

DAWN



SLORC REMAINS COMMITTED TO VIOLENT RESOLUTIONS TO BURMA'S POLITICAL CRISIS

BURMA remains at war with herself. The recent events in the country, including the military offensive against the Karen National Union and the ABSDF, make it clear that the military dictatorship remains committed to violent solutions to Burma's political crisis. The fall of Manerplaw and the loss of the headquarters of key pro-democracy groups including the DAB, NLD and the NDF, will have profound implications for the future of the democratic movement, the movements of the ethnic nationalities, and for Burma as a whole. The Slorc would no doubt like to believe that by choosing a military solution, and by taking Manerplaw, many of the nation's problems have been resolved. Nothing could be further from the truth. The tragic reality is that by once again denying the people of Burma the opportunity for a true and open political resolution, the conflict will only be prolonged. More people will suffer, and more of Burma's resources will be lost. Including her most precious resource, her many peoples.

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The International community was swift in its condemnation of Slorc's offensive. The policy of constructive engagement was put under severe scrutiny, even by some of its staunchest defenders. The question now remains, will the International business community continue to do business as usual? It must now be evident to all parties concerned that Slorc's unilateral cease-fire with the Karen was not made in good faith, that their meetings with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi are, unfortunately, show pieces meant to appease donors, investors, and the UN. Until the ferocious assault on Manerplaw, Kawmoora, and the ABSDF, it may have been possible for some Nations, leaders, and industries to believe that Slorc really was changing. To believe this now, one must deny the events of the last months in Burma. What happened along the Thai-Burma border was not a local issue, a border issue, or an ethnic issue, but a national issue for the Burmese nation as a whole. Slorc is still illegally in power, they continue to attempt to resolve all issues with force, and they have not begun any real process of internal reform. That is the real meaning behind the fall of Manerplaw, and all those with interests in Burma should take heed. The war continues, and so does the struggle for democracy in Burma.

SLORC INSISTS THERE IS PEACE IN BURMA

On 28 April, 1992, General Maung Hla announced that the Slorc had ceased its operation in Karen State for the sake of national reconciliation. After the failure of the Slorc military operation against Manerplaw, under the code-name King Dragon, the military began offering cease-fire negotiations. These negotiations were to be held only on Slorc terms. Two years later, Slorc broke its unilateral cease-fire announcement by launching military offensives against the KNU and the ABSDF. Slorc capitalised on the internal conflict between Buddhist and Christian Karens in the KNU, and supported the Buddhist Karen faction to overrun KNU military strongholds.

Chronology

Events during the Slorc's military offensives against the KNU and the ABSDF

On the 9th of December, 1994, Slorc troops stationed at Htee Par Wee Kyoe, a hilltop on Sleeping Dog range, occupied the Mae Nyaw Khei outpost and fired artillery shells into Manerplaw, Headquarters of the KNU and into Thu Mue Hta, at the confluence of the Salween and Moei Rivers. The same day, 14 Slorc military companies (Papun-based IB 19, LIB 340 and LIB 434 under the command of 1st TOC led by Col Thura Aung Ko of Slorc's South Eastern Command,) numbering over 1,000, launched a planned offensive against Dawn Gwin, the ABSDF headquarters north of Manerplaw.

On December 11th, Slorc troops advanced to the eastern side of the hilltop and began pounding Manerplaw with artillery shells. At the same time, about 400 advance troops proceeded to Dawn Gwin after they had occupied Lae Toe outpost (Hill 2688), 12 km to the west of Dawn Gwin. Dawn Gwin, headquarters of the ABSDF, housed about 700 students. Slorc then reinforced with 6 more battalions under the command of 33 LID and South Eastern Command, and set up a Tactical Operations Command headquarters at Lae Toe.

Slorc built up its troops and heavy weapons on the front near the KNU/ABSDF base at Wangkha (Kawmoora), which about 1000 KNLA/ABSDF joint troops were defending. Kawmoora is 40km south of Manerplaw. The Slorc attack on Kawmoora started at 12:45 hours and lasted until 18:07 hours. The attackers used 120MM, 81 MM and 60MM mortars. Later on, heavy artillery fire was exchanged between SLORC 44 LID and the joint ABSDF/KNLA defending forces.

On December 19th, fighting took place between Slorc troops and the ABSDF's Student Army near Lae Toe outpost as Slorc troops advanced towards Dawn Gwin. Southeastern Command and LID 33 were ordered by the Rangoon military command to set up a permanent establishment in the Dawn Gwin Area in order to paralyse any and all political movements of ABSDF. The commanders of Slorc's Southeastern Command and 33 LID reached Papun by helicopter and ordered their troops to occupy Dawn Gwin.

The same day, the No. 1. Tactical Command started attacking Ler Toe (hill No. 2669), a KNLA position (22) miles north of Manerplaw. Slorc troops brought up one 106 mm howitzer, two field gun 120 MM mortars together with shells for their attack on Kawmoora.

Naw Ta, a KNLA position situated thirteen miles south of Manerplaw, was also attacked by Slorc troops with 120 MM, 81MM and 60MM mortars, using at least thirty shells.

On December 14th, Slorc troops reached Dawn Gwin at 14:11 hours and razed the regimental headquarters and kitchen buildings of ABSDF's 216th Regiment, as well as the nearby offices of the NLD. However, the Student Army was able to cut off the Slorc's logistic supply route from the rear. The Slorc troops retreated the following day to the west, 12 km from ABSDF Headquarters.

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MM, 81 MM and 60MM mortars using at least thirty shells.

On December 19th, Slorc fired more than 200 shells from Hill 200 and Hill 300 into the Kawmoora stronghold. Sporadic fighting continued. A column of Slorc soldiers advanced within 300 metres of the stronghold. Slorc suffered heavy casualties in that unsuccessful assault.

On December 25th, Slorc troops fired at student troops near the Papun area, using 60 mm, 81 mm and 120 mm artillery. Heavy shelling did not reach the target but a house and the local Buddhist monastery of Mae Nang Nwe village were destroyed.

On December 30th, fighting took place between joint forces of ABSDF/KNU and the 1st Column of Slorc LIB 434 led by Lt-Col Tin Maung Aye at a place 14 miles from Papun, Karen State. Fighting lasted for 40 minutes.

On the 3rd of January 1995, intense fighting broke out between the KNU and the DKBO splinter group when mutinied Karens from the Democratic Kayin (Karen) Buddhist Army, the military wing of the DKBO, tried to attack Manerplaw.

On January 5th, fighting took place between the student troops and a Slorc company under the command of the 1st Column of IB 19 near Lae Toe at 11:00 a.m. DKBA troops at the confluence of the Moei and Salween rivers were firing indiscriminately at KNU boats as well as Thai, disrupting trade for Karens, Thais, and even the Slorc. The Karen National Union mainstream re-took the Buddhist monastery at the confluence of the rivers from the hands of the mutinied Buddhist Karen group. Fighting occurred at three places — between Thu Mwe Hta (the confluence) and Mae Sam Lab, Mae Seik Pass and on the mountain ranges located around Mae Lae Hta, 10 minutes by boat south of the confluence.

On January 6th, KNU forces attacked the scattering DKBO at Toe Nyunt, causing the latter group to retreat to Kamamaung. In the monastery compound at Thu Mwe Hta, uniforms and ammunition

provided by the SLORC's army were found. In Mae Seik Pass, the one-month old DKBO, estimated at 400 members split into two factions; about half the number later joined with the KNU 1st and 3rd Brigade and Headquarters forces in Manerplaw, while the remaining 200 are still mutinying with the support of Slorc.

On January 8th, after the KNU attacked the DKBA stronghold, 8 dead bodies of SLORC soldiers from LIB 13 under the command of LID 33 were found in a camp near the confluence. These were men who had fought for the DKBA. Uniforms, arms and ammunitions used by Slorc were also found. On the same day, 6 companies from the 1st column of LIB 340 and 341 occupied Kyauk Hnyat, a strategic outpost of the KNU, 20 miles north of Dawn Gwin at night. Fresh supplies of food, arms and ammunition were sent to Slorc frontline battalions in the Manerplaw and Dawn Gwin area from Thaton and Papun base commands.

On January 20th, 1500 Slorc troops composed of 3 battalions under the command of TOC 662 of LID 66 were sent to Papun with the aim of controlling the occupied areas along the Salween River.

Troops under the command of TOC 662 proceeded along Mae Tha Lauk Stream to launch a ground assault and fired on KNLA hill-top outposts with heavy artillery continuously.

On January 21st, the first batch of Slorc convoys carrying more than 100 trucks loaded with food, arms and ammunition arrived at Papun.

On January 22nd, Papun-based 1st Military Strategic Command under the command of Southeastern Command sent fresh supplies of food, arms and ammunition to frontline IB 19.

On January 23rd, Slorc troops under LID 33, including TOC 333, occupied the no-man's land of Mae Pa, Mae Nyaw Khei and Mae Lae Hta. The remaining troops under TOC 662 had proceeded to the Salween River and arrived at a place 5 km from Thay Law Hta. Those troops fired to a hilltop out-

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BURMESE WOMEN'S UNION (BWU) FOUNDED

The Burmese Women's Union (BWU) was founded on January 7th, 1995, by a group of women who have actively participated in the struggle against the military dictatorship in Burma. According to its constitution, "every woman who is sixteen years and above and has determination and commitment to the democratic cause can apply to be a member of the BWU, regardless of race, religion, color, livelihood, etc.." The BWU intends to help organize women from inside Burma, from the border areas, and from the overseas community, with several aims and objectives: (1) to promote the active role of Burmese women in politics; (2) to increase the participation of women in practising their rights, as recognised by the international community; and (3) to encourage women, both intellectuals and at the grassroots level, to contribute to the best of their ability towards a future democratic society.

The BWU formed its Executive Committee on January 7, 1995, at Yaung Ni Oo camp, on the Thai-Burmese border. This was an initiative of women staying in the border areas. The executives will focus on recruiting more members, and on implementing action plans which were laid down in their first meeting, during the second week of January. Briefs on several one-year action plans were presented to the members by the Chairperson, Mi Sue Pwint and the Vice Chairperson, Aye Aye Lwin. It was explained that the word, "Burmese", used in the Union's name, is meant to represent all citizens in Burma; it stands not only for 'Burman' but also for all other ethnic nationalities in Burma such as the Karen, Kachin, Mon, Shan, Chin, and other. The Vice Chairperson also stressed that BWU members should work hand in hand to fulfill their aims and objectives. The Secretary, Lwin Lwin Oo, and the

Joint Secretary, San San Cho, also addressed the meeting regarding details of the working plans for 1995-96 and on the structure of the BWU. The executives will implement the one-year working plans with the support of several departments including: information, organising, education, employment and productivity, and foreign relations.

The foreign relation and the organising departments are currently very active in recruitment of new members and in preparing to send representatives to the World Women's Conference in Beijing. Other departments are organising at the grassroots and they will implement educational training, vocational training and self-reliance programs.

The BWU executive will hold a conference in January 1996 to elect new executives.

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Organizing team, posed for the camera after their organizing trip in a family camp.



ALLEGATIONS OF THE USE OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS BY THE SLORC

During the recent offensives against Manerplaw, Kawmoora, and the ABSDF, there were numerous and disturbing reports of the possible use of chemical weapons by the Slorc. These reports, from combatants, refugees, medical personnel attending the wounded, and from the press, suggested that explosive shells may have carried toxic compounds, and that many people in areas under Slorc attack were exposed to agents consistent with chemical weapons. To date, there has been no independent confirmation of the use of chemical weapons in the Slorc offensives. However, there is considerable evidence to suggest that such agents may have been used. Victims of these alleged attacks have reported gasses that caused coughing, respiratory difficulty, and respiratory collapse, and other agents that appeared to cause skin burns, ulcerations, and blistering. Until these reports can

be documented, and the toxic agents identified, it will be difficult to charge Slorc with their use with confidence. However, the evidence from the field is extensive, and must not be overlooked. This evidence includes: It is important to remember that during the offensives Slorc not only attacked combatants, but civilians. The use of chemical weapons against soldiers is a crime and violates international codes of war, their use against civilians is a human rights violation as well. Whether or not these weapons were used, it is widely believed by the civilians in the area of the offensives that they were used. This has only increased the climate of fear and anxiety on the part of the civilian population. Thus, there is a clear ethical obligation on the part of the international community to investigate these allegations. Such investigations must include an evaluation of Slorc's

current and future capability to manufacture chemical weapons, as well as its possible purchase of such weapons from donor nations known to supply the Slorc with arms, notable the People's Republic of China. China has become a major source of conventional weapons for the Slorc, and China's manufacture and sale of non-conventional weapons must be investigated as well.

If Slorc has not used chemical weapons, and the evidence we have shown is not consistent with the use of toxic agents, then they have nothing to hide, and should welcome an open and unbiased assessment of their current capability. If, on the other hand, these weapons were used, then Slorc has once again violated international law and codes of conduct. If this is the case, the international community must have no choice but to further isolate what is already an outlaw regime.

In Burma, there is no fundamental change even though the military made some superficial changes, such as the release of some political prisoners and the calling of negotiations for separate cease-fires with ethnic minorities groups in order to ease international pressure. It is essential to keep international pressure while trade and investment sanctions should be imposed on the Burmese military regime.

The UN Reaffirms Support for Democracy in Burma

The 49th session of the United Nations General Assembly, meeting in New York on December 13, 1994, reaffirmed its support for the restoration of democratic rule in Burma, for the release of political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi, for the restoration of basic human rights, including the right to freely express political opinions, and for an end to the human rights abuses of the military regime. The UN session heard the report of the special rapporteur, which documented continued repression, violations of human rights, forced detention, forced labor, torture, arbitrary arrest, extra-judicial execution and crimes against women, ethnic and religious minorities, and democracy advocates.

While the resolution was not significantly different from the UN resolution of December 1993, it was highly significant in that the Slorc, and many of its international allies and business partners, have attempted to prove that human rights and political situation in Burma had improved. Instead, what the UN found and reported was a continuing reality of repression, state control, and violence.

It should not be forgotten that the UN resolution came just before the offensives against the Karen people and the democratic forces of Burma. This only highlights what the democratic forces in Burma have known since 1988; the Slorc is committed to staying in power by any means necessary.

