YEAR 2000 EDUCATION REPORT

REPORTED BY

(FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE)

ALL BURMA FEDERATION OF STUDENT UNIONS
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“The Current Education System in Burma”
Year 2000 Education Report

We, the Foreign Affairs Committee - All Burma Federation of Student Unions, present this education report about the current education situation in Burma and the long term closer of universities and colleges due to our deep concern about these issues. This report is dedicated to the people of Burma, its students and the international community who hold a deep interest in Burma’s present, disordered education circumstances. Although we cannot claim the report to be perfectly professional, as it is compiled with the outlook of Burmese students, we hope that understanding of the true situation of education in Burma will be heightened. This report consists of two parts. Part one of the report, concerning the Civilian education system in Burma, is sub-divided into 10 parts. Part two, which deals with the military education system, will then follow.

Chapter (1)
Summary and Background Information

As there are those who are not familiar with our student group, or Burma’s political or educational system, it is appropriate to first introduce the report with a brief background of Burma, its politics, and its students.

A. Summary of the report

The military regime in Burma, currently known as the SPDC, has perpetually neglected civilian education in the country, especially since the national uprisings of 1988, and the resulting political deadlock. The education system, along with other socially vital institutions, and the country as a whole, is incessantly declining. It is clear that the military junta’s priorities are to keep the army strong, despite the fact that the country has no external enemies. Over 40% of the national budget is spent on the military force, while only a mere 7.7% of the allotted education budget is used to promote education.

The country’s economy is rapidly collapsing, and common people across the nation are struggling to survive, yet teacher salaries remain low and the cost of education is high and rising. Beginning from the lowest level of primary school through to the institutions of higher learning, only those with enough money are able to receive their education. 9.5 million of Burma’s children are unable to even begin their basic education, and of those that do start primary school, only 37% are able to go on to the middle school level.

The illiteracy rate in Burma in the 1990’s was 23%, but that number is quickly increasing as more and more people are unable to get even a basic education. Beyond the economic strain imposed by the junta’s rule, the people also must bear the burden of numerous army abuses. Forced labor, constant extortion from government officials, and the war waged against the ethnic minority groups which has killed many and displaced hundreds of thousands from their homes are all factors that make it virtually impossible to attend school.

For those that are able to attend school, the quality of the education is insufficient, and military mentality is encouraged. All schools, at all levels use outdated textbooks that were introduced in the 1960’s to promote the socialist military ideology. School materials and equipment are insufficiently supplied and also outdated. School textbooks, like all other forms of literature and expression in Burma, are strictly censored by the junta. Teachers receive military training, and are ordered to make sure that their students do not engage in any anti-military activity.

Quality education has been lost as the requirements for passing grades has been reduced. A new exam system significantly lessened the need to study in order to pass in primary, middle and high school levels, and cheat sheets are widely available for sale at the time of exams, a fact which is known by the junta, but ignored. Instead, students who join the junta’s Union Solidarity and Development Association, and who participate in their teachers’ tutoring classes outside of school are favored to pass. Bribes and corruption are often a reality for students who wish to pass with good grades.

After students pass 10th standard, they face even more difficulties. Post-high school education has been increasingly problematic and unstable since the student-incited national uprisings of 1988. The military junta responded to these demonstrations by arresting the student leaders and indefinitely closing all schools of higher learning in Burma. Since that time, colleges and universities in Burma have been incredibly unreliable. The schools have closed and opened sporadically, and the system repeatedly changed. From 1988 to the present, civilian universities and colleges in Burma have been open a mere 40 months.

The quality of education has also been sacrificed as course content was simply cut out to allow for the
shortened terms when schools were in session, and corruption is commonplace at the university level for passing grades. As a result of the unavailability of civilian university education, students have been forced to enroll in military institutes, the University of Distant Education (UDE), and the more recently opened institutes of technology. However, the education through these institutions is not sufficient.

The UDE programs sorely lack in opportunity for students to actively learn. Also, when the technical universities were recently re-opened, the system was changed so that students in 2nd and 3rd year must attend new ‘Technical Colleges’ that are placed in locations far from the main cities and university campuses, which makes life very difficult for them. The institutions available to Burmese students are not only insufficient, they are also unaffordable for most.

