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PRESIDENT GENERAL BO MYA SPEECH ON THE 36th ANNIVERSARY OF
MARTYR'S DAY ,THE 12th OF AUGUST 1986

Dear Karen Nationals and Revolutionaries !

This day of the 12th of August is the day on which President Saw Ba U Gyi sacrificed his life for his nation and the day has been designated as the Martyrs' Day. On this day we commemorate with remembrance not only for President Saw Ba U Gyi but also for all the Karens who sacrificed their lives for the independence of their nation.

Since many generations, we the Karens have been subjugated and oppressed in countless barbarous ways by the Burmese chauvinists. After the end of the Second World War, our leaders and people agitated for independence and a Karenland in a peaceful manner. The chauvinist Burmese rulers, instead of acceding to our appeal, started to commit armed suppressions against us. In order to avoid national destruction and death, we had to resort to armed resistance for national survival and an independent country.

In the fight for independence, many of our national leaders, fighting men and ordinary people had valiantly confronted the enemy and given up their lives for the national survival and the mother-land. They are patriots of the highest order who are uncommonly valiant and loyal to their nation and who have made the supreme sacrifice of giving up their lives for the independence of their people. Their sacrifices can only be regarded as the most noble, admirable and estimable and, being so, we have set aside this day to commemorate and honour them.

It is not yet sufficient just to commemorate the glories of our Martyrs. Our annual gathering is to renew and strengthen our resolutions and vows to complete the job that they had to leave unfinished so that their blood that had been shed, and their lives that had been sacrificed shall not be in vain.

Accordingly, let us all be loyal to our martyrs; let us all be earnest patriots; let us stand firm in our revolution with courage and unity until all our enemy, the Burmese Chauvinists, are completely destroyed.

On this occasion of commemorating our martyrs, we also remember and glorify the fathers and mothers, the beloved brothers and sisters and the wives and children whom they had left behind. On this day we also pay our respects to our soldiers and people who are maimed for life in the course of our revolution, some who have lost their eyes, some who have lost their limbs, some who can no longer work for a living due to the enemy's tyranny. All these persons are also true

patriots. They are those who are loyal to their people and have paid highly in the fight for independence. Let us honour them with due respects not only in words, but also in deeds.

We are fighting against the Burmese chauvinists, their evil system and practices. Let us beware and keep clear of the evil practices, system and ideology of the Burmese chauvinists and let us establish the national democratic system, that guarantees unity, prosperity and peace. Let us establish a peaceful and prosperous state of Kawthoolei that will shine forth in the world with fine attributes such as honesty, peace and justice.

In order to realise the Karenland of Kawthoolei, as mentioned above, it is necessary for all of us to have patriotism, courage, loyalty and to be ready to sacrifice everything in the performance of our work and duties like the martyrs we are honouring today. If all our fighters and our entire people have these four good virtues of the martyrs, I can boldly say that we shall definitely achieve an early victory.

May the entire Karen people be emancipated from all forms of oppression by the Burmese chauvinists and may there be an early attainment of our Karenland of Kawthoolei!

- The integrity and courage of the Karen people shall surely lead to victory.
- Burmese chauvinism and the evil BSPP regime shall surely fall!

* * * * *

A MESSAGE FOR THE FAMILY MEMBERS OF OUR MARTYRS

On this 36th Anniversary of our Martyr's day I wish to express my love, concern, gratitude and best wishes to all the family members of our martyrs.

Sharing your great loss and having much affection and regards for you, I am tendering my gratitude and condolences on behalf of the Central Kawthoolei Women's Organisation.

Dear family members of our martyrs, we are very much indebted to you and take great pride in your unflinching patriotism and your virtuous aspiration for the independence of your people. We are proud and inspired by your example of encouraging, out of loyalty and resolution, your loved ones to take up arms and fight for the independence and liberation of your people.

Some of you may be young mothers who have to nurse and nurture your young ones, some of you may be the mothers of the only sons whom you depend upon, some

of you again may be the sisters of the only brother upon whom you relied on. I am aware that most of you had to go through untold hardships due to the loss of your loved ones.

You had encouraged your loved ones disregarding your own welfare, to go and fight against the enemy perpetrating atrocities and heinous crimes against our people who had to suffer endless miseries and hardships. The consequent loss of the lives of your loved ones in the fight against our mortal enemy is a selfless and honourable sacrifice made by you.

Dear family members of our martyrs, we understand the heart breaking experience and deep sorrow you had to go through at the time of the loss of your loved ones. However, I would like you to take up courage and take comfort in the fact that the martyrs, your loved ones, had been the ones who had chosen the path of honour and glory. After recovering from the heart-rending grief, I am sure that your hearts will be filled with new hope and new spirit just as the memory of them fill our hearts with courage and determination and make us proud to be fellow-partisans of such precious heroes.

We see these martyrs who had fought the enemy valiantly until their last breath, as the ones who had cleared and prepared the way for us to our national independence. They have served as our torch-bearers showing our way to the final victory and the fruits of independence.

