaning "blossom" in Burmese) have sprung up everywhere. Yet they invariably prove to be off-limits to foreigners, who are expected to patronise Mandalay's aging "first class" hotels in dollars — or in dollar-equivalent Foreign Exchange Certificates, which bear a striking resemblance to PRC-issue FECs — to the tune of \$30-70 a night. The new Shanghai-chic hotels in deco colors cater to a predominantly Chinese clientele — apparently no longer in the "foreign" category — who pay in local *kyats*, an average K750-1000, or just under \$10 at the street rate of one-hundred-plus *kyats* to the dollar. An outrageous sum for most Burmese, who might earn some K28,000 (approximately \$250) a year, but rarely pay more than K120 for lodging anywhere in the country.

A similar stratification is seen in restaurants. An entire Burmese meal of curry or noodles with soup and vegetables costs K25-30 at a foodstall where low tables and stools are set out on the pavement; certainly no more than K50 at an open-air family eatery. At the *Wazi* Kitchen, one of many cheerfully decorated Chinese establishments recently opened in Mandalay, prices run upwards of K100 a dish, with K25 tacked onto the bill for rice. Still higher on the scale, Chinese customers at the Lucky Hotel's lavish rooftop dinner club think nothing of laying out K500 per person for drinks and snacks.

Later in the evening, there's the floating stage show in the *Myanmo Thayan* Recreation Area at the southwest corner of the Palace moat. A modest two *kyat* fee grants entree to the standing crowds looking on at the bright lights from behind railings; an additional K120 for a bottle of Mandalay Beer buys a front row seat among the Chinese businessmen, who come to see bouncy Burmese girls cover hits from Taiwan and Singapore, bestowing garlands of K200 notes on their favorites. Elsewhere in town power shortages continue to blackout whole neighborhoods, but here the amps reverb until well past twelve. Nightlife of sorts.

Altogether less innocent is the way local citizens are being forced out of their

homes. Recently a fire spread over two entire city blocks in central Mandalay on April 8, five days before *Thingyan*, the tradition "water festival" of the Buddhist New Year. The latest in a long chain of minor conflagrations since 1983, the damage is particularly conspicuous in the residential area immediately south of the Palace; previous blazes claimed shops and storehouses nearer the west side *Zegyo* Market. A cooking mishap is blamed this time, although now the acre of charred rubble that was a mosque, a primary school, several rowhouses and more than thirty single-family dwellings is slated for re-zoning, ostensibly to lay in fire lanes. What isn't said is that stringent new codes will effectively bar former residents from rebuilding. Coincidentally, only Chinese buyers will be able to afford such prime real estate, soon to be the site of yet more pastel condominium towers.

Mandalay citizens are generally quite easy-going, retaining something of the regal poise and grace of another century, but they grow visibly nervous when questioned about the new landlords. Perhaps they themselves are uncertain just how complicit the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) regime is with the recent wave of Chinese. Still, stray comments have a way of reaching the ears of the Military Intelligence (MI), Maj-Gen Khin Nyunt's dreaded secret police; nowadays even anti-Chinese remarks might be construed as seditious.

"We've become third-class citizens in our own city," confides an elderly Burmese gentleman. "The military is selling everything out from under us to the Chinese." Nationality, it seems, is also on the auction block: local doctors tell of Chinese patients, who speak no Burmese, yet possess National Registration Cards complete with Burmese names.

Needless to say, "old Chinese" immigrants to Mandalay resent the newcomers. Hardly surprising, considering how in 1985 the xenophobic military targeted the Foreign Registration Card-bearing merchants, and suddenly demonetised all K100 notes. With no private banking, most saw their life savings reduced to worthless paper overnight. At the time, anything Chinese was guilty by association with then-active Burmese Communist Party (BCP) insurgents, who operated across the Yunnan border in and out of the Golden Triangle.

The situation today is again potentially explosive. Brig-Gen Kyaw Than, current SLORC Commander of Mandalay, lines his own pockets in exchange for undisclosed privileges granted to the "new colonials," apprehensive Mandalay citizens are saying it is only a matter of time before the military slips and gang warfare breaks out between triads old and new, as has occurred in most Chinatowns around the world.

For the time being, however, Mandalay is still a Burmese town. Tensions build under the surface, but SLORC has conceded just enough liberties to keep the locals temporarily pacified. As controls on business are slowly relaxed, some citizens are starting up their own trading companies alongside the Chinese. Mandalay University, Burma's number two national school, which closed in the wake of pro-democracy demonstrations four years ago, reopened last August, students say they are happy now that they can actually choose their own major curricula. Although clearly no one has forgotten the bitter lessons of 1988, when the army shot down hundreds of protesters here in the streets.

The cruel irony is that SLORC has become totally dependent on China's "new money" pouring in through Mandalay. Foreign aid has all but dried up and investors from the "outside world" will surely remain few until Burma improves its intractably obscure and unpredictable policies -- not to mention its human rights record. An estimated annual \$1 billion addition to Chinese trade -- opium tainted or not -- is about the only steady cash flow the junta has left, but by now the volume of border traffic is beyond policing. Yunnan traders have come to regard Mandalay as a more convenient "shopping bazaar" than Guangzhou for stereos and other luxury imports, some drive all the way from the border down to Rangoon, 650 km to the south, just to peruse the latest shipment of reconditioned Japanese cars.

International observers see a larger, more sinister pattern. In 1989, Burma is known to have concluded an arms deal with China worth at least \$1.2 billion, a staggering price tag for the ninth poorest country on earth. Western diplomats now fear what terms Burma's giant trading partner may have exacted in return. Indian intelligence sources claim that Chinese experts are at work setting up radar facilities on the Coco Islands just above India's Andaman Islands, as well as upgrading two other naval bases on the Bay of Bengal. And earlier this year, China promised to improve the Burma Road, plus build three new supply roads across Upper Burma to the Irrawaddy -- the "Road to Mandalay" -- fully navigable to the sea.

The sad truth is that no one, not even SLORC, can keep tabs on what the Chinese are doing in Burma. While the US defers economic sanction against Asia's colossus, the Most Favored Nation is quietly putting moves on this UN-designated Least Developed Nation. But the people of Mandalay know only too well: China's "Silk Road to the South" is already open for business.

(Composed on 24 June 1993 by a traveller to Mandalay)

Staying Power

Hear our cries. We fear for our tomorrow.
 Play out your denials of the truth
 And end this ruthless age of modern fables
 Before your yoke-the -pweh stage falls to dust.
 You'll find it isn't just in our hkamauk
 Or in a longyi of a certain style
 Our power lies; nor just in the padauk
 Or prizes freely given at grievous cost
 No, not even in our students' death.
 These you despise.
 No, no. It lies,
 As you will find, not in such outward symbols.
 Not in a peasant's hat but in his heart;
 Not in a longyi but in all our longing;
 Not in a flower but in every shower;
 Not in a prize but in a people's pride;
 Not in a student's death but in our breath,
 Our inward eyes.
 Your power dies.
 You mouth your stage denials of the truth,
 Your lying puppet-master's toothless syllables
 Silently flying like distant leaves and dust
 Blow up in gusts as all our tall trees fall.
 We have the warm wind's motive power mile
 By mile to smooch your dust upon us all
 Like thanahka; the power of truth's not lost
 But flowing free to soothe the soul beneath.
 Ignores our cries. We'll still be here tomorrow.

By Prof. Gerry Abbot (Visiting Professor in
 Mandalay University for English Department)

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| yoke-the -pweh | = puppet show |
| hkamauk | = Burmese traditional bamboo hat with a broad brim |
| longyi | = Burmese sarong |
| padauk | = blossom from the gum-kino trees |
| thanahka | = a kind of tree the bark and root of which are used in making a fragrant paste for cosmetic purposes |

BURMA AS SOUTH AFRICA

by Desmond Tutu

Four years after detaining Nobel Peace Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, and more than three years since Burmese voters resoundingly rejected their rule, Burma's dictators are today pleading with the world for more time to prove their good intentions in denying their people human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The State Law and Order Restoration Council (Slorc) rode to power on the massacre of thousands of pro-democracy demonstrators in Burma in 1988. Despite repeated promises to restore genuine representative government to Burma, the Slorc's generals have ignored the results of a free election; imprisoned, tortured and murdered those Burmese who speak against military rule; and embarked on a massive arms build-up to wage war against Burma's minority peoples.

For those achievements, the Slorc asks not only the world's indulgence. For this path of repression and destruction, the Slorc demands the world's cooperation. Any country should have deep qualms about dealing with a regime universally condemned by human-rights groups and assailed by the UN for denying fundamental freedoms to its people. The Slorc's wanton destruction of Burma's rain forests and fisheries, as well as reported links to the immensely lucrative heroin trade, further cause for concern.

Nevertheless, for many countries it remains business as usual. Those countries closet to Burma maintain vigorous trade and investment relations, and no government seems to be willing to take a stand and totally sever its economic ties. Even the massive Slorc onslaught that forced 300,000 Burmese Muslims to take refuge in neighboring Bangladesh has not prompted a strong response from the Associa-

tion of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN).

Some countries trading heavily with Burma claim deep concern over the situation there. Some diplomats privately express dismay at the Slorc's murderous nature. But the public attitude, especially among the Southeast Asian governments best positioned to persuade the Slorc to change, is far from helpful.

Only "constructive engagement," these nations say, will slowly persuade the Slorc to soften its harsh rule and join the ranks of civilised nations. China, meanwhile, provides the Slorc with all the arms and military supplies it needs to stay in power, a total of about US\$ one billion worth.

As a South African, I can claim some expertise on the subject of constructive engagement. For years, some governments claimed that the best way to deal with the apartheid regime in south Africa was by continuing to talk and trade. This gradualist approach, they said, would persuade the white-minority regime to share power and end its flagrant abuses.

