

THE NEW BURMA

IN

THE NEW WORLD

The raid was in retaliation
for a reverse. the main staff

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CORRIGENDA

PAGE	LINE	
2	7	delete of the Mahabama Organesation, the Myochit Party, the Fabian Party, the Thakin Party the Sangha's Asiayone, and
3	10	Substitute at for all.
4	19 & 20	delete (made after the fall of Rangoon.)
6	27	add held before all
7	25	add of before Patriotic
8	27	delete and before that.
9	25	substitute nominess for nominees.
16	10	add communication and before transport.
20	14	Snbstitute these for there.
21	20	add the before time.
23	36	delete Officials and to.
27	1	substitute devote for devot. their for then.
28	25	delete (a) Abolition of land lordism rural indebtedness, rent, etc.
36	9	delete of the Mahabama, the Myochit Party, the Fabian Party, the Thakin Party, the Sanghas Agiayone and
	14	Substitute 1944 for 1945.
39	13	Substitute F for T.
41	21	add Army after National.
42	22	Substitute (free India and democratic China for democratic India and free China.)
49	29	delete This will not be anti-landlord organisa- tion.
53	9	Substitute last vestige for vertige.
53	34	delete was.
55	8	Substitute principles for rinciples.
61	6	Substitute fully for freely.

PAGE LINE

- 68 14 Substitute **th** for **th**.
 74 6 Substitute **be** for **he**.
 17 add **of** before **self**.
 39 Substitute **for** for **or**.
 76 9 Substitute **programme** for **programm**.
 78 9 add **under** before **the 1935**.
 81 5 delete **and**.
 81 27 Substitute **polls** for **pools**.
 84 17 Substitute **ls** it for **lt** is.
 21 add **fit** before **to be**.
 29 Substitute **execntion** for **executive**.
 31 add **not** before **in the**.
 85 21 Substitute **mere** for **more**.
 87 6 add **Mandalay** after **League**.
 18 Substitute **helped** for **organised**.
 22 Substitute **of** for **in**.
 88 12 add **Sir** before **John**.
 97 5 Substitute **therefore we don't want to pursue negative activities for so that we can march towards the Constituent Assembly**.

ANTI-FASCIST PEOPLE'S FREEDOM LEAGUE.

BURMA.

Before the outbreak of the South East Asia War i.e., in 1941, the policy of British Government in regard to Burma was progressive realisation of self-government as an integral part of British Empire, whereas the cherished goal of the people of Burma was (and still is) complete national independence. Since the conclusion of the Russo-Japanese War in 1905, Japan was, quite naturally, looked upon in the East as the champion of the Asiatic countries. It was thought, not without good reason, that Japan would help Burma attain her cherished goal. A band of Burmese young men—popularly known as Thirty Comrades formed Burma Independence Army which fought the British side by side with the Japanese Army. The Japanese posed themselves as the friends of the Burmese but no sooner had they occupied Burma, with the support of the Burmese, than they began to perpetrate their barbaric atrocities, revealing their true Fascist colours. The Burmese independence recognised by Japan and other Fascist countries as also by their satellites was, to say the least, an eye-wash. The Burmese Government was merely a puppet government; the Japanese Fascists were the real rulers. Their rule was so utterly ruthless

that the people of Burma found it absolutely unbearable and could not submit to it for any length of time.

The Burma National Army, the Communist Party, the People's Revolutionary Party, now known as Socialist Party, the East Asia Youth League, a considerable section of the Mahabama Organisation, the Myochit Party, the Fabian Party, the Thakin Party, the Sangha's Asiayone, and of the Karen, Shan, Kachin, Chin, Arakanese, communities began to struggle, each in its own way, against the Japanese Fascists. In August 1944, it became possible to co-ordinate all these groups into one organisation under the name of Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. The activities of the League, which hitherto were carried on sporadically, became more centralised, systematised and concentrated.

The aims and objects of the League can be known from the name itself. It has two main objectives: (1) to fight Fascism until it is completely smashed in Burma as well as in its homeland with or without outside help, and (2) to see that Burma positively attains her cherished goal of independence.

The manifesto issued by the League in August 1944, under the title: "Drive away the Fascist Japanese Marauders" (See Appendix 1), explains the absolutely unbearable conditions confronting the people of Burma, as also the League's objectives and the programme of action as outlined by the

League. Needless to say that the League's activities were, then, in the secret stage, but the manifesto, though distributed in a surreptitious manner, reached all parts of the country.

The League, while organising the People's Resistance Movement against the Japanese, found it essential to negotiate with the Allied or British authorities in India for help, particularly for the supply of arms and ammunitions, through its representative, U Thein Pe, who left Burma all the time of the Japanese entry in 1942. It will be long to relate the difficulties in the way of reaching an agreement between the League and the said authorities. Suffice it to point out that the League's representative had to do his utmost to remove the doubts indicated in the manifesto: "Towards Better Mutual Understanding and Greater co-operation" (See Appendix 2). The League promptly distributed that manifesto all over the country to achieve the desired object. The later events have testified to the fact that the people of Burma, particularly those who actively participated in the Resistance Movement, proved themselves worthy of the trust reposed in them by the Allied or British authorities.

In the earlier days there was some confusion about the name of the League. Its Burmese name was translated by the League's representative in India as "Burma Patriotic Front." The Allied Forces called it A.F.O; the Americans called it A.F.L. From its full name, Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, it is evident that the

League is concerned not only with the expulsion of the Japanese Fascists from Burma but also with the attainment of independence for Burma.

he is in the right place

The Burma National Army quite naturally led the fight, with the people operating as active supporters in the rear, against the Japanese. Later, the Burma National Army and the Burmese guerillas came to be known as the Patriotic Burmese Forces. The memorable part played by these Forces in the war of liberation, in close co-operation with the Allied Forces, is so well-known all over the world that it is not necessary to dwell at length on it here. It will be sufficient to mention that it has been acknowledged unreservedly by the Allied commanders, and spoken well of both by friends and foes. Col. Nay Win's broadcast talk made after the fall of Rangoon, explaining the aspirations of Burmese people and the achievements of the Burmese Army, made after the fall of Rangoon, which was relayed by B.B.C. is self explanatory. (APPENDIX 2 B.)

As soon as the Allied Forces had occupied a good portion of the country, the League issued a statement on its objectives (See Appendix 3 A). The first objective is, as mentioned already, to get rid of the Japanese Fascists. The Resistance Movement achieved complete success in the occupied areas, and the League reiterated its determination to pursue the fight against the enemy until Fascism had been smashed in this country

and, for that matter, in the whole world. The League's second objective is complete independence. Burma wants her Constitution to be framed by a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage. She expects that she will no longer be denied her birthright, i.e., freedom from British imperialists bondage.

At the press interview given on the 4th May, 1945, a number of questions was put by foreign correspondents and the League's spokesmen gave answers in a candid manner. (See Appendix 3 B).

A programme of National Reconstruction through National Service, issued by the League speaks for itself. (See Appendix 4).

Shortly afterwards, the League issued another statement clarifying further its policy in respect of immediate purpose as well as for the long term. (See Appendix 5) The League made proposals for the formation of a National Provisional Government and a Constituent Assembly.

There were, originally, only nine members on the Supreme Council of the League, but the number was increased to sixteen as soon as it was no longer necessary to keep its activities secret. Soon afterwards, the Council was again expanded to include the representatives of all the major political parties, of national minorities and of other important organisations—36 members all told. It was also provided that the number be increased to 50 so that leaders of national

importance, who could not yet come down from up-country, could be included; it is hardly necessary to point out that the idea underlying the expansion is to make the Council as fully representative of the people as possible.

Rules were framed for the Supreme Council of the League. They are self-explanatory. (See Appendix 6).

At the conference of Burma political leaders held on the 16th, 17th and 18th August, 1945, at the premises of Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, four important resolutions were passed. (See Appendix 7).

The resolutions were forwarded, for information and necessary action, to the British Prime Minister, the Secretary of State for India and Burma, the British War Minister, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, S.E.A.C., Kandy, the Commander-in-chief, A.L.F.S.E.A. and the General Officer Commanding the 12th Army, the Governor of Burma and the Director of Civil Affairs Service (Burma).

The said four resolutions were endorsed most wholeheartedly by the people at the huge mass meeting held in the Nay-thu-yain Hall at Rangoon on the 19th August as well as at those all over the country in the course of the month.

The mass meeting held in the Nay-thu-yain Hall at Rangoon was presided over by Major-

General Aung San, the President of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. In his presidential address, he dealt at length, with the part played by the League and the Patriotic Burmese Forces in the Resistance Movement, and consequently, he said, Burma came to be known throughout the world, with much brighter prospects for regaining her freedom than before the war. After speaking on the world situation, he pointed out the necessity of making an alignment with the new democratic forces that have been generated by this world War. In conclusion, he touched upon the political situation at home and made a strong appeal for strengthening the national unity that had been achieved by the efforts of the League.

On the 4th September, a delegation consisting of the representatives of Patriotic Burmese Forces and the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League was sent to Kandy (Ceylon) to discuss army matters with H. E. Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, S.E.A.C., and consequently, a satisfactory agreement was reached between the two parties in regard to the future Patriotic Burmese Forces.

The Burmese leaders seized an opportunity to discuss political matters with H. E. Sir, Reginald Dorman-Smith, the Governor of Burma, who was then on a visit at Kandy.

Immediately on the return of the Burmese representatives from Kandy, a meeting of the

Supreme Council was held, where it was decided to send in a letter to the Governor, further elucidating the resolution No. 3 of the Leader's Conference referred to above. (See Appendix 8).

At the meeting of the Supreme Council held on the 6th, 7th, and 8th October, some important resolutions were passed—resolutions relating to the questions of general amnesty, war reparations, immigrations, war criminals, Far Eastern Commission, restoration of civil government, etc. (See Appendix 9).

H. E. Sir, Reginald Dorman-Smith, the Governor, of Burma, returned from India, after an absence of three years and a half, to Burma on the 16th October 1945. On the next day, the Governor made a lengthy speech on Burma politics at the civic reception given in his honour at the City Hall of Rangoon. The Supreme Council of the League issued a statement on the Governor's speech (See Appendix 10).

On the 19th October, in response to the invitation of the Governor, the representatives of League called on him at Government House where the question of forming the Executive Council was discussed.

The League's representatives were given to understand and that the Governor desired to appoint fifteen Executive Councillors, four of whom he had already in mind, leaving eleven posts to fill. Although what the Governor said

then and there fell far short of the League's programme, the Supreme Council decided to submit a list of eleven nominees of the League to participate in the Executive Council on certain conditions. (See Appendix 11). On the 25th October, a reply was received that the Governor could not agree to the number, the names and the portfolios asked for by the Supreme Council.

The Supreme Council held an emergency meeting on the same day and decided to withdraw its nominations.

A deadlock ensued. The League issued a statement explaining the steps leading to the deadlock. (See Appendix 12).

The Government published a statement on the 31st October in respect of the matter under discussion, and the League issued a reply there-to on the next day. (See Appendix 13).

Appendices 10, 11, and 12 should be read together to judge whether the Governor or the League was responsible for the deadlock.

The Governor formed his Executive Council on the 2nd November.

A comparison of two lists of the League's nominees and those appointed by the Governor is necessary to know who represent the people at this critical juncture. (See Appendix 14).

Some half a dozen members of the Supreme Council of the League, headed by Major-General

Aung San, namely U Ba Pe, U Mya (Pyawbwe), U Mya (Henzada) and U Kyaw Nyein made an extensive tour in Upper Burma during the first half of the month of November. There was great enthusiasm at all the places they visited, where they addressed huge meetings. The people of Upper Burma publicly supported the policy and the programme of the League as also the action of the Supreme Council in respect of the formation of the Governor's Council.

Under the auspices of the League, a mass meeting was held in Rangoon (at Shwedagon Pagoda) on the 18th November. It was the biggest mass meeting ever witnessed in Rangoon. Amidst great enthusiasm, four resolutions were passed. They speak for themselves. (See Appendix 15). Several foreign correspondents were present, among them being those of Britain and U. S. A.

The mass meeting was presided over by Major-General Aung San. In his presidential address, he said that although what the League wanted was National Provisional Government and not the Governor's Executive Council, it was prepared to co-operate with the Governor provided that the latter would include in his council the national leaders who truly represented the people. He explained that the deadlock between the Governor and the League was definitely because of difference of policy and not because of difference of opinion regarding personnel, as mentioned in certain quarters at home as well as in the British Parlia-

ment. He added that the League would continue to strive for national freedom by peaceful means, such being the most effective method under the circumstances, and this step must not be mistaken for weakness or cowardice. He urged the Governor to hold the General elections immediately, giving a promise that the League would co-operate with the Government in making all the preparations necessary for them. (See Appendix 16).

At the end of the proceedings, Major-General Aung San made his concluding speech, wherein he made it perfectly clear that the League desired a peaceful development and was fully prepared to come to a friendly agreement with the Governor.

Thakin Than Tun, General Secretary of the League, made a report on the activities of the Supreme Council, since the 19th August. (See Appendix 17).

This is, thus, the position where Burma stands now. The Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League would, therefore, appeal to His Majesty's (Labour) Government in Britain, to the democratic peoples of the British Commonwealth as well as of other parts of the world to help Burma attain her desire to have a National Provisional Government and then to convoke a Constituent Assembly in the speediest time possible for determining her Constitution so that she can reach her cherished goal of complete independence at the earliest possible moment.

APPENDIX 1.

**MANIFESTO OF THE
ANTI FASCIST PEOPLES' FREEDOM LEAGUE
(BURMA PATRIOTIC FRONT).**

**DRIVE AWAY THE FASCIST JAPANESE
MARAUDERS.**

We the people in Burma are at present suffering under the iron heels of the Japanese Fascists. The peace and security of our hearths and homes are in constant danger. We are daily being ill treated by Japanese Military Police, Japanese soldiers, Japanese Merchants and their agents. Our properties are confiscated; we are driven out of our homes. The sanctity of our religious places is being daily violated. The respectables as well as the criminals are being treated alike. The modesty of our womenfolk is being outraged. Our food-stuffs are being looted by the Japanese. Our country's produce is being exchanged with worthless Japanese currency. Our bullocks and cattles, our motor-cars and carts are being commandeered. Our men are being commandeered for forced labour and our condition is no better than that of animals.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE ANTI-FASCIST PEOPLES'
FREEDOM LEAGUE.**

- (1) Firstly, the Japanese Fascists should be driven out bag and baggage.
- (2) A constitution for Independent Burma should be drawn up by the people on the following lines:—
 - (a) Genuine personal liberty, different from that given by the Japanese, should be recognised.
 - (b) Freedom of thought should be allowed to the fullest extent.

