

CONTINGENCIES AND BACKGROUND PAPER

1 AUGUST 1965 - 30 JULY 1966

/FOR BACKGROUND, PART I

EO 12958 3.4(b)(1)-25Yrs

THE MIDNIGHT ARRESTS OF MORE THAN 500 BUDDHIST MONKS AND EX-POLITICIANS. [REDACTED] EMPHASIZED THE FOLLOWING POINTS-

- A. THROUGH DRASTIC GOVERNMENT MEASURES, THE RGUB WAS MAKING ITS PRESENCE FELT THROUGHOUT MOST OF BURMA.
- B. NE WIN WAS FIRMLY IN POWER, THE ARMY, NE WIN AND THE RGUB WERE VIRTUALLY SYNONYMOUS.
- C. THE ANTI-GOVERNMENT CAMPAIGN OF THE BUDDHIST MONKS WAS HALTED SUDDENLY BY THE SWIFT ARREST OF THEIR LEADERS.
- D. THE RGUB CONTINUED TO BE HEAVILY PERMEATED BY FORMER COMMUNISTS AND COMMUNIST SYMPATHIZERS, THE MAJORITY OF WHOM ARE PRO-SOVIET AND EXERT INFLUENCE IN MATTERS OF INTERNAL POLICY AND ADMINISTRATION.
- E. ALL FACETS OF LIFE IN BURMA HAVE BEEN AFFECTED BY THE RGUB'S INEPT AND INEFFICIENT METHODS OF ECONOMIC DISTRIBUTION.
- F. INSURGENCY CONTINUED IN MANY PARTS OF THE COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY IN THE ETHNIC MINORITY AREAS, DESPITE THE GOVERNMENT'S PACIFICATION ACTIVITIES, MINORITIES REMAINED UNRESPONSIVE TO THE BURMESE WAY TO SOCIALISM.
- G. ANTI-RGUB MOVEMENTS BY WELL-KNOWN BURMESE PERSONALITIES INCLUDING AUNG GYI, KYI MAUNG AND BO YANNAING WERE UNDER WAY.
- H. FOR THE LONG RUN, NE WIN'S MOST CRITICAL PROBLEM WAS THE SERIOUS DISLOCATION THAT THE GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC PROBLEMS HAS BROUGHT TO BURMA. IT WAS ESTIMATED THAT NE WIN MOST NEEDS TIME TO ACCOMPLISH THESE ECONOMIC REFORMS EFFECTIVELY, BUT AS LONG AS THE COUNTRY IS SUBJECT TO RIGID POLICE STATE ACTIONS, THE RGUB WOULD CONTINUE IN POWER.
- I. NE WIN'S SUDDEN REMOVAL THROUGH ASSASSINATION, ILLNESS OR RESIGNATION WOULD THROW BURMA INTO A CHAOTIC SITUATION./

BACKGROUND

AS OF LATE JULY 1965, THE RGUB CONTINUED TO BE AN AUTHORITARIAN MILITARY REGIME. FURTHER MEASURES WERE TAKEN TO BUTTRESS NE WIN'S POLITICAL AND PERSONAL SECURITY AND EXPUNGE MORE FOREIGN INFLUENCE FROM THE COUNTRY. SUBSEQUENT TO THE DETENTION OF BUDDHIST MONKS AND SECOND-LINE POLITICIANS, A SMALL NUMBER OF ARMY OFFICERS WERE ARRESTED, PRESUMABLY FOR BEING SYMPATHETIC TO THE BUDDHISTS' CAUSE. HOWEVER, THE MONKS UNREST HAS BEEN CAPPED EFFECTIVELY FOR NOW, AND NO PUBLIC POPULAR REACTION HAS OCCURRED.

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IN LATE MAY, TWO PROMINENT EX-ARMY OFFICERS WERE ARRESTED-BRIGADIER AUNG GYI AND COLONEL KYI MAUNG, BOTH OF WHOM WERE FORMER MEMBERS OF THE REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT. KYI MAUNG WAS ACTIVELY PLOTTING AGAINST THE RGUB, BUT APPARENTLY AUNG GYI WAS ARRESTED SIMPLY AS A PREVENTIVE MEASURE BECAUSE HE REPRESENTED A POTENTIAL RALLYING POINT OF POPULAR SUPPORT.