Today world knows what a failure that policy was. These ties gave the apartheid regime the political will and the economic sustenance to continue its repressive policies. Only when serious sanctions started to take a significant economic toll on my country did the road to real reform begin.

During these difficult years, our struggle had the active support of governments in Asian, and I cannot forget the strength and hope we drew from the backing of our friends around the world. I believe the people of Burma deserve the same consideration today, and that they should find it first among their neighbors, whose cultures clearly place enduring moral values higher than short-term material gain.

There was absolutely no evidence that the Slorc is implementing any policy different from its longing military solution to the public's demand for their human rights and freedoms.

In March, in the company of six other Nobel Peace Prize Laureates -- including His Holiness the Dalai Lama of Tibet -- I visited Thailand. Our mission was twofold. First, we wished to draw attention to the continued detention of Aung San Suu Kyi. Second, we hoped to learn for ourselves the reality of the situation in Burma. Unfortunately, the Slorc refused us permission to enter Burma. Instead, we travelled to the Burmese frontiers where we spoke with some of the Burmese who have fled the military rule in their homeland.

Their stories were sadly familiar accounts of suffering that seems to have no end. There was absolutely

no evidence that the Slorc is implementing any policy different from its longling military solution to the public's demand for their human rights and freedoms. Five years of constructive engagement have only given the Slorc the confidence to maintain its repressive rule.

Five years of constructive engagement have only given the Slorc the confidence to maintain its repressive rule.

By now it is clear that the Slorc has little intention of giving up power. Top Slorc advisers have been touring Europe and the US to denounce what they call "Burma bashing". They say that new elections might be held early next year, after a Slorc-controlled constitutional convention completes the document the generals find acceptable and when the terms of those elected in May 1990 have all expired.

Censorship and the detention of dissidents will continue, they add, "according to the laws of Burma." We cannot forget the hundreds of prisoners of conscience who are still being detained. While some prisoners have been released, such token gestures fall far

An international arms embargo is a first step. Trade and investment restrictions should follow... This is the language that must be spoken with tyrants — for, sadly, it is the only language they understand.

short of complying with the unanimous UN recommendations.

It is now time to admit that the policy of constructive engagement with the Slorc is a failure, even as it failed to persuade the apartheid regime in south Africa to make more than cosmetic changes. ASEAN should take the lead in applying firm pressure on the Slorc to bring peace to Burma at last. An international arms embargo is a first step. Trade and investment restrictions should follow.

International pressure can change the situation in Burma. Tough sanctions, not constructive engagement, finally brought the release of Nelson Mandela

and the dawn of a new era in my country. This is the language that must be spoken with tyrants — for, sadly, it is the only language they understand.

(Far Eastern Economic Review: 16 September 1993)

ARBITRARY BEATINGS IN IDC

On 8 August 1993, Burmese students detained in Immigration Detention Centre (IDC) held a ceremony in commemoration of the 8888 on which thousands of people from all walks of life sacrificed their lives in fighting against the military dictatorship and for the restoration of democracy and human rights in Burma. That ceremony was held after the students from IDC Cell No. 1, 4, 5, 6 and others from outside discussed. At 9:00 pm of the same day, immigration police officers and two Vietnamese convicts, namely Joseph and Awan who were appointed as warders by these police, entered Cell No. 1 and cruelly beat the UNHCR recognised Burmese students with batons. The victimised students were Aung Myint Htun (NI No. 1571), Lin Kyi (alias) Zaw Zaw (NI No. 2912), Thant Zin (NI No. 2145) and Maung Shwe Hla (alias) Maung. After that, the executioners forcibly took these students off the cell. When they reached the down floor, each of them was handcuffed at the back and subjected to beatings again. Students from other cells were also brought to the down floor and beaten like them. Among them were Kyaw Kyaw, Moe Kyaw and Tin Oo.

"We were forced to squat and lean facing to the police to endure the beatings. Then the police beat at the back and kicked with combat boots at the chest simultaneously. The butchers vituperated blasted words and profane language as soon as they starting beating. After being beaten for 30 minutes, all of us were moved to Cell No. (2)," said the victims.

Peoples around the world are sustained by many things. On the Thai-Burma border you will find a people sustained by the freedom. They are the people of Burma. Not the down-trodden victimised millions: the unfree who are trapped in the giant gulag that is the State of Burma. But the brave few who escaped and live now in the refugee or military camps in the jungle. These people have many stories to tell and they have been told and broadcast around the world, so I will not repeat them. The very word "gulag" should conjure up enough of a picture of horror to tell its own tale, one that needs only a nod from the listener to say 'I know what you have been through.'

Prominent within this microcosm All Burma Students' Demonstration of students and others who of the military junta of the people in 1988 now, which means bers of the ABSDF jungle a long time longer students, implies, but are women. They up the boyish lower common manly harshness The choice to der or return been there. Some but many didn't leave stayed on to an organisation that many reasons and in

FREE BURMA

DEREK TAYLOR

of free Burma is the ABSDF, the cratic Front, an organisation fled the murderous repres-who usurped the power 1988 is some time ago that many of the mem-have been in the and are, in fact, no with all that this young men and long since gave charm of the room for the of the jungle. stay on the bor-home has always made it and left Those that didn't found and entrench is remarkable for many ways.

Most remarkable is the fact one of the poorest organisation the existence is to overthrow dictatorship governing Burma, but ac-gratefully received from the NGOs operat-they are an impoverished people.

that the ABSDF must be in the world. Its reason for Slorc, the name of the military cept for the rice and the medicines ing along the border, they have nothing;

Man does not live by bread alone. This applies particularly, since they have precious little of it, to the poor all over the world. What they survive on is their wits. This engenders in the poor a spirit that is often very impressive. Even the Jesus Christ, the saviour of the Christian faith, commented upon it. He was not worried for the poor, their spirit, he knew, would get them by. This is as true of the ABSDF as the poor anywhere. There is something heroic about them. They have a spirit that is somehow indomitable and to be amongst them is to learn to watch out for it. The ABSDF to a man, or woman, could all be living very comfortably abroad, as resettled political refugees. Indeed, it is what the United Nations and many of the NGOs could wish for, since it would tidy things up very nicely for them, but the membership in general has decided to stay on the borders and testify, which they do by their very existence, to the survival of a free Burma. Tyrants always fall, history has shown it often enough, and it is true that sometimes they need a little shove. If the spirit of the ABSDF is anything to go by, when push does eventually come to shove in the "gulag" that is the State of Burma, it will be the ABSDF who will provide the hard-core of the muscle that is going to bring it about. By hook or by crook they supplement their means, with the paper, with pens and with arms. It follows from this, that one day, by hook or by crook, they will go home. Free Burma will return to live within its international boundaries. Slorc, you have been warned!

STICK AND CARROT FOR THE MON

Thailand which has bent on exploiting Burma natural resources with no concern for humanity have been planning to repatriate more than 15,000 Mon refugees in Thailand. Of the targetted victims, Thailand want to clear 8,000 Mon refugees from Loh Loe camp to implement the proposed construction of a natural gas pipeline which will connect gasfield in Burma's coastal town of Amherst with Thailand's Kanchanaburi province. The routes of the pipeline are now envisaged through the territory where Mon refugees settle now.

On April 7, Thai soldiers from 9th Division based in Kanchanaburi province, without giving any reason, reduced two refugee villages -- Democracy village and Aung Tha Pyay village -- to ashes which were situated on the Thai side for at least two years, about one kilometre from the border in order to push them back into Burma. 323 people lived in Democracy village and 222 in the latter one. (See Dawn News Bulletin Vol. 3 No. 12 & Vol. 4 No. 3)

The dealing of Thailand with Slorc is stronger day by day for economic reason and never raises a question of grave human rights issue committed by Rangoon military regime. Barfacedly, it repeatedly announced that it will invite Slorc to attend 1994 ASEAN foreign ministerial meetings as an observer. The repatriation is the part of the Thai government's policy to deal with Slorc strongly and to exploit Burma's natural resources. Thai authorities admitted that this is a facet of the government's so-called "new face" of foreign policy toward Burma.

Loh Loe Refugee camp is about 30 kilometres in the jungle of Kanchanaburi province's Sangkhlaburi district. It is just a few kilometres from the Thai-Burma border. In October 1993, about 8,000 Mon refugees at that camp were forced to have "volunteered" to leave Thailand. Of them the majority fled Three Pagoda Pass in early 1990 after it was attacked and occupied by Slorc troops. (See Dawn Vol. 3 No. 6) After the Thai army forced to move refugees from Day Bung, Baleh Hnook, Panung Hthaw and Krone Kung camp, the displaced refugees were ordered to stay in Hla Brad camp, which was later renamed as Loh Loe. All these camps were run by Mon National Relief Committee (MNRC) while some humanitarian assistance were provided by Bangkok-based NGOs. Since April 1992, Loh Loe has become the centre of Mon refugees.

ber 17 between MNRC Chairman Naing Tin Aung, Thai National Security Council (NSC), 9th Infantry Division in Kanchanaburi and district officials, the refugees were asked to leave Loh Loe.

The new site, know as Halockhani, about 35 kilo north of the present Loh Loe camp, was chosen by the Thai authorities, and forced the Mon to accept. The proposal of the refugees for a better place was ignored and they were given uncertain reasons. This order itself contradicts the agreement signed on 16 February 1993 at the meeting of NSC, the Thai army, Songkhlaburi district officials and MNRC which said Thailand will allow Mon refugees to shelter in its soil until the political situation in Burma changes. Thai authorities give no reason on their shift to an arbitrary order.