The current system ensures that the children of the military officials and their circle with money are able to receive an education, and is used by the junta to prove to the international community that they are progressing in their nation’s education system.

The government’s attempts at improving the education system have proven to be ineffective, as the programs they have introduced in actuality do not benefit the students. The government has neglected to provide the essentials of modern textbooks and school equipment, and has more significantly failed to bring about the necessary changes in the political and social conditions of Burma that would allow for true educational improvement.

“Education is based on past events, analyses the present events, and looks to the future”.

According to this motto, every country can see the results of their education system after 14 or 15 years. The Burmese military regime has repeatedly changed academic protocol in the national education system, yet there have been no positive results. Although Japan suffered as a nation from atomic bombs, they were able to re-emerge as a fresh and modernized nation within a few years. Japan fully invested in the education of its people, and therefore should be model nation for education.

Education is inter-related with every social, economic, political, and traditional aspect of a civilization and its history and cannot be divided from these. Burma has suffered from civil wars and oppression by the military dictatorship throughout its history and its students haven’t had a chance to receive a modern education. Burma’s education system is seriously damaged and the future for the students and the country is terrifying.

B. Burma facts and statistics

Location:
Southeast Asian region
Area: 261,228 square miles
Population: 50 million (approximate)
Population per square km: 66
Percentage of population in rural areas: 75%
Population growth per year: 18.4%

Ethnic Groups: 135
Languages: 100
People under 14: 35%
Average daily income: 263 Kyat
Currency rate: 1 US $ = 380 Kyat
Main Religions: Buddhist (85%), Muslim, Christian, Hindu

C. Brief Background of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU)

Since its founding as a student union in 1936, the ABFSU has played a significant role in leading the student mass to call for their student rights, democratic education, democracy, internal peace, and the national interests of Burma. This organization has been at the forefront of strikes for such academic freedoms. In response to these movements, the military regime of Burma banned the student union, consistently used violent means to crush the student activities, and brutally persecuted the students. Therefore, the ABFSU has been forced to work as an underground networking system.

In August 1998, the Foreign Affairs’ Committee (FAC) was established as a branch of the ABFSU main body on the Thai-Burma border. It emerged with the objectives to support the activities of the students inside Burma, and collect, document and release information concerning the student activities, which is difficult to do
The Foreign Affairs Committee of the ABFSU has been working for the Burmese students’ affairs with each new generation of students.

D. Brief background of the political situation and the significant role of students in Burma

In 1885, after 3 wars, Burma fell to the British colonial empire. Patriotic leaders continued to wage war against the colonial but failed due to the unbalances of arms. It was to be 50 long years before British imperialism vanished from Burma. The British colonial ruler first introduced the higher education system with the establishment of Yudathan and Judson Colleges under the administration of the University of Calcutta. Later, in 1920, Rangoon University was founded as the first university in Burma.

The British colonial ruler permitted the university, partly to appease the demands Burmese patriotic students who did not wish to study under Calcutta University. At the same time, the colonial government released the University Provision Act, which in effect only was of benefit to the wealthy and left no opportunity for ordinary Burmese to receive further education. This led to the first student strike in Burma’s history, which occurred on November 22, 1920. As a result of the strike, the governments changed the University Provision Acts according the desires of the students. This day is recognized the National Day of Burma and was the beginning of the Burmese students history in Burma. A university student union was founded in 1923 on the Rangoon University campus. This union became more of a social association, where the student mass could more truly express their desires, when patriotic students entered the union.

In 1936, a second student strike was sparked when the university council dismissed Ko Aung San, the editor of the student paper, ‘Oway Journal’, who would later come to be known as General (“Boh”) Aung San, the national hero.

Aung San was dismissed for an article that had spoken against and ridiculed the British government. After this second student strike, the All Burma Students Union emerged, which gave birth to national leaders.

In 1942, a group of students and youths known as the 30 comrades, or “Thakins” (masters), led by Aung San, went to Japan to seek arms to fight the British colonial government. On their return from Japan, the Burmese patriotic youths founded the Burma Independence Army (BIA) in Bangkok, Thailand in August 1943. The BIA, together with the Japanese army then entered Burma to fight for independence from Britain. The British army, weakened from this affront as well as by the defeats of Second World War, eventually was forced to withdraw from Burmese soil.

