

TIN OO, KYI MAUNG RELEASED

On 15 Mar, the British Broadcasting Corporation announced that the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) had released 31 political prisoners. Among those released were U Tin Oo, 69, Chairman of the National League for Democracy, who was arrested on 20 July 1989. He was originally sentenced to 3 years in prison by a military tribunal on subversion charges. He was given an additional sentence of 7 years in Feb.92. U Kyi Maung, 76, who replaced U Tin Oo as Chairman, was arrested in Aug.90 under the 'Official Secrets Act'. He was sentenced in Nov.90 to 10 years in prison by a military tribunal. He was given an additional 10-year sentence in 1991. Both U Tin Oo and U Kyi Maung are former military officers who believe in democratic principles. U Kyi Maung was also elected on 27 May 1990 as an NLD people's representative. It is believed that SLORC broke off its talks with democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi in Dec.94, because she had insisted that both U Tin Oo and U Kyi Maung participate in the next round of talks. The exiled National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, led by Dr Sein Win, welcomed their release. The NCGUB also repeated its call for the release of all remaining political prisoners, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, as a necessary step towards national reconciliation and democracy [BBC/NCGUB/BA].

GERMANY CUTS SHORT VISIT

German Deputy Foreign Minister Helmut Schafer cut short his visit to Rangoon after meeting with SLORC Foreign Minister U Ohn Gyaw. Schafer said that he was especially disappointed by SLORC's lack of interest in talking with Germany or the European Union. Schafer was visiting Burma, Thailand, Hong Kong and Japan, to discuss German participation in the political and economic development of the region. He said that SLORC's refusal to allow democratic reforms is going to further isolate Burma and cause economic damage. Commenting on the situation and referring to the EU's 'Critical Dialogue' policy, Gehart Baum, head of the German delegation to the UN Commission for Human Rights, said, "There was no dialogue at all, to say nothing of a critical one" [BB950303].

PIPELINE SURVEYORS KILLED

Mar 7 - A team surveying SLORC's natural gas pipeline was ambushed by Karen troops near Kanbauk. Total, the French company managing the project said that the five killed and 11 injured were all Burmese. However, it has been learnt that the party arrived in two military helicopters. SLORC does not transport Burmese surveyors by helicopter. Villagers also report seeing a white man among the dead and instead of sending the wounded to the general hospital in Tavoy, doctors from Tavoy were ordered to the scene. The dead were flown to the military area of Mingladon airport and were received by a Mr Herbico of Total. Unconfirmed reports from Rangoon said that two bodies were subsequently shipped out of Rangoon. The Burmese democracy movement and the Karen and Mon peoples have long warned foreign companies that they will destroy the pipeline. To secure the area, SLORC has perpetuated gross human rights violations and is using slave labour to build supporting infrastructure [ABSDF950315/Net950310].

KARENS GIVE UP KAWMOORAH

On 21 Feb, the Karen National Union evacuated its second base on the Thai-Burmese border following an intense artillery bombardment. Initial reports indicate that SLORC troops may have used some type of chemical weapons. Three or four different types are described by the Karens. Not all chemical weapons are banned by the Geneva Convention. Blood, urine and fabric samples from Kawmoorah have been sent for analysis to determine whether SLORC violated the Geneva Convention. Possible agents used could include an obscurant smoke, an incapacitant, white phosphorus, and some type of blister agent. Several western governments have expressed interest given earlier reports in 1993-4 of suspected SLORC use of biological or chemical agents against the Karens. Kawmoorah had been under seige since early December when SLORC launched its current military offensive against the Karens and the democracy movement. The Maerplaw headquarters of the KNU and the democracy movement, were similarly abandoned in Jan.95 [F950302, KHRG/Net950227].

Burma News:**THAILAND TO MEDIATE?**

Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai on 26 Feb said that Thailand is prepared to mediate peace talks between the Karen and SLORC. The change in policy was made after several SLORC incursions into Thai territory following the fall of Kawmoorah [NCGUB940227].

ATTACK ON SHANS BEGINS

On 14 Mar, 1,000 SLORC troops from the 331st, 327th and 43rd Battalions attacked a Shan position at Hua Namsai, west of the border town of Tachilek. The battle raged all day. The SLORC troops were accompanied by 150 mules and 800 Shan villagers who had been forced to carry their munitions and supplies. Observers believe that this could be the beginning of SLORC's offensive to convince the world that it is serious about eradicating drug trafficking. The Shan, however, claim that SLORC is trying to clear the area to open up a new economic zone known as the Golden Quadrangle connecting Burma, China, Thailand and Laos [SHAN950314, F950309].