- (c) Freedom of speech, freedom of writing, freedom of expression and freedom of press should be established.
- (d) Freedom of organisation, association e.g., holding meetings and demonstrations should exist. At present no organisation without the express permission of the Japanese is allowed to exist. Our labour organisations and our Students' Unions have all vanished. We cannot meet freely. We are not allowed to demonstrate and express our wishes. We do not want sham freedom of this type.
- (e) Freedom of conscience should be established. The State should remain neutral on religious questions. Religion should not be used as a means to exploit the masses as is being done by the Japanese.
- (f) The sanctity of the churches, pagodas, mosques and temples should, on no account, be violated.
- (g) Freedom from illegal arrest and detention should be the right of the people.
- (h) There should be fairness and justice in economic and social dealings.
- (i) No discrimination is to be made with regard to race, religion and sex in respect of employment. The State should prohibit publications which encourage such discriminations.
- (j) Everybody must have a right to employment. Skilled and unskilled labourers should be employed in their respective lines and there should be security for such employments.
- (k) Everybody should have the right to obtain free supply of timber and bamboo for the construction of one's own dwelling house. Free fishing should be allowed for one's household consumption.
- (l) State and company employees should receive at least the minimum living wages and their working hours and days should be regulated so as not to impair their normal health.

- (m) Equal opportunity should exist for all citizens to receive education, irrespective of race, religion, sex or social status.
 - (n) Freedom to follow and develop one's own language and culture should be recognised (Cultural Autonomy).
 - (o) The State should provide adequate safeguards in respect of economic, social and political interests of minorities, such as Karens, Shans, Palaungs, Taungthas, Chins, Kachins, Chinese and Indians.
- (3) Every employee within the State should have the right to obtain oldage pensions, compensations or gratuities as the case demands (Social Insurance).
 - (4) The backward communities should be helped by the State to uplift themselves.
 - (5) Progressive education should be adopted countrywide. Education of the type given by the Japanese, which makes the students spies and forget their national language should be condemned.
 - (6) By means of scholarships and State aids, the State should encourage higher education, study of science and research work.
 - (7) A modern progressive agricultural scheme should be adopted.
 - (8) An equitable system of taxation should be adopted.
 - (9) Progressive forms of production and labour system should be adopted.
 - (10) Properties belonging to the betrayers of national cause should be confiscated.
 - (11) An administration free from bribery and corruption and functioning according to the people's will should be set up.
 - (12) The judicial system should be reorganised so as to make justice available to the poorest in the shortest possible space of time; prisons should also be reformed.

Unless the above-mentioned conditions are realised, national progress will be impossible (and equity unobtainable).

It is clear that so long as the Fascist Japanese barbarians are in the country, we cannot aspire to realise the above-mentioned conditions. So long as they are in our country, there will be war in Burma, accompanied by all its evils. We shall have no opportunity to make progress. Therefore let us drive away the Japanese Fascists. In order to drive them away, the following instructions should be adhered to by the people

PROGRAMME OF ACTION.

- (1) Destroy the various transport facilities of the Japanese and set fire to their stores.
- (2) The labourers should not assist in the construction of roads. They should stay away and later rise up in revolt.
- (3) Hide your bullocks and cattle, boats and carts from the Japanese.
- (4) Kill the Japanese agents and betrayers of our national cause.
- (5) The Burmese Army should revolt and conduct guerilla warfare against the Japanese.
- (6) Convey all correct informations to the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League and false informations to the enemies.
- (7) Set up Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League Branches; organise guerrilla troops and labour unions.
- (8) There should be no disunity between the various parties and racial groups in the country. Every body should work in co-operation.

N.B.—We hate only the Japanese Fascists. The Japanese Fascists are not only ill-treating the Burmans and other Asiatics but also their own countrymen in Japan. The Japanese labourers are being exploited and maltreated. The Anti-Fascist elements are imprisoned.

All these acts are committed solely for the benefit of Fascist warlords and capitalists like Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumimoto and others. The M.K.K. etc. which are prospering in Burma are only their agents.

With a view to divert the attention of the dissatisfied masses at home the Japanese Fascists are carrying on the war in foreign countries. They are out in search of foreign markets also. They paint golden pictures and persuade their nationals to wage war in foreign lands. With the silent consent of the authorities, the soldiers perpetrate crimes in occupied areas.

By themselves, the common people of Japan are not bad but the military Fascists in control of Japan are the real criminals. So only when the military Fascists lose the war, can the Anti-Fascists rise up in power.

Therefore, carry out the above instructions in order to defeat the Fascists. Persuade the ordinary soldiers (Japanese) to come over to our sides. Treat them well, shelter them and send them to us. In Japan as well as in China, many Japanese anti-Fascists are fighting side by side with the Allied forces. In many places, either due to Allied propaganda or due to dislike for war, many Japanese soldiers are deserting their ranks. If you come across individual Japanese soldiers, do not kill them but win them over to our side. Killing a few Japanese will not make them lose the war but only destruction of bridges and transport facilities as well as ammunition dumps will make them run away from Burma.

The Victory Flag of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League is a white star in the upper left hand side on a red background.

MEANING OF THE FLAG.

Red symbolises (1) bravery (2) the masses (3) unification of all the peoples of the world. Red also draws attention

easily. The star symbolises the guiding star for the people to attain freedom and progress.

COMRADES,

Do you want to be free? Do you want peace and security? Then drive away the Fascist Japanese barbarians.

Set up a People's Government.

Destroy Fascism.

Co-operate with the Democratic Allies.

Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League,
(Burma Patriotic Front).

APPENDIX 2 A.

Towards better mutual understanding and greater co-operation between the British and the Peoples of Burma.

The Statement of the problem.

By now it is well known in many quarters that a majority of the Burmese people are Anti-Japs and that there is a section of Burmese leaders who are working on their own initiative for the victory of the United Nations over the Axis powers. These leaders are trying to influence the feeling of passive aid to the Japs, which is widespread, to one of active co-operation by the masses with the anti-Axis powers against the common enemy. The British authorities have, therefore, decided to harness the services of these leaders for the benefit of the cause of the United Nations. This decision is most welcome. It is our fear, however, that the British are doubtful about the political objectives of the anti-axis Burmese leaders. So also are nationalists in Burma doubtful of British intention in regard to the future of Burma. In order to clear up this misunderstanding we shall here attempt to explain the political objective of the anti-axis Burmese leaders in order that the British authorities shall have the better understanding of our position, leading, we hope and believe, to greater co-operation between us. It would be out of place here to suggest what the British should do to dispel our doubt for we do not wish to appear to be striking a bargain and prefer to state our case in a straight forward manner; and we feel confident that all our colleagues in Burma will, in time, endorse our view here stated.

Crux of the problem.

It will appear to us that the crux of the problem is that a lack of complete understanding of our position may lead to restricted co-operation, conditional co-operation, or even to co-operation with reservations. Whom will this sort of co-operation benefit? No one but the enemy. What is the best example of co-operation with reservations? It concerns the question of supplying arms and ammunitions to the anti-axis forces; we fear that the British may not trust true patriots with weapons of power. "Are they going to use them against us now?" "How are we going to disarm them after we have recaptured Burma?" "Won't it be better if we give them *harmless weapons*?"

It appears to us that there are the questions which may be striking at the best brains of the British Command rather than the question of how more effective and speedier forms of co-operation can be given by them, to the forces of the interior. These fears and doubts occur to us because of our past relations, because of our previous opposition to the English, and because of our past conflicts. We hope our fears and doubts have no foundation whatsoever in the realities of the present.

Solution of the problem.

Because we must deny the enemy any benefit, we must solve this problem; we must clear up the doubts "Are they going to use the arms we give them against us?". We say 'NO'. There is no possibility. "How are we going to disarm them after we had recaptured Burma?" NO. There is no need for you to disarm them. One solution is for you to make them part of the Burma Defence Forces. "Won't it be better if we give them comparatively *harmless weapons*?" Silly idea. They will be harmless only against the Japs. They must be given the best weapons possible to drive out the Japs.

This may seem to be an over-simplification of the solution of the problem, based on wishful thinking. In

actual fact it is based on our reading of the international situation, our understanding of the march of democratic and progressive forces, our readiness to see Burma related to international affairs and the correct reading of what is happening to our country and to our people:— Let us explain.

Our Final Political objective.

First of all, what is our political objective, what is our national aspiration? Our national aspiration is the complete independence of Burma. In other words, the right of self-determination to be exercised by our people through a Constituent Assembly on true democratic principles.

Methods to achieve our Political Objectives.

There are customarily two methods of achieving national independence. One is revolutionary and the other constitutional. By revolutionary method we mean here a violent and bloody conflict with rulers. By constitutional method we mean that way of struggle which avoids violence, bloodshed, and armed rising-up. By the time world fascism shall have been smashed, by time Burma shall have been able to devote all her energies to demanding her rights to determine destiny, the international situation will be so developed as to have eliminated the use of violence, bloodshed, and armed rising in a people's fight for freedom. The method which we call constitutional today will become the only correct, and therefore 'most revolutionary' method by which we will win our goal. What is the guarantee for that? The guarantee is the rise of the democratic and progressive forces in the wake of the dying fascism.

The Rise of Democratic and Progressive Forces.

Since the German invasion of Russia in 1941, the demands of the democratic and the progressive forces are:—

1. Complete unity of the military strategy of the United Nations headed by Britain, America and Soviet Russia.

2. Opening of the second front.
3. Mobilisation of the people of occupied countries to the cause of anti-Hitler coalition—as apart from the pro-fascist ruling sections—by encouraging resistance movements and recognising their right of self determination. World fascism and the reactionary forces within the ranks of the United Nations tried by all means to thwart the demand of democracy and progress. Because of the strength of the democratic and progressive forces, all the above demands have been fulfilled. Fascism and reaction are defeated the forces of democracy and progress are united and they are all powerful. (Teheran agreement, the second front, and the battle of France etc.)

The Peace Aims of Democracy.

There is no doubt that mankind, as a whole, wants a peace that will endure that will avoid the curse of wars and that will bestow freedom and progress on all nations. "To win the peace" is the battle cry. This urge of the time is reflected in the leadership of the entire civilised world. "We recognise fully the supreme responsibility resting upon us and all the United Nations to make a peace which will command the goodwill of the overwhelming masses of the peoples of the world and banish the scourge and terror of war for many generations". (Teheran three-Power Declaration.)

That is why all the democratic and progressive forces of the world are working for the complete unity of the three powers which shall form the core of the future world organisation. "And as to peace, we are sure that our concord will make it an enduring peace." Hence the Anglo-Soviet 20 years pact. Hence the growing Anglo-Soviet-American alliance. Hence the growing anxiety of each of the three powers to reach agreement on such single issue of international problem.

But is the unity of the three powers founded on reactionary policies? No. Firstly, the reactionary policies of 'Balance of Powers' and 'Spheres of Influence' are being pushed out of the picture. The proposal of Anglo-American Alliance as against the European Colossus of Russia has abandoned. The scheme to divide the Eastern block under Soviet influence, if necessary, and the Western block under the British influence has been pigeon-holed. Even such a powerful person like General Smuts cannot resurrect it. In the place of these reactionary policies, a progressive policy is taking shape. 'Is this formula of the three powers in full accord with the right of self-determination of nations concerned?' This question has become the yard-stick by which all European questions are measured, even if be the case of France or that of Italy. That means the peace policy that is winning the day is leading to the peace that is founded on freedom justice and equality of all nations. "We shall seek the co-operation and the active participation of all nations, large and small, whose people in heart and mind are dedicated; as are our own peoples, to the elimination of tyranny and slavery, oppression and intolerance. We may welcome them as they may choose to come into a world family of democratic nations." This Teheran Declaration is not dead. It is not only living but also growing. Roosevelt and Churchill have not affixed their signatures light-heartedly. They know what it is to have hard, realist, Stalin, along with them.

The prospect of a durable peace and the struggle for its realisation have strengthened the forces of democracy and progress. The realisation of a durable peace will mean full flowering of these forces. That means that the defeat of Fascism and the establishment of peace will immediately open out to us the oppressed peoples, a prospect of *peaceful development* to full independence and democracy.

From Europe to Burma.

There are doubters amongst the nationalists and forget nothing and learn nothing bureaucrats, officials who to think that what is true of Europe cannot be true of Asia

They think that developments in the West will have only appreciable influence on the future of Burma. Their way of thinking is antiquated. They are living in spite of themselves in the days of King Bodawpaya a Burmese King of the Victorian Era.

Europe is the centre of gravity of this world and it will continue to be so within the foreseeable future. The rise of democracy and the march of progress will mean the same thing in the entire world. Even the land of 'Llamas' up on the eighteen thousand feet high mountains (may not) will be alive to the fact that Burma shall not be left out of the world-wide sweep of democracy and progress.

The Changing Britain.

We are not unaware of the fact that through the experience of the present war, Great Britain has changed and still changing. The swing of the overwhelming masses of the British people to the left is admitted by all. We are immensely encouraged by the way the eight million strong British Trade Union Congress and the nine million strong Co-operative Movement are demanding the Freedom of India. We feel that they are our real friends. We are confident that the true democrats in Britain will ultimately win, will change the British Empire into a true Commonwealth of Nations, each enjoying freedom and equality.

There are some reactionaries who are forced to adapt themselves to a progressive policy regarding the Anglo-Soviet-American Unity and regarding peace settlement in Europe but they think that they can still maintain the old policy towards Empire. They are the same people who call Churchill and Eden agents of Russia because the two leaders not less determined to win the peace as to win the war, happen to adopt progressive measures in unity with Russia. The days of these reactionaries are gone. Just as a man cannot stand half in the shade and half in the sun for long and just as it is not possible to have both the progressive foreign policy and reactionary domestic policy, so also the

progressive British cannot maintain a reactionary imperial policy for any appreciable length of time. Post-war Britain is bound to help post-war Burma to *develop peacefully* along the road of freedom and democracy.

Inside Burma.

In Burma a big shift in political thought is taking place. Egoism, isolationism, adventurism, in short, blind patriotism in the nationalist camp, are fading out. The Japs have cheated them, teaching them a valuable lesson. By helping the Japs some of them naively thought they were going to win freedom. This was due solely to their inability to think of Burmese Freedom in the context of international affairs. They have never imagined that only through the victory of the United Nations they could reach nearer their goal. They had regarded their struggle for freedom as if it were only a private quarrel between them and the British. These past mistakes have been eliminated through costly and bloody experiences. The awakening of patriots towards international issues has been tremendous. This is the internal guarantee of *Burma's peaceful development* or constitutional development, if you like.

During the invasion of the Japs, some patriots thought that after driving out the British with Japanese assistance, they could keep away the Japs from entering Burma or resist the Jap invasion. This naive idea cannot be repeated. Such a fantastic attempt will be crushed in between the two battling armies. The United Anglo-American-Chinese forces and Jap forces. It is clear that the Anti-Jap forces inside Burma can have no other way of achieving their freedom except through unconditional co-operation with the Anglo-American Chinese expeditionary forces and can only be auxiliary to the main Allied forces. Such is the reality with which the Burmese patriots are faced. Out of this realism will be born the harmony between the invading allied army and anti-Jap forces inside Burma.

Immediate Issues in the Reoccupied Burma.

There will be two main forces on which the Burmese people will have to concentrate their national efforts. Firstly they must contribute their mite towards the smashing of the eastern end of the axis. Then only they will have conclusively proved of their worth as a people, "in heart and in mind, dedicated to the elimination of tyranny, oppression, slavery, and intolerance" and shall be welcome "into a world-family of democratic nations." (Teheran Declaration). Secondly, they shall have to set the whole nation to the task of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction of the war-torn Burma.