During a meeting held in Songkhala Buri on Septem-

To Page (33)

THE PLIGHT OF THE PEOPLE IN SHAN STATE

Following story is revealed by a member of the ABSDF, who has just returned from six week-long field visit in Shan and Karenni State, Burma. -- The Editor

NEW DAM AT INLAY LAKE

Inlay lake is a tourist destination where Slorc want to exploit its maximum potential, to this end the irrigation department of Slorc has started to build a dam on the Biluchaung river in Moebye. This project will prevent the water level of Inlay lake from reflux in summer and thus the area is green and attractive all year round for tourists. However, this scheme will affect the livelihood of Intha and Pa-Oh ethnic people, who make their living by growing paddy around the lake in dry season, because the dam will cause year round flooding of some 7500 acres which produce 300,000 sacks of rice per year. At present, survey and preliminary ground excavation undertaken by the irrigation department is under way and a start date was proposed for early 1994. LIB 117 is taking responsibility for the security of proposed dam area.

Alongside the dam project is one of the most unfruitful exercise of forced labour that is ever thought by Slorc. In the name of keeping the lake be clean (for tourism), 50 people from village located in that area were ordered to clean the algae by pushing them to the bottom of the lake with long bamboo poles. When people from township council complained Slorc representative that such work was meaningless because it makes the plants growing faster, they were ignored and told to comply Slorc order.

When a number of villages refused to turn up for work, the present labourers were forcibly kept waiting for their neighbours in the boiling sun by local Slorc authorities in order to force them to appear. This exercise is coupled with the water-hyacinth project which has been continuing since 1980 in which the people were forced to clear these plants to enable the fast flow of water into Moebye Dam that feeds the hydroelectric station at Lopita, Karenni State. It is a never ending project since water-hyacinth breeds prolifically -- of course all works are conscripted.

The same people of that area have suffered time and time again since the reign of Gen Ne Win's revolutionary council in 1971. As Moebye Dam flooded over ten thousand acres in 1971 and destroyed the livelihood of the farmers in this area, the regime created Saka lake and forced the people to move out to the area now under threat -- both times they have not received even one Kyat in compensation from the regime.

Only the obligation of forced labour and most ironically none of the electricity they have helped to create.

Further problems in the lake area have recently been revealed the involvement of the Pa-Oh National Organization (PNO) which reached a ceasefire agreement with Slorc in 1991 and their persecution of the people in the Biluchaung River Basin. Firstly the PNO are operating a protection racket with the full understanding of Slorc representatives. People there have to levy a tax of approximately 50 Kyat for every 6 month with the threat of village be burnt down for non-payers. Furthermore, PNO is also running a number of gambling dens previously illegal in Burma. If the local people wish to play, they must levy a tax to Slorc, police, and PNO. The police and Slorc allow the gambling without any interference. However, PNO soldiers often stage surprise raids on the dens and harass the participants if an additional tax is not paid.

An example of this took place in October 1992. The vast majority of the people of Inlay lake gathered at a pagoda called *Kyet Nok Taung* in Yawnghwe township to make the annual merit -- offering donation of rice to the monks -- to which about 5,000 people were present. Outside the pagoda, there was a "legal" (tax paid) gambling. The proceeds were to be used for the festival. In the evening, PNO soldiers arrived at the gambling den and demanded an additional 5,000 Kyat "tax". The gambling banker presented the receipt from PNO to prove they had already levied the tax and refused to pay any additional tax. The soldiers started to fire their guns into the air and caused panic at the gambling center and the nearby pagoda. The soldiers rushed into the crowd and committed robbing everyone within reach. Even the monks fled leaving the donations offered and the festival in shreds.

Extortionate Tactics

My friend who has just returned from the lake area after travelling with a firewood trader told me that Slorc's extortionate tactics are as strong as ever. Whilst proceeding from Saka lake to Inlay lake, his boat was stopped at a military check point manned by LIB 117 under 55 LID. Slorc soldiers demanded ready-cut firewood, cost about 50 Kyat, to allow them to pass. This happens every day with every possible commodity. Obviously Slorc cannot use all their ill gotten gains so that they resell them to the villagers from whom they stole from. Further on about ten minutes up river, PNO has another check point with the same routine except that their requirements are usually higher.

Since the 1991 cease fire, leaders of PNO have become wealthy, owning new Japanese cars and living in the lap of luxury; however, PNO soldiers' conditions have remained much unchanged. Hence the soldiers go on a robbing rampage to supplement their income which their leaders turn a blind eye.



New Railroad

Slorc has been carrying out the construction of 153 miles long Shwe Nyaung--Nam Sam railroad. Tactical Command 552 and 553 under 55 LID are in control of the project. The area where the railroad will pass through is controlled by a number of armed groups -- Shan Nationality Peoples Liberation Organization (SNPLO) and Mong Tai Army (MTA). There have been heavy fighting in these areas between LIB 112, 117, IB 7, 9 12 and the armed groups. SNPLO headquarters and its local market have been razed to ablaze that forced its army to retreat. Slorc has put tremendous pressure on the local people to stop these groups being supplied with food, transport, information and medicine, with the treat of being their villages reduced to ashes for those caught or suspected of helping them. Slorc's aim is to ensure the security of the railroad and to force SNPLO to sign a ceasefire agreement with Slorc.

Every family in Shan state which is living far more than 20 kilometers from the proposed railroad is required to contribute corvee labour for the railroad construction. The fee levied is six hundred Kyat per household -- a farmer's average wage is 8 Kyat per month.

Construction:

Railroad construction part 1 in section 7 area is between Mauk Mai and Hse Saing Township. Eight thousand five hundred and sixteen persons in this area have been forced to contribute corvee labour for the construction at least 4 days a month. Fifteen hundred people work at one time composed of men, women and children regardless of their age. They were forced to crack granite, carry sand, sleepers and steel in minimal eight hours per day.

Numbers of local people in Hse Saing township who have been forced to contribute corvee labour at gun point for the construction of Shwe Nyaung-Nam Sam rail road.

Township/parish	quarter/village	Numbers
Hse Saing Township	Thiri Quarter	342
	Mingalar Quarter	98
	Aung Tha Pyay	417
	Mya Kan Thar	191
	Yo Khae	335
	Aung Cha Thar	531
		1914
Kone Sook parish	Kone Sook village	62
	Nam Paw	45
	Pan Kan	40

	Maik Thien Hto	65		Chaung Chark	32
	Mwe Taw	71		Pe Kyut (East)	36
	Htee Lao	20		Pe Kyut (West)	76
	Khu Phoe	27		Khao Lai	102
	Naung Sein	112		Naung Htaw	45
	Phar Lai	35		Chauk Ein Su	
	Naung Leik	42		Naung Htaw village	48
	Mak Mon Htom	124		(Burmese)	
	Myay Ne	92		Htee Neh	113
	Myayk Kyauk village	78		Pan Aung	38
	Naung Yuay	50		Htee Sone village	121
	Nam Ngeik	42		(upper)	
	Nam Yawk	11			
					930
		923			
Naung Kyaw parish	Tha Khwe Khun	90	South East parish	Htee Tha Khao	78
	Chaung Pon	50		Khao Phom	37
	Pan Lai	96		Kaung Tae	98
	Naung Mar	24		Lwe Saung	80
	Naung Ywe	50		Nanung Bo	46
	Kaung Pan Tan	30		Pein Ne Bin	34
	Pha Lai Kauk village	25		Don Li Tan	62
	Tha Khwe Tan	20		Lwe Kha Yeh	54
	Nar Moon	95		Pan Kyan	31
	Htee Phoo	117		Don Nyo	36
				Don Mauk Ka Lan	28
		605		Pan Ka Lah	92
				Kalar Lan	64
Naung Kyaw(North)	Nyaung Kyaw(North)	44		Naung Htaw Don	16
	Nyaung Kyaw(South)	32		Kone	
	Phaya Phyu	240			2060
	Kaung Wein	125			
	Lwe Tha Phee	131	Lwe Put parish	Kaung Wah Taung	52
	Naung Bo	70		Htee Lone Hee	44
	Upper Pha Lai village	35		Taw Ya	160
	Mae Taung	160		Chaung Ngai	50
	Naung Eh village	65		Htee Pone	16
	Naung Yin village	218		Laik Pay	46
	Naung Lon	59		Tway Phoo	87
	Lwe Saung	89		Htoo Kyan	50
	Naung Seik	49		Lon Kha Yar	39
	Haung Taung	264		Pun Yan	140
	Haung Pyaung	106		Sin Taw Khan	104
	Khaik Pay	28		Htee Lon Su	84
	Thae Tan	25		Mi Yeh	113
	Pan Ngo	55		Lon Pan	78
	Nanung Kha Lork	14		Pan Si Tan	31
				Htam Sai	68
		2365		Hti Sin Khan	64
				Say Kyan	28
					1254
Nyaung Kyaw (East parish)	Pan Than Khwa	78			
	Lwe Lin	148			
	Naung Taung	16			
	Htee Tha Maung	189			
	Lone Sakar	26			
	New Naung Htaw village	162			
	Salaung Htaung	53			
	Ma Gyi Tan	21			

In the area controlled by LIB 425, of 8516 labourers, 1000 have to contribute labour, bringing their own food covering their own expenses.

Poppy Cultivation Blooming

Poppy cultivation has been blooming in Inlay, Mauk Mai, Hse Hsaing, Hpe Kong and Pan Long areas in Shan State.

In the past, poppy cultivation was illegal. In the aftermath of 1988, when Slorc came to power, the regime has allowed the local people to cultivate it in exchange of levying certain tax. The rate of tax is 500-2,000 Kyats depending on the demand of Slorc battalion. This taxation is a particular scheme of each battalion.

Before, poppy cultivation was approximately 40%, 30%, 30% to Kayan-, Khun Sa-, and Wa-controlled areas respectively. The raw opium from Kayan area is used to be trafficked to Ho Muang, Khun Sa's headquarters, for refining while the products of Wa and Kokang in Ho Pan and Mong Maw area were refined in their own refineries.