The significance of the December 1994 resolution is that it shows in unambiguous language that the world knows what is happening in Burma, and supports the aspirations of the Burmese people for peace, democracy, and freedom. To quote:

[The UN] STRONGLY URGES the Government of Myanmar to take all appropriate measures to allow all citizens to participate freely in the political process in accelerate the process of transition to democracy, in particular through

the transfer of power to democratically elected representatives;

In terms of the human rights situation, the resolution is just as clear:

[The UN] URGES the Government of Myanmar to ensure full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and assembly, the protection of the rights of the persons belonging to ethnic and religious minorities, and to put an end to violations of the right to life and integrity of the human being, to the practices of torture, abuse of women, forced labour, forced relocation, to enforced disappearances and summary execution;

In light of the recent offensives against the Karen and ABSDF forces, and against civilians in the Karen area under Slorc attack, it is also important that the December 1994 resolution specifically censured the Slorc for its attack last year on the civilian refugee camp of Halockhani, in the Mon Territory. The attack on the Mon civilians was not an isolated event but rather a part of the climate of fear and brutality of life under the Slorc. The military's treatment of civilians during the recent offensives, which included forced portage of many thousands of people, is a part of the same political crisis that led to the Halockhani raid.

The UN also repeated its call for the immediate and unconditional release of the democratically chosen leader of Burma, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. In repeating this call, the UN has again affirmed what the people of Burma know only too well: without the inclusion of the people of Burma and their chosen leader in the political life of the country, there will be no end to Burma's civil unrest and violence.

The UN also announced that it will continue to send its special rapporteur to Burma to monitor the hu-

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U NU, THE FIRST ELECTED PRIME MINISTER OF INDEPENDENT BURMA

BURMESE National Leader U Nu, the first elected Prime Minister of Independent Burma, passed away on February 14, 1995. His was a distinguished and tumultuous career.

In 1947, U Nu went to London to continue the negotiations for Burma's independence from Britain which had been begun by General Aung San, Burma's National Hero. His mission was a success, Burmese independence was declared on January 4, 1948. In accordance with the Panlong Agreement, Burma became a republic under the name of the Union of Burma.

U Nu headed the AFPFL (Anti-Fascist Peoples Freedom League) and served as Prime Minister from 1948 until 1958, except the short period of General Ne Win's caretaker administration from 1958 to 1960.

In April 1960, U Nu, then the head of the split Clean AFPFL, was elected Prime Minister for a second time after winning a landslide victory in general elections.

U Nu was ousted in a military coup d'état on March 2, 1962, led by General Ne Win. He was detained from then until October, 1966. U Nu was then released. He was allowed to leave Burma on health reasons in 1969, the year

in which he announced armed resistance against the illegal military regime.

U Nu was granted political asylum in Thailand on October 29, 1969.

The resistance was not successful, and U Nu then went to India. He was granted an honorable position from Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.

U Nu returned to Burma under a general amnesty in 1980, pledging his abandonment of politics and devotion to religious activities.

U Nu was again active in politics during the pro-democracy movement of 1988. He declared himself the legal Prime Minister of the recently formed parallel government. He was subsequently placed under house arrest on December 29, 1989 by the Slorc (State Law and Order Restoration Council). He was released on April 24, 1992 as he was deemed to no longer constitute a threat to state security. U Nu refused to abolish his parallel government, and never ever give up his demand for democracy and civilian rule in Burma.



U Nu's contribution to Burma's politics was monumental. He was one of the Bandung Conference leaders and a founding member of NAM (Non-Aligned Movement) along with other great world leaders such as Chou Eng Lai, Abdul Nasser, Pandit Nehru, President Sukarno, and Marshal Tito.

U Nu is survived by his sons, U Aung, U Aung Myint and U Thaung Htike, two daughters, Daw San San Nu and Daw Than Than Nu. U Nu's wife Daw Mya Yee died in 1994.

NCGUB, NLD, ABSDF and all other oppositions groups vow to continue the struggle for peace, democracy, human rights and genuine national reconciliation in Burma for which U Nu struggled so long. ■

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS CONDEMNED THE SLORC'S MILITARY OFFENSIVE AGAINST THE KAREN NATIONAL UNION, ABSDF AND OTHER DEMOCRATIC FORCES

Until the recent offensives, it seemed that the Slorc had made some headway in terms of recognition from the international community by meeting twice with Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, releasing some political prisoners, and by announcing that Khun Sa is not included in the national reconciliation policy. But Slorc could no longer maintain these facades once their offensives had begun. Slorc aggressively capitalized on the internal dispute between the Buddhist Karens and the leaders of the Karen National Union (KNU). They quickly broke their unilateral cease-fire announcement of April 1992, once it became clear that it was possible to seize Manerplaw. Slorc could then capture the strongholds of the KNU, including Manerplaw headquarters of the armed oppositions, because of the Buddhist Karen faction who knew the Karen lands. As a result, Slorc earned only condemnation from every corner of the world.

Slorc's clear intention was not to seek a political solution to the Karen national conflict, but to resort, once again to a military solution. This demonstrated to the international community how little things in Slorc-controlled Burma had really changed.

THE UNITED STATES called on the Slorc to end attacks against the rebel forces on January 1, 1995.

"We urge the regime to avoid the path of confrontation and international isolation, to end the violence and to implement its repeated assurances that it will peacefully resolve its differences with ethnic minorities," White House secretary Michael McGurphy said in a statement. "These actions conflict starkly with the regime's stated intention to pursue policies of national reconciliation and are especially alarming in view of the regime's pattern of serious human rights abuses in the context of civil conflict," McGurphy said.

He recalled that the United States had offered Rangoon "two visions of a future relationship: increased cooperation linked to positive developments by the regime on issues of importance to the international community or heightened isolation if progress is not forthcoming."

"THE AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT is deeply concerned by the continuing offensive against forces of the Karen National Union (KNU) and the fall of the KNU headquarters at Manerplaw," the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Senator Gareth Evans, said on his return to Australia on January 31, 1995. "The government regards these developments as a blow to the process of reconciliation in Myanmar. Military offensives will not resolve the essential political differences between the Myanmar government and groups opposed to its policies. Manerplaw had a significance beyond its role as a Karen base: it was also the seat of many opposition groups and student activists who had taken refuge there after the crushing of the democracy movement in 1988.

The Australian Government continues to believe that a process of national reconciliation is the interest of all political and ethnic groups in Myanmar to rejoin the political and economic mainstream of the region and wider international community. Australia therefore call on the Myanmar authorities to cease all military action in the Manerplaw area and to negotiate a complete military and political settlement with the KNU and other groups in the area."

Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans again called on the international community to send a "very strong message" to Burma and to refrain from giving "rewards" to the Slorc on February 20. He expressed disappointment

over the Slorc's military offensive against ethnic Karens and proposed that the situation in Burma to be discussed at this year's ASEAN Regional Forum to be held in Brunei in July. "It seemed to be a general agreement from the countries (Brunei and Malaysia) I have visited." Senator Evans made the comments after emerging from a one-hour meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan during a one-day stopover in Thailand. He also added "the good signs (of Rangoon) are stopped by the fighting with the Karens."

THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT made several resolutions on continued human rights violation in Burma (Myanmar) on February 16, 1995, and strongly condemned the Slorc's offensive against Manerplaw and Dawn Gwin and its intention to continue shelling the area until 'all insurgents are eliminated.' It also called upon all EU Member States to condemn this offensive publicly and unequivocally. The EU urged the Thai Government not to support the Burmese Government with food or other supplies, nor to allow them to use Thai airspace or territory, and to ensure that there is no forced repatriation of Burmese refugees on the Thai

border. It called on the international community to take immediate steps to halt the crisis, and requests that the Secretary-General of the UN urgently increase efforts to preserve regional peace and security and secure a genuine political settlement and national reconciliation in Burma.

Socialist International-Asia Pacific Committee met on 11-12 February 1995 in Manila, The Philippines. The committee strongly condemned the Slorc military offensive against the KNU and the capture of Manerplaw and the use of religion to create a division within the ethnic Karen community. It also said the action contradicts Slorc's own claim that it is pursuing national reconciliation through peaceful means.

The Committee called on Slorc to immediately cease its military offensives and to stop the continued use of forced porters in the current military offensives. It urged the Slorc to engage in a political dialogue with the democratic movement. It appealed to the Thai government to grant refuge and to allow the humanitarian assistance.

The Asian Forum on Human Rights and Development (Forum-Asia) condemned Slorc's recent military offensive against the Karens and called for immediate cease-fire and the unconditional release of Aung San Suu Kyi and other opposition leaders on February 20, 1995. It also stated that the military operation against the Karen opposition is a clear step backwards for the peace process and national reconciliation in Burma.

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CALLED FOR THE SLORC:

- to release Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, 1991 Nobel Peace laureate, and other political prisoners, immediately and without conditions
- to enter into a dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and other democratic and ethnic nationalist leaders, to find a peaceful solution to the political situation in Burma;
- to fully respect the will of the people which is clearly against the continued National Convention and its mandate to reserve a leading role for the armed forces in the future political life of Burma
- to restore human rights and fundamental freedoms, including ethnic and religious rights
- to stop the use of torture, arbitrary arrests, summary and arbitrary executions, forced labor, portage, relocation and conscription, and the abuse of women

THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAVE CALLED ON

- the United Nations Secretary-General to urgently assist in finding a political solution to the situation in Burma, as mandated by the December 1994 General Assembly resolution
- the UN Security Council to impose an international arms embargo against Slorc
- the UN agencies to suspend their operations in Burma and on multilateral funding institutions to not renew assistance to Slorc to impose mandatory trade and investment sanctions and to refrain from renewing ODA assistance especially in light of Slorc's refusal to respect the will of the Burmese people and that of the international community
- the foreign companies operating in Burma to withdraw or suspend their operations
- the international public to boycott the Slorc's "Visit Myanmar Year-1996";

Thailand may review ASEAN's "constructive engagement" policy toward Rangoon

The ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs Thaksin Shinawatra expressed that Thailand was concerned whether the "constructive engagement" policy could be implemented smoothly on February 4, 1994. He was first Cabinet minister in the Chuan government to question the effectiveness of the constructive engagement policy by Thailand.

The Thai government should review its "constructive engagement" policy on Burma if it wants to help end the present fighting between Burmese troops and ethnic minority guerrillas along the common border, House foreign affairs committee chairman Suthin Noppaket

said on February 10, 1995. And he stressed that Thai government should make its counterpart honor the engagement policy and care more about human life and not only about business profits. He said once the Burmese government get money from us, it will continue spending it to kill ethnic rebels. Fighting along the border will never cease. In early February, he was also quoted as saying that Thailand should take the initiative to push ASEAN to exclude Rangoon from its planned first informal meeting in December, because Thailand was the chief architect and supporter of the constructive engagement policy. On February 16, Kuthep Saikrajang said the committee had agreed to urge the government to review its policies on Burma.

- *Join the Corporate Withdrawal Campaign on Unocal, Texaco, Total and PepsiCo*
- *Launch a "Boycott Campaign" on special days, such as Sept 18, Dec 10, March 13, May 27, July 20 and Aug 8.*

--Simon Billenness

Coalition for Corporate Withdrawal from Burma

c/o Franklin Research, 711 Atlantic Ave., Boston.

02111, USA, Tel. 617-423-6655

--Project Maje, Tel. x1-908-276-8494 USA

UNION ACTION WITH IFBWW

Geneva-- The International Federation of Building and Wood Workers (IFBWW) and its German affiliates, have responded to a request for practical solidarity support against the Burmese military government. The request, from the Federation of Trade Unions of Burma (FTUB), was for IFWBB's assistance in drawing attention to tropical timber being exported by Slorc. The consignment of 1,350 cubic meters of teak were meant for German, Swedish, Danish and Italian wood-processing com-

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Regarding Thailand's offer to mediate to end the civil war in Burma

STATEMENT OF ALL BURMA STUDENTS' DEMOCRATIC FRONT

(1) The ABSDF cordially welcomes Thailand's offer to mediate to end the civil war in Burma. In the advent of Thailand's continuing to profess constructive engagement policy on Burma without an existing genuine internal peace in that country, sovereignty of Thailand, in particular, and stability of the whole region, in general, will come under threat and jeopardy.

(2) National solidarity question is the prime requisite in the fundamental politics of Burma. Specifically, national solidarity comes into tatters, in the wake of the coup by military in 1962. Currently, the SLORC instigates the Karen nationals to kill among themselves. It increases the existing concerns in the hearts of the other ethnic nationalities, and, as a result, national solidarity comes under progressive disintegration. As long as democracy and human rights for all people and equal rights for all ethnic nationalities are lacking, there will be no lasting national solidarity in Burma. As per Burma's existing unique ethnic situation, it is in evidence that democratic rights of the people and the ethnic rights are inseparable. Lack of democratic rights will certainly deprive the ethnic rights. In the same vein, in case, there are no equal rights for all ethnic nationalities, democratic and human rights for all people will be affected due to problems, there in, as a consequence.

(3) SLORC's ploys to solve the political question by way of farces—National Convention and Democratic Karen Buddhist Organization—are illusory. A political solution is the only viable way to settle Burma's ills. Dialogue between the SLORC and the ethnic nationality only, will not suffice for lasting internal peace. It is essential to convene a meeting, whereby, the democratic forces headed by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, prominent political figures, ethnic representatives and the SLORC, thrash out the vital political solution for a lasting peace in the country.

(4) Since 1989, SLORC went into cease-fires with numerous ethnic armed groups and their leaders were pushed in to attend SLORC's farce, the National Convention. Nevertheless, Peace and Democracy Front was formed recently by five ethnic affiliations led by United Wa State Party out of the original thirteen that went into cease-fires with the SLORC. Moreover, on January 7, 1995, the Kachin Independence Organization pushed for a convention participated by the SLORC, democratic forces and ethnic nationalities. These hinted that they no longer believed in the outcome of the National Convention by SLORC as the only solution for just and viable political settlement. As a consequence, all armed ethnic groups including those who went into cease-fires with the SLORC, should have the right to attend the forth-coming meeting for internal peace.

(5) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi endorses the UN resolution of December 1994, citing "a substantive political dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and other political leaders, including the representatives from ethnic groups, as the best means of promoting national reconciliation and the full and early restoration of Democracy". Accordingly, we urge the Thai government, ASEAN and other democratic countries to encourage for a political settlement in Burma under the guidance of the United Nation.