In the entire strategy of anti-Japanese war, the recapture of Burma will mean just as much as the recapture of North Africa has meant for invasion of Europe. It will be the end of the beginning of the anti-Jap war. Even the island-hopper, Admiral Nimitz, has declared that Japan must be defeated on the main land of Asia. It would be sheer foolhardiness to think that the defeat of the Japs in Burma means the defeat of the entire forces of the Japs, generally estimated as one hundred divisions. Against the Japs Britain cannot yet devote all her available forces and the resources because of her interests in Europe. It will be as much a mistake for the British to slight the co-operation of the Burmese people in the coming counter-offensive of the anti Japanese war as it was in 1941-42. She must win sincere Burmese co-operation. Promotion of better understanding and co-operation between the Burmese patriots and the British now on the first phase of the anti-Japanese war will be the best foundation for future co-operation.

There will be famine, epidemics and ruin in the wake of the retreating Japanese. The collapse of national economy will have been complete. The destruction of homes, public utilities and productive enterprises may go almost beyond repair. Without mobilising the whole of the Burmese people these wounds of war cannot be healed. It will be as much in the interests of the British as that of the

Burmese to devote all then efforts to the relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction. He will not be a patriot if he shuns these tasks. One is an anarchist, a mad-cap or a scoundrel if one tries to take political advantage of the miseries of the people. There can be few block-heads who think that famine can lead to a revolution, but these block-heads, if they dare come out on the political scene of future Burma, will be put in their places. The people of Burma will have no trust in such imbeciles.

Conclusions and Concrete Proposals.

Looking at the problem from all points of view, international imperial and internal, Burma is heading towards (the) peaceful developments and a bright future. But how soon she will achieve her goal depends on how soon world fascism is completely smashed up and to what extent she herself contributes to the historic task.

Having firm faith in this line of development of our motherland we put up the following concrete proposals:—

1. Wholehearted and greatest possible aid to the anti-Japanese movement inside Burma. Arms, ammunition, money and all equipment for espionage and sabotage.
2. Take over the anti-Japanese forces into the Burma Army which shall be the best defence forces of future Burma (one reason for withholding freedom from Burma being her inability to defend herself) and which shall fight the Japanese until final victory, on Japanese soil if necessary.
3. Accept the help and co-operation of anti-Japanese forces in suppressing dacoits, pro-Japanese rebels, criminals and other anti-social elements in re-occupied Burma.
4. Welcome the co-operation of anti-Japanese force in all measures, government and public, regarding relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction in all re-occupied areas.

These are the concrete proposals. Details can be discussed and decided once the above proposals in outline are accepted.

OUR POLICY.

Internationally We stand for (a) Complete smash-up of fascism and its influences (b) Durable and lasting peace based on the Atlantic Charter and Teheran declarations (c) Anglo-Soviet-American Alliance (d) Anglo-Soviet mutual assistance pact (e) Anglo-American Concord based on resolving of conflicting interests - commercial and financial - of Anglo-American powers (f) United, independent and democratic China.

Nationally We stand for (a) *Peaceful* solution of the contradictions between the people of Burma and the imperialists within the frame work of durable and just peace (b) Continued co-operation and mutual assistance between people of Burma and British for generations to come, based on equality and justice, (call it Dominion Status or anything you like) (c) Reconstruction of Burma by mobilising *all sections* of the people (d) Full enjoyment of civil liberties - freedom of press, speech, association, faith, etc. (e) Putting down gangstarism, fifth column etc. (f) Establishment of the national Army out of Resistance Forces (g) Revival and expansion of democracy in the political life of the country.

Specially We stand for (a) Abolition of landlordism rural indebtedness, rent etc. (b) Nationalisation of key industries, mines transport and banks. But they are *not* immediate issues. During the *reconstruction period* immediate issues are (a) Landlord and money lender to reduce rent and interest, peasant to pay due rent and work hard, to save the nation; debt moratorium; reclamation of waste lands (b) Capitalists to pay fair wage to the workers, improve conditions of workers; workers to work the hardest to revive economic life of the nation (c) Recognition of class organisation (d) Fighting black-market profiteering

and corruption in all phases of national life; social evils like prostitution.

Communal We stand for (a) Controlled immigration-foreign labour as well as capital must be productive; the guarantee that higher living standard of labour - foreign and native - is maintained, must be included in the immigration agreement and laws. (b) Full citizenship rights to all men of foreign origin who regard Burma as their home and settle down. (c) Communal harmony the naturalised foreigner by respecting native customs, manners, beliefs, culture etc., and the native by giving full autonomy to the foreigner regarding his customs, manners, beliefs, culture etc.

Nationalities. See my programme; popularise them among patriots of all minority nationalities.

Radio Address by Colonel Naywin (7-5-45).

To the people of Burma.

COMRADES AND COUNTRYMEN,

You have known by now with what aims the Burmese Army has come into existence and of what stuff it is made. Its one and only aim is to fight for Burmese freedom and it is to that aim that practically the whole of Burmese Youth have dedicated their lives. You have seen also that it is a united front put up by all the indigenous races that call themselves Burmese. Thus it is that the Burmese Army which is composed of the Burmese, Shans, Kachins and Karens has been looked upon by all as not only the hope of the country but also as its very life and soul. For it is this Burmese Army which has, in the name of the Peoples' Freedom Army, declared war on the Fascist Japanese and is actively engaged in fighting them on the Burmese front. Bitterly have they fought for the liberation of their soil from Fascist clutches and as bitterly will they continue the fight till that menace is completely eradicated. And it is our purpose here no less our duty to tell the people in as clear and simple words as possible the reason for the step we have taken. We wish every single Burmese to understand that in taking this historic step, the Burmese Army is neither guided by sheer irresponsibility of youth, as their enemy has been inclined to attribute, nor is it a meaningless, opportunist movement as some of the people have tried to make out. Members of the Burmese Army will certainly not let their blood and sweat flow so freely nor let their wives and children suffer mortal agonies at the hands of the Japanese Military Police nor let the Burmese villages go up in flames without having a firm conviction in the righteousness of their action.

We were not unaware of what terror and ravage Japanese Fascism has wrought in China. At the same time, we as realists believed that without the help of a foreign power, in those days, we could not successfully struggle against the British and achieve our independence. It happened that in view of the international situation prevailing then, Japan was and could be only foreign ally we could look up to. Secret negotiations went on and the Burmese Revolutionary Group demanded from accredited representatives of Japanese Government solemn pledges of independence for Burma. That pledge was given by Japan and this fact, briefly and simply, accounted for the co-operation, which the Burmese young men extended to the Japanese Forces during the first phase of the war. Later on January 21, 1942, just after the fall of Hongkong, the Japanese Premier General Tojo confirmed this pledge in his statement made in the Imperial Diet. "As regards the Philippines, if the peoples of those islands will hereafter understand the real intentions of Nippon and offer to co-operate with us as one of the partners for the establishment of the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere. Nippon will gladly enable them to enjoy the honour of independence. As for Burma what Nippon contemplates is not different from that relating to the Philippines." To those who are as freedom-loving as the Burmese are, such an expression of definite promise could not but receive their wishful credence especially when it was found, to all appearances, to be more satisfactory than the British statement that the Atlantic Charter shall not be applicable to India and Burma. We reasoned to ourselves also that since Japan would never be able to occupy India without being able to rally the active support of the Indians, by granting Independence to Burma and thus prove that she has no territorial ambitions, political expediency and circumstances would compel her to redeem her Independence pledge to Burma as well as to the Philippines and other East Asiatic countries. Hence our decision to making our alliance with Japan and fighting side by side with her against the British in 1942.

Our first regret came with the fall of Moulmein. Doubts began to awaken in Burmese minds when the

Japanese for the first time broke their promise of declaring Burmese independence and handing over the administration of the town to the Burmese themselves as soon as Moulmein fell into their hands. Since that time began discussions among the Burmese regarding the questionable character of Japan's promises. Their regret and resentment was certainly not improved as time went on and greater contact with the Japanese more and more unmasked their aggressive nature in all manner of dealings. It was fortunately in good time that we found out our mistake and we had been able to send a section of our youth leaders to foreign countries to seek foreign aid.

Disillusionment came a second time when, the occupation of the whole of Burma having completed, the Burmese Independence Army (As it was then called) gathered together at Mandalay. What was the disappointment and fury in the hearts of these young patriots when "Burmese Independence Army" was converted into the Burma Defence Army"! It was no consolation to know that the Burmese Army had then reached a considerable strength. They forthwith planned to turn the B.I.A., not into B.D.A. as the Japanese desired but into a Burma Revolutionary Army as their whole souls desired, but three big factors prevented their plans from ripening into action. The first is that Premier Tojo of the Japanese Government happened to have just declared his Government's intention to recognise Burmese Independence in his Diet Speech, the second is that the Burmese troops were then yet lacking in training and experience, and the third is that the Japanese Fascists were then at the height of their military power. Leading members of the Burmese Army had therefore decided to bide their time and allow discretion to form the better part of their valour.

Then came the declaration of Burmese Independence which as we all found out presently, was just a declaration. As soon as the Burmese found that the independence which they proclaimed to the world was poles apart from the independence which they have aspired for and looked forward to and that instead of enjoying the rights of real sovereignty

their territory was mutilated, their economy ruthlessly exploited and their civil liberties completely cast aside, their plans and decisions to overthrow Japanese Fascism began to take concrete shape. They made up their minds neither to rest nor pause till they have redressed the wrong they have, with the best of intentions, made to the country, and then felt equal to the many dangers that would await them, their families and their associates, should the Japanese Military Police but get an inkling of their extremely hazardous plan. Nothing but their inherent love of freedom gave them the courage to brave the inhuman tortures of the Japanese military police as they crossed the borders between Burma and foreign countries, organised revolutionary parties in all parts of the country, secretly circulated guerilla pamphlets, giving practical training wherever possible and doing the while all they can do to impede the progress of the Japanese war effort. This huge subversive movement having completed, they attempted four times to effect a general uprising and all the times their plans aborted.

This time, which is the fifth time in the history of the Burmese Army, we have successfully carried out our plans. I will now give you a rough outline of the Burmese Army's activities, to give you an idea of the loyalty and death-defying spirit of our comrades as well as to give due recognition to the admirable co-operation that we received from our own people, the gallant villagers and towns-people alike,

(a) We have been able to successfully negotiate with the Japanese Military Authorities to send our troops to various districts, to which they have been assigned, despite the fact that the entire Burmese Army has all along been stationed in Rangoon.

(b) We have been able to procure sufficient arms and ammunitions from the Japanese Army within the space of a few days from the date on which the revolution is to break out.

(c) We have been able to combine our troops with the revolutionary parties in Prome, Allammyo, Pyinmana,

Toungoo, Pegu, Mandalay and other Delta towns and thereby obtain perfect co-ordination.

(d) We have been able to send our men to India to seek outside military assistance and supply of arms.

(e) We have been able to contact the Allies successfully.

(f) We have been able to combat the Japanese in Upper Burma and Arakan and defeat them thoroughly.

(g) We have been able to give training to villagers of various districts in guerilla form of warfare, and by the time the revolution is started have already organised straight-shooting guerilla fighters all over the country.

All these, you will agree with me, are not such as can be achieved overnight, especially when there was a horde of Japanese Military Police and their secret agents and unscrupulous informers. All this certainly an uncommon feat which any nation in the world would feel proud of, for the Burmese have demonstrated to the world that Japan who is a rival power among World Powers and is the most ruthless of all Fascist Powers has at last reaped bitter defeat at the hands of the Burmese.

Even the Allied Nations have admitted that for sheer grit and guerilla fighting technique, it is difficult for any other nations to surpass Japan. And Burmese today have beaten the Japanese in their own game, as is much evident in the operations in the delta districts of Pyapon, Maubin, Bassein, Insein, etc., and in Mandalay, Toungoo, Pyinmana and other places where the Burmese successfully drove them out and redeemed the Burmese towns from their hands. It was again the Burmese Army that has to forestall the Japanese plans of subjecting the city of Rangoon to a scorched-earth demolition and occupy the city before they can carry out their plans. The most effective part of the Burmese Army's activities is the complete breakdown of transport and communications of the Japanese Army in Burma. The typically

Burmese technique of guerilla fighting is sure to find a place in the pages of world's military science.

I think I have made it clear enough that the Burmese Army is not only the hope of the country but its very life and soul that is neither irresponsibility of youth that lay behind their historic step nor a meaningless opportunist movement as I have earlier pointed out. Hence to the people of Burma who have for four hapless years been exposed to the most gruelling form of experience under Japanese Fascism, who have during the same period gone through every conceivable form of hardship, danger and disease, I wish to give this solemn pledge. That for the freedom of every small state that even like ourselves are in mortal dread of the Fascist menace, we are firmly resolved to drive back the Japanese Fascism to its native home and to give our lives to achieve our objective of Burmese freedom. With this pledge on my lips I urge you, comrades and countrymen to give us yet more of your willing co-operation and help, for before you all, ever loyal and true, we stand in readiness to fight for our cherished freedom, our one objective and our very life.

Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League Statement.

As soon as Militarist Fascism came to Burma to implant itself the strain of its iron heels was such that the peoples of Burma found it utterly impossible to submit to it for any length of time. The Burma Army, the Communist Party, the People's Revolutionary Party, (now known as Socialist Party) the East Asiatic Youth League and a considerable section of the Mahabama, The Myochit Party, the Fabian Party, the Thakin Party, the Sanghas Asiayone and of the Karen, Shan, Kachin, Chin, Arakanese, Chinese and Indian communities began to strive each in its own way to struggle themselves from Fascist oppression. In August 1946, it became possible to co-ordinate all the abovementioned groups into one whole organisation under the name of Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. When the League was thus founded, a great deal more of others from the vast public fervently sought its membership or alliance and from that moment onwards the Anti-Fascist activities which hitherto were carried on sporadically became much more centralised, systematised and concentrated.

The League's primary objective was (i) to drive Fascism out of the country until it is completely smashed here as well as in its homeland with or even without, outside help and (ii) to see that Burma positively attains her cherished goal of independence. The League rightly counted on all the freedom loving peoples of Burma to give what aid they could in the event of an open struggle against Fascism taking place anywhere and at any time. The Burmese Army quite naturally was to lead the fight with the people acting as active supporters in the rear. And in order to give utmost effect in the event of an armed uprising members of the

League were recruited to undergo intensive political and military training.

The first task before the League as has already been mentioned was to rid the country of the Japanese. And as events have shown, it may be laid claim with justification that it has fairly accomplished it. No doubt there are still some Japanese divisions scattered all over Burma which remain to be wiped out. The League is confident that its fighting forces will do their best to accomplish this task in the quickest possible time. No quarter will be given to the Fascists wherever they may be. The League shall see that Fascism no more exists in this country in any form, nor for that matter in any part of the world.

