

11. Freedom of Assembly and Association

11.1. Mounting Pressure on Pro-democracy Opposition

In 1996, SLORC stepped up its repressive campaign to stifle any political opposition; limits on freedom of assembly and association were particularly severe this year. The military junta continued its systematic harassment of the opposition, especially the pro-democracy opposition; it prohibited gatherings of more than five people, requiring permission be obtained for even informal meetings, and it detained and arrested political party members, and hired a mob of thugs to intimidate and attack the opposition. In 1996 alone, more than 2,000 people were arrested for publicly calling for political reforms, and Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's "weekend talks" were terminated and her movement severely restricted in the name of "maintaining the stability of the State."

11.2. Restrictions Placed upon NLD Party Leader Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

Throughout 1996, the SLORC repressed peaceful NLD political meetings, gatherings, and demonstrations, often using violent means. The SLORC has exhibited nearly complete intolerance of any peaceful NLD activity. At the beginning of the year, Burmese people and NLD supporters could gather every weekend to listen to speeches by NLD leaders, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, at the gate of her home on University Avenue in Rangoon; the weekend talks were terminated in September 1996. The state-controlled media has made increasingly strident personal attacks against Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD. Independent foreign reporters have been denied access to interview NLD members. Aung San Suu Kyi's compound, as well as the homes of other NLD leaders, are under constant surveillance.

Since September 1996, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi has been repeatedly refused permission to leave her compound, rendering her virtually under house arrest. Her phone line is often cut and she is confined to her house for long periods without any outside communication. According to a statement issued by Lt. General Khin Nyunt at a press conference on December 31, 1996, authorities had temporarily requested that Suu Kyi stay within her compound boundaries as a precautionary measure because they had discovered anti-government "underground elements" actively trying to foment trouble in Rangoon and wanted to prevent further disorder. At this point, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi remains

isolated in her compound most of the time.

The SLORC has stepped-up its war of words against the pro-democracy opposition and enacted sweeping legal measures designed to intimidate NLD supporters. SLORC passed a law on June 7, 1996 which forbids people from speaking, preaching, or writing anything that “disrupts the stability of the State, community peace, tranquillity and prevalence of law and order;” the law allows up to twenty years detention for such crimes. This law was passed in direct response to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s weekly “people’s forum” meetings in Rangoon. SLORC also invokes Order 2/88, which prohibits public gatherings of more than five people,¹ to prevent gathering in front of Aung San Suu Kyi’s house.

Since the end of September 1996, barricades, police, and security forces have blocked the roads leading to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s home to prevent people from gathering outside the compound to attend weekend speeches or any other NLD meetings. According to SLORC, “the road-side talks and news that circulated among representatives of foreign media and external organizations were meant to cause disruption of stability, peace, and rule of law and meant to cause collapse of economic order in Burma.” SLORC’s Military Intelligence personnel had been filming those who attended the meetings and in many cases, contacted those individuals and threatened that they would lose their jobs if they continued to go to meetings.

Since October 1996, the road directly in front of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s residence has been closed altogether. On October 12, 1996, SLORC announced that “in order to avoid the undesirable consequences arising from gatherings there, including the outbreak of confrontations and riots, disturbance of existing peace and stability in the nation, unruly actions, and incitement in the street affecting the daily life of the ordinary people, the authorities decided as a preventive measure temporarily to close University Avenue from Kokang Road junction to the Inya Myaing Road to both traffic and pedestrians.” On the same day, there were four clashes between SLORC security forces and people approaching Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s house. In the first incident, security forces allegedly chased and attacked a crowd at Kokkhine intersection, until the crowd dispersed. Later, people assembled again, and the security forces

¹ In some townships, (e.g. South Okkapala, Mingladon, Hmwebe and Insein townships) permission is required seven days in advance for NLD township-level meetings. Also NLD members have to agree that not more than 5 members will attend the meetings, in accordance SLORC’s Orders 2/88 and 8/88. Permission is even required for informal meetings in some townships such as in North Okkalapa, Rangoon Division. Some NLD meetings are attended by SLORC representatives who take notes during the meetings.

lifted the barricades to let people pass, then quickly replaced the barricades, trapping people inside and attacking them. There were also clashes between crowds and security forces in the Campbell and Hermitage areas of Rangoon. SLORC reported 25 arrests; all were apparently released later.