(6) In all the annals of civil wars in Burma, there were frequent peace talks between the belligerents without an outcome. Analysis shows that there is a lack of fundamental and significant mediator who would arbitrate unbiased in the cause, amongst many. Therefore, the ABSDF welcomes the Thai government offer to act as a mediator. On stead and behalf of Burma, ABSDF formally express gratitude on Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai, Royal Thai government and the Thai people for this offer of assistance. Lastly, we urge the global community, UN not an exception, to encourage all avenues at hand, to affect eternal peace in Burma. ■



It has always been the firm conviction of those working for democracy in Burma that it is only through meaningful dialogue between diverse political forces that we can achieve national reconciliation, which is the first and most vital requisite for a united and prosperous country. That the international community shares this view is evident from clause 5 of the General Assembly resolution of December 1994 which encourages the government of Burma to engage in "a substantive political dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi and other political leaders, including representatives from ethnic groups, as the best means of promoting national reconciliation and the full and early restoration of democracy".

It was in full acceptance of this view and with genuine good will that I approached the meetings with members of the State Law and Order Restoration Council on 20 September and 28 October 1994. There has not been and there will not be any secret deals with regard either to my release or to any other issue. I adhere to the principle of accountability and consider myself at all times bound by the democratic duty to act in consultation with colleagues and to be guided by the aspirations of those engaged in the movement to establish a truly democratic political system in Burma. I remain dedicated to an active participation in this movement.

Aung San Suu Kyi
22 January 1995
Rangoon
Burma

Aung San Suu Kyi



Continued from page 12

panies.

A protest action was organized on 2 August against a shipment of Burmese teak which had arrived in Hamburg on the M.S. "Mandalay" vessel on 28 July. "The suffering of the working people in Burma and the destruction of the tropical forests should not go unpunished by the international community," said the IFWBB in a press release. The IFWBB demands the full respect for trade union and other human rights, condemns the exports from Burma, such as tropical logs, which assist in maintaining the military junta in that country.

evacuation



Continued from page 7
man rights situation.

While the UN resolution is heartening, and unequivocally states support for the restoration of democracy in Burma, many countries who were signatories to this resolution continue to do business

with the Slorc. These include France, whose National oil company Total, is helping to develop a natural gas pipeline from Burma to Thailand; the United States, represented by Unocal in the same pipeline project; and the United Kingdom, which has established banking interests in

Rangoon. It is a cruel irony that countries should support a resolution, the fulfillment of which would mean a drastically reduced role for the Slorc, and should continue not to support the Slorc with what the regime needs most, investment capital to finance its war against the people of Burma. ■

Since December 1994 SLORC has launched a massive military offensive against the KNU and ABSDF. Along with this full-scale offensive, civilians in the area have been subjected to atrocious human rights violations — forced portorage, arbitrary arrests, torture and arbitrary executions. Moreover, tens of thousands of civilians have been forced to seek refuge on Thai soil.

Forced labor

In preparation for their military offensive against the KNU, Slorc arrested civilians from locations far and near their area of operations. The arrested numbered approximately 1,300.

In October, IB 62, led by Deputy Bn Comdr Than Win, Capt Aung Lwin and Coy Comdr Capt Aye Min arrested local people from Kaw Kha Taw, Kyaw Tan and Kaw Goe villages in Kyaikmaraw Township.

On 11 November at 5:00 a.m. Coy 3 of IB 350 led by Coy Comdr Capt Htein Lin arrested two villagers from Nyaung Wine who were on their way to their farms and another two villagers from the same village who were on their way to Shwe Kyin. They were forced to crush paddy from the field on their way to Bike Kyi The Ma Taung.

On 12 November, IB 349 arrested civilians from Ye Tha Mein, Set Su, Ah Nyar Su and Wine Bat villages in Waw Township, Pegu Division and Don Sayit, Kwin Seik, Nyaung Che Dauk and Sa Loke Gyi villages in Shwe Kyin Township, Pegu Division.

On 15 November, the soldiers from IB 57, 59, 349 and 350 arrested villagers from Donzayit Village for their offensive on Bike Kyi The Ma (Pregnant Woman Hill). About 600 porters were forced to live at Bike Kyi The Ma Taung along with 3 companies from IB 350.

On 17 November, about 200 soldiers from IB 350 led by Column Comdr Maj Tin Oo Lwin arrested some 60 men and women from villages in Kyauk Kyi, Kyauktaga, Shwe Kyin

townships in Pegu Division.

On 17 November, 300 soldiers from IB 151 led by Lt-Col Kyaw Kyaw conscripted about 90 men and women from Tan Bo Village and Kyauk Kyi Town.

On 19 November, a military column from IB 350 led by Lt Col Khin Maung Kyi arrested the residents in Shwe Kyin.

On 9 December, Shwe Kyin-based IB 57 arrested the local people in Shwe Kyin Township, Pegu Division.

Coy 4 of IB 73 led by Win Zaw, stationed at Kyun Pin Seik outpost forced the people from the villages in Htantabin Township, Pegu Division, to build a rice store and to fill it with their own rice for use by the army.

Different Slorc troops committed similar types of torture during raids, forced marches and battles. Captured civilians were forced into portorage, regardless of their age, and at gun point. They had to carry food rations, ammunition and overly heavy loads. In one instance, those who could no longer carry their loads were kicked into a ravine. Porters had to survive with insufficient food and many suffered malnutrition. Those with malaria were not treated, and ill porters received beatings instead of medicine. This led to many untimely deaths. Porters who could pay a ransom of 1,000-2,000 Ks were released. Some were forced to pay as much as 25,000 Ks for their release. Slorc soldiers demanded money from porters and if they could not afford to pay, the army might gun them down or destroy the village from which they came.

During the military offensive against the

GNU and other democratic forces, Slorc forced increasing numbers of porters to serve in several different battle fields; many of these victims sought to escape. The following information has been revealed by some of these escapees.

Three porters escaped from Slorc military columns on their way to attack Dawn Gwin on 11 December 1994. According to these escapees, more than 500 villagers were forced into portage to carry heavy ammunition and other supplies for this campaign.

They had been told by the head of their villages that they were to contribute labor for road construction near Papun for only one day. Instead, they were forced to move along with Slorc troops from the time of their arrest in early December until their escape ten days later. Among the porters, there were 30 women, 25 of whom were too old and weak to carry such heavy loads. Three other porters had also tried to run away, but no news was heard of their fate.

On 5 February, over 3000 civilians were forced into portage at the Kawmoora front to carry 50 truckload of arms and ammunition sent from Thingannyinaung.

On 5 February, 134 porters, aged from 12 to 62, escaped to Paw Pa Hta area opposite Tha Song Yang district of Tak province. They were students, peasants, workers and street vendors from Moulmein, Mudon, Thanbyuzayat, Kyaikhto, Bilin, Martaban, Paung and Thaton in Mon State, Kawkareik, Pa-an and Hlaingbwe in Karen State and Rangoon. They had also been forced to carry heavy loads of ammunition and supplies for SLORC troops. They were not fed enough and were given only rice and sometimes a little salt and fish-paste. They had to rely on streams for drinking water. Those who got sick were given neither medicine nor medical treatment.

Ko Lu Maw from Kyaikhto was stabbed to

death in Manerplaw by SLORC sergeant Toe Toe from LIB 205, under the command of LID 22, as the victim could no longer carry his load.

Another 42 porters escaped to Paw Pa Hta from military columns of the Slorc which were proceeding towards Paw Pa Hta front from Naw Ta area. Porters were accommodated in a ABSDF student camp near Paw Pa Hta. They had inadequate clothing. Most of them were from Moulmein and Mudon in Mon State, Kawkareik in Karen State and Rangoon.

According to them, over 10,000 civilians were forced into portage for Slorc's military offensive in Karen State. These porters were rounded up and arrested in cinema halls, at markets, in tea-shops, and while they were traveling. Some were prisoners whose prison terms were about to expire. From Moulmein alone, over 2,000 civilians were forced into portage.

On January 8th, Slorc troops occupied Kyauk Nyunt, a site close to a proposed dam at Wae-Gyi. This gave SLORC control of the Salween River from Saw Hta to Kyauk Nyunt. Since then, many people in the area have been forced to contribute unpaid labor by SLORC troops for the construction of a new motor-way from Papun to Kyauk Nyunt. The motor-way was used to transport logistic supplies during the operation.

Slorc's military offensive and the displacement of civilians

Noncombatants were forced to evacuate from ABSDF held areas along the Salween to the Thai side of the Border on 11 December 1994, as Slorc troops approached Dawn Gwin. The students left their belongings, while their families and the disabled were the first priority in

the evacuation.

After Slorc troops occupied Lae Toe outpost, about 2,000 villagers from the Lae Toe area fled to Mae Kar Hta, a Thai border village opposite Dawn Gwin.

After the fall of Manaplaw, another 4,000 civilians from this area left their homes and reached the Confluence of the Salween and Moei rivers. They were later moved to a newly setup refugee camp called Mae For La, in Sob Moei District of Mae Hong Son Province.

From the Naw Ta Area, 30 km south of Manerplaw, 6,000 civilians escaped to Khwe Baw Lu on the bank of the Moei River, and reached Thai soil in Tar Song Yang District of Tak Province to take shelter there.

Villagers in the Paw Pa Hta area fled to the Thai side on 1 February, since there were more signs of SLORC offensives in the area.

In order to escape from being forced into portage for Slorc military columns, about 2,000 people from Nyaunglebin and Taungoo townships in Pegu Division and Papun Township in Karen State escaped to U Hta Ta, situated between Wae Gyi and Baw Nyar Hta, about 8 km north of Dawn Gwin.

1,215 Karen refugees from the Tenasserim Division fled to Bonti Pass in Sai Yok near Kanchanaburi after they had learned that Slorc troops were active in the area.

As of 1 February 1995, at least 15,000 villagers had fled their home communities and reached the Thai-Burmese border to seek refuge.

No safe haven

After the fall of Manerplaw, the DKBO began distributing leaflets asking Buddhist Karens in several refugee camps in Thailand to go back to Burma and help in constructing peace and development in the so-called

Karen State. The statements were written in several different languages, including English and Burmese. The DKBO failed to convince many people as they had committed gross violations of human rights and challenged the sovereignty of Thailand. These violations continue.

On 25 January SLORC troops fired heavy artillery into Phway Baw Lu refugee camp while refugees slept, killing 6 villagers.

On 8 February 1995, DKBA and Slorc troops crossed the Salween River at night and took 400 sacks of rice provided for the Karen refugees near Pu Kwe Hta, located north of Mae Sakoo Hta.

On 8 February in the evening, Slorc transported wounded soldiers by helicopter 8 times. Each transport carried 8 persons. All doctors and medics in Myawaddy were brought against their will to Thingannyinaung to treat wounded soldiers from the Kawmoora battle field.

On 9 February, at about 9 p.m., 8 DKBA soldiers armed with automatic rifles and M79 grenade launchers crossed the border and entered Mae La refugee camp in Mae Ram Mat district of Tak Province. There, they raided Padoh Mahn Yin Sein's house. He is a Buddhist Central Committee member of the KNU and Chairman of the Pa-an district. Four other persons were arrested along with him including Jeffery Win; Pa-an district judge, and his wife, Saw Aung Maw Aye; the Joint Secretary of Pa-an district, Mahn Kyaw Aye; a district central executive committee member and another person. The latter three people managed to escape while being forced to drive on the way to the Moei river across from the Slorc base at Maw Pha Thu, south of Mae La.

On 10 February, at 3:30 p.m., about 20 DKBA troops led by Phar Pa Yaw crossed the Salween river by boat and entered the newly-set

up Ka Htee Hta refugee camp, 4 km from Mae Sam Lab. DKBA troops were ordered to kill all the Christians found, even those on the Thai side, by Slorc Commander Hla Myint. Later, this same Commander led another 20 heavily armed Slorc soldiers into the refugee camp and took about 300 sacks of rice. As Slorc officers gave instruction from loud speakers to DKBA/Slorc troops in Thailand not to use guns, they caught as many chickens and pigs as they could carry.

On 10 February, DKBA/Slorc troops led by Chit Aung (DKBO) destroyed and burnt a village called Ka Law Htar in Papun township. A civilian, Ha Po-O, and his son-in-law were killed on the spot.

Because of this life-threatening situation, 40 villagers from Ka Htee Hta refugee camp were too frightened to stay in Thailand, and went back to Shwe Pyi Thar. Shwe Pyi Thar is a new location near Myaing Gyi Ngu monastery in Kamamaung, created by the DKBA with the support of the Slorc. It is believed that these returnees were forcibly conscripted into the DKBA.

A school boy from Yaung Ni Oo was falling asleep. He was running with the hope to seek SAFE HAVEN together with his family after his camp was under the threat of the Slorc troops.

On 23 February, refugees from Mae Go Hta south of Mae Sam Lab were on their way to a new refugee camp, Mae Taw La, by truck, when they were attacked by approximately twenty soldiers with M-79 launchers and small arms. The truck driver, a Thai national, was killed on the spot. Two Karen women—one an expectant mother, who were seated at the front, were also killed on the spot.

On 28 February, at midnight, 30 DKBA troops led by Maung Soe, former KNU 104th battalion soldier, sneaked into Bang Huay Manok (Baw Naw) refugee camp in Tha Song Yang district and warned all refugees to leave the camp within five days or they would be killed and the camp destroyed. They fired about 100 shots in the air and injured two refugees. The DKBA kidnapped Pado San Htun, a Hlaing Bwe judge, and a KNU civilian authority from the same camp.

These illegal attacks on refugees seeking safety in Thailand violate both Thai law and international codes of conduct.

The embankment which was built by forced laborers at Kalay-Gangaw railway line.



RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION UNDER THE SLORC

Slorc has been constructing railway lines at several locations in Burma with the use of forced labor. Laborers have been sent to work sites at gunpoint, and have been forced to work under life-threatening conditions; facing landslides in the rainy season, swift currents in newly-dug trenches (which have caused several drowning), and sun-stroke, which has killed numerous exhausted people. The railway lines under construction are: Pakokku-Gangaw-kalemyo-Tamu railway line; Pakokku-Myaing-Gangaw-Kalay railway line; and the Ye-Tavoy railway line. The types of the forced labor used at these different sites is virtually identical in terms of conscription, division of labor, and forced contributions to the projects.

