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ADDRESS OF PRESIDENT GENERAL BO MYA ON KAREN NEW YEAR'S DAY

My beloved Karen Nationals!

Today, the 11th of January 1986 is also the 1st day of the month of Thalay. According to the Karen tradition handed down to us by our fore-fathers, it is the New Year's Day of the year 2725 Karen Era. On this auspicious occasion, I would like to wish you all health, wealth and happiness.

There is no denying that we, the Karen people, have all the attributes and qualities of a stable nation. We have our own national tradition which is more than 2,000 years old. We have our own distinct national language and culture. We are mostly living in lands which are distinctly marked off from those of the others. We have our own social system and distinct national characters. In addition to these, we have our own system of counting days, weeks and years - our calendar - which has been part of our long tradition. Like our ancestors, we honour and celebrate the beginning of every new year happily and unitedly.

Traditionally, our fore-fathers observed the occasion with reverence, as well as with joy, wearing new national costumes, gathering together to feast and worship and give charity in accordance with their own faith. Homage was paid to the elders by members of younger generations, and the elders in turn blessed and gave learned advice. People exchanged greetings, sang 'Htas' - the Karen traditional poems - beat gongs, blew 'Kweh' - the Karen traditional horns - and beat 'Klohs' - the Karen traditional drums made of bronze.

We as a nation must steadfastly honour our tradition and at the same time, uphold our language and literature for the perpetuation and development of our national culture.

We the Karens are the first settlers in this land, and this country rightfully belongs to us. When the Burmese chauvinists migrated into this land, they oppressed us and robbed our properties. They gradually took away our occupations and finally our home-land.

The greatest glory and prestige for a nation is to have a country of its own. There is no difference between a nation without a country and a nation in the bondage of slavery. It has been since hundreds of years that the Burmese racists have been oppressing and killing us.

We are not born to be the slaves of the Burmese chauvinists. In this age and time, we believe in the rights of all men to national freedom, equality and the opportunity to strive for advancement. In accordance with the principles of 'Human Rights', we asked for a small portion of our original land to be an independent country of our own. However, the Burmese chauvinists denied our request and went further to commit armed suppression against us. For this reason, we have been involved in an armed revolution up till this day.

My beloved Karen Nationals !

It is the duty of all Karens to regain our rightful land, our country, and our birth-rights. How do Karens fare under the rule of Burmese chauvinists pertaining to the question of freedom, equality and progress? All the Karen schools and institutions of learning have been forcefully confiscated under the Burmese nationalization scheme, which means the Burmanization of them. Karens are not allowed to learn their own language and literature in the schools they have set up. There are covert and overt activities to suppress our progress in every field.

Our enemies, the Burmese chauvinists, employ every means at their disposal to discredit us with out-right lies and misinformation. They employ bribery and favouritism to divide and create dissension among us. They have employed these deceitful and vile practices to dominate and enslave us. We can be certain that they will go on employing these same odious means against us in the future also. Let us be always alert to the enemy's foul tactics and evil machinations to destroy our unity and strength. Let us rally and be united against our mortal enemy.

The only way for our nation to prosper and to be able to stand shoulder to shoulder with other nations in this world is to win freedom and a country of our own. There is no other way.

The long duration of war has brought on us multifarious problems and hardships. However, our salvation lies only in our courageous confrontation against the evil forces, with unity and consolidated effort.

In the course of our struggle for national integrity and national rights, let us firmly maintain and uphold our language, literature and culture, and work diligently for the perpetuation and advancement of them.

Let us, therefore, maintain the tradition and virtues of our ancestors which are honesty, loyalty, diligence, purity of heart, communal cooperation and abundance of good will.

Let our whole nation unite with a single purpose to face the enemy bravely until final victory is won.

May this Karen New Year bring health, wealth and abundant blessing with joy to all of you - the Karen people in Burma - for complete victory !

The evil Burmese chauvinist regime shall surely fall. The just war waged by the Karens shall surely be victorious.

REQUEST TO THE READERS

Readers of the KNU Bulletin are requested to make a voluntary contribution of US \$ 1 or equivalent amount in any currency, except Burmese, for a copy of the Bulletin received. Readers living farther away than Thailand may double that amount. The contribution is to be used strictly for defraying the cost of publication and distribution.

Kindly accept our apologies for being late in bringing out the present issue. In spite of encouragement from near and far, we may have to scale down our ambition concerning the volume and content of our later issues due to lack of time and fund.

Please send the contribution or any communication to the address given below. The address, however, cannot be used for the normal mailing. It is intended for contact in person and, consequently, it will be convenient only for those who live in places not farther away than a day's journey from Kawmoora which is opposite to Maesod District in the Tak Province of Thailand.

Tee Set Mae Ywa Press
Kawmoora (Wangkha), Kawthoolei

A LETTER FROM THE PUBLISHER

In this issue, the President's New Year's Day Address highlights the importance of the day for all the Karen people. It is a day on which all the Karens get together to worship and make merriment, hoping and talking about the future in the most positive terms.

The historical significance of it is that the Karens started counting the year 2725 from the time they entered the country, now known as Burma, from the south-western part of China, preceding the Burmese entry in about the 9th Century A.D. from Tibet through India by 1500 years.

This year, the main hope of the Karens, as well as all the indigenous races in Burma who have been up in arms against Ne Win's military dictatorship is that there will be peace again in the country.

The Karen, Karenni, Mon and Pao peoples have had to wage the war of national liberation against Burmese aggression and domination for more than 36 years. For the Kachins, Palaungs, Shan and Was, the war has been going on for more than 23 years. However, chances for peace in the country are still very slim indeed. It is known that Ne Win's military dictatorship regime has been spending most of its foreign exchange reserve, since 1983, to build a new factory for making a new type of assault rifles. Its propaganda machines have stepped up the slander campaign against the national liberation movements, accusing them of being wreckers and bandits. It has reaffirmed its policy of total annihilation of all the national liberation movements. Its front-lines troops have plans to intensify anti-civilian activities in the Karen territories, this year.