Dear family members of the martyrs, you have done a great deal for the cause of our national revolution by giving up the ones you loved. The sacrifices made by the martyrs shall not be in vain for I am certain that there will be a day when you will witness the fruits of the labour and sacrifices of the martyrs in the form of peace, progress and prosperity for the coming generations. I hope that you will share your courage, your good-will and your high morale with the others so that they may come to appreciate and understand more about the spirit of good-will of the revolutionaries, and the love and the sacrifices made by the martyrs.

We know that the Burmese Chauvinists who have been oppressing us for many generations will never restrain from their barbarous tendencies and activities against us. On the contrary, they are scheming to destroy us with whatever means they possess to exterminate us and to wipe us out from this universe. On account of the shedding of pure and sacred blood, the existence and survival of the Karen have been sustained and ensured. We therefore commend you, the family members of our martyrs, for your love, support and your patriotic zeal, and we thank you for your loved ones who had been true to our cause to their last breath. We

honour you and take pride for your patriotism and morale. May your tears and sorrows bring joys as you see the liberation of your people and the independence of your nation one day. For all of us to attain independence, is my ardent wish on this day of commemorating our beloved martyrs.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Mr. Editor,

I have received a copy of KNU Bulletin No. 4 and read with great interest the article on "who really killed Aung San".

There is one letter however on which the author does not appear to have noted the full significance; this is the letter from Gen. Sir Neil Fitchie to Field Marshall Montgomery, dated 7 Aug 1947. This appear in Prof:Tinker's two volumes on Burma's Road to Independence; let us quote the relative paragraphs verbatim.

"Understand that Aung San was informed by CID of plot against Ministers for 20 July, and in consequence was actually discussing with ministers large scale arrests including U Saw at moment of assassinations. It is important to note that arms used for assassinations were of a different type to those obtained from the AOD.

So what does this imply? Aung San was told that U Saw planned to assassinate him on 20 July. This information would have been relayed to all senior police and army officers and the governor. U Saw got word that his plot was discovered and put forward his plan by 24 hours to 19 July. This caught everyone out and Aung San was duly assassinated.

That seems an incredible risk to have taken, but the story roughly hangs together, so let us presume for the moment that it was true. What would U Saw have done after the assassination? Sit in his house celebrating with the assassins knowing that the police would come straight to his house and arrest them? Of course not. Yet that is what the official govt:statement claimed and that even having known of the plot in advance, they waited until 5 pm before arresting him, thus giving him seven hours to get away.

This of course is quite absurd. Either the story of arresting U Saw at 5 pm while he was celebrating was a fabrication, or the information that U Saw planned to assassinate Aung San was a fabrication. Probably both statements were untrue and this proves to me more

than any other place of evidence that U Saw was innocent.

Don't forget that at his trial his counsel, who was Mr. E. H. Curtis-Bennett's son incidentally, did not have access to this letter from Gen. Neil Ritchie, or he would have most certainly have used it in his defence.

There is one error that I noticed in the article. The weapons found in the lake behind U Saw's house and used as evidence against him were Sten guns, not Bren guns. The information that these weapons could be found in the lake came from U Kyaw Nyein. Sten guns fire a 9 mm bullet, whereas the actual murder weapon was an American .45 Tommy gun, a point noted in General Ritchie's letter.

Yours faithfully,

H.A. Stonor

STATEMENT BY THE KAREN NATIONAL UNION (KNU) TO THE ENTIRE PEOPLE

The decision of the Karen National Union (KNU) with regard to the joint statement and agreements of 4 March 1986 issued by the National Democratic Front (NDF) and the Burma Communist Party (CPB) is as follows:-

1. Regarding the national question the KNU is fighting and demanding for "Equality and Self-determination" which is the birthrights of the indigenous peoples. The CPB is upholding the principle of "Equality and Self - administration" and practicing chauvinism. The two policies regarding the national question are, therefore, absolutely different.
2. The policy of the KNU regarding the institution, of "state" is to realise its objective of establishing a "Genuine Federal Union" which is in conformity with the interest of all the indigenous peoples, whereas the CPB has the objective of establishing a "state" in accordance with the principle of the "Unitary System". Therefore, the two policies are absolutely different.
3. The national liberation movement of the KNU is a "National Democratic Revolution", whereas the CPB is mainly engaged in the "People's Democracy Revolution" for the liberation of classes. The two policies are, therefore, absolutely different.
4. The KNU has explicitly opposed and banned the production, trafficking

and distribution of narcotic drugs which have been seriously endangering the younger generation as well as the people of the world whereas the CPB is directly involved in the encouragement of production and trade of narcotic drugs. The two policies are, therefore, absolutely different.

The CPB is practicing chauvinism towards the indigenous peoples, trying to establish a unitary system of state which is against the interest of all the indigenous peoples, marching towards communist state in accordance with the doctrine of Marxism - Leninism, directly involved in the production and trade of narcotic drugs which have been a serious danger to the people of the world. The policies and convictions of the KNU and those of the CPB are therefore, diametrically opposite and, moreover, as the statement and agreements are not in consonance with the situation of the Karen Revolution, the KNU firmly declares that it absolutely cannot accept nor honour the statement and agreements made by the NDF and CPB.