Local people have been conscripted from:

Chaung U, Myaung, Yesagyo, Pakokku, Myaing, Htee Lin, Gangaw, Pa Le, Yin Mar Pin, Kyauk Kar, Myaing Si, Kyauk Kwe, Kha Tet Tan, Taung Ma Taw, Tit Nyo Pin and Se Kyi Taw parishes in Kalay townships, Sagaing Division for 207 mile-long Chaung U-Pakokku-Gangaw-Kalay railway lines.

Over 300 villages in 84 parishes in Myaing for the Pakokku-Myaing-Gangaw-Kalay Railway Line.

Ye, Thanbyuzayat, Mudon, Ye Phyu, Kanbauk, Thayetchaung, Launglon and Tavoy townships in Tenasserim Division, and from Mon State for the Ye-Tavoy railway lines.

Types of conscription

Regional Slorc authorities have used different methods to exploit civilians. Civilians do not dare to speak out against the gunmen. Slorc employs the term "volunteer" to cover up their involvement

in human rights violations. However, the types of forced conscription used to supply labor for the railway lines, indicates the real meaning of "volunteers" to the Slorc's; forced laborers on these projects are working as slaves.

In Kalay township, each household in 5 quarters, and over 150 villages in 28 parishes were ordered to send one family member each on a compulsory basis, excluding only the blind. Each household had twice to send 1-2 family members on one week to one month-long work sessions. The elderly, children and women were not spared from contributing unpaid labor. Those who want to be spared must have money, 2,000 Ks at least, to bribe the Slorc or to hire substitute hands.

People from Khan Myo quarter and quarter A to E of Thar Han were forced to work in Zin Kalee. They were given assignments for three batches—the first two batches lasted for more than a week and the last for over a month.

In December 1994, civilians in Myaing, Htee Lin and Pa Le townships were conscripted by the Slorc and forced to sign agreements in one of 3 different categories. The first was to contribute labor, the second to pay fines for absences, and the last to confess that they failed to abide by the law. Those who agreed to contribute labor by themselves had to sign a list and inform the military about their presence as soon as they arrived at the work site. Fines for absence were fixed between 2,000 Ks and 15,000 Ks. Those put under the third category, waited in fear for punishments imposed by the Slorc.

Thousands of Chins, forced to work on railroad construction, have fled, eventually reaching the Indian border. People in East-Chinland have been forced to work not only for railway construction but also for building roads and bridges for military bases.

For the railway construction sites near Myaing, each family was forced to send one person, aged between 14 and 60. If there was no one within the age range, all family members had to work instead.

People in Tavoy and Ye Phyu Township were forced to send one person from each family to work in Ye-Tavoy railway construction site for 15 days, since construction work began in October 1994. Moreover, they were forced to build halls to show videos and shops to sell goods to the laborers.

On 6 November, the Slorc from Ye issued a secret order, demanding the compulsory contribution of labor from local people for digging pits and building earthen embankments for the railway line.

Division of labor

Slorc has never taken the responsibility of social welfare of the laborers, instead assigning difficult work without providing necessary tools and materials.

In Zin Kalee area, 25-30 laborers were put in one group and assigned to finish 20-50 feet of earthen embankments.

At another work site each group was assigned to complete an earth embankment 30 ft wide (the base), 11-15 ft high, 15 ft wide (the top surface) and 100 ft long. They were assigned to two shifts a day, from 6:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

There is no time limit for the labor in construction sites near Myaing.

The laborers were forced to carry steel rails, engines and wagons, and more than 80,000 sleepers, along the work sites in Myaing. The shipment started from Chaung U to Pa Rein Ma Jetty across the Chindwin River, Mahuyar Jetty to Simikhon Jetty across the Irrawaddy River, then to Pakokku.

Each laborer were forced to complete an earthen pit of 10 sq. feet wide and 1 foot deep every day at the work sites in Thayetchaung and Ye Phyu township.

Laborers from work sites between Zahar and Zalun villages were forced to work at military bases to build halls, shops and landing pads for helicopters, as an extra contribution.

Forced Contributions

Those who live in the villages along the railway line construction sites have lived in a constant state of fear. They know that if they cannot afford the contributions the Slorc demands, they will be forced to accept any actions taken by the military.

In Zin Kalee area, people were asked to bring 24 tins of rice, 100-150 Ks of money in cash, medicine, baskets, knives, pickaxes, mattocks, chopping hoes, grab hoes, and axes. Some people had to collect these tools by selling their clothing and other properties. Civilian trucks were conscripted and never paid for. All the laborers had to spend their own money for food and transportation. The laborers also had combine contributions to pay for the rental of bulldozers—2,000 Ks per hour. In addition, those who were assigned for night-shift duty had to rely on their own resources for electricity.

People in Kalay Township were forced to collect a box of stones, sizes 10 feet long, 4 feet wide and 1 foot high. If bought, each collection of stones costs 1,600 Ks. The laborers have to collect these stones not only for the construction of the railway lines, but also for building housing for the military officials from IB 228.

Poverty-stricken people living in the parishes of Pale, Yin Mar Bin and Sar Lin Gyi were also forced to dig wells for an entire day without any compensation for their time and work.



This trench, dug by forced laborers, was flooded in rainy season. It caused several drownings.

In the construction sites near Myaing, the laborers were forced to bring their own baskets, mattocks, grubbing hoes, chopping hoes, and pick axes, as well as 8-pound-weight hammers. They also had to arrange their own transport to the work site, and pay for this themselves. They then had to walk about one hour to reach the work site. Daily bus fare per person is 50 Ks. Trucks, motorcycles, and bicycles have been conscripted at gun point for army use. Civil servants were forced to pay taxes for breaking stones 500 Ks; carrying stones to the truck 150 Ks; and digging earth pitch 800 Ks. No one was spared from this taxation.

In Myaing Township, those civilians who failed to attend as USDA mass rally were forced to work at the construction site and to pay a 30 Ks fine as punishment. The Slorc in Myaing also forced the laborers to pay 20 pieces of firewood per household, 5 branches of toddy-palm leaf, jute, groundnut and cooking oil and fees for the trip of Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt.

People in Tavoy, Tenasserim Division, have been forced to pay a monthly ransom of 500 Ks to local Slorc so that the soldiers would spare them from labor conscription on the Ye-Tavoy railway line. Each household was also forced to pay monthly "porter fees", amounted 50-100 Ks. All the laborers were forced to bring construction tools, cooking materials and

food for one week, using their own money.

In Thayetchaung and Ye Phyu townships, each household must pay a fine of 2,500-3,000 Ks for any absence from forced labor. In Thayetchaung, 36 video owners were forced to provide one 28-inch TV/Video(National brand) together with one generator(Honda brand), valued at approximately 250,000 Ks, for LIB 403, 404 and 405. In addition, they also were forced to pay a monthly 400 Ks per person

to fuel the generator. Each owner was also forced to bribe the Slorc 500-1,000 Ks monthly, to be spared from forced labor.

Special Rapporteur

On the evening of November 9, Prof Yozo Yokota, Special Rapporteur for Burma, arrived at Work Site 2 of the Ye-Tavoy Railway construction, known as Kalaw Work Site, which was assigned to the local people in Yan Myoe Aung Ward and Ah Zin Village in Ye Township. On that day, the Special Rapporteur met with U Har Shin, a veteran and chairman of Yan Myoe Aung Ward, and U Maung Myint, chairman of Ah Zin Village, and asked about forced labour for railway line construction.

The Special Rapporteur held a two-hour long meeting with them. Yozo Yokota was apparently provided with disinformation by Slorc, instead of the reality of the situation at Work Site 2.

Before the Special Rapporteur arrived at Work Site 2, Slorc local people from Han Gan, Kalaw Gyi and Maokanin villages, who had been assigned to work on the construction of the railway since its start, were replaced by Slorc cronies U Har Shin and U Maung Myint on 7 November. Because of this replacement,

local people in the affected villages were unable to meet the Special Rapporteur.

One local Slorc chairman told Col Myoe Myint, battalion commander of LIB 343, on November 6, to summon all members of the Slorc to come to Kalaw Gyi Village. The commander instructed them that as Prof Yozo Yokota would visit the railway construction site on 9 November, they should not bring elderly persons and children to the work site, and that if the professor asked anything about the labour, everyone must answer that they were working voluntarily, not as forced labourers, and that aged persons and children were not asked to contribute labour.

On 7 November, the chairman of Ye Township Slorc changed work sites assignments for villagers from Han Gan, Kalaw Gyi, and Maokanin. They were nearly finished their assignment, and so were very angry and quarrels broke out among the labourers. When Yozo Yokota went back, Ye Township Slorc re-assigned them to their former work site in order to avoid tension among the villages at that time.

The reality at the railway construction site which was hidden from the Special Rapporteur remains a whisper at different work sites along the on-going railway line. Until 31 December, many local people were still being forced to contribute corvée labour for the work site from Natkyizin to Tavoy.

Number of forced laborers

The huge numbers of forced laborers belies the meaning of Slorc's "volunteers".

In January, about 1500 local people living in Kalay township were forced to work.

11,850 laborers from 29 wards/villages in Ye Township, 2,000 laborers in Work Site I,

Chaung Taung village, 3,700 laborers in Work Site II, Ka Lawk Village and 6,150 laborers in Work Site III, 9-Mile Village were forced to work in Ye-Tavoy rail lines construction.

The number of forced labor from Myaing is unknown.

Who is in charge of railway line construction?

Soldiers have taken control of railway line worksites, while engineers are idle in their offices.

Maj. Thura Sein Win of IB 89 is in control of the Kalay section of the railway line. In January 1994, he said that Slorc would provide security, health care, and industrial machinery in those areas in which laborers cannot manage by themselves.

On 8 August 1994, Win Sein, Minister for Rail Transport, televised that Slorc had already provided 5,700,000 Ks for the social welfare, education and health care of the laborers. Slorc said that each laborer would be given 30 Ks for one 10 sq. foot-wide, 1 foot-deep earthen pit. Unfortunately, this never happened.

In the first week of February 1994, Slorc Secretary-1 Lt-Gen Khin Nyunt inspected the progress of the railway line construction. At that time, the laborers were forced to say, "We are satisfied with contributing the labor and enjoy doing so." Slorc used the outcomes of railway construction in many places to mislead the international community and the people of Burma.

Slorc and USDA forced high school students to put up ready-made signboards, and took documentary video footage.

Work sites near Nat Kyi Zin village, in Ye Phyu Township and near Taw Bae Zatar, Tha Pyay Chaung and Za Lun villages have been con-

trolled by the Slorc LIB 406, IB 25 and LIB 401 respectively.

Consequences

People have been suffering each day; their voices have not been heard; what next?

People cannot afford to celebrate their religious ceremonies due to high commodity prices, frequent demands for labor and various kind of assessments. People who earned their living by harvesting toddy, peasants, odd-job workers and daily employees, had to sell or pawn their property to cover the taxes demanded by the Slorc.

The laborers had to use their own money to buy medicine. Some laborers had to sell their own cows, carts and land to cover the medical expenses. Those who had nothing to sell lost their lives.

Some sick were allowed to go back to their homes, but only when they were dying. There were a number of deaths because of incidents at the work sites, disease, beatings and torture. None have gotten any compensation.

Escape is the only option; 30 households of local Mon and Karen villagers from Ye Phyu Township escaped to Pa Yaw refugee camp, situated along the Thai-Burmese border in November. Others have not been as lucky.

Torture

Can a person be strong enough to survive after suffering mistreatment at the hands of the soldiers? If not, who will take responsibility to compensate their death?

Four laborers from Nat Chaung Village were beaten for an entire night as they could not afford necessary electricity for night shift work at the labor site.

Laborers are not allowed to resist anything the

Slorc orders. Slorc does not accept any disobedience or clarification of orders. If anyone demands clarification or resists an order, he/she is slapped and forced to dig trenches and do other hard work. Murmurs of the laborers û “We have been totally enslaved under the rule of Slorc” û have been heard around the construction sites.

While contributing labor, workers have been insulted, damned, beaten and tortured by Slorc troops. Those who made jokes were also subjected to beatings. Many female laborers have been gang-raped by the troops. As most are too shy to reveal their plight, many cases remained unexposed.

A village near 36-mile (AKA Heinze) and another village near 34-mile (Heinze Bridge) were destroyed by Slorc bulldozers. Lands and paddy fields situated along railway line were confiscated by the Slorc. Those who complained were arrested and tortured. In almost every case, instead of due payment the laborers were forced to sign that they had contributed their pay as a donation to Slorc funds.

In Ka Lone Htar village, Ye Phyu township, those who refused to contribute unpaid labor were threatened by lawsuit and sentenced to 4 years imprisonment. The laborers in the work site near Nat Kyi Zin Village were forced to stand about 30 minutes under scorching sun as the soldiers checked attendance.

In October 1994, U Su Aye's (50) from Ka Lone Htar Village, Ye Phyu Township who had been in railway lines construction was beaten by the soldiers from LIB 401 after they robbed his money and properties. In the same month, the troops came again and forced him to get down from his house and shot him to death. LIB 407 and LIB 401 were shifting the blame on each other when relatives of U Su Aye went to ask for appropriate action against soldiers. Officials from LIB 401 simply told the village that the victim died of an accidental gunshot and they did not see any reason to

take action.

Ma Tin Tin Hlaing, aged 32 from Kanbauk village, Ye Phyu township, fled to the border on 6 November 1994 after she and 6 family members were forced to work in construction sites for two batches of 15-day-long assignments. She had to bribe 200 Ks for the soldiers at two check points on the way and she finally reached a camp in Bar Line Village, Thon Par Pun District, Kanchanaburi.

Daw Khin Yu, age 39, from Myae Khanti village in Tavoy township, was sent to a concentration camp as she could not afford a bribe and 40 Ks-donation demanded by the Slorc. Before her later assignment, Daw Khin Yu met with U Moe Hein, a member of local Slorc and explained that she could not go again because she just came back recently. U Moe Win beat and punched her and shouted at her that she had failed to abide by Slorc's orders. She received injuries on her whole body. She then told the story to an officer from IB 25 in Khan Ti and the officer told her the same thing as U Moe Win. Finally, she was forced to go again to the same work site.

Farmlands were confiscated. But, no compensation.

Life-threatening conditions

Why have virtually all accidents involved civilian laborers only?