Now opium in Kayan is being trafficked to Kachin area. In Khun Sa's area, raw opium is bought for approximately 15,000 Kyat per kilo. Slorc in Kayan area is purchasing at the price of 12,000 Kyat per kilo and reselling to Kachin traffickers at 40,000 Kyat. A large number of Chinese traffickers bought from them and smuggled across the border. The regional military commanders are often involved in trafficking and the opium is carried in military convoys. Sometimes they issue a note of permission to local traffickers.

Kachin traffickers who want to get raw opium cannot buy directly from Khun Sa as he sells only the refined heroin. Kayan cannot get a higher price from Khun Sa because they lose protection. If Kayan poppy cultivators want to transport their products directly to Kachin area, they will have to pay an arbitrary tax depending on weight. Any "freelance" trader caught by Slorc who has not levied the tax will have to be arrested for illegal opium trafficking.

About 800 tons of raw opium is being trafficked traders in Bhamo and Moe Hnyin Township in Kachin State for every month.

REALITY

In Shan state, Slorc have been creating unrest between minorities by allowing PNO, Shan State Army (SSA), United Wa State Army (UWSA), Kayan National Guard (KNG) and the Kokang in order to exploit the people and instigating communal discords to disrupt their unity. All these groups signed ceasefire agreements with Slorc in order to get special privileges for them.

Slorc has embarked on a major propagandised programme in Shan State, claiming to provide many useful facilities such as railways, parks, etc.; however, the reality is that the amenities are being built by the people who were forced as labourers.

by TAN JOR TAY

From Page (29)

In October, a group of 139 Mon men who are taking part in a pilot project to resettle in Burma were took to Halokhani by Thai authorities. The group was only accompanied half-way by the Thai authorities and left in the jungle. By the order of Thai authorities, the remaining persons at the camp will have to follow them by January 1994. About 300-500 refugees are to be moved to Halockhani at each stage.

The new site cannot be reached either by vehicle during the raining season or by boat, and is very difficult to contact outside. If the refugees are in Burma, it is difficult for them to get assistance from the NGOs because they are not independent enough in providing cross-border assistance to the refugees. As soon as these refugees are on the Burmese side of the border, there is no doubt that their lives will be in danger because they will be stormed by Slorc troops since the site is only about one hour walk from the operations command of Slorc IB 62.

**NO MORE
MILITARY
INTERFERENCE
IN
CIVILIAN RULE**

ON-GOING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

To save its tarnished image as much criticised and pressured by the international community due to its gave human rights records since it came to power by a military coup in 1988, Slorc halted its annual dry season offensives against the Democratic Forces, including the All Burma Students' Democratic Front (ABSDF). Although no major clash with the Democratic Forces broke out, the people inside the country are still ruled at gun point and power is still gushing from the barrel of the gun. Forced labour, Forced Relocation, Forced Recruitment, Arbitrary Execution and Torture against the people in Burma are still widespread under Slorc reign which goes against the Article (5) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that clearly states: 'No one shall be subjected to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.' This can be clearly revealed by Slorc's brutal and atrocious deeds which have been done to the people living Shan, Mon, Karen and Karenni States and Pegu and Tenasserim Divisions. (The Editor)

FORCED LABOUR

Name	Ko Win Naing
Age	28
Gender	Male
Parents	U Shwe & Daw Shwe Kyi
Address	Golden Valley, Bahan, Rangoon
Civil status	Unmarried
Occupation	Photographer
Date of arrest	May 1993
Perpetrators	Local Slorc authorities and police

Case: The victim was earning his living as a photographer and worked near Shwedagon Pagoda and Bandoola Park (now People's Square of Slorc). In the morning, while he fell asleep in his house along with his parents and 2 sisters, local Slorc authorities and police knocked the door and gave him the reason for checking the household lists. When he opened the door, the perpetrators brought him at gun point to Bahan police station for interrogation. He was there for 4 nights, and transferred to Insein prison with the accusation of suspicion, Section (54). No trial for his case was occurred. When the sentence for that section was served, he was sent to the court.

There he was alleged with new accusations and sent back to Insein prison again. He was branded as the accused under Emergency Act and detained for further 3 weeks.

On May 25, he and over 300 people from different townships in Rangoon division who were arrested at gun point and forced to serve as porters, were brought to Pegu prison after being checked their addresses. After having meal in that prison, they were sent to Taungoo. They had to sleep in Taungoo and Meikhtila for one night respectively. Then, they were sent to Loikaw prison by LIB 101 and detained for 2 weeks. In that prison, the victim had to barter his clothes to the police to get 10 cheroots. On June 11, they were brought by LIB 250 to the western bank of Salween river and were handed over to LIB 428 in Sookpai, and then transferred to a military column, composed of about 100 troops, led by company quartermaster Kyaw Zin from LIB 54. They were forced to carry heavy loads and ammunition for LIB 228 which stationed at Huay Pon Laung. The victim was forced to carry 5 shells of 75mm recoilless rifle. There was no Medicare for the sick. When the porters asked for medicines, they were beaten. Although there was no porter who died of sickness, he saw with his own eyes that over 30 porters, including 2 children, were beaten to death. An old man, 58, was beaten to death near Kya Pasak hill. The aged persons were beaten to death with bamboo sticks or with rifle butts when they could no longer carry the loads. The youngest porters were 15 years and the eldest were at 60.

Name	Ko San Lwin
Age	36
Gender	Male
Parents	U Aung Pe & Daw Tin Shwe
Address	Tamwe, Rangoon Division
Civil status	Married
Occupation	odd-jobs
Date of arrest	May 1993
Perpetrators	Local Slorc authorities and police

Case: On 10 May 1993, while the victim was going to sell bottles and plastic to a shop in Ma-hlwa Gone, police from Tamwe station interrupted him and asked where he was going to. Then he was brought to the station for interrogation. He had to sleep at the police station for one night. The next morning, he and other 6 people were transferred to Insein. He was detained there for 15 days without any interrogation. On May 25, he and over 300 porters were brought to Pegu prison and then forced to the frontline.

(Reported by Zaw Zaw)

FORCED LABOUR AND RANSOM**1. Tenasserim Division**

From January to May 1993, 22 Mon villages in Ye Phyu township were forced to pay a ransom of (133,260) Kyats to Slorc LIB 407. Five other villages which could not afford to pay had to send the villagers to contribute corvee labour. This ransom was included tax for the porters, compensation for the weapons lost in the frontline, fine and a bribe 1000 Kyat of each villager who could not contribute labour in cashew plantation. Local people had to concentrate on the demands of Slorc troops and had to work very hard to meet Slorc's needs.

(Source: New Mon State Party)

2. Pegu Division

On 24 June 1993, people living in the villages, Htantabin township, close to Slorc IB 73 headquarters were ordered to construct buildings for the headquarters. For the headquarters' primary school, the vendors in the area had to give a contribution of 60 Kyats per person while those better off had to give 500 Kyats per household. Moreover, they were also forced to contribute corvee labour in the paddy fields owned by Battalion commander.

Slorc IB 232, 233 and 34 led by Tactical commander Thein Tun divided the troops into 6 military columns and launched an operation for reconnaissance from 18 August 18 to 9 September 1993 which passing through Kler Lar, Gaw Thay Hdoe, Ku Ler Hdoe, Hsaw Wa Hdoe, See Hkeh Hdoe, Plaw Mu Hdoe, Ha Toh Ber, Tha Kho Hdoe, Tha Aye Kee and Hbu Kee villages. These columns used 300 ethnic Burman porters. Ten porters died on the way from exhaustion and hunger. As they were placed at the head of columns, 2 porters lost their legs and 3 wounded resulted from land mines.

On 24 August 1993, Slorc troops from Column (2) of IB 48 led by commander Tin Myint seized the people living in Zayatgyi, Bone Ma Tee, Tha Yet Tan and other villages in Htantabin township, and were pressed-gang into portage.

On 29 August 1993, Slorc troops from Column (2) of IB 232 led by Toe Myint seized 60 villagers living in Gaw Thay Hdoe village. On the same day, Slorc troops from Company (2) of IB 34 led by Capt Zaw Myint seized 70 villagers in Kler Lar village, and were pressed-ganged into portage for the frontline. Of these victims, it was reported the inclusion of pregnant women, aged persons and young students.

(Source: KNU)

TAXATION/HARASSMENT**1. Karenni State**

In July 1993, local Slorc authorities at Loilem Lay village, Loikaw, ordered Thar Yu village headman Ko Aung to send the tax in cash or send the villagers to contribute corvee labour by July 31 at the latest.

On July 23, Ko Aung was ordered by Loilem Lay Lorc authorities to collect one family member from each household in his village for the construction of an earthen dam by the side of Biluchaung river. To escape conscription meant paying a ransom of if could not send 80 kyats per household or 2,880 kyats for the whole village and the ransom was asked to send July 26 at the latest.

On August 8, Ko Aung was ordered by the outpost commander to attend a meeting to be held at Htee Sakhan outpost. On August 15, he was summoned with a third warning to attend the meeting on August 16 and was said that the commander would come and take effective action on his absence.

On August 17, Ko Aung was ordered by Loilem Lay Lorc chairman to collect the tax for the construction and patrol of railroad and send by August 20 at the latest. Each household has to pay 2 Kyat.

(Reported from Aung Hum Rai Camp; ABSDF)

2. Pegu Division

On 19 June 1993, Military Column 1 of Slorc IB 48 led by Lt-Col Toe Aung ordered the people living in Sha See Bo village, Htantabin Township of Taungoo District, to hand over 16 kilos of chicken.

On 19 July 1993, they shot pigs and chickens in Ta Ya Lu and Yay Shan village and took away the dead animals. Nyaunglebin-based Slorc troops came to Sha See Bo and Yay Shan village and ordered the people living there to hand over 4 kilos of rice per household.