The second objective still remains to be achieved. And the League is confident that the British Government as well as the Governments of the United Nations already fully realise our political aspirations and that they will know how to honour a nation that has proved its worth by serving the cause of the Allies in a way which would have seemed quite unthinkable and impossible. For all the world knows that to defeat tens of thousands of Japanese at their own game—and in so short a time—was no easy task for an ill-equipped and oppressed nation such as ours to accomplish. It is no exaggeration to say that the Burmese have not only faced but also conquered overwhelming odds.

The League wishes to emphasise its political faith by reiterating the fact that short of complete independence no other form of government will satisfy the people. The League wishes also to mention a simple but rather important fact, which should not be overlooked or underrated, that the Burmese during the past three or four years have undergone such a tremendous change in thought and outlook that they could no more be pushed back to the spiritual or political level of 1941. If anybody thinks that all that Burma wants now in the year of 1945 is supplies of food and clothing and materials for reconstruction purposes—these and these alone—he will be greatly mistaken. Burma does not want chari-

ty though she would indeed be only too good to accept the whole-hearted and honest co-operation and support of any or all of the free nations of the world in establishing herself in the world family of democratic nations. Burma only aspires to be completely independent—nothing more, nothing less. And she expects every honourable nation on the face of this earth to uphold her in this respect.

The League thinks it only fair to remind powers that be that the above-mentioned facts are not lost sight of in determining the future of Burma. The League declares solemnly that this and this alone is Burma's case and that there is none other.

Burma wants complete independence. Burma wants her constitution to be framed by a Constituent Assembly elected on the basis of universal adult suffrage as soon as war conditions in Burma permit. All her actions in the remote as well as in the recent past, all her actions at the present moment should bear ample testimony to this fact, Burma will not rest until she is free. And in a world just about to be free from the throes of a most deadly struggle for freedom from Fascist domination, Burma expects quite rightly that she will not be denied herself Freedom. Were that to happen, which Heaven forbid, it would be tantamount to admitting that only a couple of Fascist powers have gone down in this deadly struggle and that fascism still remains to keep smaller nations in subjugation. That would be losing the Peace. That would mean War again and the League fervently hopes that the Frankenstein monster of Fascism is finally nailed in its coffin and that no Phoenix of disguised or unadulterated Fascism may ever rise again from the ashes.

APPENDIX 3 B.

Queries and replies at the press interview given by Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League on 14th May, 1945.

We have prepared a statement and I will tell you what you might want to know which is not in the statement. There is lot of confusion about the name because we called it in Burmese which when translated into English is "Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League". The aim and object of the organisation can be known from the name itself. Our representative in India, Thein Pe, whom you might have heard of translated it "Burma Patriotic Front". The Army calls it "A.T.O.", Americans call it "A.F.L." You may call it anything you like—its all the same. It is *not a party organization—it is a combination of various political groups and organizations and communities*. I will give you the names of these political groups, organizations and communities so that you will get an idea of what the League represents. The political parties in it are (1) Communist Party of Burma (2) Peoples Revolutionary Party (3) Myochit Party and (4) Fabian Party whose leader is U Ba Choe (5) Thakin Party and (6) Mahabama. The non-party organisations are the Burma National Army, the authors, the Sanghas, Women's League, Youth League and teachers. Apart from that we have organizations of different races such as Arakanese National Congress, which is the organization of Arakanese people, the Karen Central Organization, the Shan Association, which consisted of Shan Youths and some Sawbwas. We have many I. N. A. members and Chinese guerillas who are remnants of the Chinese troops left in 1942 who were looked after by the local Chinese.

The A. F. L. is constituted on democratic basis. You can join individually or in groups. You might call it demo-

cratic centralism. Policies are discussed thoroughly before deciding by majority. Whatever is decided is followed by all groups and individuals in the organisation. At the top is the Supreme Council which is the directing body of the whole organization. Again we have a sort of National Council which is a wider body where policies are decided. Supreme Council is the executive body which functions when that National Council does not meet.

Q. Who is the Chairman of that Council?

A. Under the Japanese we cannot have a proper Chairman because we have to meet secretly. We are now going to put the organisation on a more proper basis. The Members of the Supreme Council meet on equal terms. There are nine members on it but we intend to extend that number to fifteen. The meeting in those days were very difficult to be held—we often met in the dark—within closed doors. The National Council meets very rarely. Sometimes contact between members was obtained by circulation of papers. We could not hold a general meeting in an official way. Sometimes we called representatives to meet members of the Supreme Council. We have district organizations as well as sort of units, divided into townships, villages and so forth. The Chairman of District Organizations are nominated by the Supreme Council. Under those conditions we have to choose the best fitted man on spot. Although the organization was based on the democratic centralisation, we stress more on centralisation than on democratic basis as that was inevitable under the Japanese.

We are issuing another statement which will amplify the present one.

Q. What do you estimate the membership of the organization will be?

A. They are all component bodies such as the B. N. A. 10,000 strong Youth League with 50,000 members, etc. I think the estimate may be about 200,000.

Q. Do they subscribe to the Central Fund?

A. Yes. We have been carrying on with the funds of Burma Army, sometimes of the Youth League and sometimes of the Burmese Government. Donations from the public are also received.

This movement first started long before the Japanese came. We were out to co-operate with the British but the British Government refused. Many people were kept in jails because they were many political growths to start carrying on anti-Japanese activities in their own way but there was *no co-ordinated movement till 1944* when Independence was declared and people came to realise the shallowness of the independence. Before that one section was anti-Japanese and another section believed in the possible achievement of independence with the alliance with Japan. Those two major sections combined forces when they realised that Japan did not intend to give the Burmese real independence.

Q. What is the relation of the Burma National and the A. F. L.

A. The Burma National is a component part—it is the military organization.

Several manifestoes were issued by A. F. L. underground with the amount of paper available in their hands. Though there were very great difficulties we were fortunate that we have some resources.

We cannot yet give the names of the members of the Supreme Council.

Q. What is your political programme? You want the election of a Constituent Assembly and the constitution to be framed by that Assembly. What sort of the constitution will emerge—one on British Parliamentary model or Soviet model?

A. We cannot yet say. We want this constitution more or less on a democratic basis that would be suitable, to the People of the country. We cannot yet say what will be the main features. (Draft sketch passed on) Even the Blue Print has the agrarian indebtedness problem and we are grateful to Somerset de Chair for including it.

Amery's statement put a very unpleasant set-back to the A. E. L's. activities. If you look at the programme you will find there is a great deal of difference between *dominion status* and *national independence*.

Q. Are not the dominion countries like Canada, South Africa and Australia completely independent in their actions?

A. They cannot have their own war policy or foreign policy. We want an independent war and foreign policy and at the same time the head of the Burmese State should be according to the wish of the Burmese people.

Q. Many people say that it is important for Burma situated between India with 360 millions and China with 400 millions—to have strong allies?

A. Burma wants to cultivate friendly relations with China and India. We are convinced that there is nothing to fear from democratic India and free China. We look up for the maintenance of law and order by the New International Organization outlined in the Dumbarton Oaks talks for the New League of Nations to put a stop to any more aggression.

Q. Is the leadership of these political parties largely a youth movement?

A. Not exactly but the youths are a sort of spearhead of the movement. Some of the leaders belonged to older section. For instance U Ba Cho is a very senior politician. The Army is young on the whole.

Q. Have you been able to establish contact with similar bodies in other countries.

A. We have our friends in India, China, England and other countries. For instance we are friends of the Komington Party as well as Communist Party of China. We also have friends in America. We had secret contacts. There are our representatives who established contact even with the Philippines when our representatives went to Japan.

Q. I imagine they will make the same sort of offer to Burma as the *Cripp's offer* to India, that is, the dominion status with the right to secede from the British Empire. Britain would however like Burma, if possible, to remain, within the British Empire which would be an economic benefit to both parties. Cripp's offer is to all intents and purposes an offer of independence.

A. But Cripp's offer was rejected in India.

Q. That I think was due to the fact that at the time they thought the British were going to lose the war.

A. Very little relief work was done in India by the Government. For instance "Grow More Food" campaign was launched by the people.

Q. I don't know much about Indian politics as I spent most of my life in China, Malay and Far East, 3 years I have been in the Pacific covering the war but I think Burma is a much easier problem than India—no minority problems as in India.

A. There is no offer to Burma as Cripp's offer to India. For instance they mentioned about Constituent Assembly for India but there is no mention of it for Burma. We asked whether Burma and India were included in the Atlantic Charter and the British Government said no. Both House of the Burmese Legislature almost entreated to

include Burma in it. British Prime Minister's short reply was no and that started most of the trouble.

Q. What do you consider sufficient period for *reconstruction* for general elections to be held?

A. General elections can be held even now. There should be no fixed period for reconstruction which can be done at any time. We want to satisfy our political aspirations first and then we will carry on the reconstruction. That is the opinion of the whole of Burma I should say. The reconstruction is more of our national work rather than the task of the British. We want to raise Burma from the ashes by our efforts. We will naturally not deny outside help. At the same time we want to satisfy ourselves that it is with our own hands that we have re-made Burma. You can imagine they have sent some men for reconstruction work who are totally ignorant of the conditions in Burma. Burma should be administered by people who understand Burma. We want to emphasise the fact that Burma has changed a great deal. Burmese people have satisfied much during the three years of the Japanese rule but they are out for national re-construction. To all appearances now it look as if they won't be taken into confidence in the re-construction work. We wan't to reconstruct a Burmese Burma and not a British Burma.

Burma has become poorer and we will like to grow rich. Japan has betrayed our trust and did not redeem its pledge. She exploited us to the fullest extent. The experiment with Japan has taught us a great many things and we could not allow thing to happen again. In short we want the real things.

We want to assure the British public when we demand independence we do not mean that we are going to be enemies of the British. We want to remain on friendly terms with Britain. There is nothing to fear by our independence. In fact, we want the British capital.

Q. Why does not *dominion status* appeal to you?

A. It associates with so many unpleasant things. The very idea is foreign to us. We don't want other people to determine our testing. We think that freedom is our birth-right. We will have it in any form we like—a republic or a monarchy or anything. We may seek entry into the British Commonwealth even. But the thing is we want to decide it ourselves. Self-determination should be left to Burma. We wish to feel that we can exercise our sovereign rights even if it means going back to the British Empire.

Q. What is your attitude towards *business*?

We will have to reconstruct our country and will need a lot of capital for reconstruction of our national economy. We will try to do that ourselves. We are not idealists. We will seek foreign capital. These will be in accordance with the agreements concluded from time to time.

The trouble between C.A.S. and B.N.A. officers must have occurred in few instances but we don't think they are many. In towns captured by the B.N.A. the old officers there were reappointed and they carry on the administration. Whenever an army occupies a country naturally there is bound to be disorder and chaos. You yourself if might have been to so many places in Burma and you must have found that there is not much disorder all over the country because the people see to it that there is no disturbance.

Currency Owing to Army Administration Notification regarding Japanese currency, now all the shops are closed. 99.5% of the people have no British notes. Notes left by the British have been snatched away by the Japanese or hoarded by rich people. In those days person found with British notes say to the extent of 500 rupees were summarily arrested and they disappeared. British currency have not yet penetrated into our pockets. I estimate that there are about 2000 million worth of Japanese notes in Burma.

A. My personal view is that Japanese notes should be withdrawn — at depreciated value if desired — and treat the

sum as a national loan demand it in kind from Japan when she is defeated. The national income of Burma is only about 300 millions a year before the war and during war with so many productive equipment smashed up Burma could not stand more than 100 million. Within three years Japan has issued 2000 millions. The currency question is the most disturbing factor at present coming immediately after the British re-occupation. There may be some trouble. Already there is some looting in Bahan and China town. They have instead of curtailing the purchasing power of the people destroying it totally. The moment the people came to know of this they rushed to the market to dispose of their notes.

The Communist Party of Burma was suppressed before the war. The Communists all over the world are co-operating with the Allies.

Q. Is Communism in Burma pure Marxist communism?

A. I should say it is a *Burmanised communism* which suits condition of the Burmese people. We have adapted it.

Fabian is also a moderate form of communism. That Party exists before the war. It had one seat in the House of Representatives. People's Revolutionary Party is separate from the Communist Party. It thinks that Marxism is not suitable for Burma and at the same time it is a very strong nationalist group.

The Thakin Party was active before the war but just before Japanese occupation it was declared illegal. Thakin Party has suffered so many storms. At present the old Thakins have joined one or other of these groups. Thakinism as politics was no more practicable during the war. The old Revolutionary Party which fought the British consisted of many Thakins.

The Youth League is a non-political organization—started in June 1942 totally independent of the Government

—just about the time Dr. Ba Maw assumed leadership. It existed without any backing. It is the spontaneous growth of the enthusiasm of the youth.

(U Ba Gyan) When I became Minister I was also President of the Youth League.

Sanghas Association.—There is political movement among the phongyis.

Q. Strictly speaking Phongyis should not be interested in politics?

A. Like the Catholics during the Irish Revolutionary days. It is a very strong movement. Some young phongyis discarded their robes and joined the army.

Women's League.—started in 1939. They did social work. They took great part in political campaigns backing generally the antigovernment parties. When Japanese came almost all the political organizations were driven underground.

The object of the Burma Independence League was to collect the scattered political forces together so that the Supreme Council could meet.

General Aung San is a Member of the Supreme Council. He represents the army (Non-political organization). He was leader of University Students and all Burma Students Union. He joined the Thakin Party and became Secretary-General of that party. He left Burma for Japan for Military training and organized the B. I. A.

Q. The average age of the Supreme Council?

A. The youngest 30 and the oldest 55.

Q. The people took the British soldiers to be Americans. Why is it?

Press—May be because the planes bear American marks and the Japanese here must have been expecting Americans. The chief enemy of Japan is America. The British of course also have a bitter feeling against the Japanese.

APPENDIX 4.

Programme of "National reconstruction through National service."

1. Organisation of Peoples' League.

A. DISTRICT COMMITTEE.

This will be Non-Party—rather all parties, all sections which will accept the programme of Anti-Fascism and Peoples' Freedom. It will be as representative and democratic as possible. All political parties—sections—communities will be in it.

There shall be adequate representatives for racial and functional groups.

There will be Chairman and Secretary. The conduct of the business will be in accordance with all democratic practices. Therefore regular meeting, of decisions, decision by majority after, though discussion, division of labour, and responsibility, inspection and review of the work done.

This district Committee will co-operate with District C. A. O. in all matters of public affairs—suppression of crimes, organization of home-guards, setting up administrative machinery, cultivation—drive, anti-epidemic campaign, medical relief, distribution of relief material propaganda, etc.

District Committee should not for the present exceed fifteen, representing all townships.

B. TOWNSHIP COMMITTEE.

The formation is more or less on the lines of the District Committee. The members should not exceed nine.

C. VILLAGE COMMITTEE.

The members not to exceed 5.

It will co-operate, assist and advise the village headman.

2. Organization of Home Guard.

They will be under the C. A. O. (Police).

The actual command and organization will be in the hand of Volunteer.

Home Guards shall be formed in every town and village. There is no need for District or Township.

The task of Home Guards will be organisation of military intelligence, and suppression of crimes.

They will be more or less like military police detachments.

Arms will be provided according to the size and importance of village.