"BURMANIZATION" CONTINUED. ON 1 MAY, ALL LARGE PRIVATE SCHOOLS WERE NATIONALIZED, EFFECTIVELY BLOCKING A CHANNEL FOR FOREIGN INFLUENCE THROUGH WESTERN MISSIONARIES RESIDENT IN THIS COUNTRY. IN EARLY JULY, MISSIONARY HOSPITALS IN BURMA WERE NATIONALIZED, ALL OF THESE HAD RECEIVED SUPPORT FROM EXTERNAL SOURCES. EMBASSY LANGUAGE CENTERS WERE CLOSED ON 9 JULY BY THE RGUB /UNITED STATES, FRANCE, WEST GERMANY, EAST GERMANY/. THE AMERICANS WERE THE HEAVIEST LOSERS IN THIS VALUABLE CULTURAL PROGRAM BECAUSE MORE THAN 400 STUDENTS WERE DENIED AN OPPORTUNITY TO STUDY ENGLISH AND CONTACT AMERICANS. FOREIGNERS WERE OF CONSTANT INTEREST TO RGUB SECURITY SERVICES, AND SOME AMERICANS WERE UNDER SURVEILLANCE.

THREE FACTORS IN THE BURMESE SITUATION WILL CERTAINLY REMAIN DURING THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS. THE RGUB CONTINUES TO FACE BASIC ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES, IT IS UNABLE TO FIND A SATISFACTORY POLITICAL SOLUTION FOR YEARS OF ETHNIC INSURGENCY, AND IN ORDER TO PERPETUATE ITSELF, THE RGUB RUNS A POLICE STATE, WHERE SECURITY FORCES DEVOTE MOST OF THEIR TIME TO FERRETTING OUT POLITICAL OPPOSITIONISTS WHO THREATEN EITHER NE WIN PERSONALLY OR HIS RGUB.

ALTHOUGH BURMA SO FAR HAS ESCAPED GALLOPING INFLATION, THE COST OF LIVING IS RISING. BURMA'S RICE EXPORTS HAVE FALLEN BELOW OFFICIAL PREDICTIONS, THERE HAVE BEEN SHORTAGES OF AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL GOODS, AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE RESERVES HAVE FALLEN TO THE LOWEST POINT SINCE 1962. IN PARTICULAR, THE RGUB HAS YET TO DEVELOP A VIABLE AND FLEXIBLE ORGANIZATION AND METHOD FOR THE DISTRIBUTION OF COMMODITIES. THE ARMY HAS RUN THE COUNTRY IN QUARTERMASTER-CORPS FASHION, AND ONE NEEDS WRITTEN PERMISSION FOR PRACTICALLY ANYTHING HE BUYS. ALTHOUGH NE WIN MAY HAVE SWEEPED CORRUPTION FROM THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF THE GOVERNMENT, THE INEFFICIENT SYSTEM OF DISTRIBUTION HAS SPAWNED WIDESPREAD BLACK MARKETS, THE LIKE OF WHICH BURMA PROBABLY NEVER SAW BEFORE. SINCE THE GOVERNMENT-RUN PEOPLES' STORES HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO SUPPLY THE PUBLIC WITH BASIC COMMODITIES, THE BLACK MARKET HAS BECOME THE NORMAL SOURCE OF SUPPLY FOR EVERYDAY LIVING, AT HIGHER PRICES THAN MANY WORKERS CAN AFFORD TO PAY.

THE RGUB DOES CONTINUE TO HAVE A BASICALLY HEALTHY FOREIGN EXCHANGE POSITION. THERE IS A DEFINITE ATTEMPT TO EXPAND THE COUNTRY'S INDUSTRIAL CAPACITY, BUT IT IS NOT BEING DONE IN TUNE WITH ANY LONG-RANGE ECONOMIC PLAN. AS A RESULT OF THE CONFISCATION OF THE ASSETS OF THE WEALTHY, THE GAP BETWEEN THE RICH AND THE POOR HAS NARROWED, BUT THE GENERAL POPULACE HAS NOT DIRECTLY BENEFITTED BECAUSE OF THIS.

EVIDENCE INDICATES THAT THE ECONOMIC PROSPECTS FOR BURMA IN THE COMING YEAR ARE FOR MORE OF THE SAME, BUT NO COMPLETE COLLAPSE OF THE BURMESE ECONOMY FOR ECONOMIC REASONS ALONE IS IN THE OFFING. THE RGUB'S GOAL OF IMPROVED SOCIAL WELFARE FOR THE BURMESE IS A LAUDABLE ONE, BUT ILL-CONCEIVED PROGRAMS OF IMPLEMENTATION WILL SERIOUSLY DETER PROGRESS OVER THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS, ECONOMIC PROBLEMS POSSIBLY MAY BE SOMEWHAT ALLEVIATED, BUT THEY WILL BE FAR FROM ERADICATED. SHORTAGES WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE COMING YEAR, BUT SOME OF THE SHORTAGES WILL BE THE RESULT OF