The Japanese army had initially declared Burma’s independence, but it soon became apparent that they intended to have absolute rule over Burma. Aung San became the commander-in-chief of the Burmese Defense Army (BDA), which consisted of a small number of soldiers, and had been formed under the direction of the Japanese army, as Japan had feared the strength of the BIA. However, as a result of the brutality of Japan’s fascist rule, the BDA and other political forces, along with Burma’s common people, the workers, farmer and students, joined to fight against Japanese control on March 27, 1945. After Japan lost World War II in August 1945, they withdrew from Burma and Britain re-entered, regaining their control. At that time, General Aung San resigned from the BDA, and led the Anti-Fascist and People’s Liberation League (AFPLL), which demanded independence from the British Empire.

During the time Bogyoke Aung San headed this league, he was able to secure the confidence of the many ethnic groups, which had been influenced by Britain’s divide and rule policy and put against each other in the various wars.

These groups and parties signed a historically important document on February 12, 1947 at the PinLong Convention, which was designed to ensure a peaceful union system in Burma. In addition, Aung San was able to negotiate with the British for the peaceful transfer of power into Burmese hands. Unfortunately, one year before this independence was officially recognized, Burma suffered a great loss.

On July 19, 1947, 9 of the leaders of Burma’s government to be, including Gen. Aung San were assassinated by a British’s lackey group. With them, Burma lost its hopes for a peaceful transformation to independent rule. One of the former ABSU leaders, U Nu became chairperson of AFPLL, and spontaneously bonded with the Prime Minister of Britain. Burma became an independent nation on January 4, 1948.

However, as the trust that had been gained between the ethnic groups at the PinLong Convention had been lost after the assassination, Burma slipped into civil war soon after independence. Civil war has been rife in Burma since that time.

In 1951, ABSU change their constitution to federation style and took the name of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU). The ABFSU worked to organize the people towards activities for internal peace and democratic rights for the entire country.
The ABFSU held an education seminar and presented their principles as guidance for the government in 1958. In the resulting ABFSU education paper, the students advised to the government to rectify the education system. Even the Prime Minister praised this education report. Yet these reports, representing the students voices, went unheeded as the military took power a month later, citing the need for national security. The parliamentary system was reinstated briefly, but the military took power again in March 1962, the second time in Burma’s history. Since that time, the military dictatorship system has rooted deeply in Burma, and the country has increasingly lost their democratic rights and chances for prosperity.

The military dictatorship led by Ne Win accused the student union of witchcraft and bombed the union building in the early morning of July 8, 1962. They also banned the union, forcing ABFSU to go underground, where it has operated since that time. In 1973, Ne Win’s Revolutionary Council was changed to the one-party Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP), which was run according to Ne Win’s “Burmese Way to Socialism”. Under this system, Burma was isolated from the rest of the world, and its people were increasingly oppressed by the whims of the army. Shortly after the system was instated, Burma acquired “Least Developed Nation” status.

The students appeared as a significant freedom fighting force when a Rangoon Institute of Technology student was killed unjustly by the army on March 13, 1988. The resulting student strike, in which the students held many demonstration on the roads and spoke openly against the BSPP government, and the resulting violent army suppression of the movement, sparked the rage of a nation already tired of the military dictatorship. The 1988 movements were born, and throughout the many movements and demonstrations, the ABFSU led the student strikes and demanded the rights of their country. A nation-wide general uprising occurred on August 8, 1988 in which thousands more were massacred in the army attempt to suppress the movement. The students re-established the ABFSU and elected Min Ko Naing (a name which means Conquer of Kings) as chairperson on August 28, 1988. The ABFSU empowered the activities of the protests, and charismatic leaders such as Min Ko Naing were important driving forces. Due to the student involvement, the military forced all the schools in the country to indefinitely close. Due to the uprisings, the military junta was forced to change hands of power several times, but on September 18, 1988 they reformed as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) and overtook the nation again by violently crushing any further strikes or demonstrations in the entire nation and persecuting, imprisoning or killing anyone involved. The ABFSU student leaders were arrested and unlawfully imprisoned. Min Ko Naing was arrested on March 23, 1989, and sentenced to 15 years in prison with hard labor. He is still being held in solitary confinement. After the military took over, they declared their intent to hold a national election.