Arms will be issued not individually but collectively to each village. The village commander is to be held responsible for the arms.

Proper Registration, identification, inspection, etc. will be done.

They will be empowered to collect illegal arms—a list to be submitted to the higher authorities.

A Scheme for distribution of arms collected will be laid down.

3. Organization of the Peasants' Union.

This will not be anti-landlord organisation. Its aim is to increase agricultural production and to safeguard the interests of the agriculturists and promote national unity.

The programme will be:—

(i) Cultivation drive—especially Co-operative farming (Paddy).

- (ii) Cultivation of Deficient crops—groundnut, etc.
- (iii) Advising the cultivators in fixing the prices of agricultural products.
- (iv) Collection of military supplies of agricultural products.
- (v) Promotion of cattle, poultry breeding.
- (vi) Dissemination of Agricultural Education with the help of agricultural officers.
- (vii) Seeking assistance from the Government regarding Agricultural loans, cattle loans, implements, seeds, housing materials.
- (viii) Distribution of agricultural implements and other relief materials through this organization.

There will be District Committees, Township Committees, Village Committees as in People's Organization.

4. Organization of Labour.

Labour will be organised not according to the area, but according to the work.

The programme:—

- (i) To recruit labour for national reconstruction programmes and military necessities.
- (ii) To educate the labourers the supreme necessity and paramount importance of labour in National reconstruction, reading-clubs., etc.
- (iii) To promote the interests of labour, regarding wages, hours, etc.

There will be a Trades Council—District Organization which will be representative of all Labour Organization to co-ordinate the activities.

5. Organization of Teachers and Students.

Teachers and students will be mobilised. They will be financed by the public. Recognition will be sought for from the Government when the work is in order.

This will have to be carried on as the education of the younger generation cannot be neglected.

This Teachers' Association will be affiliated with the Teachers' Association in Rangoon.

6. Organisation of Co-operative Association.

The Societies will be formed under the co-operative Societies Act. The old Co-operative Societies will be revived.

It will work for the restoration of trade, barter exchange, etc.

7. Organisation of Technicians.

Industrial Co-operative Societies will be formed for the development of industries.

Technicians will be registered and their services will be handed over if C.A.S. need them.

8. Organisation of Health Units, Hospitals.

A. HOSPITALS, ETC.

- (i) If C.A.S. has already set up a hospital, all assistance will be given.
- (ii) If C.A.S. has set up a hospital, but no provision is made for patients, funds and food will be collected for the patients.
- (iii) If C.A.S. has not already set up one, doctors, nurses will be collected, hospital set up and maintained and will be handed over to C.A.S. when asked for.

B. HEALTH UNITS.

With the help of technicians propaganda-campaign will be conducted against epidemics cholera, cleanliness, etc.

C. ORGANISATION OF SPORTS, FOOTBALL, ETC.

9. Propaganda Campaign.

A. THE NATURE OF PROPAGANDA:—

- 1. "The anti-Japanese war is not over. We shall wage till the end."
- 2. "Back to Normal Life immediately."
- 3. "National Reconstruction through National Service."
- 4. "Allies will give us relief but that may not be enough. We must help ourselves."

5. "We cannot have happiness now yet though we are now liberated from the Japanese. We shall have to sacrifice more, work more."
6. "National Unity—Peoples' Organization" Our weapon. Karen-Burmans Unite.

B. THE PROPAGANDA WILL TAKE THE FORM OF:—

1. Leaflets, posters, etc. (will arrange with Propaganda Department in Bangoon).
2. Lectures, mass meetings, village to village meetings, etc.
3. Dramatic performances, etc.

10. Organization of Karens.

They will have their separate organization but will have representation on the Peoples' Organization.

APPENDIX 5.

Policy and immediate Programme of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League (Burma Patriotic Front.)

The Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League (Burma Patriotic Front) issues the following statement clarifying further its policy, for the immediate purpose as well as the long term.

The final objective of the Peoples' Freedom League, as it has been hitherto, is the attainment of the right of self-determination for Burma. In concrete expression, Burma desires to determine her own constitution by means of a Constituent Assembly elected on universal adult suffrage.

The League comes into this War, with the Burma National Army and guerillas as its spearhead, on the side of the United Nations because it has from ideological conviction as well as from bitter practical experience learnt to hate Fascism as the enemy of freedom, peace and progress and also because it desires to build a free Burma in a free world.

We shall therefore continue to contribute our maximum share in the war against Japanese Fascism until the world has been completely purged of its vertige. Our forces both regular and irregular will go on fighting not only in the Burma theatre but also after due preparations necessary outside Burma until Japanese Fascism is completely exterminated. They shall operate in complete harmony with and under the command of the Allied Forces. At the same time armed units of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League not participating in the military operations will help the Allied Military Administration in the restoration and maintenance of perfect law and order in Burma.

The Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League is also prepared to and will certainly offer its hearty co-operation to the Allied authorities in the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the country; especially it will immediately start an intensive drive for food production so that Burma can be in a position not only to feed herself but also India and the rest of the world suffering acutely from food shortage.

The League, however, feels that pending the framing of an National Constitution by a Constituent Assembly, the task of National Reconstruction as well as that of nationwide mobilization for anti-Japanese war effort can and will be best achieved and in the speediest time possible only by a National Government sufficiently representative of the democratic sections of public opinion in the country.

This briefly, is the policy of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League, and in executing it was looked to the Allied Forces to give us every possible assistance so that we may all the speedier and all the fuller co-operate in bringing about peace and prosperity in the East.

THAN TUN, 25-5-45,
GENERAL SECRETARY,
Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League.

Provisional Rules For Supreme Council of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League.

SECTION I. CONSTITUTION.

1. The present Supreme Council shall be constituted as follows:—

- (a) 3 representatives each from the political parties;
- (b) 10 Nationally established political leaders;
- (c) 3 representatives each from mass organizations (such as Youth League, Labour unions).
- (d) 3 representatives each from racial communities, (such as Arakan Congress, Karen Organization).

2. The question of representation from new parties or organizations shall be considered by the re-constituted Supreme Council.

SECTION II. OBJECTS.

- (1) To fight Fascism until the last vestige of Fascism is eradicated from the world.
- (2) To attain the right of self-determination for the people of Burma, in accordance with the Atlantic Charter, Teheran declaration etc.
- (3) To reconstruct Burma by democratic means and methods.

- (4) *To create a new Burma based on voluntary union, recognising the right of self-determination for all national minorities, including the right of secession.*

SECTION III. FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES.

The following are repugnant to the fundamental principles of the League:—

- (1) Individual dictatorship.
- (2) Communalism or racialism.
- (3) Militarism.
- (4) Bureaucracy.
- (5) Absolute monarchy.

The following are the basic principles of the League:—

- (1) Collective Leadership rather than individual.
- (2) Democratic control of Leadership.
- (3) Nationalism, based on cordial relationship with other nations.
- (4) Parliamentary control of Armed Forces.
- (5) Democratic rights to the people, democratic means and procedure.

SECTION IV. CONTROL OF ORGANIZATIONS.

- (1) The member parties represented in the Supreme Council shall abide by its decisions.
- (2) In a matter of dispute between parties or organizations the Supreme Council shall arbitrate.
- (3) In a matter where there is a clash between the national interests and those of a party or an organization, the national interests shall prevail.
- (4) Political activities as decided by the Supreme Council, shall be carried out in its name.
- (5) Members of the Supreme Council shall not make any personal attacks on one another.

- (6) Pending the decision of the Supreme Council, a party or an organization can advocate for the acceptance of its point of view or programme, but once a decision is made, it becomes that of the Supreme Council and no party or organization shall go against it.

SECTION V.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION.

There shall be formed local committees of A. F. O. in the villages, townships and districts.

These Committees shall be constituted on the model of the Supreme Council.

APPENDIX 7.

LEADERS CONFERENCE.

A Conference of Burma Political Leaders was held on 16th to 18th August 1945 at the premises of A. F. O., 8, Churchill Road.

Besides the members of the Supreme Council of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League (Burma Patriotic Front) which is the combination of Burma Patriotic Forces (B.N.A.), Communist Party of Burma, Peoples Revolutionary Party, Myochit Party, All Burma Youth League, Arakan National Congress, Karen Central Organization, many prominent national leaders like U Ba Pe, U Thein Mg were present:—

Representatives of Thakin Party, Sinyetha Party, Burmese Muslim League, Chinese Association and prominent pressmen were also present.

General Aung San presided and Than Tun acted as Secretary of the conference.

The following were the matters discussed:—

1. International situation.
2. Burma Army.
3. Political Future of Burma.
4. National Units.

On the basis of agreement arrived at this Conference the Supreme Council of A. F. O. was re-organised to include the remaining patriotic elements of the Country.

NOTE:—These resolutions and statements were endorsed to the Mass Meeting held on 19th August 1945.

WORLD PEACE AND FREE BURMA

(16—8—45.)

The following statement is issued by the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League in connection with the termination of the World War.

The World War is now over. This war is the Peoples' War, the war fought by the peoples of several countries for their liberation from the Fascist bondage. Freedom-loving peoples have achieved victory in this war of liberation led by Soviet Union, United States of America, Britain and China.

The victorious peoples are now in a position to exercise their inalienable right of self-determination. To make the Peoples' Victory a real one they are setting up national governments, national armies and economic systems after their own heart.

The Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League comes into the war on the side of the United Nations, with the firm conviction that there could be no world peace as long as brutish Fascism dominated the world.

The people of Burma are everjoyed at the victory of the United Nations, for they firmly believe that the victory brings with it the long-awaited opportunity for the peoples of the world to shape their own destinies.

The people of Burma owe a debt of gratitude to the peoples and armies of Soviet Union, U. S. A., Britain and

China, who led this war of liberation to a successful conclusion.

This League firmly believes that the United Nations would remain as united in peace as in the war to carry on the task of preventing recurrence of war, nay removing the causes of war.

This World War began in 1931 with the Japanese imperialist aggression on China, and the untold sacrifices of the people of China all these years would have been in vain if their untiring efforts did not consummate in the establishment of a united, independent, Democratic China. This League firmly believes that the United Nations would give full assistance to China to reach her cherished goal.

About the middle of this world war, the militarists of Spain rebelled against the legally constituted Republican Government and, with the aid of the German and Italian Fascists, brought Spain under the Fascist iron heel. The main Fascist Powers have fallen but Fascism is not dead yet in Spain. This League firmly believes that the people of Spain, who has all along organised resistance movement against Fascist oppressors, would soon be liberated from their yoke and a Peoples' Government restored.

India is not free yet, and this League firmly believes that India will enjoy full independence in the near future. The statement of political power by the people of India depends on their unity and it is fervently hoped that they would make efforts to achieve unity with a view to winning their national freedom and to reconstructing their own country.

The people of Burma have made their utmost sacrifices, of their homes and hearths, limbs and lives, for their freedom. Free Democratic world must, therefore, recognise their right of freedom, in accordance with the repeated declaration of the United Nations.

Burma is a badly war-torn country and it is the firm belief of her people that all the countries, which participated in the war of liberation, would assist them to reconstruct

their motherland, to set up a People's Government and to take a worthy place in the comity of the free nations.

The people of Burma, having fought with fixed determination and approved courage for their freedom, desire that Burma, as a free country, be invited to take part in the World Peace Conference.

In exercise of their right of Self-determination, the people of Burma desire to convene a Constituent Assembly to determine their own constitution.

Pending the framing of the National Constitution by a Constituent Assembly a provisional government be formed, representing all the political parties that took part in the Anti-Fascist movement as well as those that are working whole-heartedly for the rehabilitation of Burma.

In order that the people of Burma may be able to exercise their right of self-determination in the speediest time and manner possible they desire:—

- (a) that, since the military operations have ceased, the military administration be terminated.
- (b) that, the remaining Japanese forces in Burma be forthwith disarmed and then sent away without any delay.

The League looks to the Allied Military Authorities to give every possible assistance in this connection.

In conclusion the League declares that the people of Burma are fully united to make an all-out effort for the emergence of a free Burma in a free world, as united as they have been in their fight against the Fascist Japanese.

THE BURMA ARMY.

The Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League, having discussed the various issues relating to the Burma Army at a meeting held on the 12th August 1945, is of the considered opinion,

1. That since the old Burma Army established by the British Authorities now exists more or less in name only, it is highly illogical and not at all in accordance with justice,

equity and sound policy for the British Authorities now to form again a Burma Army based on arrangements involving the disbandment of the existing Burmese Patriotic Forces, which have been successfully operating against the enemy in co-operation with the Allied Forces in Burma; and therefore, all steps now being taken for the formation of the Burma Army on the above basis be put an end to at the earliest moment, and a Burma Army with Burmese Patriotic Forces and the indigenous guerilla units, which already exist not only in name but in concrete form and substance as its nucleus be formed by the British Authorities.

2. Personnel belonging to the indigenous races of Burma who are now serving under the British, be incorporated into the Burma Army to be formed as resolved above.

3. In forming the Burma Army Burmese Battalions and Battalions of the various indigenous races (i.e. Glass battalions) be formed, and Burmese and other indigenous Commanders, Officers and N.C.Os' be appointed to units and formations.

4. In forming the Burma Army, such matters as those relating to medical examination, ranks, military education, pay and privileges of personnel, granting of leave to those who have been in operations, and appointment to and allotment in the Burma Army of officers and N.C.Os' from the Burmese Patriotic Forces and the old Burma Army, be dealt with by a Board to be set up, consisting of the representative of the Burmese Patriotic Forces and those responsible for the formation of the Burma Army.

5. Pending a definite settlement of the above points, disbandment of the Burma Patriotic Forces and the guerilla units be suspended; in the meantime, representatives of the Burmese Patriotic Forces be given opportunity to meet and discuss with the British Authorities concerned in order to come to an agreement.

6. That this meeting place on record profound gratitude for the Burmese Patriotic Forces and the guerilla units who have wholeheartedly co-operated with the Allied Forces in liberating the whole country and appreciate their fervent

ardour to completely annihilate the Fascist Japanese. But this meeting deeply regrets that the Burmese Patriotic Forces and the guerilla units have not received adequate assistance and due publicity (in their operations) from the Allied Forces.

This Conference of leaders freely endorse the views of the Supreme Council of the 'Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League.

TOWARDS THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

For many years the people of Burma have struggled to attain their right of self determination. Since the outbreak of war in 1939, between Britain and Germany, the struggle for Burma's freedom has become more intensified and extensive in that it has developed into an armed mass movement. The people of Burma in co-operation with the United Nations, have driven from Burma Fascists, protagonists of the darkest forces of reaction in the world.

Therefore, the free democratic world will have to recognise the right to freedom of the people of Burma, according to the world leaders' declaration such as the Atlantic Charter, Teheran Agreement and Yalta Agreement.

The people of Burma will exercise their right of self-determination and determine their constitution through a Constituent Assembly.

Since it is clear in the course of history that a Provisional Government should follow an armed insurrection before the convention of a Constituent Assembly, the Anti-Fascist fighters and all those who want to take their share in the rehabilitation of their own country should immediately form a Provisional Government.