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PROBLEMS EVEN MORE FUNDAMENTAL THAN DISTRIBUTION, SUCH AS LOW INDUSTRIAL CAPACITY TOGETHER WITH A LACK OF PUBLIC RESPONSE TO NE WIN'S DEMANDS FOR INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY IN BOTH INDUSTRIAL AND AGRICULTURAL SECTORS. SHORTAGES WILL CONTINUE TO BE FELT THROUGHOUT BURMA, HOWEVER, IN THEIR SUBSISTANCE ECONOMY, THE FARMERS AND PEASANTS MAY BE LESS AFFECTED THAN URBAN RESIDENTS AND WILL PROBABLY MANAGE TO SURVIVE WITHOUT TOO MUCH DIFFICULTY AND DESPAIR. HOWEVER, THE MALDISTRIBUTION PROBLEMS COULD HAVE SUFFICIENT EFFECT UPON RESIDENTS OF RANGOON TO GENERATE DISSATISFACTION THAT COULD POSSIBLY LEAD TO OCCASIONAL OUTBURSTS OF VIOLENCE.

INSURGENCY CONTINUED UNABATED, DESPITE EXTENSIVE ARMY CLEARING OPERATIONS IN THE NORTH IN EARLY 1965. THE ARMY IS ATTEMPTING SMALL CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMS IN THE WA AND KOKANG STATES, BUT THEY PROBABLY WILL HAVE LITTLE EFFECT IN THE LONG RUN. AT LEAST ONE-THIRD OF BURMA /10 MILLION OF THE 24 MILLION BURMESE/ IS IN THE GRIP OF ACTIVE INSURGENCY AND NOT RESPONSIVE TO DR IN FAVOR OF THE RGUB. THERE ARE ABOUT 30,000 ACTIVE INSURGENTS /KARENS, SHANS, KACHINS, CHINS, KMT IRREGULARS, COMMUNISTS/ WHO SUCCEED IN TIEING DOWN LARGE SEGMENTS OF THE ARMY IN DAILY SKIRMISHES. IN ADDITION TO THE ETHNIC INSURGENTS, WHITE FLAG AND RED FLAG GUERRILLAS CONTINUE THEIR ANTI-RGUB ACTIVITY. THEIR NUMBERS HAVE GROWN DURING THE PAST YEAR TO THE POINT WHERE THE WHITE FLAG STRENGTH IS ESTIMATED AT 3,000 AND THE RED FLAG AT 600. THE WHITE FLAG INSURGENTS IN PARTICULAR ARE WELL TRAINED, DISCIPLINED AND VERY ACTIVE IN THE ECONOMICALLY VITAL IRRAWADDY DELTA AREA. IN THE VIEW OF BURMESE SECURITY OFFICIALS, THE WHITE FLAGS REPRESENT A MOST SERIOUS THREAT BECAUSE THEY ARE INHIBITING THE DELIVERY OF RICE FOR BOTH INTERNAL CONSUMPTION AND FOR EXPORT. NE WIN FEELS FULLY JUSTIFIED IN STRONG MILITARY MEASURES BECAUSE HE CONSIDERS THAT THE BULK OF THE INSURGENTS EXHIBITED NOTHING BUT BAD FAITH IN 1963 WHEN THEY BROKE OFF THE PEACE TALKS WHICH HE INITIATED. THE KAREN ALLIANCE OF SAW HUNTER THA HMWE WITH THE RGUB SHOWS SIGNS OF WEAKENING, AND THERE IS NO INDICATION THAT AN ALL-UNION CONGRESS OF NATIONALITIES WILL EVER BE HELD TO UNITE BURMA. NE WIN IS UNCOMPROMISING IN HIS VIEW THAT THERE WILL BE NO AUTONOMY FOR ETHNIC MINORITIES. YET INSURGENCY, INCLUDING COMMUNIST IS A MAJOR OBSTACLE TO POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTERGRATION.