The National League for Democracy (NLD) emerged as a legally political party, led by Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of Gen. Aung San. The NLD under her leadership quickly gained the confidence of the peoples. Even though the junta put Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest in 1989, prior to the elections, the NLD still won the elections with over 82% of the votes in the multi-party democracy election on May 27, 1990. However, the SLORC refused to hand over the power or convene parliament. Aung San Suu Kyi remained in detention until 1995. In December 1991 she awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Universities and colleges were reopened in 1991, allowing only for a short academic year. Then in December 1996, the students again protested peacefully against the military rule and called for their rights. As a result, hundreds of students were arrested, and the regime again closed all universities and colleges in the entire nation. Since that time, civilian universities have yet to open.

On August 24 1998, the ABFSU students led a strike to call for the convening of the people’s parliament and down with military regime. Subsequently, most of the students were arrested and imprisoned for 20 to 59 years. On September 16, 1998, the NLD and four other ethnic parties formed the Committee Representing the People’s Parliament (CRPP). The ABFSU remains active as an underground force in Burma, acting when it can to call for the rights of Burma and Burmese students.

The Burmese military regime remains in power, and the quality of people’s lives in Burma continues to decline. The people of Burma live in fear and their basic human dignities are continually denied. Thousands remain in prison as a result of their political beliefs, and forced labor and other military abuses are commonplace. As a result, over 3 million Burmese people have been forced to flee their homes, either into military relocation camps, the jungle in hiding, or in other countries as refugees or migrant workers. The regime openly oppresses the NLD and the CRPP, denying their legitimacy, and continues to ignore the people’s desires for freedom and democracy.
Chapter (2)  
“Primary and Middle Standard Education in Burma”

“Everyone has the rights to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory.”

(A) Learning opportunities for Basic Students

The Burma Military regime, or the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), previously known as SLORC, has ignored civilian education since they seized power on September 18, 1988. They have budgeted about 6 billion Kyats (6,155,600,000 Kyats) in the past decade for civilian education, but over 17 billion (17,538,204,490 Kyats) has been spent on Military expenses. As a percentage, the regime has expended 40.1% of the national budget for its military forces, while using a mere 7.7% for education of the education budget. The budget for the armed forces is 1,138 billion Kyats more than the budget for education. The following list outlines the 3 levels of education in Burma, and the number of schools in each category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of school</th>
<th>Number of Schools</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary Level</td>
<td>37,627</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Level</td>
<td>3,695</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Level</td>
<td>1,572</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total School</td>
<td>42,894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Students</td>
<td>(7) million in the entire nation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Burma has a population of nearly 50 million people. Primary and Middle Standard students account for 35% of this population. However, this percentage does not include the 9.5 million children nationwide who are without opportunity to get their basic education. Out of the percentages that are able to attend primary standard, only 37% complete their primary level studies. The percentage of illiterate people in Burma in the 1990’s was 23% and this percentage has been recently rising.

“"The population of the primary and middle standard student list from 1992 to 1997"(x100)"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>5919</td>
<td>5896</td>
<td>5531</td>
<td>5337</td>
<td>5351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>1109</td>
<td>1159</td>
<td>1358</td>
<td>1475</td>
<td>1571</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage of students able to attend school</th>
<th>18.76%</th>
<th>19.43%</th>
<th>23.04%</th>
<th>26.48%</th>
<th>29.43%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

From 1992 - 1997, only 24.59% of students went on to middle standard from the primary level. There are 16.24 million children in Burma in the primary level education age group, which includes ages 1 to 14. However, 9.5 million of these children don’t have the opportunity to learn. The remaining 6.7 million children have the opportunity to attend the Basic education standard schools. Of these children who begin to study at this primary level, only 25% are able to complete it. Children are required to attend school from 5 years old. Once they complete the 5 years of their primary education, children can join the middle standard, which lasts for 4 years.