On 8 August 1993, Slorc troops from Baya Nathi camp ordered the village heads of Sha See Bo tract to collect 250 grams of rice from each household and to hand over to them.

In September 93, authorities from Htantabin township law and order restoration council levied tax on businesses operating there in order to build a bridge across Htantabin river. For a machinery, the proprietor, would have to pay 100,000 Kyats and the price for an elephant was 100 Kyats.

(Source: KNU)

3. Tenasserim Division

Kawthanung -- Slorc instructed its commanders to issue orders for the soldiers who fled from armed services in order to take action. Slorc commanders issued orders to the local people that not to accept those who fled from the services and any person who accept them commit Section 135 (help those criminals) and 136 (for acceptance) of Criminal Act and will be sentenced to 2 year imprisonment or fine or both of them.

(Source: FTUB)

FORCED RECRUITMENT

Pegu Division

On 17 July 1993, Commander of Slorc IB 75 ordered the village heads in Htantabin Township of Taungoo District to collect 8 army recruits in their tract. If they unable to find the recruits had to pay 20,000 Kyat to the commander.

On 30 August 1993, Capt Khin Maung Oo from Slorc IB 351 set up camp in Kyun Bin Seik village, Kyauk Kyi township, and summoned the village heads in the area and told them to find recruits for the army. If they could not find the numbers of recruits wanted, they were to hire ethnic Burman from the towns. They were also told to hand over all orphans by saying that he would send them to school and later will transfer them to the army.

ROBBERY

1. Pegu Division

On 7 August 1993, Slorc IB 351 led by Capt Khin Maung Aye and Zaw Lin Naing which replaced IB 73 took 700 kilos of rice and properties they wanted from the villagers in Kyauk Kyi township without any payment.

(Source: KNU)

2. Tenasserim Division

On 7 August 1993, Slorc troops from LIB 104 stationed at Kyauk Ga Din village in Ye Phyu township arrested Nai Win, son of Nai Ho and Mi Ngike, and forced him to give 5,000 kyats.

Case: A number of troops led by section commander Yet Kha came to Ah Le Sa Khan village in order to levy "tax" from the traders. Three houses were razed to the ground without any reason. To cover their deeds, they arrested the victim with the allegation of a revolutionary soldiers and took to Kyauk Ga Din outpost. Deputy-company commander Saw Win Tun and Yet Kha arrested the victim until the villagers came and pay them a ransom of 5,000 Kyat.

On 30 August 1993, 35 troops led by Maj Nyunt Win and Captain Htan Lin from LIB 343 penetrated Ann Din Duya and Kok Kha Ru village, Ye township and conducted house-to-house search which had collaboration with the revolutionary forces. Suspected houses and huts were reduced to ashes and properties of the villagers were taken away. Before they left, they committed rape.

On 3 September 1993, Slorc troops from LIB 343 robbed 150,000 Kyat in cash from Nai Koung's housed and another 2,100 Kyat and 25 pairs of new clothing from Nai Ohn's house in Thar Ga Ran village, Ye township. Moreover, over 40 villagers, who were afraid of being served as forced labourers and hid in a safer place, were arrested and their watches were taken away and a ransom of 500 kyat was paid to the troops for their release.

(Source: New Mon State party)

BURN DOWN VILLAGE AND PLUNDERING

In the last week of August 1993, Slorc IB 231 led by Maj Zaw Win Myint burnt down 93 houses in Aung Hlaing village, Kawkaeik Township, Dooplaya District. Among the plundered properties were 110,000 kilos of paddy, 15 bullock carts, a Buddhist monastery, about 10 tons of building materials for a Christian church, 800 grams of gold, 100,000 Kyats in cash, 19 cattle, 10 pigs, 5 goats, tens of chickens/ducks, and clothing.

(Source: KNU)

ATTACKS THE CIVILIAN TARGET

On 26 June 1993, farmers from Yet Kha village, Kyaik Ma Raw Township, who were growing paddy in the fields were attacked by 15 Slorc troops from IB 310 led by Sergt Win Min and caused 2 women wounded. The victims and 2 pony-cart drivers were fined 35,000 Kyat each. The latter two were fined with the reason that they helped carrying the victims to the hospitals.

Case: Slorc troops which arrived Yet Kha village to inquire the movement of the revolutionary forces were angry with the situation that they were not provided any information and opened fired into the innocent crowd.

On 1 September 1993, fighting took place between Slorc troops from LIB 104 and Mon National Liberation Army (MNLA) at Kyauk Ga Din village, Ye Phyu Township. As soon as the battle broke out, Slorc troops opened fire into the crowd who were keeping the precepts in while others remaining in the

outpost ranged the artillery shells into the monastery. Because of Slorc's attack, 19 innocent people were injured. Slorc did not allow these victims to take treatment at the Ye Hospital. Therefore, they had to be hospitalised in Tavoy hospital.

On September 8, Moulmein-Ye railroad was blown up between Kwan Hlar village (Mudon township) and Hpaung Sein village (Thanbyuzayat township). The following day, while 40 troops from Slorc IB 62 were clearing the area, they stepped on land mine, resulted (3) died on the spot while 8 others, including a captain and a sergeant, wounded. Related to that situation, Slorc troops fined Kwan Hlar village and two other villages – Wargaru in Thanbyuzayat and Set Twe in Mudon – to compensate 100,000 each as a punishment.

(Source: New Mon State Party)

ARBITRARY EXECUTION

Name of the victims	Nai Chit Khin	Nai Gyo
Age	56	35
Name of Spouse	Mi Phwa	Mi Yin Thein Sein
Date of Arrest	At 7:00 pm, 1 July 1993	
Date of executed	midnight of the same day	
Address	Taung Bauk village, Kya Inn Seikgyi township	
Perpetrators	Commander Than Htun Aung and a platoon of Slorc soldiers from Coy No. 5 of LIB 106	

Case: Slorc soldiers entered the village from the south west entrance with their guns were loaded, and approached the resthouse situated in the middle of the village. Then, the troops rounded up former village chairman Nai Chit Khin's house.

Nai Chit Khin just came back from ploughing in the field and was having dinner with his family while a sergeant and three other privates rushed into the house and dragged the two victims with the accusation of rebels.

The victims were tied up in front of the resthouse and forced to confess their allegation of hiding the pistols and walkie-talkie. The victims were inhumanely tortured by the troops. At 10:00 pm, their bodies stained with blood resulted from torture and were taken to the outpost of battalion commander Aung Min. The victims were stained with blood from the head down to the foot after being subjected to torture again. At midnight of the same day, 2 victims were shot dead by the perpetrators.

A villager from that village revealed that on August

23 he was arrested by the soldiers from Coy 5 of LIB 106 while he was working in the rubber farm, and forced into portorage for 5 days to accompany the troops which patrolled Kya Inn Seik Gyi township. On August 28, he was released at Khale Ta Kun Taing village. Before he was released, a soldier told him secretly, "We have already killed 2 arrested villagers from Taung Bauk village. Tell their families and relatives to hold the religious ceremonies"

On hearing the sad stories, the widows cried, sold the properties that they belong to in order to hold the religious ceremony.

(Source: New Mon State Party)

On 2 August 1993, Saw Dee Hgay from Aleywa village in Kyauk Kyi township of Nyaunglebin District was executed by Maj Nay Myo Win, Coy (5) of Slorc IB 73.

On 31 August 1993, Saw Doh Raw, 54 years, and his daughter Naw Pu Pu, 27 years with a child, of Hsaw Wah Hdoe village were shot dead near Ler Hbaw Kler Ber village by Slorc troops from Column (2) of IB 34 led by Mya Aung.

(Source: KNU)

TORTURE

On 4 August 1993, Naw Mu Lar (female) and her daughter Law Eh Too, who lived in Kyauk Kyi township of Nyaunglebin District, were severely beaten by Maj Zaw Lin Naing from Slorc IB 73 while her 8-year old daughter Kia Paw was kicked violently.

On 5 August 1993, Maung Hla, who lived in Kyauk Kyi township, was beaten by a soldier from the same unit when he could not give the fish to the perpetrators.

(Source: KNU)

SEXUAL ABUSES

Name	Mi Yin Kyi
Age	34
Gender	Female
Ethnicity	Mon
Address	Wel Ga Glong village, Kya Inn Seik Gyi Township, Mon State
Date	24 July 1993
Perpetrators	soldiers from Slorc LIB 106 led by Coy (1) commander Capt Than Tun Aung

Case: On July 24, a fighting between Slorc troops and Mon National Liberation Army (MNLA)

broke out near the village. Slorc troops rushed into the village where only the women and children left and mistreated plundered the remaining things for the whole night. They got into each house and looted watches, cassette recorders, gold, money and properties which worth more than 150,000 Kyats. Some women in the hideouts were gang-raped by the troops. Of them Mi Yin Kyi and 7 other victims were repeatedly raped at gun point in front of the others.

On 3 September 1993, a mother of 3 children from Yawthit village in Ye township was raped by a signal officer from LIB 343.

Name	Mi Pan
Age	25
Gender	Female
Spouse	Nai Htun Wai
Ethnicity	Mon
Address	Kyon Ka Nyar village, Ye Phyu Township, Tenasserim Division
Date	30 September 1993
Perpetrators	soldiers from Slorc LIB No. 104

Case: In the afternoon of September 30, as 40 troops from LIB 104 led by Capt Aung Min Tun stationed near the village, all the men in the village, including the victim's husband, had to hide in a safer place. Mi Pan, who delivered a child (10) days ago and left with her new born baby and 2 children, was raped by a Slorc soldier in her hut.