ALTHOUGH HE WIN HAS SAID HE IS NOT A COMMUNIST, HE KNOWINGLY HARBORS WITHIN HIS GOVERNMENT A WIDE ASSORTMENT OF REVOLUTIONARIES, LEFTISTS, EX-WHITE FLAG INSURGENTS AND COMMUNIST INTELLECTUALS. THESE INDIVIDUALS ARE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE RGUB AS CIVILIAN OFFICERS ON SPECIAL DUTY /OSD'S/ IN POLICY MAKING AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSIGNMENTS. IN ADDITION, THESE LEFTISTS PRETTY WELL MAKE UP THE BRAIN TRUST OF THE BURMA SOCIALIST PROGRAM PARTY. IT CANNOT NOW BE STATED THAT ANY OF THESE LEFTISTS ARE UNDER DIRECT COMMUNIST DISCIPLINE AND ACTING WITH THE ORDERS OF BURMESE OR FOREIGN COMMUNIST ORGANIZATIONS. HOWEVER, THEY ARE CLEARLY IN POSITIONS TO BRING THEIR INFLUENCE TO BEAR ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE RGUB PROGRAMS AND THEY ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HEAVY DOSES OF MARXIST LEFTISM IN THE BSPP. THEY CAN BE EXPECTED TO DO THEIR UTMOST TO PREVENT MODERATION, PARTICULARLY IN MARXIST ECONOMIC MATTERS APPLIED IN THIS COUNTRY, A NUMBER OF THEM ARE EXPERIENCED POLITICAL ACTIVISTS WHO COULD FORM THE NUCLEUS OF A LEFTIST POWER GRAB SHOULD NE WIN DEPART THE SCENE WITHOUT HAVING ARRANGED FOR AN ORDERLY SUCCESSION.

ALTHOUGH NE WIN SWIFTLY DISPOSED OF NON-COMMUNIST POLITICAL THREATS WHEN HE JAILED MONKS, POLITICIANS, PLUS AUNG GYI AND KYI MAUNG, THERE IS A NEW POTENTIAL THREAT. SINCE MAY A NEW ANTI-RGUB

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POLITICAL AND MILITARY MOVEMENT WAS ADVERTISED -- THE NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY, SPONSORED BY BO YANNAING, MEMBER OF THE THIRTY COMRADES, AND KAREN BRIGADIER KYA DOE. THIS GROUP ESCAPED TO THAILAND IN JUNE TO SET UP A BASE OF OPERATIONS AND RECRUIT A GUERRILLA ARMY WHICH WOULD RE-ENTER BURMA AND UNSEAT NE WIN. BO YANNAING IS KNOWN TO BE ACTIVELY SEEKING THAI AND/OR KMT SUPPORT, BUT WHAT HE PROBABLY DESIRES IS U.S. SUPPORT FOR HIS MOVEMENT. IT IS A NASCENT FORCE AT THE MOMENT AND WOULD APPEAR DESTINED TO ACHIEVE LITTLE UNLESS SIGNIFICANT EXTERNAL SUPPORT IS AVAILABLE. HOWEVER, IF THAT SUPPORT IS FORTHCOMING, IT CAN BE EXPECTED THAT FROM KAREN AND MON DISSIDENT GROUPS THE NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT CAN ENLIST A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF INSURGENTS.

DESPITE THE LARGE NUMBER OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT ELEMENTS IN BURMA, NE WIN UNQUESTIONABLY REMAINS IN FIRM CONTROL. THERE CERTAINLY IS ALMOST COMPLETE LOYALTY IN THE DEFENSE SERVICES. TO BE SURE, THERE ARE EXAMPLES OF DISLOYALTY, SUCH AS SOLDIERS WHO GO AWOL AND DESERTIONS AND RESIGNATIONS OF SOME ANGLO-BURMANS WHOM THE RGUB NO LONGER TRUSTS. BY AND LARGE, HOWEVER, IT APPEARS THAT THE DEFENSE SERVICES ARE FIRMLY BEHIND THE GOVERNMENT. THEIR MEMBERS DO ENJOY AN IMPROVED STATUS AS THE RULING AND GUIDING CLASS OF BURMA, BUT PRIVATELY THERE IS PROBABLY SOME DISAGREEMENTS AMONG OFFICERS AS TO WHETHER THE ARMY SHOULD BE SO EXTENSIVELY INVOLVED IN CIVILIAN EFFORTS. SOME GENUINELY FEEL THAT THEIR LACK OF QUALIFICATION FOR CIVILIAN DUTIES AND THE RESULTANT MISMANAGEMENT IS EMBARRASSING TO THE MILITARY.