The evidence of Burmese atrocities gathered by Michel Pitron is only a tip of the ice-berg. Anyhow, he had done quite a job considering the short time available for him to stay in our territories. A more complete compilation of Burmese atrocities by a third party is desirable in order to create a wider awareness of the most brutal nature of war waged by Ne Win's regime.

The year 2724 has passed without the collapse of the Karen national movement, contrary to the prediction made by some observers. That in itself is a victory for the Karens. The New Year 2725 sees the Karen National Union told its military organisation, the Karen National Liberation Army, to be better organized, more consolidated and more vigorous to march on to the final victory, with a new spirit and stronger determination.

KARENS AND THEIR NEWSPAPERS

Earliest Publications

As a popular saying that goes, " the newspaper is the eyes and ears of a nation ", the news media is of prime importance for the advancement of a nation. The progress of a nation can be measured in terms of the news organs owned and published by that nation.

The "SAH TU GAW" (Morning Star) newspaper was published in 1841 and it was the first of its kind in the annals of the history of Burma newspaper printed in Sgaw Karen and English and later in Sgaw Karen alone till the beginning of World War II as a monthly publication. There was a temporary closing down during the Japanese era. Within a few months after the British re-occupation of Burma, it was again published in Karen and Burmese. However, soon after Ne Win assumed power, the first and pioneering indigenous newspaper was forcefully closed down by the military regime.

In 1881 Dr. T. Than Bya and his colleagues formed the Karen National Association (KNA).

In 1885 the "DAW KALU" newspaper in Karen and "FAIR PLAY" in English were published by the KNA. This news circulation stopped after the decease of Dr. T. Than Bya.

In 1915, Thra Kah Ser from Shwe Gyin, with the help of his colleagues published the " SAH TU HAH " (EVENING STAR) newspaper. This publication ceased in about the year 1925.

Karen Newspaper Before The Second World War

- (1) Thra G. A. Tudee published privately a Sgaw Karen monthly news periodical "THE SHEPHERD". It was handed over to the Karen Baptist Mission due to financial difficulties. This monthly flourished till the begining of World War II.
- (2) A weekly private newspaper published by Thra Hla Kyaw of Rangoon, the "RECORDER" was circulated until the begining of the Second World War.
- (3) The "CHILDREN'S FRIEND" the voice of Rangoon Karen Christian Endeavour Association was also a monthly news organ published by Thra Pan of Insein.

- (4) The "TAW MEH PAH", a non-religious weekly news organ was published by Sir San C. Po of Bassein.
- (5) The "KAREN MAGAZINE" was published by Thra San Ba. This was a monthly magazine with current news articles, stories, tit-bits of fun, cartoons, photographs, ancient Karen "HTA" verses and poetry.
- (6) "THE BULLETIN" was published by the Insein Karen Seminary once in three months' time. This paper included articles on health and social welfare besides religion.
- (7) "THE SUNRISE" was a monthly news periodical issued by the Toungoo Anglican Church. This paper had news of national affairs, social welfare and religion.
- (8) The "TAW HSOO NYA" (Advance Forward), later known as "Leh Hsoo Nya" (Go Forward) edited and published by S'ra Tun Aung (Father of Mahn James Tun Aung) was a monthly news periodical in Pwo Karen.

Karen News Periodicals after World War II

- (1) The "ETHNIC PEOPLE'S JOURNAL" (Taing Yin Tha) was a monthly issue in Burmese with a stand against "Imperialism" and "Feudalism". This paper was edited by Mahn Win Maung who later became an instrument of the AFPFL and an opponent to the KNU and the Karen national cause.
- (2) The "THU WUNNA TAING" (The Golden Land) was published in 1947. It was the voice of the KNU, the most famous publication that bravely stood against the Burmese Chauvinist policies and the AFPFL regime which instituted a slander campaign against the Karen people. This newspaper had firmly rallied the Karens. The publication ceased due to the outbreak of the armed revolution by Karens.
- (3) "GO FORWARD" a monthly news issue, first published by Thra Raleigh See of Insein and then later taken over by the Karen Baptist Mission is still in circulation.
- (4) "OUR HOME" a monthly women's journal is supervised by Thramu Edith Pyu and is still in circulation. This journal contains domestic science, literature and health for women.
- (5) "THE LIGHT" was published by a young Karen named Saw Larder Dwe. Although

this news organ had been outstanding for the Karen Youth, due to the one-sided support of Moosso Hunter Tha Hmwe it had been liquidated along with Moosso's clique by Ne Win's military regime.

- (6) " THE KAREN VANGUARD JOURNAL " was supervised and published by a group of Karen Youths from the Rangoon University. This publication being a progressive and nationalist in character was liquidated when Ne Win's Military regime took over power.

(Remarks:- Under the present Ne Win's Military Dictatorship "Go Forward" and "Our Home" magazines are being published with great difficulties due to tight regulations imposed on them.)

The Newspapers published by the Karen Revolution

- (1) "HTEE HTA KLONE" was a weekly publication in the Delta regions in place of "THUWUNNA TAING" for the progress of the Karen Revolution. It had to be closed down in 1952.
- (2) "THE STANDARD" edited by Saw Michael Lonsdale was a weekly English issue meant for foreigners and local English reading public. It survived for one year only in 1953.
- (3) "LIBERATION" was issued by the No. 3 Eastern Brigade. This was destroyed during the Min Yan Aung operation in 1956 by the enemy.
- (4) "THE MORNING STAR" was published after the Min Yan Aung military campaign in Pegu Yoma area. It had to be closed down in 1958.
- (5) "THE KNU JOURNAL" was the voice of the KNU party. It had a stand against the imperialist and feudal systems, the Master-Race policies of the AFPFL rulers and Ne Win's Military regime. This publication had to be terminated in 1969.
- (6) At present there exists "Tha Noo Htoo", a journal published by the KNU Central Organisation Department. This journal which is the voice of the KNU was established in the year 1968, to rejuvenate the national unity. An Effort is being made to circulate this publication once in two months.
- (7) The present KNU Bulletin in English has been published especially for foreign readership to promote a better understanding of the cause of Karen Revolution and the current situation in Burma.