Other Incidents:

- In March 1996, NLD leaders, including Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, attempted to travel to Mandalay to give testimony at the trial of other NLD members. SLORC authorities prevented them from testifying; just before they were to board the train at the station in Rangoon they were told the railway carriage was broken.
- On November 1, 1996, the authorities suggested that larger public meetings could be held within Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's compound, but that not more than ten persons could gather outside her gate. On November 3, 1996, several groups of NLD supporters were roughly dispersed by riot police on the roads leading to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house. A few monks were beaten with batons in the ruckus.
- In December 1996 Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was prevented from attending a Karen New Year celebration in the Karen ethnic community in Rangoon.

11.3. Mass Arrests of NLD Members

In May 1996, SLORC security forces arrested 23 party activists and 235 NLD MPs, who were gathering for the NLD party congress at Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house. The congress was to be held between May 26 and 29 to mark the sixth anniversary of the NLD victory in the 1990 democratically-held elections. The arrests were widely seen as a pre-emptive strike by SLORC to prevent the meeting from occurring. While most of the persons detained were released a few days later, some still remain in custody, although the exact number of detainees cannot be confirmed.

SLORC made additional mass-arrests in Rangoon and surrounding townships on September 26, 1996, the eve of another NLD congress, to be held in Rangoon, to mark the eighth anniversary of the founding of the NLD. At least 159 people were arrested on their way to the celebration. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's house was surrounded by approximately 150 soldiers. Some of the soldiers entered

her compound, kidnapping her maid. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi remained under house-arrest; all roads leading to her house had been barricaded by troops and SLORC issued a statement ordering Daw Suu not to leave her compound for three days. On September 28, 1996, violent scuffles ensued between the crowd, gathered outside Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's compound, and Riot Control Forces. The riot-control police attacked the crowd and forced, at gun point, at least 100 people onto military paddy-wagons.

In the strongest display of their discontent since the 1988 demonstrations, hundreds of students held peaceful demonstrations on December 2, 1996, less than a month after the attack on Aung San Suu Kyi's motorcade. SLORC blocked passage to streets near Yangon Institute of Technology where students were demanding their right to form a student union and other student's rights. Over a period of many hours, SLORC trapped students inside their barricades and eventually attacked students with water cannons and beat them with their batons. At least 700 students were forcibly tossed onto trucks by riot police in the early morning hours on December 3. Many students sustained serious injuries. SLORC sources reported that 609 students were released later that day but diplomatic sources stated that the students believed some of the demonstrators were detained longer. (*Source: Inside Source*)

In an effort to head off a planned party congress to commemorate the NLD's overwhelming victory in the 1990 elections, SLORC forces began rounding-up NLD members one week before the May 27, 1997 celebration. SLORC troops were searching houses of known party members and looking for overnight guests who had not been reported to the authorities in Rangoon and in the provinces. The junta detained at least 315 NLD supporters on their way to the congress in Rangoon. Despite SLORC's crackdown, approximately 150 NLD delegates managed to slip into the capital from the provinces for the congress. (*Source: Inside Source*)

11.4. Systematic Harassment of NLD Leaders and Forced Resignation of NLD-elected MPs

NLD Members of Parliament elected in the democratic 1990 elections, have been harassed mercilessly by SLORC. The MPs are "warned" that their family members might lose their jobs, their children might fail state exams, or they might endure arbitrary tax increases if they do not resign from their seats and renounce their association with the National League for Democracy. In one verbal statement, SLORC authorities made clear the seriousness of their threats to NLD members: "You are fair game. It is because we do not want to shoot

you down in an ambush that we are giving you warning. You get only one chance -- not two. You must understand that the army is governing; we will act according to orders from above. We shall clear away all obstacles." (Source: NLD)