U.N. CONDEMNS SLORC AGAIN

The UN Commission on Human Rights meeting in Geneva, for the fifth consecutive year, adopted a consensus resolution deploring SLORC's continued human rights violations. The Commission said that the military offensive against the KNU is incompatible with SLORC's declared policy of national reconciliation. It also noted that SLORC's National Convention 'does not appear to constitute the necessary steps toward the restoration of democracy' promised by the regime [UN950301].

HIGH-LEVEL VISITS POSTPONED

Thai Deputy Prime Minister Supachai Panitchpakdi 'indefinitely' postponed his planned February visit to Burma following the tension with SLORC on the Thai-Burmese border. In retaliation, Lieut-Gen Khin Nyunt, SLORC Secretary 1 also postponed his visit to Thailand which was originally planned for March [N950218, Irr950215].

SLORC GENERAL IN THAILAND

Lieut-Gen Tin Oo, SLORC Secretary-2, visited Thailand in Feb on behalf of Army Commander-in-Chief Lieut-Gen Maung Aye. He was invited by Army Chief Gen Wimol Wongwanich [BPWR950303].

THAI PROTESTS KIDNAPPINGS

On 15 Feb, SLORC ambassador U Tin Winn was summoned to the Thai Foreign Ministry. Acting Foreign Minister Surin Pitsuwan strongly protested SLORC's border incursions and the kidnapping of Karen leaders from refugee camps in Thailand. Surin warned that "Burma should not destroy the good atmosphere that is developing between ASEAN and itself". The Minister said that Burmese violation of Thai sovereignty is very serious and that measures to protect the country's territorial integrity will be taken if the warnings are not heeded. Surin also said that Thailand was ready to help facilitate a dialogue between SLORC and the KNU [N950216, Irr950215].

SLORC ACCUSES THAILAND

SLORC officials at the Thai-Burmese Coordination Unit in Myawaddy accused Thailand of helping the KNU defend Kawmoorah. Lieut-Colonel Than Zaw, commander of the 356th Light Infantry Battalion, threatened to retaliate by sealing the border. All Thai troops on the border were also ordered by SLORC to withdraw so that it could launch an all out attack on Kawmoorah. SLORC even threatened to shell Thailand if it did not comply [N950216, Irr950215].

THAIS WORRIED ABOUT BORDER

Thai Defence Minister Gen Vijit Sookmark said on 22 Feb that Thailand is worried about the possible spread of guerilla warfare along the Thai-Burmese border. The remarks were made after the KNU base at Kawmoorah was abandoned by the Karens. Gen Vijit said that Thailand would not allow the KNU to use its soil as a staging area by the Karens. He said that troops that cross over will be disarmed. In fact, he said only a small number of KNU troops had crossed over, the majority being re-deployed to other areas inside Burma still controlled by the KNU [BPWR950303].

NEWS SOURCES THIS ISSUE: ABSDF = All Burma Students Democratic Front, BA = Burma Alert, BB = Burma B'ro, Germany, BBC = British Broadcasting Corporation, BPWR = Bangkok Post Weekly Review, F = Far Eastern Economic Review, KHRG = Karen Human Rights Group, Irr = Irrawaddy/Burma Information Group, N = The Nation, Bangkok, Net = BurmaNet, NCGUB = National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma, SHAN = Shan Herald Agency for News, and UN = United Nations.

International:**BERKELEY BOYCOTTS SLORC**

On 28 Feb, Berkeley City Council in California voted to boycott products of companies doing business in Burma. Councilwoman Betty Olds said that the purpose of the boycott was to inform the public of SLORC's horrific human rights violations. The three largest US companies in Burma, Pepsi, Texaco and Unocal will be affected. The city will require that its fuel distributors not purchase from Unocal or Texaco. Summer camps run by the city will also not purchase Pepsi products. The legislation is the first of its kind in the world. "We hope other city, county and state governments will now undertake economic sanctions against companies operating in Burma" said Conrad MacKerron. As Director of Social Research for Progressive Asset Management, he coordinated the legislation with the Bay Area Burma Roundtable, a citizens group. Berkeley was one of the first cities in the US to support the anti-apartheid movement, enacting investment restrictions in 1979 and a ban on South African goods in 1986.