(B) Experimental Education

In order to manage basic education in Burma, the regime founded the Basic Education Department, consisting of 4 sub-departments on April 1, 1998. The four departments are: Basic Education Department (Lower Burma), Basic Education Department (Upper Burma), Basic Education Department (Rangoon) and Basic Edu-
cation Department (Teacher training). The Basic Education Department kept the texts and education systems that were in effect under the BSPP socialist system.

Nothing has been changed in the textbook or education standards since this system was founded in the early 1970's, although the SPDC has inserted new learning material according to the propaganda of their ruling system. The regime has also introduced a new social subject, promoting xenophobia, to be learned at the basic level. In addition, the regime established the Continuous Assessment and Progression System (CAPS) project in 11,967 basic primary and middle schools in 277 Townships nation-wide. Under this new system, the regime forced the schools to change the basic and middle level standard final test exam system. The junta’s new ‘Chapter End Test’ policy makes it possible for a student to sit for a re-exam if he failed in one subject or more. Therefore, every student is always able to pass the year’s final exam. The regime is quite clearly concerned more with quantity then quality of education.

Unfortunately, most of the students have come to believe that they can easily pass their exams every academic year without really studying their textbooks. Further, the regime pressures the basic and middle students to become members of the army-sponsored association, the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA), and to be active in various events. The students are required to be involved in sport fairs led by the military junta and are forced to pay respect to and entertain, with dancing and singing, the senior members of the military regime when they visit. If the students fulfil these ‘social’ requirements, they receive extra marks on their final examination and recommendations from their schoolteachers. If the students fail any subjects in the final exam, he must sit for a re-exam for the unsuccessful subject or subjects. The Continuous Assessment and Progression System has failed, as even the student’s parents give money to the schoolteachers to seek successful marks for their sons and daughters. This system has encouraged corruption at all levels of education in Burmese society.

(C) The Expensive Cost of Education

Every year in June schools open and a final examination is held for all basic education level students. In the past, the students were required to pay 3 sets of fees at this time. These fees covered textbooks, exercise books, and a fund for the parent-teacher association. However, the students are now required to pay extra fees for school cleaning, examination papers, school dress, sport, computer set-up, in school tutoring, and the USDA membership fee. They pay 3,000 Kyats at the time of enrolment and also must pay at least 500 Kyats per month for in school tutoring fees.

The government doesn’t distribute enough textbooks, exercise books, and other learning materials for the basic education students, so even though the students have paid a fee for textbooks, they must buy them from other sources. The cost is around 1,000 Kyats for one primary level textbook set and 2,000 Kyats for middle level standard. Students also have to purchase their exercise books from external sources, which costs about 200 to 600 Kyats for a dozen, in addition to the government fee for exercise books. This material is essential for the students for learning but because the junta doesn’t provide enough for this need, the students are forced to pay beyond the tuition fees.

**School Fees for One Year of Basic Education in Burma**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Level (Kyats)</th>
<th>Middle Level (Kyats)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollment</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent/teacher Assn.</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise book</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Building</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDA membership</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Due to the economic crisis in Burma, and low teacher salaries, teachers in Burma cannot give their full attention and energy to teaching their classes, and the classes suffer. Teachers only receive 900-1200 Kyats per month, therefore, most teachers are forced to work additional hours tutoring outside of the classroom in order to survive. The teachers generally favor the students who attend their special extra classes and are more likely to give them passing grades.

As the classes are designed according to this system, most students require extra teaching outside of the
classroom, and therefore must pay about 1000 Kyats per month for the primary level, and 2,000 Kyats for middle level tutoring.

Most students, especially those, who live in rural areas, are unable to attend school because of the high-cost and numerous fees. Burma's families are facing a severe economic crisis and cannot support their children’s education. The dropout rate in Burma is steadily increasing.