List of Recent Incidents

- Irrawaddy Division: U Win Kyaing, Bogale township, constituency (1); Dr. Sein Myint, Bogale township, constituency (2); U Thar Soe, Nyaungdon township, constituency (2); and U Thaung Yi, Danubyu township, constituency (2) were all forced by local LORC to resign from their elected-MP positions.
- Other elected-MPs, also from Irrawaddy Division, refused to comply with the LORC's threats by maintaining their positions. These MPs were arbitrarily accused of breaking laws. They were tried and sentenced. For example, Dr. Myo Nyunt, Dedaye township, constituency (1) was sentenced under the *Medicine Act*; U Min Swe, Pyapon township, constituency (2) was sentenced under the *1984 Private Tuition Act*; U Hla Myint, Maubin township, constituency (2) was sentenced for "disturbance of civil duties"; U Sann Myint, Laymyatnhar township, constituency (2) was sentenced under the *Video Act*; and U Tin Aung, Wakhema township, constituency (1) has been charged with violating the *Emergency Provisions Act*, Section 5(j). (Source: *Inside Source*)
- Dr. Than Nyein, vice-chairman of the NLD's Rangoon Division and an elected NLD MP from Kyauktan-1, was arrested on February 19, 1997 for "breaching medical professional ethics"; his medical license was revoked by the health ministry. He was released from custody on April 2, 1997 after paying 1,000 kyats. (Source: *Inside Source*)
- Saw U Rei, NLD MP from Prusoe, Karenni State, was forced to resign from the NLD and his position as an elected member. He was then sentenced to seventeen years imprisonment. (Source: *Inside Source*)
- Dr. Than Aung, an elected MP for the NLD from Mingla Taungnyunt-2 was arrested on February 21, 1997 for allegedly causing the death of a patient through negligence. He was sentenced to four years in Insein prison on April 11, 1997 for "homicide not amounting to murder." (Source: *Inside Source*)

- U Tin Maung, chairman of the Bogale township NLD organizational committee, Irrawaddy Division was accused of possessing an illegal lottery ticket and sentenced to nine months in prison. (*Also see Chapter 2, date of sentencing unknown*)
- U Myint Kyaing, U Than New, and U Soe Myint, members of the Zalun township NLD, Irrawaddy Division were each sentenced to three years imprisonment under the *Video Act*. (*Also see Chapter 2; date of sentencing unknown*)
- U Khin Thaung, a member of the Pyapon township NLD organizational committee, Irrawaddy Division was sentenced to two years in prison for the alleged illegal use of electric power. (*Also see Chapter 2; date of sentencing unknown*)
- The NLD-elected MP from Kawthaung, Tenessarim division was sentenced to seven years in prison under Section 5(e) of the *Prison Regulations Act*. He was not permitted to confer with counsel. (*Also Chapter 2; date of sentencing unknown*)
- Many NLD members have been evicted from state-owned apartments where they had lived for many years. U Win Tin and U Tin Latt, NLD members they had lived for many years. U Win Tin and U Tin Latt, NLD members and Bo Aung Naing of the People's Volunteer Organization were evicted from their state-owned housing in 1996. (*Source: SAIN*)
- Since June 1996, at least thirteen MPs have succumbed to SLORC's pressure and resigned from the NLD.

11.4.1. **Forced Resignation from National Convention: The Case of Sai Soe Nyunt**

On December 18 and 19, 1996, Sai Soe Nyunt, a member of the Shan Nationalities League for Democracy (SNLD) and official delegate of the SNLD to the National Convention, was beaten, arrested, and forced to resign from the party by Major Win Thu of SLORC IB 58.

On the evening of December 17, 1996, Sai Soe Nyunt was sitting on a bench near a movie theater not far from his house in Murng Na village, Waeng Maw township, Kachin State. Nearby, a noisy quarrel erupted between a villager,

Maung Soe Thein, and two army officers in civilian clothes. Sai Soe Nyunt interceded peacefully by scolding all three of them and turning the two soldiers over to the village LORC Chairman, U Kyaw Nyein. Other villagers witnessed the two army officers, Sgt. Lin Aung and Corporal Thein of IB. 58, confess their guilt.

On the evening of December 18, 1996, five armed soldiers arrived at Sai Soe Nyunt's house and severely beat him and another villager, Maung Pho Tha Htoo. The soldiers beat the two men with their guns; they both suffered severe injuries, Sai Soe Nyunt's jaw was fractured. The soldiers bound the hands of the two men as well as Maung Mya Oo -- who happened to be in the house -- and took the three men to a military camp at Murng Na. The soldiers continued beating the three without any explanation and in spite of Sai Soe Nyunt's pleading that he was an official delegate to the National Convention. The three men were left in a prison cell at the IB 58 base for the night.