MASSACHUSETTS STATE BILL

On 28 Feb, the Massachusetts State Legislature's Committee on State Administration passed a bill that would establish a "Selective Purchasing" program prohibiting state agencies from doing business with corporations doing business in Burma. Bill H.2833 will now go before the House Committee on Ways and Means. The bill sponsored by Representative Byron Rushing (D-South End) is based on the program used to put pressure on the apartheid government of South Africa. The legislation was first introduced in May 1994. For more information: Simon Billenness, Franklin Research & Development Corporation, 711 Atlantic Ave, Boston, MA.02111, USA or CPPAX, tel: 1 (617) 426-3040.

SWEDISH BURMA SEMINAR

On 13 March, the Olof Palme International Centre hosted a Burma Seminar in Stockholm. Speakers included Dr Sein Win, Prime Minister, NCGUB and Dr Thaung Htun of the ABSDF.

SEMINAR IN FINLAND

On 17 Mar, Dr Sein Win spoke at the University of Helsinki on Economic Development in Burma. The seminar was organized by the Finnish Burma Committee.

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

On 8 March, International Women's Day, the US Congressional Human Rights Caucus, and the Congressional Caucus for Women's Issues in cooperation with Freedom House, Refugees International, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and the Institute for Asian Democracy, sponsored a meeting on Capitol Hill to pay tribute to women who courageously defend human rights in the face of extreme opposition. 1991 Nobel Peace Laureate Daw Aung San Suu Kyi of Burma was the principal woman honoured. Guest speakers were 1976 Nobel Peace Laureate Betty Williams from Northern Ireland and Bette Bao Lord, Chairman of Freedom House and wife of US Assistant Secretary of State Winston Lord.

DRUG POLICY ROUNDTABLE

On 2 March, Human Rights Watch/Asia, the US Committee for Refugees, the International Centre, Jesuit Refugee Service and Refugees International, sponsored a Roundtable discussion on "US Anti-Narcotics Policy" in Washington, DC. Speakers included Richard Porter, Director National Security Affairs, Office of National Drug Control Policy (White House) and Douglas Rasmussen, Division Chief, International Narcotics Matters, US State Department.

US SENATE HEARING

On 14 March, the US Senate held a hearing on "Asia: Democracy, Trade and Drugs". In his opening statement, Senator Mitch McConnell of Kentucky, criticized the State Department's proposed renewal of drug interdiction aid to SLORC and said, "Heroin will be a problem in Burma and for us until a democratic leader who shares our concern is restored. That is the goal I believe we should be working toward."

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PUBLIC NOTICE

On 9 Feb, Than Lwin, the Secretary General of the **Alliance for Democratic Solidarity, Union of Burma**, issued a public statement dissolving the organization due to 'irreparable damage'. This Burmese democracy group was founded in exile by U Aung, son of the late Prime Minister U Nu, and Zali Maw, son of the late President U Ba Maw. It is understood that both of the founders have made their peace with SLORC and returned to Rangoon.

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Interview:**KIM YOUNG SAM**

President of South Korea

Given the presence of Korean companies in Burma, it is often assumed that South Korea is a strong supporter of SLORC. We often forget that South Korea is a newly democratic country. The Foreign Editor of Dagbladet in Oslo, Norway, interviewed President Kim Young Sam of South Korea on 14 March 1995. Translation of excerpts:

I was imprisoned, stripped of my parliamentary immunity and expelled from the National Assembly. This happened for the first time in South Korea's political history. For three years, my home was surrounded by hundreds of soldiers and police, and I could not leave. The military regime searched my house at irregular intervals. In many ways, imprisonment would have been preferable, since a prisoner has, after all, some rights. You can meet your lawyer and your family members. This was denied me ...

Q - Against this background, you can, therefore, well appreciate the situation in Burma, and the elected leader of the people, Nobel Prize winner Aung San Suu Kyi, who is now in her sixth year under house arrest?

A - *I am well acquainted with her situation and the criticism of those countries which support the military regime through active trade relations. Our country's (trade) relations are not as extensive as that of some countries. We have sent a clear message to the military regime urging them to re-introduce democracy in the country. We are now ready to increase the pressure, both to have Suu Kyi released and to re-introduce democracy.*

Q - Can violations of human rights, under any circumstance, be considered the internal affair of a country?