(Source: New Mon State Party)



Mosque to be brought down

An excavated tomb



RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION

Under the iron-gripped reign of Slorc, not only Buddhism but also other religions in Burma have been persecuted. In the Article 18 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights although it clearly expresses on Freedom of Religion — Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance -- it has been intensely violated by the military regime. Following is religious persecution occurred in Southern part of Burma. — The Editor

Muslims living in Tamai quarter of Kawthaung (Victoria Point) are now facing with persecution of the Slorc authorities who intends to bring down the mosque in order to build a GEC store. Every civil servant has to pay 1,000 Kyat for that store to meet the required amount of working capital. Although Muslims in that city are not satisfied with Slorc's order, they dare not submit any complaint to Slorc because freedom of expression is denied by Slorc. Up to now 47 tombs from the Muslim cemetery were secretly excavated by Slorc.

FORCED EVICTION

(1) Kawthaung

Over 1,000 households on Bogyoke Street of Kawthaung were forcibly confiscated by the Slorc. This resulted 1,500 people become homeless and some of them are sheltering in Ranong as Slorc has no plan to resettle or compensate these victims. Their lands were given to local Slorc authorities. Moreover, Bayintnaung quarter is also ordered to move. Most of the dwellers there are Muslims, and 60 households of them and a number of others are in the list to be forced out.



Houses to be confiscated by Slorc

(2) Thai-Burma border

On 30 September 1993, a platoon from Artillery Corps of Slorc invaded 4 kilometre into Thailand and arrested a mine worker. After conducting interrogation, the soldiers took the victim to guide them for 3 kilometre near the mine which is in mountainous area.

When they approached a motorway, called Mine Gyi intersection, a car from that mine came up. The victim requested the captain, platoon commander, to set him free by saying that car was from his mine and



Refugees moving for a safer place

he was also a foreman there. After paying a ransom of one hundred baht to a sergeant he was released.

A few minute later, the BBC (Burma Border Consortium) relief worker Ma Shalley arrived there, carrying basic commodities to deliver the villagers in Aung Thabye refugee village. She was interrupted and interrogated at gun point. She was released when the soldiers were satisfied with her answer that she was a mine owner and the commodities were for her workers.

Twenty minutes later, when Soe Lwin, Secretary of FTUB (Free Trade Union Burma) Youth Section and a local contact, proceeded to Lay Aeingsu refugee village and held a meeting with the villagers. Being concerned the raid of the soldiers, all villagers immediately moved to No. 1 and No. 5 mine areas.

As Slorc troops used to arrive at this spot and threaten the workers and local people, they were scared about their peaceful living and unable to work safely. Burmese refugees and their children on Thai area have been suffering from various forms of insufficiency in social, economic, health and education because they were not recognised as refugees or temporary asylum-seekers instead of illegal immigrants. Moreover, they have to work as low-waged labourers and their income are not enough for their survival.

The area where Slorc troops invaded was just 3 kilometre from the refugee villages so that the refugees in Aung Thabye and Lay Aeingsu had to move to No. (4) and (8) led mine area for their temporary safety. Slorc LIB 401, 409 and 25 stationed and patrolled in that area have been preparing for dry season offensive.

(Source: FTUB)

PEOPLE STILL OPPRESSED UNDER CEASEFIRE AGREEMENT

In April 1991 when PNO (Pa-O National Organisation) resigned from the NDF and DAB and made a ceasefire agreement with Slorc, the regime proposed the condition that people living in PNO-controlled area will be free from various forms of taxation and serving as forced labourers. Since then, leaders have been fostered as delegates to the National Convention and whatever they say are just echoing word for word of Slorc's proposal. As a part of divide and rule policy, Slorc allowed PNO leaders to operate Mong Shu mine for one year.

PNA, armed wing of PNO had responsibility to collect porters, runners and interpreters for Slorc military columns. When their own people were victimised in different forms, PNA troops do not have a chance to interrupt. At this stage, PNA, instead of safeguard its own people, became armed porters of Slorc.

Under the disguise of development policy, Slorc divided PNO area into 3 regions and instigated the people for the occurrence of discords among them. In the west region, west of Inlay Lake in Southern Shan State, people's farms were confiscated without any compensation. Shan, Karenni, Kayan and other ethnic minorities were press-ganged into portage

for the construction of Loikaw-Aung Ban rail road and military bases. As they had to work, bringing their own food and medicines covering their own expenses, hundreds of people died of starvation and sickness. Regarding death rate, Col Thein Han told a foreign correspondent that "death is not strange to human beings." When people could no longer bear such kind of day-to-day suppression in the construction of "new death railway", many people formed 30-40 for each group has been fleeing to Mae Hong Son province.

Slorc proposed the construction Yawnghe--Nam Sam railroad across the Central Region of Pa-O minorities. In fear of people's uprising led by the Buddhist monks there, Slorc changed its former proposal which will cross Taunggyi, instead of Hse Saing. If the former one became to implement, land confiscation, forced relocation and construction of military bases would occur. Now people living in Hse Saing township are also escaping to the border.

In eastern region, east of Taunggyi-Loikaw motorway, forced relocation, reducing the villages to ashes, forced labour, robbery and arbitrary execution are very common following Slorc offensives against democratic forces.



**GOTTA
BOYCOTT**

Canadian Youth Network for Asia-Pacific Solidarity (CYNAPS) in Vancouver and OPIRG-Carleton in Ottawa and a number of groups are working on corporate divestment in Burma and the Pepsi Boycott is continuing to grow in size.

(CYNAPS) and OPIRG-Carleton have been disseminating Pepsi boycott stickers which say "GOTTA BOYCOTT" over an old Pepsi logo, along with some information around the logo. (CYNAPS) and OPIRG-Carleton are still distributing Pepsi-Boycott handouts, petitions and other

information. These groups ask to return them the written endorsements of the boycott as they strengthen the boycott by demonstrating to PepsiCo that the international network of organisations are behind the boycott.

Among the organisations, involved in the network are Bangkok-based Burma Rights Movement for Action (BURMA), Hong-Kong based the Burma Campaign, Asian Human Rights Commission and Asian Students Association, the International Union of Students, Madras-based the Environmental Solidarity Group, JSTSF (student association in Pakistan), the All Burma Students' Democratic Front and almost all other refugee/exile/ethnic resistance groups on the Thai-Burma border, Committee for the Restoration of Democracy in Burma (CRDB, Washington DC area), CYNAPS, Canadian Friends of Burma, POSSE (Philippines-Ottawa Solidarity and Support Effort), Ottawa Disarmament Coalition, Capital Rainforest Action Group, several student unions across Canada and the Australia Burma Council.

SLORC SOLDIERS DEFECT



Name	Nyunt Wai
Age	16
Address	Duyin Seik village, Thaton township, Mon State
Parents	U Thaug Nyunt & Daw Than Hlaing
Occupation	Farmers
Ethnicity	Burman
Education Status	-
Serial No.	8413533
Battalion	IB 225

Following is an extract from what he said at an interview with the members of the ABSDF.

“My family have been facing starvation about 4 months of every raining season. We had to rely on odd-jobs for our survival. In winter, we caught the fish and sold them at the market in order to get rice. I joined the armed service in winter as my family could no longer feed me enough. After 4-month training, I was sent to the frontline. But I can't identify the name of the area. There are many recruits who are younger like me. I was along with Section (2), Platoon (3), Company (3) of IB 225. I was not fed enough and when I asked for more rice, I was kicked into the ravine. When I climbed up, I was knocked down again. When I told the captain, he paid no attention to me. I was also forced to fetch water frequently. I was on duty everyday and when I complained, I was punched and fed a small meal as a punishment.

In the front line, we were forced to carry rice, cooking oil, fish paste and artillery shells. Moreover, we were also forced to carry jacket of the officers. When I could no longer walk, I was beaten. On the way, one soldier was died from sickness. 2 others fled as they could no longer carry the loads. One was found and recaptured by the troops. We were disarmed since then. The sick were left at an outpost while the column continued proceeding.

On 2 August 1993, I run away because I was missing my parents. We fled alongside of the Salween river. When we arrived at an old village, we made a raft. We floated downstream of the Salween river and were saved by the Karens.

Name	Win Hlaing
Age	17
Address	Hle Gu township, Rangoon
Division	
Serial No.	881006
Battalion	IB 225

“After the training, I was sent to the frontline. There were about 150 porters in our troops. Of them some were the aged persons. After I talked to Nyunt Wai, we fled to the borders because I could no longer bear beatings. I was not fed enough during the service.”

Note: LID - Light Infantry Division
LIB - Light Infantry Battalion
IB - Infantry Battalion



Background

The Thai authorities on 28 November 1992 announced that a total of 516 Burmese students living in Bangkok were given the deadline on 30 November 1992 to report to the Interior Ministry to enter the so-called safe camp in Ban Maneeloy, Ratchaburi province or face arrest on charges of illegal entry to Thailand. Burmese students without refugee status would be deported if they failed to check in at a government holding centre by the given deadline and those who sheltered them would face prosecution. Moreover, who failed to register would immediately become illegal immigrants. Interior Minister Gen Chavalit Youngchaiyuth said Burmese students would not be granted as political exiles. (*See Dawn Vol. 3 No. 9*)

Since then Burmese students seeking shelter in Bangkok are frequently hounded by police who demanded payoffs from them in order to avoid arrest. On a regular basis the students were rounded up and sent to the Immigration Detention Centre (IDC) where bribes are demanded for their release.

At the police station, there was no separate cell for the Thai criminals and alien immigrants who were arrested because of travelling documents. Of them the Burmese students who were arrested for illegal entry were detained in the same cells and treated as Thai criminals although they did not commit any criminal cases like the Thai convicts. Most of the time, the students were not allowed to be outside the cell. They were fed 2 meals (about one plate of rice and curry) a day. The sanitation is very bad. Toilets inside the cells are very dirty. Police came and checked their names 4 or 5 times for every day and even at midnight. It was as a punishment to the them not to get sound sleep. Cigarettes are barred to bring into the cells. As there is no drinking water, people there had to drink water use for toilet. After dinner, at about 5:00 pm, the police forced all the persons (most of them are Thais) to squat, checked their names and put into one cell.