The next morning, on December 19, 1996, all three men were lined up in front of Major Win Thu, company headquarters commander (IB 58). The Major threatened to kill them and interrogated them as to their membership in the Communist Party of Burma (CPB), the All Burma Students Democratic Front (ABSDF), or other "rebel" groups. After a long tirade, he threatened to charge Sai Soe Nyunt with a crime. Sai Soe Nyunt denied committing any crime and restated that he was an official delegate to the National Convention. The Major furiously retorted, "what National Convention? It is full of whores, drug abusers, and drug runners. It is nonsense! Get out of it!" The three were then locked-up again.

At about 11: 00 a.m., Sai Soe Nyunt was forced to sign a resignation from the SNLD party and the National Convention and a letter of apology. Sai Soe Nyunt had not received any medical attention since his arrest and was in grave condition; he hoped that by signing the resignation, he would be allowed to die at home. Upon his release, Sai Soe Nyunt tried to get medical attention -- for fear of SLORC reprisals, no medical clinics or hospitals in Myitgyina would treat him. He finally traveled to Rangoon, hoping to receive treatment at the medical center arranged for National Convention delegates. (*Source: SNLD*)

11.5. Harassment of NLD-office Landlords and Systematic Removal of NLD Signboards

During 1996, landlords of NLD offices were summoned by the SLORC authorities and ordered to sign an agreement that, in the event of legal action

against their tenants (the NLD), they would accept the consequences, including sealing of the premises, confiscation of the building, and even arrest of the owner. SLORC told building owners that the NLD would be declared illegal and that they risked grave legal consequences as the landlords.

The NLD signboard has been a matter of contention since the founding of the Party in 1988. When NLD offices, with their distinctive signboards, spread across the country after the Party was registered in September 1988, a SLORC regulation was promulgated forbidding village party offices from erecting signboards. After a discussion between leaders of the NLD and the Multi-party Elections Committee in January 1989, it was agreed that signboards could be retained in village offices where they had already been erected or where applications were already made to the relevant authorities to establish an office and erect a signboard. In spite of this agreement, SLORC authorities have continued to harass the NLD over signboards, as it is seen as a strong symbol of public support for the Party and of defiance in the face of intense persecution. A concerted effort was made by local authorities to remove all NLD signs from main roads or any place where they might be widely exposed to the public. In many cases, NLD signboards have been replaced with a sign that states the NLD no longer occupies the office. Many NLD offices have been forced to relocate to obscure locations.

11.5.1. The following is a list of locations at which NLD signboards have been removed by local LORC officials:

State/Division	Township Office	Ward/Village Office
Kachin	all township/ward/ village except State NLD party's signboard	
Kayah	all township/ward/ village except State NLD party's signboard	
Karen	all township/ward/ village except State NLD party's signboard	
Irrawaddy	Maubin township	Kywe Don village, Kywe Kyut village,
	Naungdon township	
	Ah Pyauk township	
	Nga Thaing Chaung township	
	Pyapon township	Kantkyat village
	Ingapu township	Shwe Laung village, Chaungwa village,
	Ngaputaw township	Thingangon village, Pyinkhayaing village,

State/Div.	Township office	Ward/ village offices
		Kyaukchaung village, Kyagan village, Phayataung village, Ahtetpyaw village
	Kyankhin township	Betye village, Khonggyi village Yekeyin village, Hseiktha Pauktime village,
	East Bassein township	Kan Ywa village, Darka village
	Bogale township	Kadon Kani village
Shan	Moe Meik township	
Sagaing	Pale township	
	Kanni township	
	Tamu township	
	Minkin township	
	Wetlet township	
Rangoon	Twunte township	
	Yakin township	
	Dawpon township	
	Thingangyun township	
	Kamayut township	
	Botataung township	
	Kyinmyindine township	
	Pabetan township	
	Dagon township	
	Seikkyi/Khanaungto township	
Tenasserim	Nergui township	

11.6. List of Typical Incidents

- On September 27, 1996, the NLD office on Shwedagon Road in Rangoon was closed and the NLD signboard was removed. According to the officials, the office was closed because the lease had expired and the landlord was disturbed by the 300 persons that gathered on his property, preparing for an NLD Congress. In truth, SLORC forced the landlord to annul the lease and illegally remove the signboard. SLORC officials told the landlord that the NLD would be declared illegal and

they would confiscate his building if he did not comply with their “request” (*Source: NLD*)

