

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

Statement No: 49 (3/99)

1. Our information is that on the sixteenth and seventeenth of February 1999, at Tar-gwa, Htan –thone-bin village tracts of Myan-aung township, Irrawaddy Division, the Township SPDC headed by one U Myo Set (Secretary) summoned all the farmers who failed to supply the required amount of paddy, threatened and ordered them to supply 14 baskets per acre even though the prescribed amount was 12 baskets.
2. Daw Tin Yee, cultivator from Pay-gone village (Htan-thon-bin east) made the submission " I have fulfilled my quota every year, but because of weather conditions I have not been able to do so this year." U Myo Set who is only as old as Daw Tin Yee's son rebuked her in the presence of about 200 other cultivators and said " You talk too much (long-tongued). I am asking whether or not you will sell the paddy. Have nothing else to say. I will slap your face." This is the report that has reached us. A public servant should never behave in such a disgraceful manner. Her daughter Ma Tin Yee was much aggrieved when she heard about this so she went to U Myo Set and told him that as a Buddhist he should have more fellow feeling and not speak so disrespectfully to someone who is his mother's age.
3. U Myo Set then got the police who accompanied him to handcuff Ma Thin Thin and put her into the car which was standing in the sun. She was left baking in the sun. After about forty five minutes her husband who was standing near by brought her some drinking water but the police objected and knocked the cup of water out of his hand. Ma Thin Thin was left thirsty and baking in the sun.
4. We condemn this mistreatment of one's fellow being and abuse of authority and weaponry.
5. In a similar fashion, on 19 February 1999, in Nyaung-tae village, Tha –byay-gone village tract, Myan-aung township, a group led by the head of the township police unit and consisting of the following:- U Than Lwin (Shwe-kyin village police station in-charge), U Aung Soe (Tha-byay –gone police outpost in charge), and U Hla Tin (chairman of Tha-byay-gone SPDC) raided the homes of the following cultivators and confiscated paddy stored for household use claiming that they had failed to supply their full quota of paddy:-
  1. U Ko San
  2. Ko Kyauk
  3. Ko Maw Thein
  4. U Kan Hla
  5. U Tin Pay

6. U Sein Thaung
7. U Than Tin
8. U Htun Khin
9. U Kyi Thaung
10. U Htoon Yin
11. U Saw Win
12. U Thaung Shwe

6. It has also been reported that the above group demanded payment of kyats 640/- per basket for the short fall and threatened to arrest and confiscate the lands of those who defaulted. Some have had to sell their cattle, lands and belongings and are endeavouring to pay the money demanded. Many farmers in the villages of Seit-phu-gone and In-gwae (Tha-byay-gone) village tracts were arrested as in Nyaung-Tae cvillage.

7. We detest and denounce this corrupt extortion of money by dishonest means, unjust behaviour, and the selfishness towards cultivators and farmers who are our benefactors. We emphatically urge that such practices be immediately halted.

Central Executive Committee  
National League for Democracy

Rangoon  
17 March 1999