In a small cell (15 x 10 feet), the police put at least 35 persons. As a punishment all the people were sometimes put into one cell while the remaining cells

Burmese Refugees and Notorious IDC

Students and Refugees

Arrested Burmese were brought to the police station or directly to IDC before they were sent to the court to hear their sentences. Those who were brought to the police station had to wait at least 2-3 days for trial. It is one-sided trial and there is no right to defence. After the judge read out in Thai, the victims were forced to confess the allegation of illegal entry to Thailand. If the victims confessed, the trial was finished. If not, the trial was postponed and the court allowed the police to detain the victims for a period of time. The victims were kept in the police station until they confessed before the court. They were sentenced for 2 months imprisonment or 2,800 Baht of fine in minimum to over 5,000 Baht in maximum. Those who were unable to pay the fine had to serve at least the terms they were sentenced. Sometimes, they had to serve longer than their sentence.

After the trial the victims were brought to the police station until they were transferred to IDC. Most cells in the police stations were crowded. There was no separate cell for the female. Only when the women were arrested, the police used one cell to keep them.

are free. Such orders were based changed from time to time in accordance with the police on duty. The cell was very crowded and nobody wanted to move from his place. If he moves, he had to sit to sleep because there was no space on the floor. The cell was very filthy and full with foul smell for the people there. Moreover, they could not sleep at night because of bugs on the floor. As there was no fan in the cell, the temperature was very high.

The police transferred the Burmese students very first if they could bribe as demanded by the police. If they could not pay, they had to wait for at least a couple of weeks for their transfer. On the day of the transfer, they were handcuffed and put into a car. As soon as they entered the compound of IDC, they were greeted with beatings by the immigration police there. Most of the time, the police were drunk, and reviled blasted words and profane language at the students. Men were usually forced to assume a squatting position as criminals with hands clasped behind the head and stripped off their shirts. After that, they were brought for gauging weight and pressing fingerprints. If one delayed to gauge on, they were subjected to beating. After that they were

forced to squat again and each of them had to answer the police who questioned and registered their name, parents' name, address in Burma, work, the last date and border town entered to Thailand. Then, the police checked the money they had. There is a notice that reads: "Everyone has to have the valuable things here." After that, they were sent to one of the cells in IDC. Altogether there are 8 cells and 2 cells -- No. 7 and 8 -- are for the female. Cell No. 1 is for the Chinese and Vietnamese. Cell No. 5 and 6 are for the Burmese. These two cells are always crowded. Each cell is 30 x 80 feet wide and there are round about 350 people. The entrance fee for each person was 100 Baht. If one could not afford to pay he had to clean all the toilets there. If someone wanted to take out the money that he gave the police to keep for a while before his release of transfer, he had to pay the warder and the police 15 % each. This is normal rate. Sometime, the rate was higher.

The people there were fed a small mould of broken rice and boiling vegetables. It was hardly enough for each of them. Sometimes, rice was not well-cooked. As the cell was very crowded, they had to sleep and take birth in rotation. The cell was very old and 2 ceiling fans were swaying from side to side. The light was not enough as there were only 4 fluorescent lights. The persons who paid the fine were detained at least one week while others who could not pay were detained 2 months in minimum. They were counting the passing days and waiting for every Thursday night on which the police came and called the names of about 250 people who would be transferred to IDC in Kanchanaburi province, about 96 kilometre west of Bangkok. It is very rare for the students to be in the lists because they have to serve more terms without any reason and then forced to enter the holding centre. Some students who were released at the border without notice were recaptured by the police on knowing their student status, and sent them to Special Detention Centre (SDC) where nobody knew his/her exact term to serve.

Ethnic Refugees

When the police called his/her name, he/she had to answer quickly and give the police 100-200 Baht for bus fare. Those who could not pay were summoned for body check. If the police found money, they took them all and beat the victims. Most of the people who were transferred to Kanchanaburi were Mons, Karens, Burmese and Muslims and other nationalities in Burma who did not get refugee status. The next morning, the police came and called their names again and took them out one by one. About 250 people were forced to squat for more than 2 hour to get into 2 buses. The immigration police there threatened the Burmese that they will be killed if they return to Thailand and recaptured for the second time. Then, they were given 2 tiny snacks. As soon

as they arrived the latter IDC, they were forced to squat. The police there called their names, categorised them according to their ethnicity, (especially 4 groups -- Mons, Karens, Burmese and Muslims) gave a small package of rice and put all of them into a small cell regardless of gender basis. That small cell is about 20 x 20 feet wide. So, everybody had to stand up there and wait for the second call of the police. The cell was very crowded and the temperature was very high. Although there was a ceiling fan, the police never switched it on until all the people were taken out from that cell. When the police called for the second time, everybody had to give 100 Baht to the police for bus fare to Songkhlaburi district, 209 kilometres from Kanchanaburi. Those who could pay were released on coming Friday while who could not pay had to stay at least one more week. Moreover, all the persons who could not pay the fare were forced to stand facing the wall one by one; the police stripped off their clothes regardless of gender basis and conducted body checks. Then, the police collected another 100 Baht from each person which was known as *cell tax*. The persons who paid *cell tax* were put together in a cell regardless of gender basis while those who could not pay were put in the another cell which was rather crowded.

The cell was wet and very cold early in the morning because of brick floor. Police opened the ceiling fans when the cell temperature was down, and switched off all fans when the cell was getting warm. Because of this, most of the people there were suffering from sickness. All the people there were fed up 2 meals per day. The curry was boiling vegetables. Police usually selected some women and lured them for working outside or at their houses. Police are usually drunk at night and they entered to the cell and called the women to accompany them. Sometimes, some women were forcibly taken out of the cell and raped by the police. In August, a Mon woman committed suicide in the cell after being raped by the police. Sexual abuses, including rape, committed against the Burmese women are a common nature of Thai police and there is impunity for the perpetrators. Sometimes, when the victims ask fair trial for the cases, they are not only denied but also fined by the authorities on the basis of illegal entry to Thailand.

On every Friday, about 250 persons were handed over to Songkhlaburi-based Thai army unit which stationed near the Thai-Burma border. Before they were transferred, the police came and confirmed the names and persons who were going to be transferred, divided them into 4 groups according to their ethnicity to press their fingerprints at ground floor and they were forced to line for photographs. Then, all of them were put in one cell. That night nobody

To Page (46)

STUDENTS STAGE PROTEST



UNHCR which assisted Burmese students fleeing repression in Burma to Thailand by providing 800 Baht per month for those with student status registered with the Interior Ministry for staying in the holding centre in Maneeloy in Ratchaburi province suspended all its assistance and withdrew all personnel from the camp following the beak-in on September 16.

On September 17, Burmese Student Centre (BSC) commander Chaithawat Naimsir issued an announcement to restrict the movement of the Burmese students in the holding centre. Prohibition from entering into BSC office without sound reason, prohibition from trespassing within 10 metre-range of BSC officials' residence and prohibition to be outside BSC and their residence from 9:00 pm to 6:00 am were part of those tight measures.

On that situation, about 20 Burmese students in the holding centre on October 11 rallied and staged a protest in front of UN office against the suspension of assistance. Due to this protest, 3

of their representatives were invited for talk with the UN authorities.

On September 22, a memorandum signed by UNHCR Representative in Thailand Daniel E. Conway stated that UNHCR could not continue to operate in and would withdraw from the safe area. It would return only when the guilty persons came forward to identify themselves or when the police investigation of this incident was completed. Moreover the memorandum said UNHCR would not arrange for any holding centre resident to participate in UNHCR-sponsored educational activities.

Since then, more and more Burmese left the holding centre for Bangkok, and are on the verge of starvation for lack of money. In the so-called "safe camp" (holding centre), created by Thai authorities, 135 Burmese were kept to prevent them from conducting the political activities in Bangkok.

In a letter forwarded to President Clinton, ONSOB said the Thai

authorities, instead of investigation, imposed curfews on the Burmese students in the holding centre. Regarding the cases, the Burmese students there wanted the Thai authorities to identify and prosecute those who were guilty.

It also said that they were put as if under house arrest in the holding centre. Moreover, the students said that while they were striving for democracy, liberty, human rights, political rights, social rights and justice, all these rights were ravished and adversely affected by double-standards of "constructive engagement."

In that letter, 15 cases of inhuman treatment by Thai authorities and 7 cases of misconduct committed by UNHCR were highlighted.

UNHCR moved back to the centre on November 8 and assumed students' monthly allowance of 800 Baht after it received a report from the police about the arrest of a Burmese, namely Aung Min Din (alias) David, who confessed that he broke into the UN cell but denied burning any document or writing death threat on the wall as alleged by UNHCR. Nobody can confirm that the accused is the agent of Slorc or perpetrated by the Interior Ministry of Thailand in order to suspend monthly allowance to the camp residents or to create misunderstandings between the students and the international community.

Regarding police's arrest warrant for Zaw Lin Hlaing, identified as Burmese student, UNHCR turned a blind eye. Although the students requested the UNHCR to increase their allowance, the proposal was refused by UNHCR.

UNHCR and Interior Ministry have been discussing to finalise the imposing of tight measures in the holding centre in order to restrict the movements of the students in and outside the centre.

THAI WAY TO NEUTRALITY

SLORC-THAI RELATIONS

Thailand, one of the culprits of the "destructive involvement" policy, has been exploiting the natural resources of Burma while the people there have been plunged into the economic chaos and suffering from the oppression of the brutal regime. Thailand's overall investor with projects in Burma worth US\$ 3.5 million. As of June 1993, there was 29 Thai's venture in Burma.