THE BURMESE SOCIALIST PROGRAM PARTY IS THE VEHICLE THROUGH WHICH NE WIN HOPES TO CONSOLIDATE THE BURMESE WAY TO SOCIALISM. THE BSPP IS ALSO APPARENTLY INTENDED TO BE THE EVENTUAL SUCCESSOR TO THE BURMA ARMY AS THE MASS POWER BASE OF THE BURMESE GOVERNMENT. SO FAR, HOWEVER, THE BSPP REMAINS A CREATURE, CREATED AND MAINTAINED BY THE RGUB. ITS CADRE CONSISTS PRIMARILY OF MILITARY OFFICERS PLUS A FEW CAREFULLY CHOSEN CIVILIANS. NO EXPERIENCED POLITICIANS, A GROUP NE WIN DISTRUSTS AND DISLIKES, ARE DIRECTING ITS AFFAIRS. ATTEMPTS TO PUSH THE BSPP ROLE IN THE BURMESE WAY TO SOCIALISM, SUCH AS ORGANIZATION OF WORKERS COUNCILS AND PEASANTS COUNCILS UNDER PARTY AUSPICES, HAVE NOT PROGRESSED FAR BEYOND THE PLANNING AND PUBLICITY STAGE. THE BSPP HAS BEEN USED AS A CHANNEL FOR INDOCTRINATING THE PUBLIC IN THE NEW DOCTRINE OF BURMESE SOCIALISM, BUT IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THIS INDOCTRINATION HAS BEEN EFFECTIVE. IN SUM, SO FAR A SKELETON HAS BEEN CREATED BUT THERE IS LITTLE FLESH ON THE BONES.

PART II
THE FUTURE

THE CURRENT ISOLATED POSITION OF WESTERN OBSERVERS IN BURMA TODAY MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO JUDGE ACCURATELY AND MEASURE CURRENT TRENDS AND CONDITIONS. NEVERTHELESS, BASED ON AVAILABLE INFORMATION, IT SEEMS MOST LIKELY THAT TWELVE MONTHS FROM NOW NE WIN WILL REMAIN IN POWER, AND BURMA WILL NOT APPEAR TO BE TOO MUCH DIFFERENT FROM THE WAY IT IS NOW. THE CAST OF CHARACTERS SUPPORTING NE WIN MAY UNDERGO SOME CHANGES IN THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS. THERE IS AS YET A RELUCTANCE TO BLAME THE PRECIPITATE NATIONALISATION OF BUSINESS AND ABSURDLY COLLECTIVIZED DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS FOR THE PRESENT ECONOMIC SHORTCOMINGS WITHIN BURMA, AND THIS NECESSITATES PERIODIC SEARCHES FOR A SCAPEGOAT. IT IS LIKELY THAT THIS PATTERN

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WILL CONTINUE, WITH INDIVIDUALS BEING HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR ECONOMIC FAILURES WITHIN BURMA WHICH COULD BE FAR MORE LOGICALLY LAID TO THE SYSTEM WHICH HAS BEEN RAPIDLY IMPOSED. AT PRESENT, THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT SOME INDIVIDUALS WITHIN THE BURMESE MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT ARE GROWING RESTIVE UNDER PUBLIC CRITICISM RESULTING FROM THE MALDISTRIBUTION OF GOODS. SOME MILITARY OFFICERS AT THE LIEUTENANT COLONEL LEVEL ARE REPORTED TO BE SUGGESTING THAT THE RADICALLY INCLINED ADVISERS CLOSE TO NE WIN WHO HAVE BEEN THE AUTHORS OF BURMA'S CHAOTIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM BE CIRCUMSCRIBED OR REMOVED. NE WIN APPEARS TO BE RESISTING THESE SUGGESTIONS BUT CONTINUED LACK OF PROGRESS ON THE ECONOMIC FRONT WITHIN THE NEXT YEAR MIGHT CAUSE HIM TO SACRIFICE ONE OR TWO OF THIS MORE RADICAL ADVISERS, THE MOST PROMINENT OF WHOM ARE BA NYEIN AND TIN PE. NE WIN IS RELUCTANT TO REMOVE SUCH MEN FROM OFFICE SINCE HE KNOWS AND TRUSTS THEM, AND THEY ARE TIRELESS WORKERS. NE WIN HAS JAILED MUCH OF THE ECONOMIC EXPERTISE IN BURMA, ALTHOUGH THERE ARE MANY FORMER BUSINESSMEN, NOW SIDELINED THROUGH NATIONALIZATION, ON WHOM HE COULD CALL IF HE DECIDED TO DE-EMPHASIZE THE RADICAL SOCIALISM HE HAS HERETOFORE EMPLOYED. THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF SUCH A TREND, HOWEVER. SUCH A DE-EMPHASIS, IF IT COMES AT ALL, WILL COME SLOWLY AND THE COMING YEAR WILL PROBABLY NOT SEE MORE THAN THE DEMOTION OF SOME ADVISERS NOW CLOSE TO NE WIN.

AN ORGANIZED COUP AIMED AT REMOVING NE WIN FROM POWER SEEMS AN UNLIKELY PROSPECT WITHIN THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS. HOWEVER, IF SUCH A COUP DID OCCUR, IT COULD ONLY BE MOUNTED SUCCESSFULLY BY ELEMENTS OF BURMA'S MILITARY FORCES. AS NOTED ABOVE, HINTS OF MILITARY DISSATISFACTION ARE BEGINNING TO BE NOTICEABLE BUT THE DISSATISFACTION APPEARS NOT TO BE DIRECTED AGAINST NE WIN BUT AGAINST HIS RADICAL ADVISERS.