For this reason, all the political leaders should come to an agreement in policy with a view to forming a Provisional Government.

The Provisional Government should be a National Government sufficiently representative of the democratic section of the public opinion in the country.

Moreover the Provisional Government should have full powers in matters relating to foreign relations, finance, economy, defence, internal security etc. of the country.

Having the Constituent Assembly, in view the provisional government should:—

- (a) make provisions for setting up an electoral machinery,
- (b) draw up a Constitution for the future government of a free Burma;
- (c) draft such agreements as will be necessary for conclusion between Burma and Britain,
- (d) make arrangements for sending Burma's representatives to foreign countries, if necessary, and
- (e) make preparations for sending Burma's representatives to the Peace Conference.

It is incumbent on the provisional government to take effective measures for relief, reconstruction and other tasks of immediate nature and importance.

This conference of political leaders firmly believes that, in order that the provisional government may be able to accomplish their tasks the people will co-operate whole heartedly with the government, reminding them constantly of their grave responsibilities.

This conference authorises the Extended Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League to take necessary steps for achievement of the desired ends.

NATIONAL UNITY.

This Conference urges all the people of Burma, irrespective of race, creed and religion, to work unitedly in the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League for national freedom and reconstruction, in accordance with the fundamental decisions arrived at this Conference.

APPENDIX 8.

LETTER TO THE GOVERNOR.

Your Excellency,

From what transpired at the interview of some members of the Burma Delegation at Kandy with Your Excellency, it appears (1) that resolution No. 3 of the Leaders' Conference, which was in session from 16th to 18th August and endorsed by a mass meeting held at Rangoon on the 19th August, 1945 requires further elucidation and (2) that some caveats should be entered now in order that the said resolution might have full effect. The said resolution is set out in Annexure A to this document.

The resolution was put up at the said meeting by the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League after most careful discussion and deliberation and it was passed at the said meeting with great enthusiasm. As the League and the meeting were of the opinion (1) that the immediate transfer of power and responsibility should not be less real and extensive and (2) that composition of the Executive Council should not be less liberal than what has been proposed in "Lord Wavell's plan for India" in view of (a) the contribution which Burma has made on the side of the United Nations towards the final defeat of the Fascist enemies, (b) the solemn pledge by His Majesty's Government that the Separation of Burma from India would not prejudice the political future of Burma and (c) the intense political consciousness of the Burmese people as a whole.

The extent to which power would be transferred under Lord Wavell's plan has been summarized by Reuter as follows:—

"If the offer which His Majesty's Government now make is accepted all portfolios except that of the War Member held by the Commander-in-Chief will be transferred to India hands. The portfolio transferred would include not only the important Home and Finance Departments but

also that of External Affairs hitherto reserved to the Viceroy in person. This would naturally be accompanied by the appointment of fully accredited representative abroad and so constitute definite enhancement of India's international status."

It will be seen at once that the offer is much more liberal than what Your Excellency has so far proposed in as much as the portfolio of External Affairs hitherto reserved to the Viceroy-in-person would also be transferred to Indian hands; and there does not appear to be any reason why Burma should be treated less liberally than India in this or any other respect. Burma like India should have the right to appoint fully accredited Burmese representatives abroad. She should, inter alia have a Burmese High Commissioner in London and a Burmese Agent in India. The Executive Councillor in charge of External Affairs should also have a Board of External Affairs to help him.

At first sight Lord Wavell's Plan and Your Excellency's proposals appear to be identical in respect of Defence. However, it should be remembered that Lord Wavell's Plan was formulated before the war was over and therefore while there were cogent reasons for the Commander-in-Chief remaining the War Member of the Viceroy's Council. Now the war has been won and there is no risk of another war in the near future. So there has been a complete change of circumstances and there does not appear to be any valid reason for not transferring the portfolio of Defence into Burmese hands. There should also be a Council of Defence with the Burmese majority.

Lord Wavell's Plan is much more liberal than what Your Excellency has so far proposed in as much as all members of the Viceroy's Executive Council would be Indians with the exception of the Viceroy and the Commander-in-Chief; and the transfer of power in respect of any particular subject can neither be real nor complete in Burma unless it be into Burmese hands. The demand for the formation of a National Government really is a demand for transfer of all power into Burmese hands; and this demand is only fair and reasonable in view of the offer to Indianize

the Viceroy's Executive Council and also in view of His Majesty's Government's pledge that Burma should not suffer on account of her separation from India. There should not be any invidious distinction between Burma and India in this respect. However, if for some insurmountable objection there must be some official element on the Governor's Executive Council such element should be reduced to the barest minimum. There should be no official member without a portfolio and no official member who is a mere advisor. In fact if there must be more portfolios than one which cannot be transferred into non-official Burmese hands, yet, in spite of the above representations, they should be combined with a view to reducing the number of official Executive Councillors to the barest minimum. Besides if there must necessarily be more than one official Executive Councillor at least one of them should be a Burman official.

As regards the composition of the Viceroy's Executive Council according to newspaper reports of Lord Wavell's Plan all members there except the War Member would be nominated on the joint recommendations of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League. The joint recommendations were required obviously for the reason that there have been two rival All Indian Political Organizations in that country. Burma however is much more fortunate than India in this respect. She has only one national organization. It is the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League which embraces all the major political parties and indigenous racial groups of Burma and which therefore is fully representative of the country. Your Excellency stated in the course of the speech on the cruiser H. M. S. Cumberland "In the meantime, during the care-taker period, I have said that I will try to make the Executive Council and the Legislative Council as representatives as I can after consultation with representatives of the principal political groups". Luckily for Burma and Your Excellency all the principal political groups are now united in the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League and there is no necessity for Your Excellency to consult them separately. Your Excellency can safely

follow Lord Wavell's Plan as a precedent and appoint members of the Executive Council on the recommendation of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League and it is urged that Your Excellency should do so in order that members of the Executive Council might be both representative and able to shoulder collective responsibility under circumstances which more than ever require good team-work.

Again with reference to Lord Wavell's Plan, Mr. Amery the Secretary of State for India is reported to have indicated "that if the occasion ever arose the power of veto would be invoked essentially in the interest of India and not Britain." It is highly desirable that there should be an agreement and an authoritative declaration that the Governor of Burma would not ordinarily exercise his power of veto and that if he does exercise it still it would essentially and exclusively be in the interest of Burma.

To turn now to the caveats which must be entered at this stage i.e. before the formation and functioning of the new Executive Council. No Government, however national and however representative it may be, will be able to function successfully or even satisfactorily if its hands are tied or if it be embarrassed by any measure, arrangement or under-taking in spheres financial, economic, legislative, judicial etc. made or adopted before it comes into existancy. It is therefore urged that no such measure etc. be made or adopted and that where any such measure etc. has to be made or adopted unavoidably on account of its real urgency it should be made expressly subject to review by the new Executive Council. At any rate no long term commitment e.g. by immigration or trade agreements, by oil or mineral concessions, or by forest or other leases, should be made in the meanwhile. This caveat is entered also in respect of the fixing of cadres and the making of appointments which might embarrass the new Executive Council.

No Government can function successfully without the help and co-operation of a good legislature. So it is a matter of primary importance that nominations to the Legislature and appointments of the Speaker and the Deputy

Speaker should be made in consultation with the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League or at least with the new Executive Council.

The judiciary also is of great importance and it must be urged that no new appointments nor recommendations for such appointment be made to high judicial officers e.g. to be Judges of the High Court of Judicature at Rangoon without consulting the New Executive Council. The stock excuse in the past has been that Judges are appointed by His Majesty. However it is a matter of common knowledge that in actual practice the initiative is with the local authorities and that appointments are made on their recommendations. In making appointments or recommendations for appointment during the caretaker period it should be remembered that the number of Burmese Judges will have to be considerably increased not only in conformity with the political and constitutional advancement of Burma as a state which is to have full Dominion Status including judicial autonomy in the near future but also for the reason that Burmese Judges have a more intimate knowledge of the local conditions and of the Burmese customs, usage, manners, sentiments, aspirations etc. than others and are therefore better qualified to administer justice among the Burmese people.

With due respect to the Advisers, past and present, to the Secretary of State for Burma, and without casting any slur on them it must be said that Burma has been unfortunate in that not a single Burmese has ever been appointed to be such an advisor. That Burmese Advisor would be able to state the case for Burma and put the Burmese point of view more satisfactorily appears to be fairly obvious. It is therefore urged that representations be made for appointment of Burmese Advisors to the Secretary of State for Burma in order that the new Executive Council might have the benefit of their assistance.

The above representations are made if some of your Excellency's own words may be used, to help Your Excellency who "want no puppet administration—no facade behind which the Governor can continue to keep powers in

his own hands", "to set up a new regime with an Executive Council which will be able to work as a team", to count on "the help of the Burmese people" and, in the words of the former Secretary of State "to secure the greatest possible measure of Burmese co-operation".

These representations are comparatively moderate in view of the fact that countries which enjoyed political status similar to that of Burma before the war both in Europe and Asia are becoming independent status even.

APPENDIX 9.

Resolutions passed at the Meeting of the Supreme Council of The Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League, which was held in Session on the 6th, 7th and 8th October 1945.

Resolution 1.

The Revolutionary Movement organised and led by Sun-Yat-Sen in China was for the attainment of power by her people, and the celebration of the victory achieved by that Movement must be regarded as the triumph of the Eastern peoples. The Chinese National Day is celebrated on 10th October every year and, hitherto, it was considered to be the concern only of the Chinese Nationals. However, now that Peoples' War of Liberation has been brought to a successful conclusion, it can clearly be seen that the Chinese Revolutionary Movement has not only resulted in the Chinese people's triumph but also paves the way for that of other peoples.

The Burmese people, therefore, would observe the Chinese National Day, i. e. 10th October, as the day for the celebration of the triumph of the people's movements.

Resolution 2.

This Council, on behalf of the people of Burma, expresses its appreciation of and sympathy for the movements for freedom of the peoples of French Indo-China and Indonesia which have been respectively under the French and Dutch subjection, and this Council urges the United Nations to arbitrate in such a manner that the said peoples can enjoy the rights of self-government.

Resolution 3.

The League urges that a general amnesty be declared in respect of:—

- (1) all political opinions expressed, political attitudes adopted, and political offences committed during the war;
- (2) Dr. Ba Maw and members of his Cabinet;
- (3) all services under, and co-operation with the Japanese and the Ba Maw Government and;
- (4) all activities connected with the War consistently with H. E. Governor's desire:
 - (a) "to bring back happiness to a people who have suffered grievously through our inability to carry out our responsibility for defending them against invasion" and
 - (b) to make Burma "a willing co-operative partner" by holding out "the hand of friendship and understanding to her."

It is only fair and just that such amnesty should be declared in as much as;

- (i) the people were left unarmed and unorganized at the mercy of the Japanese;
- (ii) there was an actual reign of terror in the country on account of the Japanese army, the Japanese Military Police and their heinous methods and cruelty;
- (iii) many were naturally lured, confused and misled by the Japanese offer of independence; and—

- (iv) many more were carried away by enthusiasm for, and excitement over, independence.

Resolution 4.

The League urges that war reparations be claimed from Japan with a view to recalling at par all the Japanese currency-notes in Burma, since

- (1) Japan has received full consideration in the form of service or commodity for all the notes issued by her;
- (2) there is no reason why she should not be required to redeem them—why she, the enemy, who mercilessly exploited Burma and her resources over three years, should be relieved of her just liability for such exploitation at the expense of the people of Burma who have otherwise suffered grievously on account of the Japanese invasion; and
- (3) in fairness to the people of Burma provision for redemption of the said notes should, in any case, be made out of such reparations as Japan is required to make in cash, in kind, by concessions, by cession of territory or otherwise.

Resolution 5.

In view of the fact that Burma is a war-shattered country and the consequent unsettled conditions and straitened circumstances in every walk of life, this Council urges the authorities concerned to forbid the entry into Burma of all the foreigners except experts and those connected with the military, before necessary measures have been taken in regard to immigration problem by the care-taker Government of Burma.

Resolution 6

WAR CRIMINALS.

One of the measures of the United Nations is to take strong action against the war criminals, and accordingly such an action is being taken against the war criminals of Ger-

many, who are responsible for oppressions and persecutions during the war. It is necessary to take action in the same manner against the Japanese war criminals.

The Japanese army and military police did perpetrate ruthless oppressions and persecutions in Burma, and this Council urges the United Nations to take strong action against such Japanese as are responsible for them.

This Council would also request that a demand be made from the Japanese Government for damages or compensations to be given to the families of those who lost their lives because of the Japanese oppressions and persecutions.

Resolution 7.

In view of the statement of M. Molotov, Foreign Commissar of Soviet Russia, that all countries, which took part in the fight against Fascist Japanese, should be represented on the Far Eastern Commission that will deal with such matters as the occupation of Japanese etc., and secondly, because of the fact that India has been given the right of representation thereon, this Council urges the British Government to secure the same right for Burma from the United Nations on the ground that the Patriotic Burmese Forces and the people of Burma have resisted the Japanese aggression at a great sacrifice, a sacrifice involving the loss of lives and limbs, homes and hearths—and effort in no way inferior to that of India.

Resolution 8.

APPOINTMENTS BY THE GOVERNOR.

This Council regrets to learn that, despite its timely request made not to take steps while in India in regard to such matters as the appointments to important and high offices, the Governor of Burma has already dealt with the question of filling the posts of:—

- (1) High Court Judges,
- (2) Chief Justice of High Court (with a comparatively junior man over the head of a senior man).

- (3) Advocate-General (with a comparatively junior man),
 (4) Director of Prosecution,
 (5) Chairman of the Burma Army Reorganisation Committee,
 (6) Commerce Advisor,
 (7) Industry Advisor, and
 (8) Advisor on affairs relating to Indians in Burma, amounting thereby to tying of the hands of the care-taker government; and this Council emphatically urges the Governor to withhold these appointments in the meantime.

Resolution 9.

HANDING OVER OF MILITARY ADMINISTRATION TO CIVIL ADMINISTRATION.

The League learns with regret that the administration of Burma will be handed over only piecemeal by the British Military Administration to the civil government, the League urges that the whole of the administration be handed over immediately to the Civil Government and authorises the Executive Committee of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League to take such measures as may be necessary for the implementation of this resolution.

APPENDIX 10.

Statement of the Supreme Council of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League on His Excellency the Governor's speech on 17th October 1945.

The Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League has closely followed the speech of His Excellency the Governor and welcome the spirit of co-operation and goodwill which has permeated the speech.

While the spirit of co-operation and goodwill expressed by His Excellency is most welcome, the Supreme Council feels compelled to state that certain references in his speech to non-existent factors are rather out of tune with the spirit of the times. Burma's armed struggle against Japanese Fascism has proved conclusively that Burma like other progressive nations will neither harbour nor favour fascist methods.

Again Burma wants peace and tranquility not for fear of any display of military or police force, but in her own interests. Burma is a war-torn country and more than any one else, the peoples of Burma want the earliest return to normal life so that they will be able to devote themselves wholeheartedly to the task of national reconstruction under a government in which they have full confidence. Conditions in Indo-China and Indonesia to-day show that it is not the oppressed peoples who are disturbing the peace but those who use fascist and imperialist methods, and military force aggressing on the inherent rights of peoples, instead of solving the vital issues in a peaceful way. The Supreme Council earnestly hopes that the peace-loving peoples of Burma would not be victims of "provocations" and by any show of might or by use of military force.