Even peasants familiar with hard work cannot bear the hardships at Slorc's construction sites. Many people have died from falling logs and some have drowned in the Myit Thar River after heavy rains. Due of a landslide, many laborers from Tar Han Ward and Nat village were hospitalized. Because of such landslides, falling trees, drownings, widespread malnutrition, anemia and severe illnesses due to lack of shelter, heatstroke and beatings by Slorc troops, about 50 people have already died in Myaing, all, apparently civilians.

From September 1993 to February 1994, 21 people died and many others were injured in the work site near Myaing. Their hands and/or legs were broken due to a severe landslides.

Since the railway line has been under construction, Slorc has never provided shelter or drinking water for laborers at work sites near Myaing.

Because of heavy rains, floods and landslides during the rainy season, water from the Htee stream changed course, and the railway line was under a new water way. The new stream is 15-20 feet deep and 500 yards long. Work already done by the laborers was destroyed, and more people will be conscripted again to repeat the same horrors.





Villagers running for their lives from Slorc's troops



What is her future?

Accounts of systematic and random human rights violations by the Slorc inflicted on the civilians of Burma come from every part of the Union. These accounts, in sum, give us a picture of a nation at war with itself, of a military out of control, and of the breakdown of even the most basic discipline on the part of Slorc troops in the field. What is happening in Burma today is nothing less than State sanctioned terrorism. The victims of this reign of terror include farmers, villagers, women and children, and civilians from all walks of life.

AROUND BURMA

Extra-judicial killings; the killing of civilian and arbitrary execution

On 10 July, 1994, four Pilatus PC7's flew out of Kengtung, Shan State, and attacked a de-

fenseless Ban Akhu Village of Akha people in Tachilek. The planes dropped eight 80-lb. bombs on the village, fired rockets and strafed the village with 30mm guns. In Ban Akhu two boys (ages 7 and 14) were killed while playing outside, and 5 others were wounded. The back of one child's head was blown off while the other was mortally wounded at the body. Several other villages in the area were subsequently abandoned because of air raids.

On 5 August, Slorc AIG soldiers and troops from IB 96 came to Shwe Yaw Pya village in Thaton and called out Saw Ko Myint (37, son of Thaug Shwe). They asked him where suspected KNLA troops were and also ordered him to find them guns. Saw Ko Myint couldn't get any guns for them, so they demanded money from him. He had no money, so they killed him.

On 6 August, Thit Sa Phauk Thanmani (clearly an alias which means "Treacherous Steel") and Slorc soldiers based at Ka Ma San Village in

Thaton District came together at Mee Chaung Ye Village and captured civilians from Maw Ta Lay, Saw Kla Hla and village headman Saw Naing Naing, and demanded money from them. Saw Kla Hla gave them 6,000 Ks so they released him, but the other two men who had no money were tortured brutally.

On 7 August at night, in Monywa, 6 people were arrested by the Slorc troops. They had taken part in the 1988 pro-democracy uprisings and had previously been arrested after the military coup.

On 10 August, Maung Kyaw Thein, Chief of the News and Information Committee of SNDSA in Thingankyune Township, fled to the Thai-Burmese border after his release from IB 3. He was arrested at night on 9 August 1994, at his house.

At 4 p.m. on 17 August, AIG soldier Saw Cha Htoo came to K'dee Pu village in Thaton and shot to death Saw Koo Rah (40). Nyunt Khin (50) was also shot and severely wounded, no explanation for either action was given.

On 18 August, Sai Hla Htay, a Shan farmer, was executed by LIB 246 after he was unable to carry heavy ammunition and supplies for Slorc columns moving between Laikha and Kunhing. Another porter, Sai Sam Mya, was recaptured and beaten severely with sticks when he was about to escape.

On 20 August, civilians Par Nott, 35, and Par Noe, 25, villagers from Don Pan Kiang refugee camp were killed by Slorc soldiers from LIB 3, while they were collecting charcoal near Noe Pa Doe area inside Burma. The soldiers shot and killed them both. That evening, fellow villagers brought back their bodies for burial.

On 22 August, Slorc troops from LIB 408 arrested U Shay (56), a bus comptroller from Ah Lae Sa Khan Village, Ye Phyu Township, at his home and brought him to the headquar-

ters of LIB 408 in Paukpinkwin Village. He was accused of having contacts with the rebels and passing information to them. The victim's ears were cut off, nails were driven through his hands and legs, and then his tongue was cut out. He was finally killed by driving nails into the crown of his head.

On 3 July, Slorc troops from LIB 3 arrived at Nyar Lee Ah area and arrested several villagers from Dom Pan Kiang refugee camp, who were working on a plot of land to grow beans. At this writing, their fates remain unknown. Some villagers think that they have already been killed by the soldiers.

In the first week of September 1994, Noor Mohammed (about 45, son of Fakir Bakker), hailing from Myothugyi Village, 3 miles east of Maungdaw Township, Arakan State, was carrying some food items from Buthidaung Township. His bicycle was stopped for a routine check at a 3-mile outpost by Na Sa Ka (border administration) forces. A small rice bag was seized and he was beaten. Noor Mohammed lost his temper and resisted the officer in-charge, Thet Naing from MIS Unit 10. Perceiving danger, Noor Mohammed ran for his life and took refuge in a construction site (of a UNHCR office). He had fled after seeing the furious in-charge reach for his pistol. Unfortunately, 15 security force personnel of the 3-mile outpost pursued him, finally caught him, and punished him with summary death. His body was later handed over to family members for burial.

On 2 September, Slorc soldiers from LIB 9 fired shots at Eh Say, who was fishing in the Moei River near Noe Pa Doe. Eh Say was not hit by the shots, and tried to swim to safety. Unfortunately, he drowned. After 2 days his body was recovered by his relatives.

On 3 September, villagers Pwee tha and Ah Bu from Don Pon Kyang refugee camps were shot by Slorc troops from LIB 9, while they were collecting firewood and vegetables at Noe

Pa Doe area a few yards inside Burma. Ah Bu managed to crawl away and hide in the bush despite having been shot in the leg. While he was hiding, he heard his companion, Pwee Tha, limping away from a bayonet stab wound in his leg. Pwee tha was brought back home the next day. He wound has not healed yet at the time of this report.

On 7 September, the camp commander of Slorc's Ba Nwe Kla camp ordered 2 villagers from Naw Htoo Day village in Thaton to deliver a letter to the commanders of Coy 4 of IB 24 at Kwi Lay Doh camp. When they arrived there, soldiers shot one of them dead and the other villager was ordered to enter the camp. The camp commander told him that his friend had been shot for not showing him proper respect. The villager who was shot dead was Saw Pa Kwee (57) from Naw Htoo Day Village.

On 9 September, Bn Commander Thein Soe of IB 63 went to Pe Le village in Thaton District and captured two villagers; Aung Tha Nyunt (47) and Saw Aye Kyaw (46). Thein Soe took them to his camp and detained them there. On 13 September, they were about to be killed for unknown reasons. Aung Tha Nyunt managed to escape but Saw Aye Kyaw's is believed to have been killed.

On 11 September at 8 p.m., LID 33, IB 27, Coy 1 (Bn Comdr Chit Thaug, Second-in-Command Zaw Myint, Coy 1 Comdr Capt Win Tint) entered Kru See village (Burmese: Kyaun Sein village) in Thaton township, Mon State. All the villagers ran away because they were afraid to be taken as porters. The company opened fire. The village headman begged Capt Win Tint to release four villagers the soldiers had captured, but he was beaten and dared not ask again. Tee Toh Po, a 38-year-old Karen Buddhist farmer of Kru See village, was hit his left lower leg by gunfire, but managed to escape. Maung Than Oo (26, son of Tee Der Day, married with 2 children) was hit in the jaw and died that evening. Three other men were captured by the SLORC soldiers, and all

of them were executed at 4 a.m. on 12 September.

The victims were; Moo Ko (21, son of Maung San Win, unmarried), Ko Naing (23, son of U Than Ngwe, unmarried) and Thein Win (18, son of U Aung Shwe, unmarried). All of them were Karen Buddhist farmers from Kru See Village. Moo Ko was stabbed with a knife in his throat. Ko Naing's nose was cut off and he was stabbed in the eyes and in both of his ears. Thein Win's teeth and his left arm were broken. The left side of his face was cut with a knife. The bodies of three of them were black and very hard to be identified because they had been broken all over. The soldiers also looted all of the properties of every household: clothes, rice, pots, etc. They also took and ate all the chickens, fruit and vegetables they wanted.

On 17 September, the secretary of Nai Phu from Kaw Ba Lai Village in Kyaikmaraw township, Mon State, and his wife were arrested by Slorc troops from IB 62 led by Bn Deputy Comdr Ohn Myint, and were tortured without questioning. The troops also took away the properties of the victims and smashed a video. Nai Chit Pale from Kaw Pauk Village, Nai Yu from Kaw Tun Village and Nai Hla Sein and Nai Hlaing from Kha Byaw Village were also tortured by IB 62 without knowing any reason.

On 17 September, SLORC troops from IB 62 led by Bn Deputy Comdr Maj Ohn Myint arrested a monk, age 25, from the monastery in Kaw Bain Village, Kawkareik Township, Karen State. The commander accused him of having contact with Mon rebels and forced him to disrobe. Having stayed at Halockhani Mon refugee camp for some time, was also given as a reason for his arrest.

Slorc patrol-troops south of Buthidaung entered Saubrang village on 18 September and arrested Moulvi Dil Mohammed (25), alleging that he had been associated with anti-state

elements. He was later executed without trial. The same troops entered Saubrang village on 20 September and arrested Mohammed Ayub (23, son of Mohammed) and Mohammed Anwar (22, son of Moulvi Abu Bakker) giving no reasons. Later, the two victims were tortured and subsequently shot dead.

On 2 October, Kyaw Pu and his brother-in-law Lar Khao, from Htee Mu Htan Village were arrested by a Slorc military column from LIB 357 at a place between Mae Ta Neh and Htee Mu while they were tracing for their lost elephant. They were asked about a man called Ki Gay and whether he had a walkie-talkie and a gun. The victims could not give any information apart from knowing Ki Gay. They were accused of being spies sent by Ki Gay and subjected to various forms of torture for 2 days.

On 22 October, Slorc troops under the command of LIB 403 penetrated Ye Pone village, Ye Phyu Township, Tenasserim Division, and brutally gunned down innocent Karen villagers who were running for their lives. U Si Aye (63) was hit and died on the spot. Two other villagers, one of them a 16-year-old who was hit at both sides of his thigh, could no longer run and were arrested by Slorc troops. Since then they disappeared. According to escapees, Slorc troops also burned down and destroyed the village.

On 25 October, 25 escapees from 5 households reached Moe Khao Phaw Karen refugee camp, near Nat-E-Taung in Kanchanaburi Province of Thailand. One, was Naw Than Nu (23, daughter-in-law of the victim U Si Aye).

About 450 refugees who escaped Slorc's "Four-Cuts" strategy, are now taking shelter there and have been provided humanitarian assistance by the Burmese Border Consortium.

On 29 October, at noon, two sections of soldiers from LIB 9 under the command of LID 44, arrived near the Moei River. They shouted

at the villagers who were fishing and then opened fire. The villagers panicked and ran for their lives. School teacher Saw Day Wah and 3 other persons including a woman ran to the river side and were chased by the soldiers, with continuous shots. Lah Khu, age 20, dived into the river and swam, he finally escaped to the jungle. Naw Pay Pay, age 29, could not swim. She pretended as if she was wounded and killed. Ah Toe, age 25, was hit and sunk into the river while he was crossing the river. School teacher Saw Day Wah, age 27, was hit in the chest while trying to cross the river and disappeared. His body was found on 30 October, at 4 p.m., by friends and relatives.

On 31 October, four army personnel, including one sergeant from IB 525, stationed at Aung Mingala outpost, entered the house of Ma Nu Begum (25, wife of Qarim) at Headmanpara village and attempted to rape her. She resisted and the soldiers retreated. The soldiers met Jalal Ahmed (about 12, son of Haffiz Ahmed) on their way back and the boy was beaten to death. Killing the young boy did not satisfy the angry soldiers, and they continued their spree—killing Mahammed Hussain, who was working on his vegetable farm (60, son of Fetan Ali) in Rwanmagone, Buthidaung Township. The man was first tortured and later his head was disfigured due to severe strikes with a wooden bar.

About 100 Slorc troops from Shwe Kyin-based IB 351 led by Deputy Bn Comdr Lt-Col Kyaw Kyaw, penetrated into villages located north of Shwe Kyin and committed torture and killings of innocent villagers on 20 November. That military column arrested U Saw Bi (58) while he was working on his farm in Pade Gaw Parish, near a church in Swe Dein Village. Slorc troops accused him of having contact with the rebels and he was taken to Shan Su Village and tortured to death on 21 November at 8:30 p.m. He had to dig an earthen pit for himself, he was battered on the neck with a bayonet and shot in the abdomen with a 9 mm. pistol.



*"It's all I could save."
A woman from Halockhani refugee camp.*

On 26 November, over 100 Slorc troops from LIB 410 led by Capt Min Nyo and Coy Comdr Capt Than Wai arrived at Kaw Zar Village in Ye Township and arrested the villagers and took away the properties including 30,000 Ks. The victims were Nai Nyan Thein, Nai Shi, Nai Pra and their families.

On 28 November, Slorc troops from IB 62 led by Deputy Bn Comdr Maj Ohn Myint arrested 12 innocent Mon civilians from Mon Hlaing, Kyaik Ga Bin, Kyauk Ye Twin and Kaw Kha Lein villages, Kawkareik Township, Karen State. They were accused of being sympathizers of the Mon rebels. The victims were interrogated and tortured.

Slorc troops raided Kyaik Ga Bin village on 27 November, Kyauk Ye Twin village on 28 November, Mon Hlaing village on 29 November and Kaw Kha Lein village on 1 December.

Those were Nai Naung, Nai Kyi and Nai Dauk Bu from Mon Hlaing Village; Nai Kha Lae (village headman), Nai Kane (Secretary) and Nai Kyaing from Kyaik Ga Bin Village; Nai Mon Kyi, Nai Ye Kyaw (Chairman), Nai Kun Jit and Nai Nyunt Win (Secretary) from Kyauk Ye Twin Village; and Nai Hta Lon (Chairman) and Nai Meit (Secretary) from Kaw Kha Lein village. They were beaten with rifle butts, kicked with combat boots and punched. In addition, the victims' heads were covered with a plastic bag and water was poured on them, their whole bodies except their heads were buried, while they were being interrogated and beaten. The soldiers then threatened to kill the victims when they did refused to confess what the had troops accused them of doing. The victims were released after severe torture.

