National League for Democracy
No: (97/B), West Shwegonedine Road
Bahan Township, Rangoon

Statement 116 (7/00) (translation)

1. We have received information that in the first week of July, 2000, the military township dictators of Natmauk (Magwe Division) summoned all the villagers in the township and ordered that shouting demonstrations against the NLD be staged at 9 different locations.

2. The Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) was instrumental in obtaining signatures from the wards, towns and villages for the said illegal shouting demonstrations. Since the military dictators pressured the people to stage those illegal demonstrations we have received information that the people dispersed at the commencement and there was no cohesion as planned. It was an empty show. We strongly denounce these illegal demonstrations.

3. In collusion with the private businessmen Natmauk authorities are exploiting the peanut cultivators.

4.The Myawaddy Bank is supposed to be giving agricultural loans at 1.2% interest to the cultivators in Natmauk through the township authorities. As a matter of fact, the loans are not given in cash. Through some arrangement made by the township authorities and the private businessmen, even though the season is not appropriate, the stipulation made is that farmers must buy 6 baskets of seed per acre of land on which groundnut is to be cultivated at Kyats 1200/- per basket, cash down. The quality of the seed is inferior and unfit for cultivation and fetches a price of only Kyats 700/- only. Thus the cultivator looses Kyats 500 on every basket. There are one thousand seven hundred and sixty one acres of groundnut cultivation so loss to these cultivators as a result of such exploitation totals approximately Kyats 5,283,000/-.. The loans and interest have to be repaid in cash.

5. We denounce this bloodsucking exploitation of the farmers by the authorities and urge that equitable and adequate compensation be given for the losses they have suffered.

Central Executive Committee
National League for Democracy

Rangoon
27 July 2000