His Excellency the Governor has stated that it has been hotly contested from one side that "we are going too fast" and "the pace at which we want to go will land us into a lot of trouble". The Supreme Council is not aware of any important section of public opinion in Burma which have so contested. If any exists, the Supreme Council would be glad to know. The Supreme Council cannot understand why the Europeans and the Indians can lay claim to the right to hotly contest this question which concerns Burma and her peoples alone.

The Supreme Council regrets to note that the bogey of the past—the questions of Minorities has been raised again. The peoples of Burma have jointly and unitedly fought the fascist aggressor and we can claim to-day that the peoples of Burma are more united than ever. The Supreme Council desires to point out that "one of the fundamental objectives of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League is "to set up a voluntary union of the peoples of Burma, with the right self-determination to national minorities", and that Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League is fully determined to ensure and safeguard the legitimate aspirations of the 'national' minorities.

His Excellency the Governor appears to have questioned the representative character of "any party or combination of parties". Obviously, His Excellency is referring to the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League which is the combination of all political parties in Burma and which is to-day voicing the opinion of the country. To-day Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League has become the symbol of the unity of the Burma peoples and all lovers of Burma should encourage this unity to grow; not to belittle it nor to intrigue against this unity. The Supreme Council agrees that 'the verdict of the ballot-box is an incalculable verdict' and if for any reason His Excellency, is not in a position to accept the representative character of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League, the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League would be only too happy if it were possible to go immediately to the polls.

The Supreme Council fully endorses the sentiments of His Excellency or desiring "free" elections. The Supreme

Council is definitely against the use of force or any other fascist method at the polls. Elections should be free from "supervision" and intervention by any Army or "free" from interferences and restrictive measures from "Bureaucracy" and police. To ensure free elections, the Supreme Council would urge that an International Commission should be appointed by the United Nations Organization.

The Supreme Council has clearly stated its position regarding the formation of the provisional National Government before the entire country and the world democratic opinion and it has communicated its views to His Excellency the Governor on this point in detail. If the views expressed by His Excellency in this speech regarding the Executive Council were the final reply to our national demand on the issue of the Provisional National Government we must state that it definitely fails to meet the legitimate desire of the country.

His Excellency the Governor has mentioned that His Majesty's Government wants to know what Burma means by an "adult". The Supreme Council feels that this is a question which can be easily solved when major questions are settled. If it were to express its views, the Supreme Council feels that 'eighteen' should be the qualifying age for the purpose of "adult franchise". However, the Supreme Council considers that only those who are 'domiciles' shall have the right to franchise, when Burma's destiny is going to be determined.

The Supreme Council regrets to note in His Majesty's 'message that 'hill areas' are excluded from the Sphere of Burmese Administration. It cannot be disputed that the peoples of Burma must be, and are, more than any one else interested in the welfare of the hill inhabitants. The Supreme Council also feels that these areas are vitally important for National Defence. It has been stated often that hill inhabitants should be separated until such time as they express their desire to join the Burmese Union. It is difficult to see how these people can express their desire when ordinary democratic rights are denied to them. A large number of these hill peoples residing in the plains adjacent to these hill

areas are enjoying the same political rights as those in the rest of Burma. The obvious and natural course should be to extend these rights to these excluded areas.

The Supreme Council heartily welcomes His Excellency's statement that "His Majesty's Government's programme is not intended to be a rigid, inelastic programme" and that "this programme may be capable of changes and alterations to any new conditions". The Supreme Council will henceforth concentrate all its efforts to get the programme changed.

In conclusion, the Supreme Council desires to record the efforts of His Excellency in fighting for the good name of Burma and for the future of Burma. The Supreme Council also feels that Burma to-day enjoys the good will of United Nations because.

- (i) the people of Burma, though they co-operated with the Japanese at the earlier stages, later took up arms against the same Japanese, before it was clear to them that Allied forces would, or could come to their rescue, because of their intense desire for freedom and progress; and
- (ii) the international allies, of the Burmese peoples, who form Anti-Fascist, and Anti-imperialist World United front, clearly understand the role of the the Burmese people and have therefore incessantly worked for the sympathetic understanding among the United nations.

APPENDIX 11.

Instrument of Instructions.

The Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League (Burma Patriotic Front) has carefully considered the proposals of His Excellency the Governor regarding the formation of the interim Executive Council as contained in his speech at the Town Hall on the 17th October 1945 and as later clarified to the delegation of the Supreme Council on the 19th October. The Supreme Council is unanimously of the view that the Governor's proposals so far understood fall far below what would meet the legitimate desire of the country, as clearly expressed by all organs of the public opinion in the country especially the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League which is the united front organisation of all important political parties and important Political elements and the entire national press.

But the Supreme Council feels that to further consolidate the patriotic movement and the democratic gains so far achieved by the Burman peoples as a result of their heroic anti-fascist struggle to render immediate relief to our suffering masses, to mobilise the entire nation for reconstruction and to transform the Executive Council into a provisional national government and lead the country forward to the sovereign constituent assembly, the council should accept the Governor's invitation to help to form the said Executive Council as a start and not as an end in itself on the following conditions :—

- (1) That the Governor accepts the list put up by the Supreme Council, the list of eleven representative leaders to make up the said Executive Council fifteen—4 being left for the Governor's nominees.
- (2) That the said eleven representatives of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League in the Executive Council shall abide by the following instruments of instructions.

THE INSTRUMENTS OF INSTRUCTIONS.

The objectives for which the said representatives will strive their best to achieve shall be :—

- (a) to create conditions for the success of a free general election based on the universal adult suffrage and to make the coming general election an election for a constituent assembly for the purpose of drawing up a new democratic constitution for the country and not one the 1935 Government of Burma Constitution.
- (b) to work the said Executive Council so far as practicable as popular Government reflecting the national interests and needs of the country as a whole;
- (c) to mobilize the mass opinion as national sanction behind the said Executive Council and to make the Executive Council responsive to the public opinion and initiative as expressed in democratic organs such as the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League, the peasant unions, the Trade Unions, Youth organization and the national press.

Concretely the representatives of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League in the Executive Council shall among other things undertake the following tasks:-

- (a) Release of all political prisoners, restoration and extension of civil liberties, such as freedom of press, speech, organization, assembly etc.;
- (b) To subordinate bureaucratic measures and tendencies in all organs of administrations to the popular public control.
- (c) To restore all essential democratic institutions such as local bodies, educational organisations etc.;
- (d) To associate the patriotic public organisations in all the tasks of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction and administrative reforms,
- (e) Where it is not within the competence of the representatives the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League on the Executive Councillors to so fulfil the declared needs and achieve the declared aims, the

representatives shall without a moment's delay prevail upon His Excellency the Governor to make such suggestions and recommendations to His Majesty's Government for alteration in the programme as may be desirable;

- (f) To report periodically to the Supreme Council an account of their work.

To be able to achieve the objectives outlined and to carry out the concrete tasks specified it is essential that the representative of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League function as a united team under a leader and a ship of their own, have the right to allocate portfolios as they think desirable so as to ensure team work and so as to be able to carry out the responsibilities assigned to them by the Supreme Council, they should resign in a body after reference to the Supreme Council whenever they find they cannot usefully serve the purpose for which they go into the Executive Council or whenever the Supreme Council decides that its representatives can no longer serve the purpose for which it sent them to the Executive Council.

The Executive Councillors nominated by the Supreme Council should withdraw their co-operation with Government if the majority decide to do so or if the Supreme Council decides by 75% majority that they should resign from the Executive Council. .

Statement issued on 28th October 1945 by Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League.

Political Leaders' Conference was held on August 16, 17, and 18. The Conference demanded Provisional National Government and a Constituent Assembly.

The demand was endorsed at a Mass Rally in Rangoon on August 19, and by meetings and rallies held throughout Burma.

On 7th September, some of the Members of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League met His Excellency the Governor of Burma at Kandy and had a discussion on the formation of "care-taker Government" pending the holding of General Elections.

1. In order to elucidate the demand for a Provisional National Government, the Executive Committee of the Supreme Council sent a letter to His Excellency the Governor, dated the 22nd September.

The following are the main points in that letter:—

- (1) The portfolio of External Affairs be transferred to the Burmese hands;
- (2) The portfolio of Defence be transferred likewise;
- (3) Members of the Executive Council to be appointed on the recommendations of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League;
- (4) The Governor of Burma shall not exercise veto unreasonably and the Executive Council shall function as a Cabinet with collective responsibility;
- (5) No commitments shall be made in the meanwhile which might embarrass the Executive Council and the future Government of Burma.

The Supreme Council of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League met on 6th, 7th, and 8th October and endorsed the stand of its Executive Committee.

2. The Supreme Council passed a number of resolutions on vital questions concerning the country, and such as general amnesty, war reparations, war criminals, Far Eastern Commission, etc.

Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League has received no reply yet whatsoever on the demand for a national Government when His Excellency the Governor arrived Burma on 16th October.

His Excellency the Governor outlined his proposals in a speech at the Town Hall on 17th October.

3. The Supreme Council of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League met and issued a statement on his Excellency's speech. The main features of the Statement are:—

- (1) Burma does not harbour nor favour fascist methods;
- (2) Burma wants peace and tranquility in her own interests;
- (3) Outsiders should not hotly contest the questions which concern Burma and her people alone;
- (4) Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League is fully determined to ensure and safeguard the interests of 'national' minorities;
- (5) Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League is prepared to go the pools now or at any time to establish its representative character;
- (6) Burma wants 'free' elections; free from 'super-vision' and intervention by any army or 'free' from 'Bureaucracy' and police;
- (7) The Governor's reply failed definitely to meet the legitimate desire of the country;
- (8) The qualifying age for 'adult' franchise should be 18.
- (9) Burma is more interested in the hill areas than anyone else; democracy should be established to enable the hill peoples to express their views freely;

- (10) The Supreme Council is fully determined to get the programme outlined in White Paper altered;
- (11) Burma to-day enjoys the goodwill of United Nations because of the Resistance Movement and of the work of anti-fascist, anti-imperialist forces of the world.

A delegation of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League was invited by His Excellency the Governor on 19th and the question of forming the Executive Council was discussed. The delegation noted that there was no change in the stand taken by His Excellency the Governor.

The delegation reported to the Supreme Council on 20th and on 23rd October the Supreme Council decided to permit its members to participate in the Executive Council on certain conditions.

4. These conditions are set out in the 'instrument of instructions' approved by the Supreme Council meeting on 23rd.

On 24th October the Supreme Council elected 11 persons to serve on the Executive Council. The names were communicated to His Excellency the Governor on the same day. On 25th, the Supreme Council received a reply that the Governor cannot agree to the number, the names nor the portfolios asked for by the Supreme Council.

5. The Supreme Council on 25th October therefore decided to withdraw its nominations.

At the present moment, we have come to a deadlock.

It will be found that the Supreme Council of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League has been for peaceful settlement whereas the other side is fully taking advantage of the situation. Goodwill and willingness of co-operation for the purpose of reconstructing the war-torn country are taken as 'weakness' or fear of force.

The future programme of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League will be:—

- (1) to mobilise the people behind it for the National Demand and to strengthen the National Unity;

- (2) to explain to the World and the British people especially how British Government has come back to re-establish monopolist rule;
- (3) to give 'practical services' to the people as far as possible within its power and means.

APPENDIX 13.

The League's Rejoinder.

The Executive Committee of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League has read the statement issued by Government in to-day's press. The Executive Committee desires to point out in this connection that the Government communique is extremely misleading to say the least.

In the first instance the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League delegates in all their talks with His Excellency the Governor have never been given to understand that "His Excellency had already in mind names for the appointments to the four portfolios of Defence, Frontier Areas, Home and Finance." What our delegates were informed by His Excellency was only to the effect that the portfolios of Defence, (including External Affairs) and Frontier Areas could not yet be entrusted to Burmans and that His Excellency would have to include the two Burman Ministers who evacuated along with him to India, again in his Executive Council. Our delegates also did not claim that His Excellency should accept the dictation of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League on the actual allotment of portfolios. What our delegates represented was that His Excellency should in consultation with his Executive Councillors allot portfolios. However our delegates argued that His Excellency should allot the portfolios of Home and Political Affairs to one of our nominees for the following reasons:—

1. Since the present time is extraordinary, the Executive Councillor in charge of Home Affairs should be

one who has had thorough knowledge of the condition of Burma and the people for the last three years.

2. Since the preservation of law and order at this critical juncture is particularly important and since Home Councillor would be called upon to do many other additional tasks, he should be one who could effectively mobilise public opinion and co-operation in the discharge of his duties.

3. With such a Home Councillor the collection of illegal arms widespread in the country could be more effectively carried out.

His Excellency did not argue at all with our delegates on this point and only observed that he appreciated their views very much. The Executive Committee of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League could not understand what cogent reasons His Excellency has in finding himself unable to allot the Home Portfolio to one of our nominees. It is because His Excellency fears that if one of our nominees is entrusted with the Home portfolio there is a danger of our nominee discharging his duties irresponsibly? Or is it because His Excellency thinks that among our nominees not a single one is it to be Home Councillor? *(It may be remarked in this connection that out of our 11 nominees six had held ministerial appointments of whom four had been in charge of the portfolio of Home Affairs.) Or is it because His Excellency fears that if one of our nominees becomes Home Councillor he might thwart or nullify his scheme of things? Or does His Excellency fear that our 'bloc' of councillors if accepted might become a great stumbling block in the executive of His Excellency's policy of 'reconstruction'?

Lastly though in the least in importance, we desire to make known that nowhere in the instruments of instructions issued by the Supreme Council of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League is there anything that corresponds with His Excellency's construction that our nominees should be reduced to mere delegates of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League. The instrument of instructions issued by the Supreme Council of Anti-Fascist Peoples' League

is just the sort of thing that is issued usually by any democratic political organization to its representatives in similar circumstances in order to outline the programme to be pursued by our nominees in His Excellency's Executive Council. What the Supreme Council asks our nominees to report periodically is only to let it know from time to time how far our nominees are progressing with the programme thus outlined. We cannot therefore understand how the Supreme Council's instructions can make our nominees unable to express their genuine convictions and to take the oath of office and Secrecy conscientiously, since in the past too, there have been such practices by political parties in Burma and we believe elsewhere also. The instrument of instructions issued by the Supreme Council says clearly that our nominees are representatives and not delegates. The Supreme Council in putting up its nominees have only one desire—that is that it wants to see good team work in the Governor's Executive Council and to make it able to shoulder collective responsibility.

His Excellency the Governor differs from this view. The more inclusion of some Leaders of Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League in the Executive Council in their individual capacity, will only mislead public opinion both at home and abroad, while at the same time they will be unable to discharge their responsibility to the country and the people.

It is pointed out in the communique that the negotiations with the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League are still open. The Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League is always anxious to reach political settlement and is always prepared to co-operate with the Governor in forming an Executive Council which will command the confidence of the country.