BSPP OR BURMA MILITARY DICTATORSHIP PARTY

On March 2, 1962 General Ne Win, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces in Burma, staged a coup d'etat against the government of the Union of Burma under the pretext of saving the Union from disintegration. Then a military junta known as the Revolutionary Council with General Ne Win as chairman and the Revolutionary Government were formed. The Union constitution was abrogated and, thereby, the democratic rights of the Burmese people and any semblance of democratic rights of the indigenous peoples in Burma were abolished.

In an attempt to create a political base, General Ne Win set up the Burmese Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) on July 4, 1962 choosing the word "socialist", an idea, which was more or less popular with the Burmese at that time. All other political parties were banned. Thus Burma has become a one-party state and Ne Win has been ruling the country with an iron hand ever since that time.

From the very beginning, BSPP is a military party manned and managed by the people in the uniform or those who have retired from the service, and Ne Win has been its chairman since its inception. The party is now entering its 24th year of existence. The fifth BSPP congress was convened in August 1985. The executive committee members elected by that congress are as follows :-

(1) Chairman.	U Ne Win	(Retired General)
(2) Vice Chairman	U San Yu	(Retired Lt. General)
(5) General Secretary	U Aye Ko	(Retired Maj. General)
(4) Joint Gen. Secretary	U Sein Lwin	(Retired Brig. General)
(5) Member	General Kyaw Htin	(Present Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces)
(6) Member	Maj. General Saw Maung	(Present Vice Chief-of-Staff of the Armed Forces)
(7) Member	U Chit Hlaing	(Retired Commodore, Navy)
(8) Member	U Saw Pyu	(Retired Chief-of-Staff, Air)
(9) Member	U Sein Tun	(Retired Colonel)
(10) Member	U Tint Swe	(Retired Colonel)
(11) Member	U Tun Tin	(Retired Colonel)
(12) Member	U Tun Yi	(Retired Maj. General)
(13) Member	U Min Gaung	(Retired General)

(14) Member	U Maung Maung Kha	(Retired Colonel)
(15) Member	U Ye Gaung	(Retired Colonel)
(16) Member	U Than Tin	(Retired Colonel)
(17) Member	U Hla Tun	(Retired Brig. General)

As shown above, all the executive committee members of the BSPP are either military men or ex-military men. No civilian has ever been included in that highest organ of the party.

In view of the above facts, we see that dictator Ne Win has kept BSPP strictly to remain as a military party which has been toeing the line of the dictum 'one blood, one voice, one command'.

If, in the beginning, dictator Ne Win had anticipated to make the BSPP as a rallying point for people of ability and initiative from all classes in the country, he was soon in for a miserable disappointment. All the BSPP attracted in large numbers were the self-seeking opportunists and riff raffs who would not succeed anywhere, at anytime.

Anyhow, Ne Win soon played the military card to the full. Since that time, all mass organizations and even sports, cultural and religious associations have become concerns controlled and managed by the military or ex-military men. Millions in secret account have been spent to set up and maintain a wide and efficient net-work of intelligence service to spy on the people. Men from this intelligence service have the power to search, arrest and detain any person without warrant. With such a pervasive power, these intelligence service men go about turning thousands of people suspected of opposition to the military regime or non-cooperation with it, into detention camps each year where the suspects are subjected to mental and physical tortures using the methods not dissimilar to those used by the Nazi Gestapo and Japanese Kempeitai during World War II.

The party runs the government and the country like a military establishment. Most of the top and middle positions in the government offices are given to the military or ex-military men resulting in a military bureaucracy that ignores everything except orders from above. The centralized planning in accordance with the Burmese Way to Socialism, ignoring the reality and needs of the country results in mismanagement, misuse of fund and resources, imbalanced growth and

uneven regional development.

The unemployment problem under the BSPP military regime gets worse and worse with each advancing year. In the 23 years of its rule, the unemployment figure has climbed from a mere 5% to more than 25% of the active labour force. Inflation is raging at a rate of 50%.

The glowing reports about the successes of the four-year development plans are just false propaganda spread by the BSPP military regime. The recent demonetization is a resounding proof to the dismal failure of the regime's economic policies that brought about a financial crisis of the worst nature, prompting a columnist of the Bangkok Post to question the "financial credibility" of Burma for further foreign loans.

In short, Burma has been turned into a police state and an economic basket case by Dictator Ne Win and his military dictatorship party, the BSPP. It is a nation condemned to unrelenting cruelty by a clique of very cruel men, by a ruthless dictator and his comrades drunk with power and all its brutal implications.

In this connection, one may want to know what the fate of the indigenous races in Burma is. Since the BSPP military regime is following the policies of Burmese chauvinism, these people are suffering a fate ten times worse than that of the Burmese. The regime is using the most brutal methods of war to suppress their national movements. Areas where these national movements exist are marked off as black. Each year thousands of innocent civilians found in these areas are tortured and killed. The women folks are molested, properties are looted and villages are burnt down. For these peoples, the Jew Holocaust in Nazi Germany could not have been worse.

Time and again it is said that the people get the kind of government they deserve. However, in Burma, where the most cruel form of military dictatorship using the gun as the main instrument of policy is in power, we take the liberty to wonder whether the reverse is not true.

THE BURMESE SOCIALIST WAY OF INCREASING STATE'S REVENUE

In a surprise announcement on November 3, 1985 the Burmese government ceased the legal tender of 100, 50 and 20 Kyat notes (worth about US\$2.5, 1.25 and 50c. respectively on the black market) leaving only the small change and the 5, 10 and 25 Kyat notes in circulation. In inflation plagued Burma, it means that a farmer wanting to buy a pair of oxen would have to carry a bagful of money with him. A person looking for a house to buy would have to hire a porter to carry the sackful of notes needed.