15 August

1986

Central Standing Committee

Wagaung Waxing Moon 10, 1348

Karen National Union

PRESIDENT GENERAL BO MYA'S APPEAL TO GOVERNMENTS, LEADERS AND PEOPLES OF THE WORLD

Governments, Honourable Leaders and Peoples of the world who cherish Freedom and Democracy:-

Burma is a country collectively inhabited and owned by indigenous peoples such as Arakanese, Burmese, Chin, Kachin, Karen, Karenni, Mon, Pa-O, Palaung, Shan, Wa, etc. Instead of choosing a peaceful co-existence policy with their brethren indigenous peoples of the country, the successive Burmese governments persecuted and oppressed them.

On many occasions, the Karen people, numbering more than twenty percent of the total population of Burma, by peaceful means, tried to negotiate with the Burmese governments for peace and progress in the country. The Burmese governments refused to consider the demands of the Karen people on all occasions. The Karen people have thus been coerced into armed struggle against Burmese chauvinism since January 31, 1949 under the banner of Karen National Union.

Other indigenous peoples of the country followed suit and took up arms against the Burmese chauvinism separately. In 1976, the KNU sponsored and formed the

National Democratic Front (Burma) comprising of Arakan Liberation Party (ALP), Kachin Independence Organisation (KIO), Hew Mon State Party (NMSP), Karenni National Progressive Party (KNPP), Pa-O National Organization (PNO), Palaung State Liberation Organisation (PSLO), Shan State Progressive Party (SSPP), and Wa National Organization (WNO) for the establishment of a genuine federal union with liberty, equality and social well-being for all indigenous populations and individuals.

The indigenous peoples as well as the Burmese people are suffering heavily under the current Marxist Socialist Burmese Government. Due to the incorrect socialist economic system and rampant corruption, Burma today is one of the poorest country in the world although it is rich in natural resources.

Government of the world who cherish Freedom and Democracy:-

Foreign aid projects in all forms are being misused by the Burmese government. They are being used for the killing of women and children, persecution and oppression of the peoples of the country. May I appeal to you that you reconsider your foreign aid to Burma, persuade the Burmese government to seek the just and rightful solution to the settlement of the current conflicts in the country.

Honourable Leaders of the world who cherish Freedom and Democracy:-

For the sake of Justice and democracy, I appeal to you to help restore freedom and democratic rights to the 7 million Karen people as well as the 15 million other indigenous peoples of Burma.

Peoples of the world who cherish Freedom and Democracy:-

You are greatly blessed by God to be citizens in countries where there is freedom and democracy. You may never fully understand the meaning of persecution and oppression. The Karen people and other indigenous peoples of Burma are God's creation as well as you are. May I appeal to you to have sympathy and help your fellow human beings in Burma whose religious, national, cultural and other birth rights have been denied by the Marxist Socialist Burmese government.

General Be Mya
President,

Republic of Kawthoolei
August 1986

* * * * *

KAREN WAR STRIKES AN IMPASSE

In the remote mountains of the Dawna Range in south-east Burma a critical stage has been reached in the most determined Burmese army offensive in years to end one of Asia's forgotten wars - the 37-year rebellion of the Karen national Union (KNU).

The KNU has long been a serious threat to the central government in Rangoon. Although most of Burma's estimated 4,000,000 Karen live under government control on the plains to the west, much of the rugged borderlands with Thailand remain in KNU hands.

The flame of the Karen rebellion has been kept alive in the "liberated" mini-state of Kawthoolei by the KNU's Seventh Bay Adventist president, 59-year old General Bo Mya. "If we look back at history there has never been peace under Burman rule - always war. Only when we have gained our independence can there be any normality in relations between the Burman people and the Karen," he said.

In January 1984, with a steady decline in activity from the Communist Party of Burma in the north-east, Burma's military ruler General Ne Win launched a counter-insurgency campaign. It is aimed at wresting control of the strategic Papun and Hlaingbwe districts from the 7th Brigade of the KNU's military wing - the 5,000 strong Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA).

Along a 73-mile front, villages have been burnt down, crops destroyed and villages ordered into camps across the mountains to the west. Allegations of Burmese army atrocities abound. More than 17,000 refugees have fled into neighbouring Thailand with complaints that villagers have been forced into hazardous front-line porter duties for the Burmese army.

Little remains of the KNLA's once bustling stronghold at Wangkha. An intermittent artillery barrage deters civilians from returning. Almost the only occupants are young recruits, armed with M16s AND AK47s, undergoing a hasty basic training. At Maw Po Kay and Mae La further north, Burmese troops have dug in within sight of KNLA positions.

Despite its initial advances, the Burmese army is showing signs of being in trouble. Outgunned and outnumbered Karen defenders are still clinging on to a thin line of bases on the Moei River which marks the border with Thailand.

"People forget we've been fighting for 37 years. We've gained a lot of experience in that time" said the KNU vice-president, Than Aung, a veteran guerrilla leader from the Delta.

Surrendered Burmese soldiers talk of low morale and steadily rising

casualties. KNLA commanders claim to have inflicted more than 5,000 casualties on the Burmese army last year, including 2,000 dead. Estimates of diplomatic sources in Rangoon come close to these figures.

KNLA leaders admit the loss of "several hundred" troops but claim civilian casualties may be higher. The Ne Win government rarely acknowledges the scale of the fighting but claimed last August to have killed 9,000 insurgents and captured another 3,000 throughout Burma during the past four years.