A SOMEWHAT MORE CONCEIVABLE CONTINGENCY ARISING DURING THE NEXT YEAR WOULD BE THE ASSASSINATION OF NE WIN. /THE ASSASSINATION OF AUNG SAN IS A TRAGIC AND SENSELESS PRECEDENT/. IF SUCH AN UNHOPEFUL EVENTUALLY OCCURRED, THE MILITARY, SUDDENLY RENDERED LEADERLESS, WOULD PROBABLY PROCLAIM A RULING JUNTA. SUCH A JUNTA WOULD BE TEMPORARY AT BEST AND A POWER STRUGGLE AMONG THE TOP MILITARY LEADERS WOULD PROBABLY ENSUE. SUCH A STRUGGLE COULD LEAD TO A PERIOD OF PROLONGED INSTABILITY WHICH WOULD BE A SIGNAL FOR THE SOVIETS AND CHINESE TO TRY TO EXERT THEIR INFLUENCE OVER SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENTS THROUGH OSD'S AND OTHER AGENTS OF SUBVERSION NOW IN PLACE WITHIN THE RGUB. IF NE WIN WERE TO BE REMOVED FROM POWER THROUGH ASSASSINATION, THE PUBLIC WOULD EXPECT THE RELEASE OF U NU AND OTHER POLITICIANS. THOSE MILITARY OFFICERS IMMEDIATELY SUCCEEDING NE WIN, WHO ARE PROBABLY MUCH LESS POLITICALLY CONFIDENT THAN THE GENERAL, MIGHT ORDER A LARGE-SCALE RELEASE OF DETAINEES IN RESPONSE TO THIS DEMAND. /POSSIBILITIES ATTENDANT TO THE SUDDEN ASSASSINATION OF NE WIN AND THE RELEASE OF U NU ARE MYRIAD AND ARE NOT DEALT WITH IN THIS PAPER/.

ONE FACTOR WHICH WOULD AMELIORATE THE IMMEDIATE EFFECTS OF NE WIN'S ASSASSINATION WOULD BE HIS PRIOR DESIGNATION OF A SUCCESSOR. IT IS NOT KNOWN IF SUCH A SUCCESSOR HAS BEEN NAMED. NE WIN'S REMOVAL WOULD, HOWEVER, PROBABLY PRESENT SUCH POLITICAL EXILES AS BRIGADIERS MAUNG MAUNG AND AUNG SHWE AN OPPORTUNITY TO RETURN TO BURMA. IF BRIGADIER AUNG GYI, REPORTED TO HAVE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT IN THE BURMA ARMY, WERE RELEASED, HE MIGHT BE A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN SUCCESSOR GOVERNMENTS.

NE WIN'S REMOVAL FROM POWER BY SUDDEN DETERIORATION OF HEALTH IS ALSO A POSSIBILITY WITHIN THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS. THIS WOULD

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PROBABLY NOT BE SO PRECIPITATE AS TO DENY HIM THE OPPORTUNITY OF MAKING SOME ARRANGEMENTS FOR AN ORDERLY TRANSFER OF POWER TO A DESIGNATED SUCCESSOR.

IN THE FIELD OF FOREIGN POLICY, AS LONG AS THE BURMESE FOREIGN MINISTRY REMAINS UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER U THI HAN, IT IS NOT LIKELY THAT BURMA'S POLICY WILL DEVIATE MARKEDLY FROM ITS PRESENT NEUTRAL COURSE. THE MOST STRIKING SUCCESS OF NE WIN'S REGIME HAS PROBABLY BEEN ITS ABILITY TO MAINTAIN A NEUTRAL INTERNATIONAL POSTURE AND THE AVOIDANCE THUS FAR OF INVOLVEMENT IN ANY MAJOR INTERNATIONAL DISPUTE. /THE MAINTENANCE OF A NON-COMMITTED INTERNATIONAL POSITION IS A MODEST ACHIEVEMENT, BUT IT IS THE ONE AREA IN WHICH A STATED OBJECTIVE OF THE RGUB HAS BEEN RESPONSIBLY ATTAINED. THE CONTRAST WITH INTERNAL ECONOMIC MATTERS, WHERE THE PROFESSIONALS HAVE BEEN REMOVED AND PLANNING AND EXECUTION PLACED IN THE HANDS OF IMPRACTICAL THEORETICIANS AND AMATEURS IS STRIKING/.