In order to renew logging and fishery concessions which Slorc announced to terminate in December 1993 as a bargain to get something from Thailand and to force the democratic forces to surrender to Slorc, Royal Thai Army Commander-in-Chief Gen Wimol Wongwanich, Defence Minister Gen Vijit Sookmark, Royal Thai Navy Commander-in-Chief Admiral Vichet Karunyavanij, Public Health Minister Boon Pun Kaevatan and Foreign Minister Prasong Soonsiri respectively visited the military regime in Rangoon in August and September 1993.

Moreover, Thailand wants to get green light from Slorc for the construction of 8 dams along the border of Burma to fulfill Thailand's badly needed electricity and water resources in exchange to bring Slorc to 1994 ASEAN ministerial meeting. FM

Pra-song is the chairman of ASEAN standing committee for one year and he is taking this advantage.

At the first plenary session of Slorc-Thai Joint Commission, held on 17 September 1993, FM Prasong termed the meeting as a "historic landmark" as well as "the beginning of a new chapter" in the bilateral relations between Thailand and Slorc. He also expressed his wish to see Slorc participating in the affairs of the region, particularly in ASEAN, in the near future. The Joint Commission is the highest level in bilateral relations and covers the largest range of issues and, was established as a forum for consultation in bilateral relations, to enhance cooperation between Thailand and Slorc. During the meeting, they discussed bilateral and cooperation matters, including exchange of visits, tourism, technical and economic cooperation in agriculture, the construction of a friendship bridge, energy, trade, investments, forestry, fishery and air services.

Following his visit, the New Mon State Part (NMSP) and the Karen National Union (KNU) have been pressured to make some agreements with Slorc.

A Thai military delegation led by the First Army Commander Lt-

Gen Chetta Thanajaro was in Burma on 8-11 November and met with Slorc Commander-in-Chief (Army) Lt-Gen Maung Aye. Thai delegation attended the 8th meeting of so-called Slorc-Thai Regional Border Committee held on November 9 at the South Eastern Command Headquarters in Moulmein which was headed by SE Command Commander Maj-Gen Ket Sein from Slorc side. Accompanying Thai commander at the meeting were the deputy commanders of the 1st, 3rd and 4th army, the governor of Petchburi and the deputy governors of Kanchanaburi and Ratchaburi. After his return, Lt-Gen Chetta Thanajaro said Thailand has to try much hard to show its sincerity toward Slorc by mentioning Thailand's neutrality on conflicts between Slorc and the minority groups.

Oil & Gas

A nine-member delegation from PTT led by its governor Luen Krisnakri which arrived at Rangoon on 16 October 1993 met Slorc's Energy Minister U Khin Maung Thein and held discussion with energy officials and representatives of foreign oil companies involved in Burma's offshore gas exploitation to complete arrangements on how best to implement plans to exploit off-shore reserves of natural gas. PTT also negotiated the price of gas offered by Thailand.

Thailand aims to get a daily supply of at least 400 million cubic feet of natural gas to be transcended by a proposed pipeline through Amherst of Burma and Kanchanaburi of Thailand in or-

der to meet its fast increased demand.

Tin

On 12 October 1993, a production-sharing contract for offshore tin exploration and mining in Hemze Basia, Tenasserim Division, was signed between Slorc and Roong Siam Mining (Myanmar) Co Ltd of Thailand. That one year contract was signed by Roongvit Thivat Tanakul for the Thai company and Managing Director U Tin Win for No. 2 state mining enterprise of Slorc. This company is well known in Thailand of having decade-long experiences and using most advanced technology to exploit the natural resources.

Logging

Thai Logging Industry Association, comprising logging companies along the border, asked Thai Foreign Ministry to negotiate with Slorc regime to eliminate Rangoon's agent system in awarding concessions for managing natural resources.

Logging concessions of 47 Thai

logging companies which approved working in Burma since March 1988 will have to be eliminated in December 1993 and replaced by companies from Singapore, Malaysia, China, Japan and Taiwan. Aiming to benefit more, Slorc wants the wood to be processed inside Burma, and demands foreign companies to form joint ventures. Several Thai logging companies have been seeking ways to set up sawmills, wood-processing factories and furniture factories in Burma.

Fishery

The Thai Fisheries Department director-general Plodprasop Surasawadi, after returning from a meeting in Rangoon on November 1 with Slorc fisheries department said the latter fisheries department will permit 281 fishing boats belonging to 8 Thai firms to fish its water beginning in 1994.

The fishing concession agreement is the result of the bilateral meeting on fishing held in Burma during September 13-18. The Thai fisheries department told Slorc that it will help Slorc set up a 25-million Baht worth shrimp breed-

ing station in Rangoon. The project is to begin operation at the beginning of 1994.

Bridge & Road

On 5 November 1993, Thailand agreed in principle to three options — joint contributions from the Thai and Slorc, the private sector or soft loans — for the construction of the first four lanes bridge which is 350 metres long and 12 metres wide, linking Thailand and Burma at Tak province. The bridge is to be built at the end of Highway 105 in Mae Sot District of Thai and Myawaddy in eastern Burma. The estimated cost is 80 million Baht.

With the bridge linking Mae Sot with Myawaddy, two-way trade and communication with Slorc will be easily facilitated and notorious tourism in that area will increase.

Aiming to generate tourism and other industries, and to connect the Asia Highway at Mae Sot with Kawkaek in Karen State of Burma, Tak Provincial Chamber of Commerce proposed the construction of a 70-kilometre highway worth 500 million Baht.

From Page (43)

could sleep as it was very crowded in the cell. The police there were also busy at that night. They were looking for the persons who wanted to get into Thailand by giving them a bribe of 2500-4000 Baht person. These persons were put in the cell who were waiting another week for their transfer. Some persons from the latter cells were brought into the liama one where the people to be transferred the next morning were kept. The persons who bribed the police were then smuggled into the country. It is a profitable two-way business of Thai police and immigration officers.

The next morning, at about 6:00 am, the police came and called all the female to get into one truck. The

police used to carry 250 people in two trucks. Then, the remaining persons were forced to squat and get into the truck. If they rushed into the truck, they would be beaten with raw bamboo sticks by the police who were waiting at the entrance. All of them were given a small package of rice for breakfast. They had to stand in the truck as there was no space to sit down. In Songkhlaburi, they were handed over to Thai army on the border. The army then checked the names of the persons and ethnicity as divided by the immigration police. Those who identified as Karens were handed over to the Karen Refugee Committee in Songkhlaburi while the remaining nationalities were forced to Halockhuan area, the proposed site for the Mon Refugees in Loh Loe, at sun point. They had to walk for 2 hours. Nobody knows what will happen to them.

By Nyein Han

Slorc, in its deceitful and dishonest manner, sent puppet Ohn Gyaw to the United Nations General Assembly to echo its sugar-coated blatant lies.

The military regime is masking the truth of its concentration on divide & rule policy and its offer of special but different privileges to armed ethnic groups for ceasefire agreement. Instead, Slorc is propagandizing at the UNGA that these groups have surrendered or returned to so-called legal fold after realising the reality.

Slorc barefacedly repeated that consensus was reached on the fundamental principles for the constitution before the national convention was adjourned on September 16. In fact, above-mentioned principles were adopted by force regardless of factual and solid objections raised by the elected MPs and delegates composed of members of political parties and individuals who represent the people. Of them, No. 6 objective of Slorc -- to enable the military to participate in a leading role in the national politics of the country -- has been sharply criticized.

Although Slorc states at the UNGA for the building of a democratic society in Burma, hundreds of prisoners of conscience, including the 1991 Nobel Peace Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, are still under detention.

Slorc has been shamelessly pronouncing that it will guarantee for freedom of thought; freedom of expression; freedom of belief; freedom of worship; freedom to seek a livelihood; freedom of organisation and social, economic and political justice in Burma based on the universal values of justice, liberty and equality. In reality, inequality, injustice, day-to-day oppression and harassment are widespread and freedom of expression is totally deterred from practice under the reign of the military regime.

Slorc said that "The president of the State shall have

the power to exercise the administrative, judiciary and legislative powers. Moreover, the President must be elected by the electorate chamber formed by the military personnel and must be an ex-military officer who had experience in military affairs." This proposal clearly unveiled Slorc's aim to create a new form of military dictatorship in Burma.

Slorc has also been echoing its so-called development of infrastructure building: schools, hospitals, dispensaries, railways, roads, bridges and dams. If the people elected MPs of the NLD were given a

chance to form the government, double or triple development to the present could be proved, decades-long civil war would come to an end and the people of the country would enjoy the fruits of democracy and human rights rather than their peaceful living is being interfered with the sound of the guns.

Adjournment of the national convention is a dishonest manner and an insincere ploy of the military regime. The adjournment means Slorc will move superficially after the resolution of the UNGA is adopted. As a matter of fact, the regime is hypocritical and deceitful enough to exploit the situation.

Even though Slorc is self-satisfied with the GNP grew by 10.9 per cent in economic sec-

tor, in reality one kilo of rice costs 30 kyats. The currency exchange rate in the black market is 115 kyats for 1 US dollar while 100 kyats is equivalent to 18 Thai Baht. As Burmese currency notes have been printed without order or discipline, it becomes worthless and down to zero.

Expressed factual points are a part of so many sufferings that the people of Burma have been subjected to endure within the past five years. If the military regime does not have the idea to relinquish power or if it concentrates to cling on it, the people in Burma will suffer more worthless and deceitful suppression of Slorc.

**SLORC'S
REPEATED
BLATANT
LIES**

By Lt-Col Ayo Myint (Retired)

FOR THE SAKE
OF PEACE, BOY!
GET HOLD OF IT
AND COME UP!



REVOLUTION



WHAT
KIND OF
PEACE...?

SAWNGO/93

DAWN

PRINTED MATTER
VIA AIR MAIL



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

IF NOT DELIVERED PLEASE RETURN TO
GPO BOX 1352, BANGKOK 10501
THAILAND