The Burmese army have not been able to cut off the KNLA's financial lifeline the lucrative cross-border blackmarket trade. Trade continues in a few areas away from the front. Convoys of cattle-drawn carts from Lower Burma rattle daily through the Three Pagodas Pass in the south carrying everything from rubber and duck-down to bicycles and medicine.

The Burmese army has singled out traders for severe treatment.

After the "demonetisation" of the Burmese currency last November some analysts have speculated it might be Rangoon's own financial difficulties that are preventing the Burmese army pressing home the offensive.

As the Burmese army prepares to campaign through a third consecutive rainy season, the situation remains delicately poised. KNLA guerrilla units are already in position harassing army supply lines. Younger KNLA officers are growing impatient to carry the guerrilla war back to the Burmese heartlands.

Last year the KNLA admitted attacks on two trains on the Rangoon-Moulmein line. It denies placing a mine which derailed a mail train near Toungoo in July killing 67 passengers and injuring 112.

BURMA'S MUSLIM BORDERLAND SOLD DOWN THE RIVER

The sun comes up over Burma's Arakan border and a small ferry boat slips out of Maungdaw harbour, along the Naaf River bound for Teknaf in Bangladesh. On board are local villagers and officials grasping one-day passes allowing them to do business in the bustling Teknaf bazaar.

But these official visitors are not the only travellers crossing the 256-kilometre Arakan border. Night and day, smugglers' launches ply the Naaf River or move out into the open sea where they trade with larger ships anchored off shore. And over rugged hills to the east traders drive cattle or drag timber for sale over the border. Nor are these the only clandestine cross-border travellers. Eight years after the giant migration when over 200,000 Rohingya Muslim refugees

fled into Bangladesh, a steady stream of Muslims filters out little noticed by the outside world.

Tha Arakan (Rakhine) State, guided by the unique 'Burmese way to socialism' of Burma's long-time military ruler, General He Win, is in many ways present-day Burma in microcism - a largely rural rice-growing population, a stagnant economy, a thriving black market, ethnic discontent and insurgents in the mountains.

Markets along the border abound with goods smuggled across Burma - sarongs and electrical goods from Malaysia and Thailand which first have passed through customs gates belonging to the rebel Karen national Union in the south, and crockery from China Channelled through territory controlled by the Kachin Independence Army or the Communist Party of Burma. Even heroin, unheard of a few years ago, is now available, though largely from offshore sources. In this impoverished backwater, however, most local traders deal in basic goods - rice, fish, timber and cigars from Burma, and medicine and kerosene from Bangladesh.

BLACK MARKET: A WAY OF LIFE

For local villagers black market trading has become almost a way of life. Under its curious blend of marxist and Buddhist principles the 'Burmese way to socialism' requires farmers to sell their harvest to the government at fixed prices - at present, rice sells at 9 kyat (about £1) a basket. But selling to Bangladesh on the black market for as high as 50 kyat a basket enables many families to buy a variety of goods available only on the black market. Likewise, a box of prawn going for 50 kyat in Burma will sell for six times that amount across the border. According to Gyaw Hla of the Arakan Liberation Organisation: 'If you need to earn money in Arakan today there are only two ways - to become a soldier or a smuggler.'

The scale of Burma's black market, though impossible to calculate, is undoubtedly vast. One 1983 estimate put the total volume at some US\$200 million a year - the equivalent to one quarter of Burma's official imports that year. As one intelligence officer with long-time experience of the cross-border trading explained, 'many people, when they hear figures quoted in millions, are very sceptical. They look at the vegetables, cheroots and cattle, which are all most people see trickling across the border, and think the trade can't be very large. What they forget is the high value of goods like jade, teak, rubies and opium which pass through largely unnoticed.

Indeed, some observers have speculated that in many areas of Burma today there is probably more money circulating in illegal transactions than in legal ones - a remarkable claim given some credence by the extraordinary 'demonetisation'

of the Burmese currency on 3 November last year. Overnight all the larger notes in circulation - of 20, 50 and 100 kyat - were declared valueless, and Burmese citizens were required to deposit their cash holdings for exchange. But there was a catch. Only a maximum 5,000 kyat (£500) per family - the price of a pair of oxen - would be returned, until investigations ensured that the rest of the money had been legally earned. In practice, 5,000 kyat appears to have become the legal amount any family can hold and anything above this limit has apparently been 'nationalized'.

Although there are reports of individual black marketeers losing personal fortunes, most of Burma's numerous rebel organizations that depend on taxes from black market trade claim contingency plans have minimised their losses. Indeed, a spokesman for the Karen National Union said the measures showed that serious financial difficulties exist in Rangoon with Burma's foreign debt having almost doubled over the past five years - one recent estimate suggesting a figure of US\$2.8 billion.

LEGAL ROBBERY

Many local villagers in Arakan have greeted the measures with bitterness. 'Day light robbery' said one trader from Akyab. Hill tribe farmers also complain of difficulties in travelling to banks in time. But it is in the hard-press Rohingya Muslim community that demonetisation has been hardest felt.