NE WIN'S PERSONAL ATTITUDE TOWARD MAJOR WORLD POWERS INFLUENCES BURMA'S FOREIGN POLICY AND IS A FACTOR WHICH CANNOT BE IGNORED. OVER THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS, GIVEN THE LIKELIHOOD OF WESTERN CRITICISM OF THE CONSPICUOUS LACK OF SUCCESS OF HIS REVOLUTION IN BURMA, NE WIN'S SENSITIVITIES MAY MAKE HIM BECOME PERSONALLY MORE HOSTILE TOWARD THE FREE WORLD. /THE MAJOR COMMUNIST POWERS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY MAKE SURE THAT ANY COMMENTS THEY MAKE ABOUT BURMA WILL BE CAST IN A HIGHLY FAVORABLE LIGHT/. THERE MAY BE A FURTHER REDUCTION OF THE ALREADY DRASTICALLY CURTAILED WESTERN "PRESENCE" IN BURMA, WESTERN INFORMATION PROGRAMS MAY BE FURTHER IMPEDED, AND THE CHRISTIAN MISSIONARIES STILL REMAINING IN BURMA MAY BE FORCED TO LEAVE.

PUBLIC REACTIONS WITHIN BURMA TO THE BURMESE WAY TO SOCIALISM WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO BE LARGELY VOCAL AND NEGATIVE. IF INEFFICIENT INTERNAL DISTRIBUTION CONTINUES TO DEPRIVE THE BURMESE PEOPLE OF DAY-TO-DAY NECESSITIES, FORCING THEM TO BUY AT HIGH BLACK MARKET PRICES, WIDESPREAD INDIVIDUAL COMPLAINING WILL GO ON AT A HIGHER NOISE LEVEL AND ISOLATED INSTANCES OF VIOLENT PROTEST COULD TAKE PLACE.

THE ATTITUDE OF COMMUNIST CHINA TOWARD BURMA DOES NOT APPEAR LIKELY TO CHANGE DURING THE NEXT YEAR'S TIME. THE CHINESE WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE THEIR EFFORTS TO GIVE THE IMPRESSION INTERNATIONALLY THAT BURMA IS UNDER ITS SWAY, THEREBY ANNOYING NE WIN, WHILE AT THE SAME TIME MAINTAINING BASICALLY CORRECT RELATIONS. SUPPORT AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE WHITE FLAG COMMUNISTS WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE AT THE SAME LEVEL AS IN THE PAST. DEVELOPMENTS IN VIETNAM AND LAOS MAY, HOWEVER, CAUSE THE COMMUNIST CHINESE TO UNDERTAKE PRELIMINARY INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES DESIGNED TO PAVE THE WAY FOR A MILITARY INCURSION INTO BURMA. RGUB SECURITY SERVICES SAY THEY ARE ALERT FOR SUCH PROBES, AND SHOULD THEY BE DETECTED WOULD PROBABLY CAUSE A MARKED WORSENING OF SINO-BURMESE RELATIONS.

THE WHITE FLAG INSURGENTS DO NOT AT PRESENT POSE A SERIOUS THREAT TO THE RGUB DESPITE THE FACT THAT THEIR NUMERICAL STRENGTH AND THE AREAS UNDER THEIR CONTROL ARE INCREASING SOMEWHAT. UNDER EXISTING CONDITIONS, ANY SIGNIFICANT MILITARY VICTORIES BY THE COMMUNIST INSURGENTS APPEAR HIGHLY UNLIKELY UNLESS THE COMMUNIST CHINESE DRASTICALLY ALTER THEIR PRESENT POLICY AND GIVE THEM SIGNIFICANT MATERIAL SUPPORT. IT IS ALSO UNLIKELY THAT THE RGUB WOULD BE WILLING TO END THE COMMUNIST INSURGENCY BY OFFERING TO DECLINE THE CPB/WF/ IN A COALITION GOVERNMENT. DURING THE NEXT

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TWELVE MONTHS THE COMMUNIST INSURGENTS WILL PROBABLY CONTINUE TO EXPAND THEIR AREAS OF CONTROL AND INFLUENCE BUT NOT SIGNIFICANTLY.