The immediate effect of the demonetization was the sky-rocketing prices of all commodities. Trade in the whole country came virtually to a stand-still. In frustration, foreign tourists at the airport threw the defunct notes in air like confetti, when the authorities refused to exchange them with usable ones.

The people were allowed to turn in the old notes on the 11th of November. The orders stipulated that only one from each family could turn in the notes. Whatever the amount, that person could change the old notes with the new denomination of 75 Kyats up to a maximum of 5,000 Kyats. The rest had to remain as a deposit in the bank. To get the deposit back, the person concerned had to prove later that the money had been legitimately acquired or face legal actions.

The most spine chilling clause, however, was that anybody known or found to be trying to hand in the notes other than his own or his family had to face a prison term from 6 months to 3 years.

Long lines of queues appeared in front of the banks on November 11, when the citizens had been assured that they could turn in the cancelled notes until the end of the year. To be on the safe side, most of the people turned in 10,000 Kyats or a lesser amount. The run on the banks turned into a stampede, however, when 5 days later, the government issued further orders saying the notes had to be turned in before the end of November, and only 25% of the total amount would be allowed to be changed for legal tender.

It would not be very far from the truth if the outside world thought that the government was trying to stage a comic opera on a nation-wide scale. The issuing of an odd denomination of 75 Kyat note (see "PROFILE OF AN ABSOLUTE DICTATOR") and the way the whole operation of demonetization were handled, bore all the marks of a comedy of errors. The fact is that the story of Burma and its

peoples, since the coming of Ne Win to power, has been a story assuming all the implications of a tragi-comedy.

The laws have become a well known instrument of the Burmese Socialist Government to harry, harass or persecute its own citizens suspected of non-cooperation or opposition.

When the first demonetization was implemented by this same regime in 1964, many who were suspected of 'capitalist crimes' were thrown into jail and kept under detention for many years without trial. That lesson has not been lost on the people.

Some citizens just took out sackfuls of worthless notes in their possession and made a bonfire of them in their own backyards rather than face the questioning by the much feared police of the military intelligence service.

After Ne Win came to power in 1962, all political parties were abolished and the philosophy of the Burmese Way to Socialism was declared as the philosophy of the state. The Burmese Socialist Programme Party (later changed to 'Burma Socialist Programme Party'), was the only party set up in the country. All the banks, mills, factories, business enterprises, news paper establishments, private schools and almost everything in sight was nationalised. The result of this nationalization was mismanagement and dislocation in production and distribution of commodities. All state enterprises became losing concerns and everything including daily necessities such as cooking oil, sugar, salt, soap, chilli etc. became scarce. Within a year, the government's coffer became almost empty. Hence demonetization was implemented as a measure to 'fight against counter-revolutionists and reactionary elements of the capitalists'. Reliable sources said that the government made a profit of more than 400 million Kyats at that time.

After more than 20 years of socialism, the government could not give the same reasons for the latest demonetization. This time it was a measure 'to fight against hoarders of black money and black marketeers'. Since there were more 100 and 50 Kyats notes in circulation and since the 20 Kyat note was also included in the demonetization, knowledgeable sources estimated that the government would make a profit of more than 1,500 million Kyats, this time.

A government demonetising popular units of currency issued by itself is

plainly robbing its own citizens of their hard-earned wealth,, No responsible government would contemplate, let alone take, such a drastic and depraved measure to replenish its coffer. Now the Burmese Socialist Government is guilty of such a heinous crime as a result of gross mismanagement at a high level.

Since the year 1963, the Burmese government has been spending more and more money on its military machine in order to destroy the identities of the indigenous races and rob the vast natural resources. In spite of the Burmese Government's efforts to destroy the national movements of the indigenous races of Burma, they have become stronger and stronger over the years. Instead of admitting defeat and relinquishing its wrong policies of domination and conquest by force, the Burmese Socialist Government has follhardily persisted in its destructive policies up to the present day. Hence, it has had to rob its own citizens shamelessly not once, but twice, in a space of 20 years.

It has yet to learn that negotiation and accomodation in the best tradition of democracy are the best policy for peace, unity and progress in the country.

PROFILE OF AN ABSOLUTE DICTATOR

Early Beginings

To understand the present-day politics in Burma, it is necessary to know the personality and background of the absolute dictator Ne Win, who is still ruling the country by fiat, though he has assumed the position of chairmanship of the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP).

After failing to finish his second year in college, Ne Win joined the postal service as a clerk and dabbled in the politics of Burmese national movement in pre-World War II days of British Burma. He was one of the "Thirty Comrades", the radical Burmese nationalists, who sneaked out of the country to organize anti-British activities under the aegis of the Japanese facists, who were also preparing war against the British. When the victorious Japanese Imperial Army marched into Burma after the fall of Singapore in 1942, Ne Win was in the vanguard as an officer of the hastily formed Burma Independence Army (BIA) which was responsible for the atrocities against the Karens in Papun District and the Irrawaddy Delta areas. He eventually rose to the rank of a colonel,

second-in-command to Major General Aung San who was Commander-in-Chief of the Burma Defence Army (BDA), as the reorganized BIA was known.

On March 27, 1945, when the Japanese in Burma were almost defeated by the Allied Forces, BDA turned against its former mentors and became a party to Japanese resistance forces in the country.

When the British reorganized the Burma Army after the war in 1946, about 40% of the BDA troops and officers was taken into its ranks. Ne Win was given the rank of a major in this army.

Rise to Power

When Burma gained her independence in January 1948, the Anti-Facist Freedom League (AFPFL) came into power. The Communist Party of Burma (CPB) immediately started denouncing the independence as a "fake". CPB went underground in March of the same year when it was declared an unlawful association by the AFPFL Government. Like all the old-time radical Burmese nationalists, Ne Win had been much swayed by the leftist ideology, though he had a very superficial idea about either Marxism or Leninism. A number of his old comrades went underground to join the CPB. Before doing so, they came to urge him to join the insurrection.

He Win told them to go first, promising them to come later.