In 1978 local Muslims fled northern Arakan enmasse when the government 'Nagamin' census operation went badly wrong, amid widespread allegations of rape, brutality and murder by the Burmese army. A seriously embarrassed Ne Win government eventually allowed most of the 200,000 refugees to return, but recent refugees claim many have still not been issued national registration cards, without which money cannot be exchanged.

Local Muslims consider this just another example of a deliberate but now more subtle campaign of harassment by government authorities to drive all Muslims out of Arakan. According to Jaffar Habbib, President of the Rohingya Patriotic Front, on average one family crosses the border every day. 'We have a saying - if the Burmese army sees you in the village you are an alien. If you are fishing on the river you are a smuggler, and if you are working in the forest you are an insurgent.'

At issue is the definition of who is a bonafide citizen of Burma. That Muslims, along with the Buddhist or Rakhine majority and several hill-tribe groups, form a historic part of the Arakan community is not in doubt. Muslim settlements date back to the ninth century, and from the fifteenth century Arakan

kings even used Muslim titles. But large-scale immigration from India during the era of British rule greatly complicated the situation. Resentment at the activities of unscrupulous money lenders and landlords of India descent fuelled in part the rising Burmese nationalist movement in the 1930s. During World War Two an estimated 500,000 Indians fled Burma, chased out by the young nationalists of the Burma Independence Army.

MUSLIM SEPARATISTS

Since independence, this resentment has apparently been channelled towards the Muslim community, especially after an armed Mujahid separatist movement took control of much of the old Mayu frontier district of Arakan in the chaos of the early years. In recent years, however, alleged harassment of Muslims has occurred beyond Arakan. In August 1983 an armed Muslim front was formed under the Karen National Union in the south, after a series of alleged officially inspired attacks on mosques and Muslim quarters in Moulmein, Martaban and other towns in southern Burma.

In Arakan, the difficulties local Muslims face have been compounded by a citizenship law passed in 1982, which restricts full citizenship, exempting 'indigenous' races like the Shans or Burmans, to those who can prove ancestors resident in Burma before the British conquest in 1824 - a practically impossible task in an area where Muslim and Buddhist communities have historically intermingled on both sides of the Naaf River. Government officials nowadays studiously avoid calling Muslims by their own local name 'Rohingya', with its indigenous connotations, and use instead 'Bengalis' or 'Kalas'. They have also begun replacing names from the historic Muslim past with their Buddhist counterparts - Rakhine for Arakan, Sittwe for Akyab. This policy finds undoubted popularity among the Rakhine majority who greatly fear unchecked illegal immigration from Bangladesh. Conversely, many Burmese-speaking Muslims answer to the name Rohingya and claim to have been born in Burma.

The Burmese army and authorities appear to have stepped up activities in the northern Maungdaw, Buthidaung and Rathedaung areas. Refugees allege arbitrary arrests, army brutality, constant restrictions on travel, and the confiscation of land which is then handed over to their Buddhist neighbours. In October 1985 Amnesty International launched an emergency appeal after the arrest and alleged torture in Buthidaung of 19 Muslims suspected of links with an armed underground Muslim organisation.

Several refugees who escaped this roundup denied the charges. Mohammed Sayed, a 48-year old headmaster from Taung Bazaar in Buthidaung, fled with his family in October, fearing imminent arrest after military intelligence officers

twice came to his home asking after him. Sayed, a graduate of Rangoon University, holds a national registration card and was one local Muslim leader not to flee in 1978. 'I encouraged my students not to run away. I tried to control the situation by staying.' He categorically denies involvement with the Muslim underground, claiming he has been singled out because of his education and position.

OTHER ACTIVE GROUPS

Today, two small armed Muslim groups, the Rohingya Patriotic Front and the Rohingya Solidarity Organisation, remain active along the border, while a third, the Arakan Liberation Organisation, trains in the south. But their armed strength today is a far cry from the Mujahids in the early years after Burma's independence. Pressured by the Burmese army, they are restricted to publicity and liaison, with a growing exile movement spread as far afield as Saudi Arabia and Pakistan causing some observers to dub the Rohingyas the 'new Palestinians'.

Besides the Rohingya fronts, Arakan, geographically isolated from Burma proper by the long Arakan Yomas, has a long history of independence. Only in 1784, forty years before the first British annexation of Burma, was Arakan overrun by its Burman ethnic cousins and drawn into the Burmese empire.

Today the Arakanese separatist movement, though splintered, remains alive. A common grievance is that Arakan has been economically neglected since Burma's independence. 'The country is kept backward by Burmese colonialism. There is no modern industry except cottage farms and a few essential works like rice mills and small timber mills', claims Thein Pe, general secretary of the Communist Party of Arakan (CPA).

But the Rangoon government has held its own in Arakan on the military front. A counter-insurgency campaign in 1979 drove guerrillas of the Arakan Independence Organisation and the Communist Party of Arakan from their base areas in Kyauktaw and Myebon. Then a 1980 general amnesty netted a top organiser in the Burmese Communist Party. Central committee member Thet Tun surrendered with his men, and the strategic base area around An township fell into government hands. Today, some 150 CPB cadres under Saw Tun Oo patrol the Arakan hill tracts along the India-Bangladesh borders but pose little threat to government forces. Indeed most recent reports stress clashes between the Burmese army and Mizo insurgents from India.