On 18 December, companies from Slorc LIB 351 patrolled the area in Shwe Kyin Township, Pegu Division. At 11:45 a.m., when they reached old Tai Pin Village, located north of Shwe Kyin, there, the soldiers opened fire on the villagers from Shan Su village who were on their way to cut bamboo for household use. Ko Hla Myint (35, husband of Ma Pu) was killed. Slorc troops took away a sarong and a bag in which a small amount of money was kept. Other villagers escaped. Nobody knew the reason why they were shot.

On 22 December, Slorc troops from LIB 351 shot Maung Zaw Naing Oo (son of U Kyaw Hlaing) and other 5 people from Ma Bee Lay Village near Kaw Htaw Kaloe River in Shwe Kyin. Maung Zaw Naing Oo was shot twice in the chest and was found dead the following morning at a place 3 furlongs from where the incident occurred.

On 29 December at 11:00 p.m., SLORC troops from IB 73 blasted a grenade into a crowd holding a religious ceremony in Inn Gyin Gown, Htantabin Township, Pegu Division, wounding 24 and killing 10.

On 31 December, Saw Lar Noe (20, son of

Tee Kyaw Moe) from Tar Baw Khee Village, Thaton Township, Mon State, was shot to death by the Slorc troops from LIB 119 without knowing any reason.

The Slorc troops from LIB 410 penetrated Kaw Zar Village in Ye township, Mon State, in the evening on 1 January 1995. 12 young females were forced to accompany the soldiers to Paukpinkwin Village. The victims were Mi Mu (15), Mi Khaing (17), Mi Mee (13), Mi Kyi Htay (16), Mi Thu (18), Mi Cho Lay (18), Mi Aye Khaing (18), Mi Mar Lwin (13), Mi Hnaung (20), Mi Kha Baik Klu (20) and Mi Kun Shi (38). They were all raped by the soldiers, and continue to be held at the time of this report.

Political prisoners and enforced disappearances

U Khin Zaw Win (44, dental surgeon) was a graduate student who worked for UNICEF in Rangoon from 1991 to 1993. He was arrested on 2 July at Mingaladon International Airport in Rangoon as he was about to board a plane to Singapore. He was studying in Singapore for a master's degree on a scholarship. He had returned to Burma in order to prepare an academic paper on the current situation in Burma, a thesis for his post-graduate studies. He was arrested for allegedly carrying anti-Slorc pamphlets in his luggage. He was brought to an MIS office on Kaba Aye Road and later transferred to Insein Prison. *On October 6, he was sentenced to 15 years in prison.*

U Sein Hla Oo (aka Maung Nwe Oo) was born on 17 October, 1938, and is the son of U Boe Ba and

Daw Ngwe Kyaing at Myar Gyi Village in Yesagyo Township, Sagaing Division. In 1963 he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from Rangoon University. While he was in the university, he worked as the university correspondent for both the Botataung and Tun Daily newspapers, and was also a member of Rangoon University Student Union. He participated in the 7 July Uprising in 1962 against the coup of Ne Win's regime. Since 1964, he had worked as Editor of the Botataung Newspaper where he wrote articles under the pen name Maung Nwe Oo. He was married to Daw Shwe Zin, businesswoman, and lived at 14 Prome Road, 6 miles, Rangoon.

In 1988 he won the D.J. Jefferson Award from the East-West Center in Honolulu. He played an active role in the 1988 democracy protests and was the head of the Journalists' Strike Committee. He joined the National League for Democracy (NLD) after '88 uprisings and became a member of the Central Information and Press Department. Briefly arrested in February 1990, he won the seat for Insein (2) in May 1990 election but was subsequently arrested for the second time on 23 October 1990 and sentenced to 10 years' hard labor under section 124 of the Penal Code for "withholding

Respect the law?



information relating to High Treason". He was sentenced in 1991 to 10 years in prison in connection with the establishment of the NCGUB and was freed in 1992 under Slorc's amnesty. He was re-arrested on 4 August 1994 with the allegation of having links with democratic opposition groups and giving anti-SLORC information to foreign media and diplomats. *On October 6, he was sentenced to 7 years in prison.*

U Khin Maung Swe (aka Maung Ye Kyaw) was born on 20 July 1942, son of U Maung Aye and Daw Tin Kyi in Ngathaing Chaung, Irrawaddy Division. He was a student from ABM Mission School, and graduated from Rangoon University in 1966 with a Bachelor of Science (Geology). In the same year he worked as geologist on the official staff of the Myanmar Corporation, was junior officer in 1974 and became senior officer in 1982. He attended the Oil Development, Oil Exploration and Drilling training in the USA in 1968, and a training for the prevention of explosion of oil wells in Singapore in 1978.

During the uprising, he was secretary of Labor Union at Myanma Oil Corporation (Head Office). Afterwards, he became an active Member of the Central Executive Committee of the NLD, as well as Chairman of the Central Information and Press Department. In May 1990, he was elected as a representative of Sanchaung constituency in Rangoon. He lived with his wife Daw Win Win Aye, a bank accountant, on 18 Pyarpon Street, Sanchaung Township. U Khin Maung Swe was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment in 1991 with the allegation of being in connection with the establishment of the NCGUB. He was freed under Slorc's amnesty in 1992. He was re-arrested on 4 August 1994 with the allegation of having links with democratic oppositions and giving anti-Slorc diplomats. *On October 6, he was sentenced to 7 years imprisonment.*

Daw San San Nwe, a writer and member of NLD Central Committee, was a well-known

journalist under the pen name San San Nwe Tharrawaddy. She was arrested in July 1989 for allegations of agitating unrest. She was released in April 1990. She was re-arrested together with her daughter Myat Mo Mo Tun on 4 August 1994 with the allegation of having links with democratic opposition groups and giving anti-Slorc information to foreign media and diplomats. **Myat Mo Mo Tun** was a computer science student at Rangoon University and also part time compositor at a printing press. *On October 6, both of them were sentenced to 7 years imprisonment.*

On 4 August 1994, **Dr. Htun Myat Aye**, a dentist who was working for UNICEF in Rangoon, and **Daw San San Tin**, who used to work as a translator for UNICEF occasionally, *were sentenced to 7 years imprisonment on 6 October.*

Death in custody

Yan Gyi Aung, aged 29 from No. 4, Zee Taw Quarter, Pa-an Township, Karen State, had fled to the KNU headquarters soon after the coup in 1988. The following year he decided to return to Burma, or the "legal fold" in Slorc's term. Yan Gyi Aung was promptly arrested and sentenced to death by a military tribunal before the 1990 election. Buddhist monks in Karen State appealed to the court and his sentence was reduced to life imprisonment. In March 1994, the victim died of cholera after receiving no medical treatment in prison.

U Aye Nwe, former administrative officer of Pa-an municipality, participated in the 1988 pro-democracy uprising. He was arrested and sentenced to life imprisonment in Moulmein prison in 1989. He died on 1 February 1995. He did not receive any medical treatment in prison before he died.

Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment and punishment

On 3 July, commanding officer Saw Win Naing from Slorc IB 73 arrested innocent villagers Maung Htwe and Ko Thein from Mone Township, Nyaunglebin District. The victims were subjected to a severe beating without cause.

On 15 August, local Slorc troops in Sakhan Gyi Village, Win Yaw Township, tortured Maung Tun Kyi, Toe Phaw, Phar Tha, Daw Mu Dah, Daw Pi and Dae Di during interrogations about a robbery. Of them, Maung Tun Kyi was again tortured on 1 October and had to seek medical treatment.

On 13 September, Slorc soldiers from IB 63 came to Saw Law Kloh Village, Thaton District, and captured three villagers; Saw Ko Nyeh (43), Saw Ku Nu (43) and Saw Pa Naw Si (37). The soldiers tied up the three men and took them to the military camp. They were beaten and poked with a knife until they were bleeding, and their heads were also beaten severely.

On 25 September, a joint military column of LIB 206 and 208, led by Nyi Nyi Aung entered Mi Ka Thit Village in Myawaddy Township, and summoned the headmen of the village Phar Ka and Yu Lar. They were violently kicked and beaten with heavy combat boots and their necks were throttled. The troops complained that whenever they reached the village, they did not see any men. They warned the headmen that the next time this happened, every house must host 3 soldiers and provide shelter for them.

On 27 September, SLORC troops from LIB 355 led by a Coy Comdr (name unknown) kicked Kyaw Pay and Phar Sar Mi from Htee

Mu Kalay (aka Ah Pyin Kwin Ka Lay) Village in Myawaddy Township, with combat boots. The victims were also punched with the barrels of rifles and underwent a forced interrogation asking whether they knew Ki Kay from the KNU. When the victims replied by saying "No", they were beaten more. They were blindfolded with a sarong and told that villagers from their village suffered only beatings this time, the next time would be worse.

U Ku Lu and Kyaw Haw Maw from Htee Mu Ka Village were also forced to lie down on the ground by the troops from LIB 357. Both victims were beaten with the butt and flat of a knife which belonged to U Ku Lu and they were tread on and kicked by the whole column. On 29 September, Dah Naw Htoo and Phar Yoe were beaten for the same reason.

On 27 September, Naw Khu Tel, mother of a 5-month-old baby, and Naw Mi Taw Wah from Htee Mu Ka Village in Myawaddy township were also beaten by Slorc troops from LIB 355.

On 28 October, Slorc troops from IB 62, led by Deputy Bn Comdr Than Win, Capt Aung Lwin and Coy Comdr Capt Aye Min, fired mortars on escaping porters from Kaw Kha Taw, Kyaw Tan and Kaw Goe villages in Kyaikmaraw Township, severely wounding U Nyein (56), Maung Hla Tin (14) and Maung Kun Kaw (13) from Kaw Goe Village.

On 25 November, a military column from Slorc LIB 410 entered Paukpinkwin Village and arrested the village women as they did not find any men. Women of various ages were given one bullet, which was a sign of threat to kill. Village Chairman U Sher and Ma Mi Ngwe, Secretary Nai Phyu Ngwe, were forced to balance a bullet on their heads from 8:00 a.m. to sunset. None of them were allowed to eat nor drink. They were also beaten severely later. All the men were arrested and forced to build barracks for the soldiers for one day and one night.

On 26 November, Slorc troops from LIB 410 led by Capt Than Wai forced 30 females from Paukpinkwin Village—some of them in their seventies, to stand under the scorching sun for a full day. The victims were; Ma Tin Nyan (19), Ma Thein (21), Mat Tut (27), Ma Hla Kyi (32), Ma In (32), Daw Ya (42), Daw Kayin (50), Daw Kun (55), Daw Ngwe Khin (56), Daw Hla Tin (64), Daw Hla Kyaing (68), Daw Ngwe (75), Daw Mi, Mi Tut (50), Ma Tin Hla, Ma Kyi, Ngwe In, Daw Lae, Ma Kyin, Ma Ngwe, the elderly Daw Lwe, Daw Phu Akae, Daw Phyu, Daw Si and Mi Nge. One woman, Mi Tut, became unconscious due to heatstroke and anemia.

A former teacher and his two sons from “B” Quarter of Yin Mar Pin Township, Sagaing Division, were tied up at the back, put under the scorching sun and subjected to incessant beatings. Each household was assigned by Slorc soldiers to send 2 family members and contribute labor 4 times. Those who came were fed with the poorest quality of watery rice with brinjal [a vegetable]. As the laborers were forced to work under the scorching sun from early in the morning to 10:00 p.m., most became ill; local medical resources were soon over-burdened as a result.

Restrictions on freedom of belief

On 20 December, Pastor Maung Hlaing from Kon Kai Lon Village, Lae Shi Township, Sagaing Division, was held at gunpoint and ordered to convert to Buddhism by soldiers from Homelin-based IB 222. The victim resisted and told the soldiers that he believed in Christ with all his heart and soul, and that he would be a Christian for the rest of his life.

U Maung Hlaing is a pastor who graduated with a Bachelor of Divinity from Insein Seminary. He was then ordered to destroy his church and to build a pagoda in its place. Moreover, he

was told that the whole village would gain certain privileges if they became Buddhists. The platoon commander then threatened that if the whole village did not worship Buddhism, all the villagers would be in danger. Such religious persecution occurs in every Christian village in the Naga areas.

Restrictions on freedom of opinion and expression

On 8 July, the Solidarity for the National Democratic Students’ Alliance (SNDSA) distributed leaflets and posters in Rangoon calling for the release of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, 1991 Nobel Peace Laureate. As a consequence, Chit Shwe Press in Mayangone Township, Rangoon, was forcibly closed down under orders from the SLORC on 11 July 1994. On 18 July 1994, Burmese students, youth leaders of the SNDSA, were arrested at their homes by MIS. The following is a list of the arrested students:

Myint Oo-1st year, Burmese Major
Dagon Township
Lin Aung-1st year, Burmese Major
Botataung Township
Aung Naing-1st year, Burmese Major
Hlaing Township
Cho Oo-1st year, Economics Major
Mayangone Township
Khin Win-1st year, Burmese Major
Kamayut Township
Than Lwin-1st year, Burmese Major
Thingankyune Township

Twelve Burmese students also were arrested on the night of 8 August 1994 at their homes. They had participated in a ceremony to commemorate the fallen students in the pro-democracy 8888 Uprising, held in Pyitharyarkawe in Thingankyune Township. The arrested students are;

Saw Shwe-2nd year, Burmese Major
Dagon Township
Htoo Ko-2nd year, Economic Major
Tamwe Township
Aung Htwe-1st year, Burmese Major
Tamwe Township

The abuse of women

On 25 September, 1994, a joint military column of LIB 206/208 led by commander Nyi Nyi Aung robbed 17,500 Ks worth of property from villagers in Mi Ka Tit village in Myawaddy township, Karen State. That evening, the commander summoned Naw Bwe, leader of ten households in Mi Ka Tit Village, talked rudely to her and forced her to strip off her sarong and to uncover the lower part of her body. Her life was threatened if she refused.