A - *No. Every country may have certain conditions they need to consider but human rights are universal rights. One cannot make exceptions by claiming special exceptions based on national or regional circumstances.*

Investments:**KOREA IN BURMA**

BEST INDUSTRIAL	?
CHEERY MYKO AUTO	Auto
DAEWOO	Garment factories, US\$11 million
DAEWOO	Department Stores
DAEWOO	Copper mine, US\$20 million
DAEWOO	5-star hotel, US\$60 million
DAEWOO	Plywood factory, US\$1 million
DAEWOO ELECTRONICS	US\$6.6 million
DOO PUNG CO	Heavy industry?
DONGWON IND	Fishery, US\$0.5 million
HAE YAN CO	?
HYUNDAI MOTORS	Supplied buses
I.C. ENTERPRISE	Foodstuff
KOMY TRADING	Trading
KOREA MYANMAR TOURISM	Tourism
KOREAN MINE PROMOTION CORP	Copper
LUCKY GOLD STAR CO	Consumer goods?
MIWON SHWE TA JIN CO	Trading?
MOK YANG CO	Plastic Pipe factory
MULTIGATE CORP	Workers to Korea
MYANMAR DAEWOO INTERNATIONAL	
MYANMAR KOREA TIMBER	Timber
MYKO CO	Trading
P.M.K. CO LTD	?
POHANG IRON & STEEL	Steel Mill
S.M.I. CORP	?
SAMWON	Plywood factory, US\$1 million
SAMSUNG CORP	- Trade
SEGYI INTN'L	Textile factory, US\$4.75 million
SEOUL AIR INTN'L	Helicopter for oil companies
SUNKYONG/YUKONG	Oil & Gas, US\$39 million +
WOOSHIN SANGHAP	US\$0.8 million

Note: Daewoo's investments through Myanmar Daewoo International are joint ventures with SLORC's Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings. Segye International is also a UMEH partner. Myanmar Korea Timber is a partner of the Myanmar Timber Enterprise. Daewoo Electronics and Doo Pung are partners of Myanma Heavy Industries. Mok Yang and Hae Yan are partners of the Yangon City Development Corp.

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In 1994, grants from the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, Canada; the Evangelisches Missionswerk, Germany; and the National Endowment for Democracy, U.S.A. were received

Speech:**BURMA IN 1995**

On 10 March, Prime Minister Dr Sein Win of the NCGUB spoke at the NGO Forum of the UN World Social Summit in Copenhagen, Denmark. The Burma Session was organized by the Danish Labour Movement's International Forum and the Danish Burma Committee, in cooperation with the Norwegian Burma Council, the Olof Palme International Centre in Sweden and the Finnish Burma Committee. Excerpts:

"The State Law and Order Restoration Council (has) changed its tactics ... SLORC's main emphasis in 1994 was to convince the international community that it is seeking national reconciliation... (But today,) Daw Aung San Suu Kyi ... is still under detention... SLORC attacked and seized the headquarters of the Karen National Union ... And in February, SLORC also captured Kawmoora, another KNU base on the Thai border. Life along the Thai-Burmese border has been seriously disrupted... and there are now over 80,000 refugees in Thailand. ..Armed men crossing the border to harass the refugees, kidnap leaders and seize relief supplies have created a climate of fear and uncertainty.

The events leading up to and the subsequent loss of Manerplaw and Kawmoora have also raised concerns about the KNU and about the future of the Burmese democracy movement ... However, SLORC did not defeat the KNU at Manerplaw. Realizing that SLORC was using Karen defectors to spearhead the attack, the KNU decided to abandon the base...to prevent heavy casualties on both sides... KNU headquarters have now been re-established in another area ... Therefore, although Manerplaw was important, the remaining liberated area under KNU control is still largely intact.

It must also be remembered that the democracy movement in Burma did not begin in Manerplaw and it will not end with its loss. The KNU provided the democracy movement with much needed protection and support, but the movement never intended to restore democracy in Burma through an armed struggle. The main strength of the movement lies with the people of Burma who are currently living under SLORC. Therefore, as long as the people inside Burma keep on resisting SLORC's suppression, the democracy movement in Burma will continue. Similarly, the NCGUB was formed mainly to make the international community aware of the situation in Burma...Since the end of 1993, the main international effort of the NCGUB has been

operating out of Washington, DC. Therefore, the loss of Manerplaw, although serious, will not materially affect the effectiveness of the NCGUB.