DISASTER AND REALIGNMENT

Two remaining insurgent forces, the Arakan Liberation Party (ALP) and the Arakan Independence Organisation (AIO), have never really recovered from disasters

suffered in 1977-the year of the 'long marches'. In that year AIO troops trained by the Kachin Independence Amy and ALP troops trained by the Karen National Union both attempted the long trek back to Arakan to establish new base areas. Both were ambushed and decimated within a few months of each other in the Chin state in an area unprotected by other insurgent armies.

Today ALP troops remain with the Karen National Union in southern Burma, concentrating with the AIO on underground activities in Arakan. Last year the two groups formed a joint committee with the Communist Party of Arakan, which still employs a few guerilla units in Arakan. The CPA, which aims at setting up a people's republic of Arakan, is alone amongs Burma's rebellions ethnic minorities in being a separatist communist party. Formed largely by defectors from the now defunct Red Flag faction of the CPB of Thakin Soe, the CPA condemns the CPB for being 'unstable', and the ruling Burma Socialist Programme Party for being 'pseudo-socialist'.

A fourth rebel groups, a small band of followers led by veteran nationalist Maung Sein Nyunt, the Arakan National Liberation Party, is expected to join shortly, but there is equally a remote possibility that the Rohingya Muslim forces will join as well. As one AIO spokesman explained, 'we recognise the rights of the Muslim people in Arakan and invite them to join us but they must realise that talk of holy wars severely alienates our people.'

But for many observers these attempts at unity are too few and too late. 'The only way change will come is when the Burmese themselves get fed up with this economic chaos', commented one Muslim exile from Rangoon, watching boats unloading in Teknaf.

Indeed the recent success of the Burmese army in Arakan points out the economic fallings of the Burmese way to socialism. Elsewhere in Burma, government officials regularly place blame on collusion between 'economic' and 'political' insurgents, and the Burmese army has in the past year summarily executed suspected smugglers on the Karen front. But in the mostly 'white' areas of Arakan the black market thrives with, according to some traders, the active collusion of the local Burmese military. And common complaints such as the press-ganging of local villagers into forced labour or porter service for the Burmese army continue unabated.

And as if to stress the seemingly unending nature of the problems facing the Ne Win government, news comes in with a sadly familiar ring. In November 1985 a new rebel group - the Revolutionary National Party - was formed in the hill tracts this time amongst the hill-tribe Kami, Chin and Mro. They are armed, in training, and are actively seeking new recruits.

IN THE CHAPTERS OF CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY

The Bible says that man began with Adam and Eve. However, according to Darwin's Theory of Evolution, the origin of homo sapiens has a much lesser degree of dignity. Whatever the origin of man is, he is now in a modern and civilised age after many eras of change and development. Among all the various animals, man has been singled out to be regarded as the most noble and dignified. The contrary view of man portrays him as the most wicked and vicious of all the species in the animal kingdom. The two contradictory views are opinions formed by man himself and there may be no end to argue about one or the other.

In the study of the history of man, we see that his development has been divided into many stages such as the Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age, the Age of Slave Owning Societies, the Age of Feudalism, the Age of Capitalism and the Age of Socialism. History says that in the Stone Age man, primitive and being barbarous, kills his own kind without much thought. Man, at that time, is very cruel and has no culture at all. Their actions are based only on instinct. Therefore, if man in the stone age is regarded as a wicked and vicious animal in accordance with the second view, then man in this modern and cultured Age of Science of the 20th Century should be regarded as the most noble animal in accordance with the first view.

For a thinking man, question arises as to whether the barbarous nature of man, attributed to man of the backward Stone Age, has disappeared in this cultured Age of Science of the 20th Century? Has the vicious and cruel act of man killing his own kind disappeared? The answer, sadly, is that man is still killing his own kind in this Age of Science which is supposed to have a high standard of culture, knowledge and education, because most of the developed and powerful nations are waging war against the weaker and less powerful nations at every opportunity killing, oppressing and trying to spread influence and gain territories. Assuming to be of master races, some groups of men are still waging wars killing, oppressing and enslaving the others. In this Modern Age of high standard of culture, the world is still filled with wars of aggression and wars of resistance. The two World Wars, of course, are the definitive indications of the sad condition of humanity.

In the Stone Age, lack of knowledge leads man to kill his own kind. In this Modern Age, some groups of men assuming themselves to be racially superior, have committed the atrocious crimes of killing and oppressing other groups of men for domination and exploitation. The belief of the superiority of the German people had led Hitler and the Nazis to conceive and execute the dreadful plan for the extermination of all the Jews. The horrifying death of six million Jews in the

concentration camps of Auschwitz, Mauthorsin, Dachau and etc. however, has barely made a dent in the conscience of some men.

Discrimination based on the colour of the skin has denied a large number of the Negros their birth-rights who have to suffer a great deal of oppression and indignity. The movement against racial discrimination spear-headed by Martin Luther King Jr. has relieved their plight in America. Those who are committing the crimes of discrimination, exploitation, oppression and murder against the others just because the others happen to be a number of another race, nationality or tribe in the present age should only be regarded as barbarians of the 20th Century.