- The NLD offices in South Okkalapa township relocated on September 29, 1996. Shortly thereafter, township LORC officers, led by the secretary, warned NLD members that moving an office without prior permission was illegal. The owner of the new office was also threatened by the LORC officers. (*Source: NLD*)
- U San Pe, a member of the NLD, Shwebo township, allowed an NLD office to be opened in his house. His wife, Daw Ohn Kyi, had a small shop in the grounds of Shwebo college; she was forced to close her shop in October 1996 due to her husband’s party affiliation. (*Source: SAIN*)
- On the night of October 26, 1996, U Ba Kyi, a member of the Kachin State organizational committee and U Kyin Thein, a member of the Myitkyina township organizational committee were called to the township LORC office. The chairman of the local LORC ordered them to remove the NLD state and township signboards. U Ba Kyi and U Kyin Thein refused. Later, LORC officials removed the NLD signboards. (*Source: SAIN*)
- On October 27, 1996, Maran Zaw Aung, an NLD MP from Wainmaw township, Kachin State, was summoned by the Chairman of the township LORC and forced to remove the NLD signboard above the township office. (*Source: SAIN*)
- On November 30, 1996, in Chaungwa village, Ngaputaw township, Irrawaddy Division, township LORC Chairman, U Tin Yi, a Major, soldiers from the 92nd Regiment Sub-Inspector of Police, U Than Shwe, policemen from Pyinkhayaing village, the whole Chaungwa village LORC, the voluntary fire-brigade, and members of the local USDA advanced to the local NLD office, also the home of NLD MP (Ngapudaw 1), U David Hla Myint. The large group of soldiers and policemen pointed their guns at the MP and other NLD members and ordered them to remove the NLD signboard. The NLD members initially refused but eventually capitulated when the soldiers became more threatening with their guns. When the signboard was removed, NLD organizational committee members were rounded-up and forced, at gun point, to remove all of the NLD signboards in the villages and township.

- NLD members were forbidden to hold a ceremony to commemorate the seventh anniversary of the opening of the Ngapadaw NLD office. (*Source: SAIN*)
- The NLD signboard in Nga Thaing Chaund was erected at the home of the chairman of the NLD Organizational Committee, U Tin Thein. At the end of 1996, township LORC officials removed the signboard. U Tin Thein erected the sign again. Township LORC officers called for the arrest of U Tin Thein. He has been forced into hiding and has not returned home to avoid arrest. (*Source: SAIN*)
- In Sagaing Division, the township LORC offices sent a letter to all NLD offices instructing them to remove their signboards. (*Source: NLD*)
- In Mayangone township, Rangoon Division, the SLORC authorities demanded that the NLD signboard be reduced in size. (*Source: NLD*)

11.7. No Free and Independent Trade Unions

In 1955, Burma freely ratified ILO Convention No. 87 concerning Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize. However, workers in Burma do not enjoy the right to join organizations outside SLORC's existing structure. Furthermore, no Burmese organizations are permitted to join international federations or to affiliate with international organizations without SLORC's permission.

In June 1996, at the eighty-third session of the International Labor Conference in Geneva, before the Committee on the Allocation of Standards, the matter of freedom of association and protection of the right to organize in Burma was raised for the ninth time since 1981. Tragically, Burma's military junta continues to ignore international standards and no steps have been taken to allow workers to establish organizations of their choice or to become affiliated with international workers' and employers' organizations.

11.8. USDA, SLORC's "Brown Shirt"

On various occasions the SLORC has blatantly used the "Union Solidarity Development Association" (USDA) to serve the interests of the military regime. During 1996, the USDA was primarily used to attack violently senior

members of the NLD, including Aung San Suu Kyi, and to damage and disrupt the activities of the NLD. It is widely accepted that the regime is hoping to create an unbearable situation for the entire NLD, in order to provoke the organization and its members into a violent confrontation with SLORC, allowing the military an excuse for another repressive crack-down on the NLD and its supporters.