On 1 January 1995, SLORC troops from LIB 410 entered Ta Yoke Taung Village, Ye Township, committing robbery and the rape of 5 women, including one who was pregnant.

Human Rights Violations of the Southern Command

The generals from the Southern Command, based in Taungnoo, have been leaders in a competitive human rights violation contest. The then commander, Lt-Gen Aye Thaung, developed his career as an abuser in "The Sugarcane plantation". The present commander, Maj-Gen Soe Myint, developed his in "The paddy and fish pond project".

The Sugarcane plantation

Lt-Gen Aye Thaung confiscated farmlands in Mahn Si, Kyin Ywa, Kun Gyi, and Swa Min Lan villages, altogether over 1,000 acres in

1992. No compensation was given to the farmers used to who own the land. All the fields were bulldozed by army tractors just before the harvest season.

Soon after, the General started his sugarcane plantation project which is called, not surprisingly, the "Aye Thaung Sugarcane Field Project".

The people from Shwe Ka Saung, Tha Phan Sin, Swa Taung Kan, Swa Wah Pauk, and Kha Nan Lei were forced to work in these fields, from site clearing to harvesting. In addition, sugar mills and roads (24 foot width and 4 foot height) to transport the sugarcane and necessary equipment were built by forced labourers. About 400 bullock carts were conscripted to carry 18 feet-long and 3-8 inches-diameter logs from the forest to the sawmill in the headquarters of the base command.

Slorc officials and some police commanders reaped the profits from 5 acres each, while the lion's share officially went to Southern Command. Extra wood from the sawmill was sold by army officials after they completed the army barracks in Southern Command. New locations for veterans have been built along the sugarcane fields so that ex-soldiers can work there for security. Aye Tha Ya and Shwe Pi Tha, two new locations for veterans, were supposed to build with the wood provided by forced laborers. Unfortunately, the veterans had to find their own way to get building materials.

Similar stories to this one have been repeatedly told; such projects routinely are for Slorc staff benefit, involve uncompensated seizure of lands, forced labor, and corruption of junior army officials.

[Aye Thaung is now Minister for Border Area Development Ministry and Head of Border Area Development Program, partly funded by the UNDP and UNICEF].

Paddy and fish pond project

This project was implemented in Yedashe Township, Toungoo District. It is located between Yedashe and Myo Hla villages in about 2,330 hectares of land which belonged to local farmers until 1992. The lands were confiscated without compensation.

10x10x4 sized ponds have been dug for two purposes, fishery and paddy cultivation. The entire civilian population of the township have been forced to dig these ponds. A total of over 20,000 people from all walks of life, except SLORC personnel, have been forced to work in every dry season since 1992 in their construction. Each family is assigned to dig 2 ponds, then build terraces around the ponds with the excavated earth and plant bananas. The whole process takes 15-20 days. No machines or necessary tools were provided by the SLORC.

The SLORC once again used the term "volunteers" to cover their human rights violations. No one was paid for their labor. If a household cannot supply the required labor, it costs 1,000-2,000 Ks to hire a person as replacement for the household.

Maj-Gen Soe Myint, the commander of Southern Command, is steering the project and has earned it its new name: "Death Ponds", after more than 100 forced laborers have died from untreated illnesses, exhaustion, and heatstroke.

Additional activities

Four persons from each household have been forced to work for security at every 200 meters along the Rangoon-Mandalay railway within the boundary of Yedashe. They have also been forced to watch and block the possible movements of opposition groups from liberated areas around the Sittaung River each night.

Under the name of the "development project", people in this region have been forced to work for road construction from Pa Lay Wa to Bawgali village and on the construction of the Bawgali Hospital, using their own money and building materials.

Source; NLD (LA) (It is no wonder our correspondent could manage to sneak in, since all the guards along Sittaung road were forced to work by the SLORC)

Lands confiscated from the people to build army bases

Many acres of land in Tamardan Village in Yesagyo Township were confiscated by SLORC without compensation in order to build military headquarters for LIB 256, 257 and 258. All the households in Khawekyin Village in Monywa Township were forced to relocate from their home community by the orders of SLORC so that an airport could be built.

The Northwestern Command started plans to build a new base for an artillery regiment near Kyauk Sit Pong village in Mon Ywa at the end of 1993. They started confiscating paddy fields and farmlands, about 2500 acres, around Kyauk Sit Pong, in April 1994. Farmers from 20 villages were forced to work at the construction site. Kyauk Sit Pong and Myaut villages have faced the worst condition since they are just next to the construction sites. Each family was forced to send three persons for two months. The laborers were assigned to dig 2x2x15 cubic feet-trenches for the road, including site clearing.

Egg Taw, Kan Tha, South-Kyauk Sit Pong, North-Kyauk Sit Pong, Soe Than, Kan Phya, Taung Pa Luu, Tha Man Dar, Min Gla Gaung, Taung Gaung, Myin Myee Laung, O Si Gaung

and other villages were also affected by the forced labor.

The Northwestern Command also confiscated lands from the farmers in Kyaukar and Hta Naung Wing villages. The confiscated lands, about 2,000 acres, are situated along Mon Ywa-Kyaukar motor-way. This land is going to be a military base for the Burma Air Force.

The Northwestern Command confiscated the 5,000-acre lands between Mon Ywa and Ye Oo motor-way to build a military base. It takes about an hour to drive through the confiscated land by car.

The Northwestern Command confiscated the lands in Tamadan village, Yesagyo township to build the military headquarters for LIB 256, 257 and 258.

The Northwestern Command forced the entire Kha Wea Gin village in Mon Ywa township to move (however, they were not told where to go). Their lands were confiscated as part of airport construction.

In every case of land confiscation, no one has been given compensation, and farms were consistently destroyed just before the harvest.

The Northwestern Command has even unofficially named the Mon Ywa township as "the Capital of Northwestern Command" since the whole area fell into the hands of the army. Mon Ywa is famous for its mass production of tropical crops.

Increasing new satellite towns

After the confiscation of large tracts of land had been completed, Slorc officials invented another occupation: buying and selling lands in satellite towns.

Now landless farmers from confiscated areas were sent to the Tha Lar satellite town in Mon Ywa district, Sagaing Division. They were without regular jobs and sources of income in their new location.

Another satellite town in Mon Ywa, called Nundawon, is located between Kyaik Kar Lan and Sar Kyin village. The residents of this satellite town are civilians who had been forced to move there because their homes were along roadways which were going to be extended.

The new satellite town was built on farmlands which had been forcibly bulldozed. The farmers did not get any compensation for their lands, and were forced to contribute labor for the road construction sites. They were assigned to dig 3 earthen pits each to plant trees along 100 kilometer-long stretch of new road. Those who could not supply their labor were fined 50-300 Ks.

Internally displaced persons

In November 1994, Muslim villages in Mrohaung were raided by combined police and army forces; villagers were ordered to be ready to move to new locations without prior warning. The villagers were forced to leave their cattle and crops behind as the authorities ordered them to board transports immediately.

Eventually, people from several different villages were gathered at a central point and were then brought to Maungdaw via Buthidaung. Another group of Muslim civilians, numbering 5,000 from Kawalong and 160 from Mahamyatmuni village in Kyauktaw township, were also brought to Maungdaw township.

Yet another group, 170 households of Muslims from Minbya, Arakan State, had already been taken to Maung Daw that July. All of these



Slorc soldiers! Run.. Run..Run

raids were timed such that these population movements could be hidden from the UN agencies operating in Arakan.

In the new location in Maung Daw, people were forced to prepare a camp for in-coming Rohingyas. The Slorc refused to take responsibility for the relief and rehabilitation of these returning refugees.

Throughout Arakan, displaced Muslims have quietly endured brutal oppression under the Slorc's Frontier Administration (NA.SA.KA). *Their tolerance of this brutality seems to be the result of having lost their identity and sense of belonging in the displacement process.*

Repatriation of muslims

Burmese Muslim refugees who had fled to Bangladesh were recently repatriated to Burm after an agreement signed on October 20, 1994, between the UNHCR and the Slorc, with the cooperation of Bangladeshi government.

A total of 1215 and 1236 Muslims refugees were repatriated to Arakan through different routes on 25 and 29 October, respectively. A total of 88,847 Muslims were sent back by the end of that month on a voluntary basis, according to a statement of the office of the Refugee Repatriation Commissioner in Bangladesh.

In late September, about 1,000 refugees from Burma, mostly Chin nationals staying in Aizawl, capitol of India's Mizoram State, were rounded up and forcibly handed over to the Slorc on the border. These refugees had lived in India for over 40 years. The forced repatriated people—men, women and children, were then jailed. They were not allowed to bring any belongings during these arrests. Evidently, the round-up was aired on India's television. This repatriation can be related to a railway extension project in the area which has a high demand for forced labor.

Forced relocation

Tactical Commander Tint Lwin, from LID 44, forced 200 households from No Phone village, in Kawkareik township, to move to a new site, about 3 miles from their old village. The villagers resisted; they hid temporarily in the jungle, and then settled in their old village again.

The villagers were then ordered to move again on 23 June by the 3rd Tactical Command, and a deadline was set for the 31 of the month. The villagers were also warned that if the village failed to abide by the order, their home would be declared a war zone.

The villagers remained, unable to abandon the place where they had lived for generations. Furthermore, they had no materials to make shelters in any new place.

On 10 September, troops from LIB 355, led by Bn Comdr Myo Kyin, from LIB 356 and

troops from LIB 375, led by Bn Comdr Than Soe, fired four 81mm mortar shells into the village after they found that the villagers still resided there. The terror in No Phone Village finally caused the villagers to flee.

Sakhan Gyi, Payaw Hae and Wae Htaw villages in Win Yaw Township, Payaw Hae, Wel Htaw and Kyon Khani villages in Thanbyuzayat, were forced to move to new locations 3 miles away from their old homes. A total of 285 households, approximately 1,620 villagers,

were forced to move by the 3rd Tactical Command, IB 355,356 and 357.

Kyauk Hta Yan and Dhani Kyar villages were forced to move to a new location by the LIB 406 from Natkyizn in Ye Phyu township in December. Slorc troops de-

manded Ks 120,000 from the villagers who earned what little money they had from selling betel nuts.

(source: KHRG/SHRF/ABSU/NMSP/DSNJ/NLD-LA/BIG/DPNS/Mirror of Arakan/ABSDF)

Burmese Benefit Dinner

28 May 1995.

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**Burmese Relief Center
(Japan)**

Continued from page 4

post of KNLA, called Hta Min Soke Taung.

On January 24th, Slorc troops under the command of TOC 661 of LID 66 crossed the Salween River with inflatable boats from Baw Khei. Major clashes took place at Nor Dae, located downriver of the Salween, about 10 km from the Confluence, between KNLA and Slorc troops.

Slorc troops under LID 22 occupied Klaw War Lu, located to the west of Naw Ta, which is on the Moei River about 20 km southeast of Manerplaw. Heavy artillery fire was exchanged between KNLA and Slorc troops under the command of LID 22 and 44. Moreover, ground assaults were also launched from both sides. Slorc troops were ordered by Rangoon to overrun Manerplaw at the absolute latest by 2 February.

troops under the command of TOC 662 of LID 66 and DKBA troops crossed the Salween River from Mae Lae Kyoe with 8 inflatable boats. 12 hour-long intense fighting took place between KNLA and Slorc troops after the Slorc troops reached the other side of the Salween.

There was also the intense fighting between KNLA and Slorc/DKBA troops at the foot of White Elephant Hill. Slorc troops at the foot of White Elephant Hill pounded Manerplaw with three 81 mm mortars. Moreover, Slorc troops from another hilltop (Hill 2500) near White Elephant Hill, located Northwest of Mae Lae Hta, stormed Manerplaw with two 105 mm Howitzers and one 120 mm mortar. However, they were not within range.

On January 25th, Slorc troops overran Naw Dae and reached the checkpoint located at the entrance to Manerplaw from the north and

intense fighting took place.

Loikaw-based IB 428 under the command of SLORC Eastern Command was sent to reinforce the troops in Kyauk Hnyat, a strategic outpost of the 102nd Special Battalion of the KNLA which was overrun by Slorc IB 340 and 341 on 8 January, 20 miles north of Dawn Gwin.

Fresh supplies of food, arms and ammunition were sent to Papun. On the same day, the KNU ordered all of its troops defending Naw Ta to withdraw.

On January 26th, KNU set fire to all the buildings in Manerplaw, except two monasteries. Hundreds of Slorc troops took positions on the hills, west of Law Kwa Lu. As troops from DKBA spearheaded the Slorc military columns in the fighting and penetrated Manerplaw vigorously, KNU soldiers were stunned, depressed and scattered. Slorc

At 2:00 a.m., about 80 Slorc

troops could not enter Manerplaw as they were intercepted by KNU's landmines and ground assaults. Intense fighting continued. KNU troops were ordered to abandon Manerplaw and retreated to a spot three kilometers from the former headquarters.

Two Slorc battalions under the command of LID 33 were sent to Lae Toe. Slorc troops were ordered to occupy Dawn Gwin on 27 January at the latest.

On January 27th, the joint Slorc/DKBA forces occupied Manerplaw.

On January 28th, at 10:00 am., the 1st column of the Tavoy-based IB 25 and the 1st column of the The DKBA troops on the Salween River at Mae Sakoo Hta (known as Mae Sakoo in Thai), about 15 miles north of Dawn Gwin. All of the 7 students in the boat were hit. One boat driver was hit then thrown with violence into the river and died on the spot. Others jumped into the Salween River. 4 of them could manage to escape to the eastern bank of Salween (Thailand). They were sent to Mae Sod for further treatment following severe injuries. Khin Tun Kyi, Central Committee of the ABSDF, wounded on the boat, was dragged by Slorc/DKBA troops and was shot to death later. Another student also died.

On February 9th, Slorc/DKBA troops reached Dawn Gwin Headquarters of the ABSDF in the morning.

Maj Zaw Htet, deputy com-

mander of Slorc LIB 5 under the command of LID 66 wrote a letter to the students asking them to lay down their arms and return to the "legal fold". This letter was carried by a Thai national.

On February 10th, Slorc sent fresh troops as reinforcements and heavy artillery to the former Salween Camp of the ABSDF by helicopter, and set up a permanent establishment along the Salween River.