Events took a drastic turn when the Karen rebellion broke out in January 1949. The Chief-of-Staff of the Burma Armed Forces, General Smith Dun, a Karen, was forced to retire and Ne Win was given the post. The rise from the position of a lowly major to the position of a commanding general in a space of three years, was quite a heady experience. However, all had been foretold by an astrologer who even predicted that he would, one day in the future, become head of the state of Burma. Starting from those days, his belief in the mysticism of astrology had been enhanced to the point of a religious fanatic. Even since he became the absolute dictator of Burma, Ne Win, never makes important decisions on matters of state, like initiating a new law, changing the policy or negotiating with a foreign power, without first consulting with the astrologer.

Astrology, His Guiding Star

In 1970, when the situation in the country failed to improve after 8 years of Burmese Way to Socialism, Ne Win went to see the astrologer. He was advised

to shift his policy to the right. Knowing that he would have to relinquish most of his power if he shifted to the right, he asked the astrologer again whether there was no alternative to that course. He was told that at least he had to make a gesture. That gesture was a new motor-vehicle regulation requiring the drivers to keep to the right of the road.

One may ask that, inspite of He Win's pathological hatred for all his rivals why is he keeping San Yu so prominently as the second nan? In Burmese "Ne" means "sun" and "San" means "moon". The prediction of the astrologer is that the two have to go together and if one falls, the other shall surely follow suit. However, Ne Win is taking no chances. Though he has given San Yu the position of head of state, he makes sure that there is not a single San Yu's man in important positions of government, as well as the party*

In a world that has become used to counting money in terms of 10 and 100 or the multiple of them, the issue of the uncomfortable denomitation of currency of 75 Kyat note is also linked with Ne Win's belief in the mysticism of astrology. However good medicine or medical treatment he was getting, in order to live to be a 100, he was advised by the astrologer to issue a currency denomination in conformity with his present age. So, out come the 75 Kyat notes.

Megalomania

One well known fact is that He Win is given to frequent temper tantrums. It is said that, in these out-bursts, he is capable of shooting up his own body guards or kicking the faces of his own aides. Medical experts diagnose this megalomaniac behaviour as the case of syphilis germs going to his brains. Most agree with this medical opinion since Ne Win is also noted for wining, dining and womanizing quite liberally in his younger days.

This disease, affecting his personal behaviour as well as his way of thinking, often leads him to make erratic policies and decisions of the state of Burma, which he rules with absolute power. The peremptory dismissals of his heir apparents, the sudden decision of Burma to get out of the non-aligned movement, his construction of a grandiose building to house the parliament while most of his countrymen are living in poverty, the massacre of the student demonstrators in 1962. the massacre of starving Arakanese villagers in 1967. the massacre of

worker in 1974 and the demonstrators at U Thant's funeral in the same year etc. can only be understood in this light.

So long as He Win lives, in order to understand the bizarre actions and decisions of the Burmese Socialist Government, one must bear in mind that these decisions are made by a dictator given to megalomaniac fits who depends on astrology rather than a sound reasoning based on facts and figures to guide the nation deeper into poverty and chaos.

BURMESE ATROCITIES

Evidence of atrocities and discriminations committed by the Burmese troops and authorities against the Karens has been published in a book form by Michel Pitron, an official of the Amnesty International, in November 1985. The report bears the title of "VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS BY BURMESE AUTHORITIES IN THE KAREN TERRITORIES".

The author stays in the Karen territories from August 12 to August 31, 1985 in order "to appreciate as clearly, precisely and objectively as possible, the political, economic and social situation of the country". He met Karen people from various backgrounds including the Prime Minister and the President of Kawthoolei. "In the present report," said the author in the preface, "I have limited myself to the presentation of evidence of violation of human rights against the Karen people by the Burmese Authorities from a military and civil point of view".

It is the opinion of the author that the Burmese Army applies a policy of terror and destroys properties and massacres people, in order to force the population to flee. Generally, Burmese soldiers enter the villages, destroy them, as well as the paddy fields and livestock and kill or torture some inhabitants "as an example". "Karens are persecuted in Burma simply because of their nationality, which is indicated on their identity cards. The Karens are under constant surveillance by the Burmese Intelligence Services".

A typical story of atrocity and looting by the Burmese is the evidence given by a 50 years old woman named Naw Kwah of Kyaw Ta Lay Kho village :-

" When Burmese soldiers entered our village they seized everybody. Those who ran away were shot. I saw them shoot Pah Pweh, Pah Kya Lay and Pah Maung Myaing to death. Naw Eh Pu was tied up and dragged along by the Burmese soldiers. He was so old and weak that he could not keep up with them. He was beaten to death before our very eyes. The Burmese soldiers burned down our houses and rice granaries. They also set 400 baskets of polished rice ablaze. The soldiers looted everything, from clothes to utensils and tobacco etc. They ate up all our livestock they could get. They bombed the village and surrounding forests with mortars almost everyday. We had to run away empty handed".

There are 31 more similar personal testimonies and stories of discrimination in towns and cities told by those who had been personally involved.

A list of the names of persons, with short remarks, who had been killed or whose properties had been looted or destroyed by the Burmese troops covers 9 pages of the report.

The report concludes with a reproduction of the statement issued by the Central Standing Committee of the Karen National Union on September 10, 1985 the concluding paragraph of which says "Under the prevailing circumstances, therefore, if Ne Win's BSPP military regime should have a sincere and honest desire for the national unity of all indigenous races and thereupon, the longevity of internal peace, the BSPP should resolve the issues ,with the revolutionary forces fighting for their national liberation, through political means".

Victory at all costs, victory in spite of
all terror, victory however long and hard
the road may be; for without victory
there is no survival.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1985

A Long-Running Ethnic Rebellion Being Run Out of Forests of Burma

By BARBARA CROSSKEY

Special to The New York Times

MAE SOT, Thailand — In the rugged, forested hills of eastern Burma across the river from here, the Burmese Army is closing in on one of the world's largest remaining and least known separatist struggles — the Karen rebellion.