APPENDIX 14

List of the nominees of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League

1. Major-General Aung San.
2. U Ba Pe.
3. U Ba On.
4. U Aye.
5. U Razak.
6. U Mya (Pyawbwe)
7. Thakin Mya.
8. U Thein Pe.
9. U Nyo Tun.
10. Mahn Ba Khin.
11. Saw Ba U Gyi.

1. Major-General Aung San, one of the national leaders who organised the Resistance Movement; the Supreme Commander of the Patriotic Burmese Forces; the President of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.

2. U Ba Pe, a veteran in Burma politics; national leader since the inception of the National Freedom Movement; a member of all the Burma delegations to Britain; was a Minister in two governments before the war; declined to co-operate in any way with the Japanese during the war; a member of the Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.

3. U Ba On, Deputy leader of Myochit Parliamentary Party; of which U Saw was the leader, Minister of Labour in U Saw's cabinet—1941-42; a member of the Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League.

4. U Aye, a member of Myochit Party; Minister of Home Affairs in U Saw's cabinet—1941-42; a member of the Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.

5. U Razak, a Burmese Muslim, Head Master of National High School, Mandalay, for over twenty years; commands the confidence of all the communities in Upper Burma. One of the organisers of the Resistance Movement in Upper Burma; President of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.

6. U Mya (of Pyawbwe), Deputy leader of Sinyetha Wunthann Party, of which Dr. Ba Maw was the leader; a member of the House of Representative; before the war declined to accept the offer of a place in U Saw's cabinet; Minister of Commerce and Industry and later Minister of Home Affairs in Ba Maw government in the Burmese regime a member of the Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.

7. Thakin Mya, the leader of the Thakin Party in the Burma Legislature, President of All-Burma Peasants' Union before the war, Deputy Prime Minister in the Ba Maw Government; one of the national leader who organised the Resistance Movement; Leader of the Socialist Party.

8. U Thein Pe, the General Secretary of the Communist Party in Burma; a member of the Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League; represented the League abroad during the war; negotiated on behalf of the leaders of the Resistance Movement with the Allied command.

9. U Nyo Tun, a prominent member of the University Students Union, the leader of the Resistance Movement in Atakan.

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| 10. Mahn Ba Khin | } representative of the Karen national minority. |
| 11. Saw Ba U Gyi | |

List of the members of the Governor's Executive Council

1. Sir Paw Tun.
2. Sir Htoon Aung Gyaw.
3. U Ba On.
4. U Aye
5. U Lun.
6. U Pu.
7. Thakin Yan Aung.
8. Mahn Ba Khin.
9. U Tharrawaddy Maung Maung.
10. John Wise, I. C. S.
11. Sir Raibeart MacDougall Kt., I. C. S.

1. Sir Paw Tun—a lawyer by profession, began his political career as an advocate for complete independence and, as such, entered the Legislative Council with a view to wreck from within the dyarchical constitution; has moved since perceptively to the extreme right; a Minister in all the cabinets since 1937—hence, popularly known as the "Joker Minister"; Prime Minister just before the war; evacuated to India and became one of the advisers of the Governor of Burma when his ministry was dissolved; has an American wife; one of the few politicians universally distrusted by the people of Burma.

2. Sir Htoon Aung Gyaw, Barrister-at-Law; a member of the richest family in Akyab, a family of bankers, with vast vested interests in Arakan; Minister of Finance in all the ministries since 1937—another "Joker minister"; evacuated to India and became one of the advisers of the Governor of Burma when Paw Tun's ministry was dissolved.

3. U Ba On }
4. U Aye } see 3 and 4 of the list of nominees of the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League. As the Governor rejected its proposals, the League decided to withdraw its nominations. U Ba On and U Aye did not take part in the

discussion leading to that decision. They kept silent all the time, giving an impression that they were in favour of the decision. But it was learnt, later on, that they accepted the Governor's offer of membership of his Executive Council. They were then, obliged to resign their membership of the Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. According to them, the Myochit Party has decided to secede from the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League, whereas U Mya (of Henzada), the President of All Burma Myochit Party makes it known that it is yet to be decided by the Party whether to secede or not. U Mya adds that, so far as he is concerned, he would work on with the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League should the Myochit Party decide to secede. The members of the Myochit Party in Rangoon, who are not in favour of secession from the League and of acceptance of office on the Governor's Executive Council against the decision of the League, have passed the resolution to the effect that U Ba On and U Aye be expelled from their Party. In the Government communique U Ba On and U Aye were stated to have taken part in the Resistance Movement. They had neither any connection nor taken any part in the Resistance Movement. They became members of the Supreme Council of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League as the representatives of the Myochit Party when the Council was expanded to include the representatives of the major political parties and the national minorities, after the occupation of Rangoon by Allied Forces.

5. U Lun, a member of Myochit Party; a member of the House of Representatives before the war; comparatively unknown in the country; supposed to have been included in the Executive Council only for the period before U Saw's return to Burma from Uganda—to give place to U Saw.

6. U Pu, an obsolete elderly politician whose ability is not rated high by people of Burma but who belong to the few who know how to win the favour of British Government in Burma.

7. U Yan Aung—a nobody in Burma Politics.

8. Mahn Ba Khin. See 10 of the list of the nominees of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. Mahn Ba Khin is not a member of the Supreme Council of the League.

9. U Tharrawaddy Maung Maung was Deputy Leader of the Sinyetha Wunthann Party, of which Dr. Ba Maw was the leader; Education Minister in Ba Maw Government in 1937-39; Expelled from his party for taking office in U Pu's Ministry as Health Minister; held the same portfolio in U Pu's Ministry and U Saw's Ministry—another "Joker Minister."

10. } Senior members of the Civil Service.
11. }

1937-39; resigned membership of his party and took office in U Pu's Ministry as Health Minister; held the same portfolio in U Pu's Ministry and U Saw's Ministry—another "Joker Minister."

10. } Senior members of the Civil Service.
11. }

APPENDIX 15.

Resolution 1.

Shwedagon Mass Meeting.

Governor's Executive Council.

It was resolved at the Nay-thu-yain mass meeting that steps be taken by those who took part in the Anti-Fascist movement as well as by those who are keenly desirous of reconstructing the country to form a provisional government forthwith; that it must be a National Provisional Government; consisting of national leaders representatives of the people; and that full powers must be attained to control all the departments, including Foreign Affairs, Defence, Finance, Home Affairs.

With the return of the Governor of Burma on the 15th October 1945, the Military Administration ceased and the civil government was restored. On the 17th October, the Governor announced his proposal in regard to the formation of his Executive Council. On the 19th October, the Governor discussed the matter with the representatives of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.

The League was of the unanimous opinion that what the Governor said fell far short of the legitimate desires of the people. However the League readily expresses its desire to extend its co-operation to the Governor, as sought by him, in forming the Executive Council, with belief that such a co-operation will enable us to consolidate and expand such of the civil liberties and the national freedom as have been achieved by the Anti-Fascist movement; to give immediate relief to the mass of the people who have been in dire distress since the outbreak of war; to mobilise the people's support for reconstructing the country; and to help the Governor convert the Executive Council into a National Provisional Government, that will be able to convene a Constituent Assembly. With these objectives in view, the League finds it necessary to propose—

- (1) that in as much as the League accepts the four nominees of the Governor for his Executive Council, consisting of 15 members, it desires that the Governor accepts its nominees for remaining posts;
- (2) that, the representatives of the League on the Governor's Executive Council are to make the Council respect the wishes of the people, as represented by the people's organizations; and
- (3) that, in the allocation of subjects or departments, the eleven representatives of the League should be placed in charge of such subjects or departments as are required for implementing the expressed objectives of the League.

The Governor, unfortunately, has his own reasons to reject these proposals. He accepted only seven out of the League's eleven nominees and furthermore, expressed, on personal grounds, his unwillingness to accept one of its nominees, U Thein Pe, who had all along been representing the League abroad during the war. As for Home and Judicial Departments, he added that these two departments would be placed under the control of one of his advisers,

Sir Paw Tun, and, therefore, could not be allocated to one of the League's representatives.

For these reasons, there is, at present, a deadlock between the Governor and the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League. The Governor adheres to his wish and does not budge an inch to make a compromise with the people's representatives; what is worse he has, contrary to all expectations, formed the Executive Council on the 2nd November 1945, and has begun to function in a manner inconsistent with his avowed declarations and utterly out of sympathy with the League's expressed desires.

It is, therefore, resolved that (1) this mass meeting registers a protest against the Governor's action and deplores that Fascist tendencies should have swayed the Governor who is here to represent the democratic government of Britain;

(2) This meeting urges His Majesty's Government in Britain to dissolve immediately the present Governor's Executive Council in that it does not command the confidence of the whole country and to accede to the proposals of the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League.

Resolution 2.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

It was unanimously resolved at the Nay-thu-yain mass meeting that a demand be made for the holding, as early as possible, of elections on universal adult suffrage for the convention of a Constituent Assembly with a view to determine the Constitution of Burma.

To achieve this objective it is hereby resolved that (1) a demand be made for the holding of elections forthwith, on the distinct understanding that the Anti-Fascist Peoples' Freedom League is fully prepared to co-operate with the Government in the task of making necessary preparations

for the elections; (2) that the elections be held on the basis of universal adult suffrage, the qualifying age being 18 years and above; (3) that the elections be held for a Constituent Assembly to determine the Constitution of Burma in accordance with national aspirations, and not for a Legislature under the Government of Burma Act, 1935, whereby alien minorities enjoy equal rights.

Resolution 3.

NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION.

It is hereby resolved that this mass meeting strongly objects to the action of the Governor in drawing up the schemes for national rehabilitation and reconstruction in that he has not only afforded no opportunity to the people of Burma to participate in drawing them but also has not published them for public information, and that this mass meeting emphatically demands that these schemes be published for public criticisms and shall not be put into effect without the consent of the people of Burma.

Resolution 4.

GENERAL AMNESTY.

It is hereby received that this mass meeting urges the British Government:—

- (1) to release immediately all the political prisoners now under trial or custody for charges on political or war grounds either before the war or during the Japanese regime or after the return of the British; and
- (2) to declare forthwith a general amnesty in respect of all the political or war offences committed during those periods.

APPENDIX 16.

Gist of Major-General Aung San's Speech.

The purpose of this mass meeting is to tell you what the Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League has done since the last mass meeting held in August, how far it has carried out its programme, what steps it proposes to make to implement its objectives.

The League's immediate objective is to form a National Provisional Government and then to convene a Constituent Assembly.

The Governor does not see his way to accept the proposals of the League, i.e.,

- (1) to appoint its 11 nominees;
- (2) to allocate certain portfolios to its nominees—portfolios required for implementing its objectives.

Hence the deadlock

The Patriotic Burmese Forces have to be incorporated into the Burma Army. There should be no misunderstanding. The Patriotic Burmese Forces are faced with two alternatives (1) disbandment or (2) fight against the British. Patriotic Burmese Forces, therefore, have decided to amalgamate with the Burma Army because fight is not desirable as people in Burma have suffered so much for the last three or four years, and also because Burmans must be trained in military matters in view of national Freedom. Members of Patriotic Burmese Forces and the people should not misconstrue the agreement reached between us and the Supreme Commander.

We want National Provisional Government. We are not satisfied with Governor's Executive Council. What he

said fell far short of our national aspirations but we are prepared to co-operate if the Governor would form his council consisting of national leaders who truly can be said to represent the people. The Governor says that we are Fascist. We say emphatically "No;" our methods are democratic. Our nominees are our representatives and we only issue an instrument of instructions as any democratic party of any democratic country would do. We want to shoulder collective responsibility. If anybody is Fascist, it is the Governor, not we. The Governor says, "There is no legal obligation on my part to form even an Executive Council. No one has a right of representation on the Council." These words show that the Governor is showing fascist tendencies. The Governor's Executive Council is full of his "yes-men." Mr. Tom Driberg M. P. (Labour) has said to that effect in the British Parliament on the third of this month. The Governor's Executive Councillors do not represent the people.

We would pursue our struggle for freedom by peaceful means. The world opinion is behind us. We would make the world know what our aspirations are by peaceful means. But our peaceful struggle must not be mistaken for weakness or cowardice.

The Governor's approach is as old as the approach of the pre-war Governors. He should realise that he can't do anything for this country without our willing co-operation, which we are prepared to give. He must, however, take a new approach. Nobody knows the conditions of the country and the aspirations of the people as well as the national leaders do—national leaders who have united under the banner of Anti-Fascist People's Freedom League. It is we who have organised the Resistance Movement against the Japs—it is we who fought side by side with the Allied Forces. We would co-operate with the Governor with a view to implement our objectives.

It has been said here as well as the British Parliament that the deadlock between us and the Governor is not

because of difference of policy but because of difference of opinion regarding personnel. It is not true. Difference of policy has always been there. We want National Provisional Government. We have never liked the Executive Council. We have offered to co-operate so that we can march towards the Constituent Assembly. The Governor's intention is to hold elections according to 1935 Constitution, whereby the alien minorities enjoy equal rights with the people of Burma. The Legislature formed under the 1935 Act cannot be a Constituent Assembly as it does not represent the people. In short, the difference of policy is clear from the fact that the Governor wants to continue his personal rule and that we want a National Provisional Government and a Constituent Assembly. It is for the world to decide who is in the right. This chapter of our national life will be placed before the bar of history.

It is said in certain circles that we are adopting an uncompromising attitude. This is an absolutely false accusation. We want to reach a compromise with the Governor but that compromise must be such that we can continue to work for national interests. We are fully prepared to co-operate with the Governor to carry out the tasks of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction. The British Government must admit that Britain is not as economically strong as it was before the war. Our co-operation is, therefore, all the more necessary to reconstruct Burma. Without our co-operation, British Government cannot achieve anything in our country. We desire co-operation but responsibility rests both on the Governor and us.

It must be realised that Asiatic consciousness has been brought about by this World War II. Burma's case is not a case to be settled between Burma and British Government. It has assumed an international complexion. The world is watching. Subject nations of Asia will unite to achieve their freedom. In Burma, we will strengthen and stabilise our unity. Next month, there will be an All-Burma A. F. P. F. L. Conference; it will be held in Rangoon. Today's

resolutions are not only for the British Government and people but also for the world.

We would continue our struggle for freedom by peaceful methods. The responsibility for peace and order in our country rests on the British Government as much as on us. When we say British Government, we mean the British Government in Britain and particularly British Governor and all the bureaucrats, big and small, of this country.

We want elections to be held immediately. Lots of excuses are given for the delay. To make it a fair election, let the representatives of the United Nations organisation run them. We would co-operate with the Governor to make all the preparations necessary for the elections, such as preparing electoral rolls. It is possible that all sorts of obstacles will be placed across our path before the elections. There might even be arrests of the national leaders. To make the elections fair, the responsibility rests as much on the Government as on us. The elections must, however, be for a Constituent Assembly.

In conclusion, I would warn the people not to give credence to the rumours set afloat by our enemies. We must be ever on the alert to avoid the pitfalls placed before us. With care but with courage and coolness we would march forward to win our national freedom.