It was reported that DKBA built a military training centre at Myaing Gyi Ngu and recruits will be sent there. Another training centre will be built at Thu Mwe Hta (the Confluence). Slorc promised DKBA that if the strength of the latter army reached 20,000 and if they agreed to join Slorc in attacking Khun Sa, the DKBA would be allowed to rule Pa-an district.

On February 12th, in the morning, 2 students from ABSDF were fired on by Slorc/DKBA troops as they made their way back from sending family members and children to New Yaung Ni Oo village, which is in deeper inside Thailand. They narrowly escaped by running into the jungle.

Another two students walking along the banks of Salween River (in Thailand) from Mae Samlab (Thaw Lae Hta) to Mae Kar Hta (located opposite site of the former headquarters of the ABSDF in Dawn Gwin). On their way, they came across Slorc troops on Thai soil and ran for their lives. Both managed to es-

cape.

On February 20th, KNU troops withdrew from the Kawmoora stronghold which had been under siege by the Slorc troops since early December.

The Thai Army fired several smoke shells into Burma after the Burmese Army deliberately fired about 40 mortar rounds and anti-personal shells into Thailand to drive off about 100 Thai soldiers stationed around Bang Wang Kaew, opposite Kawmoora. On the same day, Slorc troops resumed offensives against Kawmoora.

On February 21st, Slorc troops took complete control of the Kawmoora stronghold.

[NOTE: 1 Command = 3 MSC (usually for offensive support and securing an occupied area, currently being used for these offensives)

1 LID = 3 TOC = 5000 men total (for offensive maneuvers) ; 1 MSC or 1 TOC = 3 battalions = 1500 men total

ABBREVIATIONS:

Coy Company; DKBA Democratic Kayin (Karen) Buddhist Association; KNLA Karen National Liberation Army; KNU Karen National Union; IB Infantry Battalion; LIB Light Infantry Battalion; LID Light Infantry Division; MSC Military Strategic Command; TOC Tactical Operations Command.]



Letter from **Editors**

We did not send DAWN into your hands for six months. These delays were due to several challenging situations including insufficient resources for printing the bulletin on a regular basis, security concerns for our office staff and the necessity of travel. We remain most grateful to you, our readers, and would like to thank you for your patience in continuing to support DAWN. We will try our best to keep you informed of events in Burma by making this news letter bimonthly in the future. It would be impossible for us to continue this news letter without the contributions, both moral and financial of the Asian-American Free Labour Institute (AAFLI), as well as the support of well-wishers from around the world.

A great deal of information generated over the last six months about activities against the Slorc by democratic oppositions and their allies around the world, is, unfortunately, missing from this issue. More news and events, including news from inside Burma, and from the border, could also not be included. We hope to rectify these omissions in later issues of the DAWN.

We greatly appreciate your continued support. When Burma is free, such support will not be forgotten.

**FREE
AUNG SAN SUU KYI
FREE ALL POLITICAL
PRISONERS**

ABSDF MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCES

The All Burma Students' Democratic Front deeply bemoans the loss of the Shan State Progress Party (SSPP) General-Secretary Sai Lek who led the Shan people in their struggle for self-determination and ethnic rights as well as for the restoration of peace against successive military dictatorship in Burma. We would also like to convey our deep and heart-felt condolences to the bereaved family and the Shan people at large. Please accept our very sincere sympathy.

We will never forget General-Secretary Sai Lek nor his struggle for democracy until his untimely death. As he died while serving the revolutionary cause, it is also a sad loss to us who are struggling for the restoration of democracy and human rights in Burma. His dedication to the revolution and unceasing commitment to the course of righteousness will ever burn bright in the annals of our nation. In honoring General-Secretary Sai Lek, the ABSDF further states its commitment to liberate all peoples of Burma and to do whatever it takes to restore democracy and human rights in Burma.

Central Committee
ABSDF

Dawn Gwin, 22 January 1995

Under Whose Control Constitution Making Process Goes

In a recent meeting with Premier Chuan Leekpai, Slorc's foreign minister U Ohn Gyaw mentioned about the constitution making process, one of several discussions, as getting progress by referring completion of four out of fifteen chapters of the constitution. Despite Slorc's officials defend their constitution making process many including United Nations, pro-democracy activists and Burma experts ask for transfer of power to the elected representatives in the 1990 election prior to the drafting a new charter.

Slorc claims in several occasions as they are working out for democracy in Burma by repeating about some changes done by themselves, drafting the new charter is one of those. Although every body agrees that Burma needs a constitution, but it is questionable who will draft that under what circumstances and whether Slorc has any responsi-

Khin Maung Win

bility to do so. Obvious lesson from drafting the 1974 constitution is that constitution drafting under totally control of only one party may not obtain proper political system which many agree. Control of the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) on the drafting process of 1974 constitution resulted only its control in the politics and the coercion on the public, as a right, to accept totalitarian administration. As consequent experience of the past, no Burmese people trust on Slorc's present constitution making process which would endeavour to allow people the exercise of democracy.

After Slorc broke their promise of transfer of power after the 1990 election that Slorc expected for the success of National Unity Party (NUP), former BSPP and

Slorc backed party, constitution making process becomes major political strategy for Slorc to interfere in the future politics. Slorc's main reason for drafting the charter is the need of constitution only by which country will be governed accordingly. Their reason is not acceptable due to Gen. Ne Win did rule the country for twelve years without constitution from 1962 to 1974 and also according to continental experiences where transitional periods are passed without constitution—promulgation of constitution is done when suitable political atmosphere is achieved. If the NUP won the election, every body believes, transfer of power is certain. Why overwhelming victory of National League for Democracy (NLD) is not honoured? Should Slorc be determiner of democracy if they are not ready to respect principles of rule of law which is crucial in every democracy? Rule of law does not mean necessity of constitution in a land but the primacy of the dignity of all persons and respect for human rights, free expression of the will, Burmese people did in the 1990 election. The issue of Aung San Suu Kyi's release is considered by some observers as coterminous issue with present constitution making process when Slorc started to have dialogue with her. How Slorc will handle these two issues of Aung San Suu Kyi and drafting process—totally opposing is-

Armed Forces Day Golden Jubilee (27th March 1995) objectives

- to preserve the fine traditions of the Tatmadaw;
- to always strive for promoting unity and capabilities of the Tatmadaw;
- to safeguard Our Three Main National Causes;
- to strive together with the national races for the emergence of State Constitution; and
- for Tatmadaw's participation in the national political leadership role of the Future State.

sues due to drafting process is attempting to exclude her involvement in the politics while Aung San Suu Kyi's leadership is playing in the key position to resolve problems of Burma. Slorc's coming into dialogue with her, as she asks for throughout time, is precise phenomena despite Slorc still denying.

If Slorc is willing to work out for reforms in the country, doing the same as BSPP did like neglecting of public participation, will not reach to the desired reforms. Political reforms can be obtained only by letting the dissident groups get involve in the process of reforms. Slorc's consideration letting Aung San Suu Kyi should be essentially priority one. Prime minister Chuan Leekpai, within the meeting, expressed to U Ohn Gyaw his desire for release of Aung San Suu Kyi to end political woes in Burma. There may be seen little support for Slorc's changes, but it is still needed to continue and increase of steps aiming toward real changes. Handling simultaneously two opposing issues should be altered into more similar direction that is letting, not neglecting, Aung San Suu Kyi's involvement in the reform process.

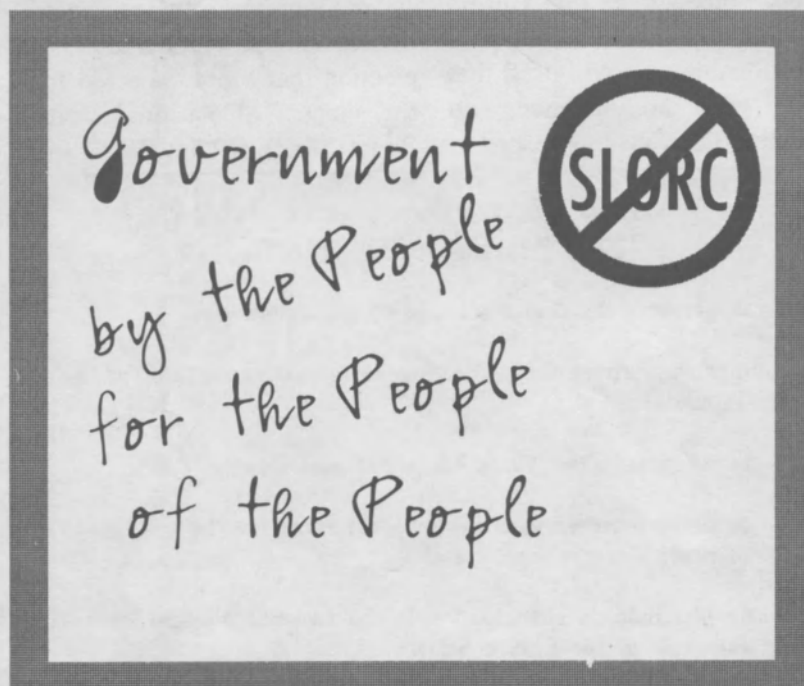
Interpretation of Aung San Suu Kyi's speeches and philosophy could be as the owners of democracy are the people not a group of elite- that is Slorc in Burma. Slorc must show respect on principles of rule of law by returning state power to the elected representatives then problems will be resolved by having dialogue be-

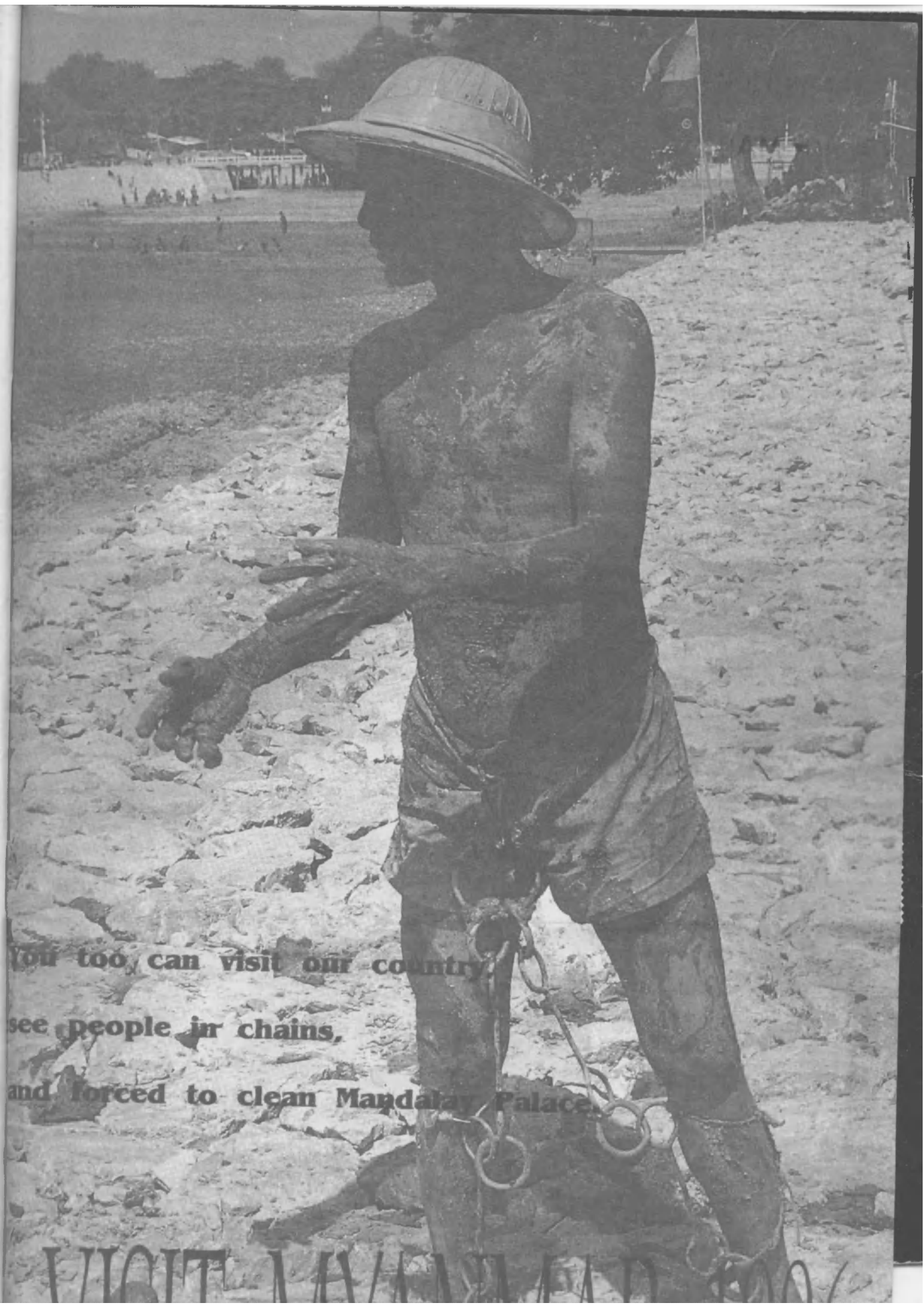
tween Slorc, Aung San Suu Kyi led pro-democracies and armed organizations, tri-partite dialogue. The return of power to the civilians would involve some major difficulties for Slorc, but some possibilities can be found out from dialogue with Aung San Suu Kyi to do so. It is understandable Aung San Suu Kyi automatically become an advocate for democracy on behalf of the people. Creating mutual understanding between Slorc and Aung San Suu Kyi, before tri-partite dialogue for discussion more details, is helpful for solving the problems and peaceful transition.

Even though details have not publicised, discussion between Slorc and Aung San Suu Kyi on constitution drafting is predictable. Aung San Suu Kyi has expressed through American Congressman Bill Richardson her concern on present Slorc constitution making process and the

National Convention. Main discussion on the constitution should be, as many are willing, on who will draft the constitution and when not correction of Slorc proposed constitution. Slorc's constitution drafting is not only lack of legitimacy but also lack of proper political principles for Burma, a multi-ethnic country. For a searching political principles suitable with Burma should allow all the groups demanding for that.

Argument who has the right to draft constitution is prior to the drafting any constitution in Burma. To reach an agreement between Aung San Suu Kyi and Slorc on how the constitution will be drafted is more important than Slorc's defending their constitution making process. Constitution made only by legitimized body in a proper manner could be workable in Burma. ■





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