Thousands of civilians from Karen State in Burma have fled across the Salween River in the last few months to seek refuge in Thailand.

They say they are running from the shooting and burning of their villages and from a forced-labor portage system that the advancing Burmese are using to move arms and equipment across difficult, mountainous terrain.

Between 15,000 and 20,000 Karens are now living in a string of refugee camps stretching north from Mae Sot to the confluence of the Irtan and Salween rivers, where the rebellion and its leaders, Gen. Bo Mya, have headquarters.

Fighting Since 1948

The Karens, members of a Chinese-Thai ethnic group, have been fighting since 1948, when Burma became independent from Britain. In effect, many but not all Karens, who represent between 10 and 15 percent of the population of Burma, have never recognized the Burmese Government.

Some refugees bring accounts of Burmese torture and atrocities. These charges are hard to confirm since victims of such violence are not appearing for medical care, medical workers say, and few come forward with first-hand testimony.

But many have experienced, and talk about, forced marches without food, and the emptying of villages as Burmese troops move people into strategic areas where they can be controlled.

At the refugee settlement of Kaimay, about 60 miles north of here, 26-year-old Ngai Hsu said she and her husband, Pao Wun, 36, fled their home in

early October because "the Burmese want to make our village into a base."

On the Burmese side of the Salween, fewer than half a dozen Karen military organizations hold out against inter-military bombardment and a gradual loss of communications as Burma's troops seek to isolate the outposts from one another and from their sources of money and logistical support.

Two Tribes Sabotaged

In May and July, sabotage attacks on two Burmese trading — both carrying troops, the Karens say — brought brief worldwide attention. In the second attack, for which called Karen leaders were publicly deny responsibility, a mine set under the truck between Burma's capital and Mandalay blew a locomotive and six cars of the rails, killing dozens of people.

In recent weeks, the Karen rebellion has come under closer scrutiny from the Thai Army because several fugitive Karens were discovered fighting with the guerrillas, who were being battered by what they describe as the heaviest Burmese attack this year.

A French national was killed by the Burmese, and an Australian was wounded, Thailand, carried out to upper, delicate relations with Burma, does not want to appear to be allowing foreigners to cross this country to join an anti-Burmese rebellion.

Karen military leaders here say they are not recruiting mercenaries but their small force, though to number 4,000, down from 10,000 a decade or more ago. They say the outposts are adventures who have about them through Soldier of Fortune and other paramilitary magazines and who volunteer to help in guerrilla training.

Surgeously Anti-Communist

For the past part, however, the Karens have been fighting an unrelenting war. They are strongly anti-Communist when many separatist

movements have taken on more left-wing, Marxist ideologies that draw at least publicly and support abroad.

"When the Burmese go to the West, they tell lies about us, they call us Communists," Col. Taw Elin, a Karen nationalist commander, told a reporter taken to his bandaged headquarters on the Burmese side of the Salween.

"What we want is pluralism — a genuine union of states on a equal footing," he said. "It is the Burmese who are trying to force a socialist system on everybody."

The Karens get little foreign aid, help except for humanitarian assistance from a few organizations and Western missionary families.

Many Karens are Protestant Christians, converted by Buddhist missionaries while under British rule. They have names like David, Walter, Lytle, Robert, and Joshua. Many Karens are Buddhists or animists, like the majority of the people of Burma.

Alfred of the British against the Japanese occupation in World War II, the Karens believed they would be rewarded with considerable autonomy within an independent postwar United Kingdom. In their view of history, the self-interest of their people precluded the movement of ethnic Burmese into the area, giving them the right to some control of their homeland.

By 1948, civil war was under way to establish a Karen state, called Kawthale, "The Land of Flowers" in the Karen language.

The fortunes of the Karens have risen and fallen since, depending on the ability of the central Government to deal with their insurrection. The conflict has been one of a battle of ethnic and

ideological rebellions that have kept at most all the national borders out of Myanmar's control.

Harassed but never defeated in more than three decades of skirmishing, the Karens built a strong economic base by selling or collecting leaves on teak, gemstones, cattle and other products smuggled out of Burma through their territory. They also taxed, at 5 percent, the return trade in smuggled consumer goods from Thailand that Bangkok's markets grew to depend on.

Corruption flourished on both sides of the border, and trading seriously disrupted the trade carried on by human porters or elephant caravans. During the Burmese city of Mandalay with this town and other Thai border centers.

Over the last two years, however, the Government of Gen. Ne Win, who has ruled Burma since 1962, apparently decided to put an end to the Karen insurrection.

General Ne Win has so far continued militarily and economic strategy against the Karens. The latter has set up a recent severing of traditional trade routes has done is evident in the guerrillas' dwindling supplies of weapons. They are learning, in effect, said, to improvise. Mines are made of bamboo tubes, and they are trying to produce explosives from natural substances.

The success of the Burmese campaign is also apparent in the empty shops and among numerous merchants in this once-booming trading and smuggling center. This month, for the first time in memory, several weeks passed without porters getting through from Mandalay and Rangoon to one or another of the cross-state river-crossing points, a Karen refugee said. His story was confirmed by shopkeepers.

If the 35-year-long rebellion collapsed, would the Karens be able to negotiate an accord with Rangoon?

"That depends on General Ne Win," said David Wayne Thabaw, a Karen leader with a service degree from Rutgers University. Asked to believe in a peace, he thought for a while and answered, "Switzerland."

KAREN REVOLUTION AND THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS

The New York Times

Founded in 1861

ADOLPH S. OCHS, Publisher 1896-1906
ARTHUR HAYS SULZBERGER, Publisher 1906-1961
CARL L. BENTSON, Publisher 1961-1963

THE NEW YORK TIMES, FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29, 1985

Letters

The Karen People in Burma Are More Than an Ethnic Group

To the Editor:

Your Nov. 8 article on the Karen-Burma war skirted and clouded several important issues behind this 37-year-long conflict. As portrayed, the Karen are an "ethnic group" within Burma's territory who are either fighting a "rebellion," an "insurrection" or a "separatist struggle" against the Government.