But why did SLORC change its tactics? ... In 1994, the response from the international community to SLORC was positive. Australia proposed a 'Benchmark Policy', the European Union adopted a 'Critical Dialogue' policy, and even the U.S. offered SLORC, 'Two Visions' for the future. Lastly, the UN began a dialogue ... SLORC, however, saw these steps as a sign that the international community was weakening its position on human rights... and Japan's renewal of its humanitarian aid program to Burma convinced SLORC that it had succeeded in obtaining acceptance. The second reason is that SLORC was never really prepared to grant any political concessions to the ethnic peoples...SLORC also became worried when groups that had previously signed cease-fire agreements began calling for a political settlement. SLORC felt that it should act immediately to strengthen its military position. Therefore, when the opportunity presented itself, SLORC attacked Manerplaw.

If the international community does not protest SLORC's attack against the Karens, and continue to seek a dialogue, SLORC will become bolder in 1995 and more ruthless. It will abandon all pretence of trying to seek a political solution to Burma's problems. In addition to protesting publicly, like-minded nations should call on the UN Secretary-General to exercise his mandate to help facilitate national reconciliation in Burma. The UN should call on SLORC to stop all military action immediately... (otherwise,) all multilateral funding ...through UN agencies should be suspended. A UN Security Council embargo on arms to SLORC should also be considered. Finally, Burmese refugees should be given adequate protection. It is just not acceptable that the refugees in Thailand are still being harassed by SLORC. An international presence is needed on the border.

Speaking on behalf of the Danish Government, Helle Degn, Chairwoman of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee and former Minister of Development, said that Denmark is prepared to walk together with the people of Burma for as long as necessary until democracy is won. Addressing SLORC directly, she said, "Although we live far away, we are watching you closely". Degn ended her speech by saying that the Danish people have only one word to describe their feeling for SLORC - "Contempt".

Tourism:**VISIT MYANMAR YEAR - 1996**

SLORC is promoting tourism. It is calling for foreign investments. The generals are wooing African, Islamic and Latin American nations to support its regime at international fora. Yet recently, SLORC began disseminating false allegations against detained democracy leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. In the process, they managed to insult women, blacks, Cubans, West Indians, Jews, Muslims and the international community. To expose SLORC's mentality and how it views the world, the Burma Alert is publishing some excerpt:

"During her (ASSK) stay in New York, she was always seen in the company of a **black Cuban** diplomat, who was her constant companion, and the couple socialized together amongst the New Yorkers and the diplomatic circle. Eventually, she married Michael Aris, a **British Jew**...."

"Before 1988, Aung San Suu Kyi had very little contact with Myanmar and the people of Myanmar...She had made only 8 short visits...and had laid a wreath only once at her father's tomb...Her mother, Daw Khin Kyi, suffered a stroke and only when the Minister ...persuaded her (ASSK) and arranged for her air ticket, she arrived in Yangon..."

(It is conveniently not mentioned that from 1962, it was virtually impossible for anyone to visit Burma without the regime's permission. Tourists, at one time, were restricted to 24-hour visas - Ed).

"Only those foreigners who knew nothing about her background would believe in her... Those countries should not be deceived... Will it be acceptable to the people of the United Kingdom if the Queen of England was to be married to a **black West Indian**? or the President of the United States of America was to be married to a **black Muslim lady**?...If Suu Kyi were not married to a British Jew...would she have received the Nobel (sic) Peace Prize ...?"

"The ...foreign media has recently criticized... (her) house arrest... What they did not realize was that she was permitted to see her husband and her children and to live freely with them. She could have whatever food she wanted. She could watch television and listen to the radio and read the newspapers and periodicals. I also gather that she could also send letters abroad. With all these privileges given to her, it could be said that she was not under proper house arrest. The only restriction that the Government had imposed upon her was not to go outside her compound. I believe that such measure was

taken ... (Because) if some politicians would come and join her ...and instigate a political movement and create trouble in the country, it would jeopardize the growing economy and the peace and tranquility in present day Myanmar."

Would you visit such a country?

Network:**BURMA CONTACTS:****DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT:**

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Bangkok Post	Fax: 66 (2) 240-3666
Burma Alert, Canada	yawngghwe@hookup.net
CRDB Bulletin, USA	Fax: 1 (714) 635-7266
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