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

Statement No. 14 (1/99)

Contents of letter dated 25 January 1999 from the Chairman of the National League for Democracy to the Chairman of the Peace and Development Council on the subject of "Purchase of paddy in Paungde, Pegu Division" is published for all to know.

START

"xxx 1. We bring to your notice the current situation relating to the purchase of paddy in Paungde township, Pegu Division and ask that appropriate action be taken immediately.

2. Because of the drought conditions, it has not been possible to cultivate paddy in many many acres of land. What has been cultivated was ruined because of insufficient water. Our information is that the Land Records Department has made an inspection and reported that approximately 22000 acres have been lost.

3. We have information that those in authority in the township have disregarded the said circumstances and with the assistance of the armed forces stationed in the area summoned the farmers individually threatening and demanding the sale of twelve baskets of rice per acre.

4. Our information is that the cultivators are suffering great hardship because should they fail to deliver the paddy on the fixed date they have been threatened with arrest for flouting an order and with withdrawal of permission to cultivate flagrant abuse of authority!
5. Because of the drought , these farmers have suffered loss and to meet the demands they have had to sell their cattle, carts and other properties. Others have had to mortgage house and land.

6. Though some farmers have had a reasonable yield, they have been forced to sell their crop at the price of Kyats 32,000 when the market price is Kyats 60,000. We have heard that those farmers who have not been able to meet the demand are unable to sleep or eat fearing that they could be arrested at any time (day or night) by soldiers."

END

Central Executive Committee
National League for Democracy

26 January 1999