But like the Apaches, who were neither rebels nor separatists, the Karen perspective from the other side of the frontier is very different. The Karen are a people (four to five million population) who have their own nation, government and armed forces. They never agreed to be incorporated into Burma, and as a result they have been forced to fight a long defensive war against Burma.

Rangoon is waging two wars: one against the Burma Communist Party, which seeks to topple Gen. Ne Win's Government and his "Burmese Way to Socialism"; and another war against several indigenous nations that seek to stop and reverse the Burmese invasion and occupation. The Karen are one of the largest and best

organized of 11 indigenous peoples threatened by forced incorporation and assimilation into the Burmese Socialist state.

In 1976 nine of these indigenous peoples formed the National Democratic Front (Arakan, Kachin, Karenni, Karen, Mon, Pa-O, Paloung, Shan and Wa), which represents a total population of some 7.5 million (one-fourth of "Burma"), and controls over 30 percent of what Rangoon asserts is the Burmese state. Each of the nine N.D.F. nations has its own armed defense force, with the Karen National Liberation Army being the largest.

Rangoon's position is that these peoples are dissident minorities ("hill tribes") at the sovereign and economic margins of the Burmese state, and that the Burma Socialist Program Party Government has the right and the power to consolidate, develop and defend "national territory." In opposition to this, the Karen, along with other indigenous peoples, maintain that they are an independent people with their own government and national territory that they will

defend against Burmese attempts to invade, occupy and annex.

Burma and many other third-world states that were formed on the outlines of imposed colonial territories have become the new colonialists and imperialists against independent and unconsenting indigenous nations and peoples. It is ironic, perhaps, that the Karen people are actually fighting to join Burma as a self-governing autonomous territory within a federated union of different peoples, which includes the Burmese.

While more than half of the world's 45 hot wars involve indigenous nations against internationally recognized states, all of the rules of war and rights of self-determination are established by states to protect states. Internationally, indigenous nations have almost no rights; if they resist a state's military and economic onslaught, indigenous defense forces are labeled "rebels," "separatists" or "terrorists."

BERNARD NIETZSCHMANN
Professor of Geography
University of California
Berkeley, Calif., Nov. 10, 1985

HALF-YEARLY MILITARY SITUATION REPORT FOR 1985/86 (FROM 1ST JUNE 1985 TO 30TH NOVEMBER 1985)																			
MILITARY ZONE	ENEMY LOSSES										OWN LOSSES								Remarks On Enemy's Casualties & Losses
	Total Enemy Attacks	Total Own Attacks	Total Own Mine Wars	Killed	Wounded	Surrender	Captured	Total S. Arms	Total Ammos.	Total Magazines	Shells & Bombs	Killed	Wounded	Surrender	Captured	Total S. Arms	Total Ammos		
No. 1	7	38	13	43	63	-	1	16	475	5	3	11	6	-	1	12	5440	1 Coy Comdr & 1 Sgt among killed. 1 Cpl among wounded. 7 died of cholera; 5 drowned.	
No. 2	1	9	1	8	10	2	-	5	410	17	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1 Lt & 1 L/Cpl among killed. 2 drowned with weapons.	
No. 3	10	21	69	52	43	-	-	1	-	-	-	7	7	-	-	6	30	1 Maj. among killed. 1 Coy Comdr. among wounded. 1 large 3 small mills destroyed.	
No. 4	3	44	4	42	28	3	-	24	1078	38	19	3	4	-	-	-	-	1 Coy Comdr among killed 1 Column Comdr (Maj) & 1 I.O. among seriously wounded.	
No. 5	3	29	3	56	97	-	-	17	1249	27	20	-	-	-	1	-	-	1 Column, 1 Coy, 2 Pln Comdrs, 1 S.Lt. 2y/Os & 2 WCOs among killed. 1 Coy, 2 Pln Comdrs, 2 W/Os & 3 WCOs among wounded.	
No. 6	10	71	58	213	358	6	-	12	2370	75	28	3	5	-	-	1	-	1 Coy, 2 S.Lts, 3 Sgts & 1 Cpl among wounded.	
101 Pn	17	26	18	65	147	-	-	4	420	19	10	9	22	-	-	-	-	1 Coy Comdr (Capt) & 1 Sgt among killed.	
Papua Area	1	49	17	56	39	-	1	3	470	2	2	1	-	-	-	2	-		
TOTAL	52	287	183	535	785	11	2	82	6472	183	82	34	44	-	2	23	5470		

BATTLE FIELD REPORTS FOR DECEMBER 1985

No. 1 Military Zone. Thaton District

In a total of five minor actions, our troops killed 5 and wounded 12 enemy troops. One enemy outpost, one bridge and a truck were destroyed. One G3 rifle, 120 rounds, 7 G3 magazines, 2 hand-granades and some military equipment were captured.

On December 10, 1985 an enemy company commander, Aung Shwe, of No. 90 Infantry Battalion was shot and killed by two of his own men. The two fled after the killing.

Our troops captured one of them on December 14, a private Sr. No., 561083 with 1 G3 rifle, 780 rounds and 6 magazines. On December 19, the other, also a private, Kawk Sein, Sr. No. 496148 surrendered to our troops with 1 G4 rifle, 160 rounds, 8 magazines and 1 hand-grenade.

No. 2 Military Zone, Toungoo District

On December 3, our troops killed 1 and wounded 4 enemy troops in a minor action in Thandaung Township.

No. 3 Military Zone, Nyaunglebin District

Anti-personnel mines killed 5 enemy troops and wounded 4 including one porter in this area.

No. 4 Military Zone, Mergui-Tavoy District

In a small-scale ambush on December 5, our troops killed 2 and wounded 4 enemy troops. One G3 rifle and 120 rounds of ammunition were captured.

No. 6 Military Zone, Pa-an District

By guerilla actions, our troops killed 2 and wounded 6 enemy troops at three different places.

