

National League for Democracy
No. (97/B), West Shwegondine Road
Bahan, Rangoon

Statement No. 12 (1/99)

Contents of letter dated 20 January 1999 from the Chairman of the National League for Democracy to the chairman of the Peace and Development Council relating to incidents of illegal incarceration, and persecution of NLD members in the Mandalay Division are made public for all to know.

START

"xxx 1. Objections to the illegal, unwarranted and enforced incarceration of NLD members by the Military Intelligence Unit No 15 in Meiktila township of the Mandalay Division were lodged with the township Multiparty General Election Commission in accordance with the law. With regard to the illegality of the incarceration, arguments have been stated in the matter under reference.

2. (1) In retaliation to the legal objections, the MIS 15, without consultation and with habitual arrogance arrested the members.

(a) On the 26 December 1998 the following members were arrested: U Ye Naung, U Tin Maung, U Aung Moe, U Kyaw Htwe Oo, U Aye Thein (Joint Secretary), U Joseph, and U Hla Tun (ordinary member). U Hla Tun was released the same day.

(b) More arrests followed. They were U Thein Aung (Vice chairman), U Htoon Shwe, U San Tun, U Thaung Shein, U Maung Maung, U Sein Ywet and Daw Tin Tin Htwe.

(c) Daw Myint Myint Aye (Secretary of the township organising committee) had been arrested and incarcerated since the 6 September 1998.

(d) Dr. Thein Lwin (Chairman of township organising committee and parliamentarian-elect) had also been arrested and incarcerated since 6 September 1998.

(2) That is why the fifteen members of the Meiktila township organising committee have been illegally arrested and incarcerated.

3. Our information is that on 6 January 1999, when U Htun and U Sein Ywet was examined by an unidentified civilian doctor who was called in despite the fact that there are many military doctors at the Meiktila Military Base, where Infantry, Artillery, Armour and Air Force units are based. Therefore there is cause for suspicion.

4. After examination the doctor left and the persons exercising authority made them swallow five tablets each all in one go.

5. (1) Our information is that U Than Maung suffered mental derangement that same night and behaved violently shouting and screaming. He also suffered muscular pain forcing him to somersault and attempt to throw himself out of the window. Those exercising authority did not send him

to the hospital immediately but had him manacled. This shameless and brutal response by the holders of authority indicates their complete lack of human feeling and compassion. He was later sent to the hospital and the information we have is that instead of being given medical treatment, his hands and legs were bound.

(2) Our information is that he was taken to the Meiktila Police Station 2 on 7 January where he was photographed and sent home. We understand that there has been no improvement in his health.

7. U Than Maung was in good health at the time of his illegal arrest.

What and how the medicine prescribed by the doctor who examined him was to be taken is not known. There are many unknown factors in this matter.

A report sent by connected and concerned persons to the Central Executive Committee contains the statement that " MIS 15 will be held entirely responsible for the mental and physical health of those they have incarcerated". The Central Executive Committee endorses this statement.

7. The thirst for illegal brutality not being satiated, the MIS 15 have now dispatched all those incarcerated with the exception of Dr. Thein Lwin, Daw Myint Myint Aye and U Than Maung to the prison of Meiktila.

8. The above illegal persecutions inflicted by those in authority are intolerable and are indicative of a total absence of humane feelings for one's fellow beings. It is the authorities who are committing the crimes. It is no offence whatsoever to endeavour and have aspirations for the good of the country in accordance with one's personal convictions. Therefore, the National League for Democracy condemns the actions of the authorities and urge you to take suitable action as required against those offending the law.

Central Executive Committee
National League for Democracy

22 January 1999