The SLORC is trying to create the illusion that there is a groundswell of support for the USDA. Since December 1995, the SLORC-controlled media has begun to report that mass rallies attended by tens of thousands of people throughout the country are being held in support of the USDA. According to inside sources, USDA membership is not voluntary; people join out of fear of the army. Attendance at USDA rallies is mandatory; in many cases people are fined if they do not attend required events. Often, mobs are paid by SLORC to perform violent acts against NLD members. (*See Appendix 2 for background information on USDA*)

The following incidents are a few examples of SLORC's attempts to use the USDA - SLORC thugs - to discredit Aung San Suu Kyi and the NLD, disrupt activities, and to cause bodily harm to members:

- On February 14, 1996, at the commemoration of the first anniversary of U Nu's death (the first democratically-elected Prime Minister), SLORC sent USDA members in plain clothes to disrupt the service.² The USDA members wore red rubber bands around their right arms in order to identify each other in the crowd. The SLORC used MI (Military Intelligence) vehicles to supply the USDA supporters with tomatoes, which they encouraged them to throw at Daw Aung San Suu Kyi when she made her scheduled speech in front of the monastery where the service was held. However, when some of the USDA members learned of their "assignment," they refused to participate and left the gathering. Clearly part of the reason SLORC's plot was thwarted lay in the fact that the USDA members were in the minority, among a large crowd gathered to listen to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. (*Source: Inside Source*)
- On February 26, 1996, a rumor spread that Daw Aung San Suu Kyi

² *USDA members are required to wear USDA "uniforms" for their gatherings. It is widely understood that USDA members wear plain clothes to blend into crowds when they are "assigned" to create a ruckus; later SLORC can claim that NLD members are causing disruption or that there is internal strife among NLD members.*

would join a celebration of the centennial celebration for famous temple called “Taung Ton Lone” near Pegu. Three of the most revered monks in Burma, Thamanya Taung Sayadaw, Shwepaw Kyun Sayadaw, and Ko Lone Sayadaw were also supposed to visit the temple to conduct religious rites. SLORC sent a number of USDA members to the gathering to physically harm Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. They were later ordered to cancel the mission when they discovered Daw Aung San Suu Kyi was still at her home. (*Source: Inside Source*)

- The roads leading to Daw Aung San Suu Kyi’s home were barricaded by soldiers and police on Burmese New Year’s Day in April 16, 1996. Despite the fact that the NLD canceled the planned event, USDA members at the site were instructed to beat with their batons any NLD members that tried to pass the barricades. (*Source: ABSDF*)
- On November 9, 1996, a group of about 20 USDA members were paid to attack the motorcade in which Daw Aung San Suu Kyi and a few NLD leaders were riding. Iron bars and bricks were used in the attack. The NLD’s Vice Chairman, U Tin Oo was slightly hurt. Each of the men were paid 500 kyats by SLORC to participate in the attack. Shortly before the attack on her motorcade, Aung San Suu Kyi was told that U Win Sein, a government minister, had announced to a meeting of USDA members that she should be killed. (*Source: Inside Source*)

11.9. SLORC-run NGOs in Burma

Founded in 1949, Burma’s oldest non-governmental organization (NGO), the Myanmar Medical Association (MMA), began as a professional association. It currently boasts over 6,000 members, with 50 branches at the township or state/divisional levels. Consisting of physicians from both the public and private sectors, the MMA was pulled into the government’s orbit when senior BSPP officials in the Ministry of Health took up key leadership posts in its governing hierarchy. Today, many health workers feel that the MMA has yet to reestablish its independence under the present SLORC authorities.

The other NGOs, the Myanmar Red Cross (MRC) and the Myanmar Maternal and Child Welfare Association (MMCWA) have even closer links with the government and Ministry of Health. With over 180,000 volunteer members, the MRC is supported by public donations and government funds and it supposed to have branches in each of the country’s 319 townships. Similarly, the MMCWA is also trying to establish branches in townships throughout the

country. Its joint General-Secretary (a doctor) is the wife of the SLORC Secretary-1, Lieutenant-General Khin Nyunt; the President is the wife of Colonel Pe Thein, the former health minister; and the Vice-President is the sister of the late Dr. Maung Maung, a leading BSPP functionary and, originally, one of the Ne Win's chosen successors as party chairman. As with other so-called non-governmental organizations in Burma, critics often question the MMCWA's NGO status given its intimate association with the SLORC.



Photo (39)

One of Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's weekend addresses outside of her compound in Rangoon. (Photo By Yamamoto Munesuke)



Photo (38)

The NLD and its activities are being restricted and suppression has mounted. Not even peaceful NLD gatherings or meetings are allowed. (Rosalie T. McKernan)

Students peacefully calling for the restoration of a student union and their rights during their demonstration in December 1996.



Photo (36)