In small-scale actions at three different places, our troops killed 13 enemy troops including one lieutenant and wounded 23 including one second lieutenant. In these actions, our troops also captured 2 enemy village council members, 1 G4 rifle, 200 rounds of ammunition and some military equipment.

Land mines in this area killed 1 and wounded 10 enemy troops. A captain was among the wounded. Of the wounded, 7 had a leg each blown off. An enemy truck was also damaged by our land mines.

101ST Special Battalion Area

In a guerilla action staged by our troops, 1 enemy soldier from No. 33 Bn was killed.

Our combined forces including NDF troops, initiated three small-scale actions in this area killing 12 and wounding 64 enemy troops. There were one platoon commander and one column commander among the dead and the wounded respectively. The arms and ammunition captured were 3 G3 rifles with 600 rounds, 1 G4 with 125 rounds, 1 .30 M1 carbine with 40 rounds, 1 pistol, 3 81mm mortar shells and 20M79 mortar rounds. Land mines in this area killed 1 and wounded 3 enemy troops. Two of the wounded had a leg each blown off. Land mines also damaged 2 enemy trucks and 1 D4 bull-dozer, Our demolition squad blew up 2 bridges on the enemy's communication line in this area.

The actions in Pa-an District were mainly against the enemy troops trying to resupply the enemy laying siege against our camps in Mawpokay and Maela.

20TH Battalion Area, Papun District

In a guerilla action, a force from the Mining Department killed 2 and wounded 1 enemy troops near the wolfram mining town of Mawchi. In small-scale action, Ta-doh-wah column killed 1 and wounded 2 enemy troops.

In a series of action, our troops from the 20th Battalion inflicted casualties of 4 dead and 6 wounded on the enemy column from No.19 and 30 Bns. The enemy column was 500 strong, making a long range penetration towards Salween River. A separate attack on an enemy outpost killed 3 enemy troops. One nurse and 5 enemy militia troops were captured.

Reports for December 1985 given above are incomplete, as all reports have not reached us in time due to difficulty in communication. The late reports will be given in the next issue of the Bulletin if circumstances allow.

A summary of the above reports gives the figures of enemy casualties and material losses as follows:-

- | | | |
|------------------------------|------|---------------------------|
| 1. Total number of killed | 53 | |
| 2. " " " wounded | 140 | |
| 3. " " " troops captured | 6 | |
| 4. " " " small arms captured | 13 | |
| 5. " " " ammunition captured | 2145 | assorted small-arm rounds |
| | 3 | 81mm mortar shells |
| | 20 | M79 mortar rounds |
6. One bull-dozer and 4 trucks damaged or destroyed.
7. 3 bridges blown up.

FIFTH BASIC MEDICAL TRAINING COURSE

The 5th Basic Medical Training Course, sponsored by the Karen National Liberation Army (Medical Branch) was given at the 6th Brigade Headquarters for a period of 6 months, from 4th June 1985 to 26th December 1985. Seventy six trainees, ranging in age from 19 to 35 years, with secondary education, from all over the Karen Revolutionary areas attended the training.

The course includes the subjects of medicine given by Col. Dr. Singh, obstetrics given by Lt. Col. Dr. Kho Thaw, surgery given by Lt. Col. Dr. Marta and nursing care given by Nursing Chief, Lt. Col. Tha Hser.

Seventy two trainees - 47 men and 25 women completed the course. The graduation ceremony was held on the 26th of December 1985 at 8 am. Four students passed in the First Division, 8 in the Second Division and 9 in the Third Division. Prizes were given to Naw Thi Htoo of the 6th Brigade (1st prize), Saw Ter Nay Klay also of the 6th Brigade (2nd prize) and Saw Willie of the 2nd Brigade (3rd prize).

Selection of students for Medical Diploma Course of 5 years is made from those who have passed the Basic Medical Training Courses, with at least a service of one year in various military zones. Graduates of the Medical Diploma Course are awarded the Diploma of Medicine.

PHOTO CAPTIONS

- Photo 1: Close-up view of excision and removal of kiloid performed by a surgi-team of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA) Medical Branch at the 6th Brigade Hospital in Paloo.
- Photo 2: The prize winners of the 5 Basic Medical Course. Standing in the back is Dr. Marta, lecturer in surgery. Front row, left to right are Saw Ter Nay Klay (2nd), Naw Thi Htoo (1st) and Saw Willie (3rd).
- Photo 3: Graduation ceremony of the 5 Basic Medical Training Course (1985) held at the 6 Brigade Headquarters.
- Photo 4: Trainees of Wireless Operator Course (1985) at the 6th Bde. H.Q.
- Photo 5: Excision and removal of a bullet lodged in the back of a patient, performed by a surgical team headed by Dr. Kho Thaw at the KNLA Base Military Hospital.
- Photo 6: Heavy weapon training given at the KNLA General Headquarters.
- Photo 7-8: 75mm recoilless rifle and 81mm mortar training given at the H.Q. of Special 101st Bn.
- Photo 9: Heavy weapon trainees seen after graduation at the 6th Bde. H.Q.
- Photo 10: National Democratic Front (NDF) troops seen at the front receiving enthusiastic support of the people.
- Photo 11: KNLA detachment that shot down, in 1983, two of the helicopters given to the Burmese Army by the US Government for the purpose of narcotic suppression work. In contravention to the agreement between the two Governments, the Burmese Army used the helicopters against the Karens who have never been involved in the narcotic drug production or trade.
- Photo 12: The young French couple Jacques and Martine Bossues at the press conference held on their release by the KNLA. We remember them their understanding, good-will and courage.
- Photo 13: Forty young men and women in Kawmoora, before baptism according to the Christian faith, seen with two ordained pastors (front row, middle).
- Photo 14: The 40 receiving baptism.
- Photo 15: Kawmoora Dance & Drama Troupe seen during water festival.
- Photo 16: Karen traditional group dance of " Doun " at a New Year celebration.
- Photo 17: Some troops from the KNLA 19th Battalion helping farmers with rice trans-plantation at the front.