Any man should have his legitimate fundamental rights. All men should have the right to enjoy their birth-rights equally and should have the right to be treated with decency and dignity as befit human beings. If anyone is denied his or her birth-rights, oppressed and enslaved, it is only most honourable for her or him to die fighting for justice against the oppressors. For this reason, revolutionary struggle for social progress, wars of national liberation and anti colonialist wars have broken out in many places of the world up to this day. To quote the late US President Kennedy, "All the revolutionary wars in the history of man have occurred due to the indomitable spirit of man aspiring for freedom and equality."

Our Karen revolution, like all the revolutionary struggles in the world, is a struggle for justice and freedom against the Burmese chauvinists who are trying to dominate and enslave us. The Burmese chauvinists have to be classified among the barbarians of the 20th Century for, with their policies of conquest and domination, they are acting most barbarously against all the other nationalities in Burma. There will be no end if we are to make a list of the outrages committed by the Burmese chauvinists against the whole people in the country. However, a limited sample of the bestialities and outrages committed by the Burmese chauvinists against the Karens should give the readers some idea of the enormity of the crimes the Burmese chauvinists have been committing against the different peoples of the country for more than 37 years.

The Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) Burmese chauvinist Be Win-San Yu military regime launched the so called 4-cut operations - to cut the rebels from contact with the people, food supply, information and economic activities - against the Karen revolution in East Yoma starting from the year 1975. In the four-year-period beginning from 1975 to 1978, the Burmese chauvinist troops burnt down more than 800 villages, with a total of more than 20,000 houses, in Toungoo, Nyaunglebin, Thaton and Papun District. The Burmese wantonly killed more than

160 innocent villagers, including women and children and injured more than 120 simple folks. Many thousands tons of rice and paddy, more than 20,000 pieces of the old silver rupee coins, more than 500,000 kyats worth of paper money, innumerable pieces of gold and silver ornaments, more than 2,000 heads of cows and buffaloes, pots and pans of the villagers were robbed and destroyed by the Burmese chauvinist troops. In addition, 40 Karen women were raped and 8 of them were brutally murdered after the rape. As a result of the operations, about 200,000 villagers were rendered homeless and became refugees in their own land. The total worth of the properties robbed and destroyed by the Burmese chauvinist troops has been estimated to be not less than 200 million in kyat (about 7.5 kyats = 1 US\$).

In 1979, the Burmese chauvinists expanded their war effort to include Pa-an and Tavoy-Mergui Districts in the 4-cut operations. In a nine month period, the Burmese troops committed the crimes of burning down more than 100 houses murdering more than 80 innocent villagers and raping more than 28 women. Specific incidents of bestiality committed by the Burmese chauvinists occurred on October 10, 1979 when the enemy troops from Infantry Battalion No. 30 murdered 3 Nokota villagers, gang-raped 2 women and looted 200,000 kyats worth of properties of the villagers. On October 12, 1979 the enemy troops from Infantry Battalion No. 53 murdered 8 villagers from Me-waing village including the village head-man U Nanda. They seized and took along with them 12 Wawkar village women and brutally murdered 2 on the way. More than 1,000,000 kyats worth of the properties of the villagers were looted by the Burmese troops.

Twelve innocent villagers of Thapota village in Tavoy-Mergui District and 6 villagers in Tenessarim Township were killed. Thousands of kyats worth of gold and silver were looted.

The incidents mentioned above are only part of the barbarities and atrocities perpetrated by the BSPP Burmese chauvinist military regime against the innocent people. For these barbarous and atrocious acts, the Burmese chauvinist militarists should certainly be branded as the barbarians of the 20th Century.

Of the two views, one assuming that man is the most noble animal and the other saying that man is the most vicious and wicked animal, which one shall we adopt to view the BSPP Burmese chauvinists as?

Like the barbarians of the Stone Age, men who are wantonly killing and trampling on the human rights and oppressing the others, men who are committing the crimes of aggression, and the crimes of enslaving the others and men who, assuming themselves to be of superior racial stock, are committing the crimes of exploitation and genocide against the other nationalities should be classified

only as the most vicious and wicked animals. On the other hand, men who are resisting against the aggressors and expansionists, men who are opposing chauvinism and who are fighting for national liberation and men who are struggling for social change in order to bring about the right for all to enjoy their birth-rights and freedom should be regarded as the most noble animals.

Accordingly, the BSPP Burmese chauvinists shall be recorded in the annals of history as the most vicious and wicked oppressors and the records of their acts of atrocities and bestialities shall certainly occupy pages in the chapters recording crises against humanity. On the other hand, the struggles of our revolutionary forces shall surely be recorded as just and noble acts in the chapters of history recording the heroic acts and achievements of man.

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NDF CENTRAL DELEGATION'S GOOD-WILL VISIT
TO NORTH-EASTERN AREAS

On the proposal of Head of Delegation of the Kachin Independence Organization (KIO), a member organization of the National Democratic Front (NDF), the 1984 Central Presidium Meeting of the (NDF) decided to send an NDF Central Delegation consisting of representatives of all the nine NDF member organizations for a good-will visit to the north-eastern areas of Burma.