OTHER INSURGENT ACTIVITIES WITHIN BURMA WILL GO ON MUCH AS THEY HAVE IN PAST YEARS. A RETURN TO INSURGENT STATUS OF ELEMENTS OF THE KAREN REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL HAS BEEN STRONGLY RUMORED FOR THE PAST FEW MONTHS. BRIGADIER LIN HTIN IS PARTICULARLY RESTIVE, AND IF HE RETURNS TO INSURGENT STATUS, THE RGUB'S ATTEMPTS TO GET ARMED INSURGENTS TO JOIN IN PROMOTING THE BURMESE WAY TO SOCIALISM WILL HAVE BEEN DEALT A BLOW. IF LIN HTIN TAKES UP ARMS AGAINST THE RGUB, HE WOULD BE OPERATING IN THE SAME GENERAL AREA OF EAST AND SOUTHEAST BURMA AS THE BO YANNAING-KYA DOE NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY. WHILE THE LEADERS OF THESE TWO GROUPS ARE NOT FRIENDLY TOWARD EACH OTHER, THE PRESENCE OF TWO NEW INSURGENT FORCES IN THE SAME AREA WOULD PLACE A HEAVY ADDITIONAL BURDEN ON THE BURMA ARMY. IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT THE NLA WILL DEVELOP INTO A SIGNIFICANT MILITARY THREAT IN ITSELF. HOWEVER, ITS MERE EXISTENCE COULD PROVE TO BE AN IRRITANT TO BURMESE-U.S. RELATIONS. IF THE RGUB BELIEVES THAT U.S. SUPPORT IS BEING GIVEN TO THE KYA DOE-BO YANNAING GROUP.

THE ROLE OF THE BSPP IN THE COMING YEAR WILL PROBABLY DIFFER LITTLE FROM THE POSITION IT NOW OCCUPIES. NE WIN AND HIS COLLEAGUES WILL CONTINUE TO GIVE BSPP DEVELOPMENT HIGH PRIORITY. LARGE CHUNKS OF TIME OF OVER-WORKED SENIOR RGUB OFFICIALS AND MUCH MONEY WILL BE SPENT ON EFFORTS TO EXPAND ITS ORGANIZATION AND ACTIVITIES. COLONEL THAN SEIN, REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL MEMBER AND JOINT SECRETARY OF THE CENTRAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF THE BSPP, WILL PUSH THE BSPP VIGOROUSLY.

EXPANDING BSPP ACTIVITIES ARE EXPECTED TO CREATE SOME PROBLEMS WITHIN THE RGUB. FRICTION BETWEEN PARTY PERSONNEL, BOTH CIVILIAN AND MILITARY, AND ARMY OFFICERS OPERATING WITHIN A STRICTLY MILITARY FRAMEWORK SEEM INEVITABLE AS THE FORMER MOVE INTO SPHERES OF ACTIVITY NOW THE EXCLUSIVE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LATTER. PERHAPS OF LONGER RANGE SIGNIFICANCE, AS THE BSPP ORGANIZERS ATTEMPT TO SIGN MORE PEOPLE INTO THE PARTY AND TO CIVILIANIZE THE CADRE, THEY WILL FIND IT INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT TO KEEP OUT THE OPPORTUNISTS AND THOSE, PARTICULARLY THE COMMUNISTS, WHO WILL ATTEMPT TO INFILTRATE THE BSPP WITH INTENT OF TAKING IT OVER.

WITHOUT UNEXPECTED SUCCESS IN BSPP ORGANIZATIONAL AND INDOCTRINATION CAMPAIGNS, THE PARTY WILL NOT IN THE NEXT YEAR BECOME THE POWER BASE OF THE GOVERNMENT AND WILL NOT BE STRONG ENOUGH TO FORM A PARTY GOVERNMENT ON ITS OWN. NE WIN COULD DECIDE TO INSTALL A BSPP GOVERNMENT AS A FACADE FOR CONTINUED MILITARY RULE. BUT THIS IS NOT PROBABLE AND, IN ANY EVENT, THERE ARE NO IMMEDIATE PROSPECTS FOR A REAL TRANSFER OF POWER FROM THE ARMY TO THE BSPP.

CONCLUSION

BARRING THE SUDDEN REMOVAL OF NE WIN BY ASSASSINATION OR ILLNESS, BURMA A YEAR FROM NOW WILL PROBABLY BE MUCH AS IT IS TODAY. NE WIN RULING RIGIDLY THROUGH THE BURMA ARMY AND AN EFFECTIVE MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, THE PUBLIC DISSATISFIED WITH THE ECONOMIC SHORTCOMINGS AND WITH INTERNAL INSURGENCY CONTINUING. BURMA WILL MAINTAIN A NEUTRAL COURSE INTERNATIONALLY, BUT NE WIN MAY EXHIBIT MORE PERSONAL ANIMUS TOWARD WESTERN NATIONS THAN HE DOES TODAY, WITH A CORRESPONDING DETERIORATION OF THE WESTERN POSITION AND INFLUENCE IN BURMA.

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