The purpose of the Delegation's visit was to strengthen the friendship and understanding among the NDF members and to promote the cooperation in the fight against the common enemy, the Burmese chauvinist military dictatorship regime of Ne Win-San Yu clique.

The Central Delegation set out in March 1985 from the Headquarters of NDF. The enemy, which had received an information on the itinerary of the Delegation, posted many units of its troops all along the way and made several attempts to intercept and harass the Delegation. In spite of all the dangers and difficulties and because of the protection and care afforded by the local populations, the militia and regular troops under the NDF member organizations along the way, the Delegation could have successfully held mass meetings and visited the Headquarters of Karenni National Independence Organization (KNIO), Pao National Organization (PNO), Shan State Progress Party (SSPP), Palaung State Liberation Organization (PSLO) and reached its final destination of the Kachin Independence Organization Headquarters.

The Delegation received enthusiastic welcome from peoples of various tribes and nationalities in all the areas it passed through. The peoples' revolutionary fervour was much heightened by the visit. A little after more than a year, the Delegation arrived back safely at the NDF Headquarters in Marnaplaw, Kawthoolei.

RANGOON FLEXES ITS MILITARY MUSCLES

Reports reaching here indicate that Rangoon is massing its troops to make serious attacks against some Karen strong-holds situated on the Thai-Burma border before the moonsoon season is out. Intelligence reports confirm that the enemy troops are stock-piling food and ammunition supplies in positions not far from their advance headquarters. A senior KNLA officer at the front, however, is of the opinion that the enemy cannot make any serious attempt before November.

In an interview at the KNLA General Headquarters, a senior staff officer said " Our troops are ready and in position to cut off the enemy's supply lines and harass him from the rear once he's deep in our territory." Pointing at the many blue and green dots on an operational map , the officer went on to explain " Our guerilla and regular units are here, here, here and so on, well behind the enemy's line and close to his lines of communication. In some places , our troops can even block his lines of withdrawal completely and annihilate all his troops at leisure." " Let him come, if he can take another 5,000 casualties," he added.

Using an unprecedented number of troops and fire-power, the Burmese Army attempted to capture the KNLA strongholds on the border in a major offensive at the beginning of 1984 and kept up pressure until the end of the year. The Karens put up a resistance stiffer than the enemy expected. After suffering losses of more than 5,000 troops in casualty and a considerable amount of war materiel, the Burmese troops turned more and more against the innocent Karen civilians. The Burmese troops have been looting and killing the villagers indiscriminately, burning down the villages, raping the women-folks and destroying the crops and live-stock in the Karen areas ever since. As a result of these tactics of terror, thousands of Karen civilians, who could manage, fled across the border for refuge. Those left behind

were put into concentration camps and forced to do hard labour for the Burmese troops. The most terrifying thing for those poor souls is carrying food and ammunition supplies as porters for the enemy-troop columns going into battles. Sometimes, they are forced to march in front of the troops at bayonet points to serve as human mine detectors.

According to some observers, Ranoon is flexing its military muscles apparently after filling up the depleted ranks of its military units facing the Karens with newly trained recruits. Some sources say that the enemy is also replacing the old junior officers with the newly graduated ones.

In order to put some elan into its troops, it is the practice of the Burmese high command to tell the recruits that the rebels are few and armed only with old and out-dated weapons. After a few rounds of battles, the recruits get the shock of their lives and become demoralized. Then, disobedience and desertion usually follow.

The KNLA troops may be few by comparison, but they are fighting deep inside their traditional territory. Apart from having the advantages of familiarity with the terrain and weather conditions, the support of the population and a short supply line, the KNLA troops are a few of the best fighters in jungle warfare in the country. Taking all these into consideration, we are inclined to take the word of the staff officer at the KNLA General Headquarters for it and confident that like before, the KNLA troops will not fail to give a good account of themselves if and when the Burmese Army attempts to capture the KNLA strongholds again .

A WORD OF THANKS TO THE READERS

We are very grateful to the readers who have responded to our request with contribution, advice and encouragement. We look forward to enjoying the same support and good-will of our readers in the future as well.

Please contact us as usual to the address below for sending contribution or correspondence through normal mailing.

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General Bo Mya , President of NDF



Colonel Zaw Seng, Vice President of NDF.



The KNU delegates at NDF Emergency Presidium meeting of 1986



Young men and women singing on Tie-Hands of White Thread Day. (Photo- Min Htoo)



Children of Gen. Bo Mya. 4 sons and 5 daughters



A Karen wedding



Members of Kawthoolei Women's Organisation clearing the Central cemetery grounds.



Tie-Hands of White Thread at Kawmoorah



"Done" dance on 'Tie-Hands of White Thread' Ceremonial Day.



Palaung troupe welcoming the NDF delegation,



A Kachin dance group welcoming the NDF delegation.



"Done" dance by junior group at General Headquarters.



The NDF Delegation entering the KIO GHQ.



Wa Nationals of Southern Wa State welcoming the NDF delegation.



A Palaung village.



A Lishaw dance welcoming NDF delegation.



SSPP Headquarters welcoming the NDF delegation



Akah (E Kaw) children welcoming the NDF delegation