Main reasons for student dropouts in Burma in 1994-1995

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Ages 5 to 9</th>
<th>Ages 10 to 14</th>
<th>Total Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High tuition and fees</td>
<td>20 (80%)</td>
<td>185 (55.6%)</td>
<td>205 (57.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home chores</td>
<td></td>
<td>11 (3.3%)</td>
<td>11 (3.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care for family</td>
<td>1 (4.3%)</td>
<td>5 (1.5%)</td>
<td>6 (1.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(younger siblings, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help home business</td>
<td>1 (4.3%)</td>
<td>16 (4.8%)</td>
<td>17 (4.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time work</td>
<td></td>
<td>40 (12%)</td>
<td>40 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illness</td>
<td>1 (4.3%)</td>
<td>6 (1.8%)</td>
<td>7 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Permanent work</td>
<td></td>
<td>4 (1.2%)</td>
<td>4 (1.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not interested</td>
<td></td>
<td>56 (16.8%)</td>
<td>56 (16.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief that education is not useful</td>
<td></td>
<td>1 (0.3%)</td>
<td>1 (0.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td>9 (0.7%)</td>
<td>9 (0.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23 (6.5%)</td>
<td>333 (93.5%)</td>
<td>356 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Reference from Labor Department & UNICEF report on working Children and Women.)

The above chart was completed by the Burma Labor Ministry and UNICEF joint research team, who analyzed the rate of dropout base on the cases of (1163) children in Rangoon and Mandalay. Of these children, 27% were able to complete their primary level, 34% dropped out and 39% weren’t able to enroll. Not mentioned in their report was the situation of thousands of children, who are unable to attend school, or forced to drop out because of things like forced labor requirements of the army and forced relocation. Other crimes committed by the army, such as the extra-judicial killing or summery execution, and illegal arrest and imprisonment of their parents, and the burning of their homes and villages also prevents many children from going to school. The use of child forced labor has been well documented in Burma. When the military orders villagers to give their free labor on a project, the men and women are often have no chance to go, as they must continue to do their own work in order to survive, and so the children are sent in their place.

(D) Basic Education and Computers

The military regime has forced the primary level students to give money for the set-up of computers in state schools in Rangoon. Also, the junta has introduced multi-media classrooms in the state schools, for which the students must pay about 3,000 Kyats. However, these classrooms are not available to every student. In order to join these classes, students must fulfil 20 rules - they must be “good students”, or they can pay 1,500 to 4,000 Kyats per academic school year for primary level and 2,000 to 4,500 Kyats for middle level.

In 1998-99, a multi-media classroom was introduced to the 244 State School in Rangoon. Painting, music, English, and Home Economics were included in this classroom program. The junta has instituted 216 similar classrooms around the country within the last 3 years. The junta has conscripted “donations” for these classrooms from some wealthy businessmen as well as the some of parents of the schoolchildren who use the classroom. The junta then shows this list of donations from the businessmen.

For Example:

The cost to set up computers in State schools in Panthanaw Township, Irrawaddy Division was 2 million Kyats. This money was donated from 40 businessmen. The cost to set up computers in State schools in Mayangone Township, Rangoon was 2.6 million Kyats.

The cost to set up computers in State schools in BEHS #3 in Bago was 7.9 million Kyats.

The cost to set up computers in State schools in BEHS #1 in Bago was 4.35 million Kyats. 40 students must pay 421,000 Kyats in fees in order to learn Computer. (1,525 Kyats per person.) The junta claims that they promote education in Burma by setting up computers in State schools, as ordered by the Minster of Education in
Practically, however, the junta uses the money from the people and students to set up the computers, without any government provision or funding. In State schools, the teachers cannot fully explain computers as they do not have enough computer knowledge themselves, and in addition, the classes are not open to all students. Therefore, this program isn’t effective, but is merely something the junta can use for show.

The junta claims that providing computers will sufficiently “modernize” the nation’s education system, but they have yet to take the responsibility to institute libraries in all schools, to provide modernized learning resources such as laboratories, and updated textbooks, and to provide sufficient learning tools such as pencils, rulers and exercise books. In the major cities of Burma, an average BES (Basic Education School) has 2,000 students.

There are averages of 5 computers in each of these schools, with an average teacher/student ratio of 1:150. Therefore, there are not enough computers or teachers for the students to learn hands on. They are taught the computer by lecture only, which leads the student to be intimidated in actually using a computer.

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Chapter (3)
High School Standard Education

“Higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.”
“Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.”

(A) Changes in the High School Standard System

The Burmese junta is changing the education system nation-wide. In the past, the 8th and 10th Standard Final Exams were standard government exams, the same throughout the whole country. The 8th Standard is the final level in the Middle level, and the 10th standard is the final level for the high school standard level. Also, the government previously recognized Art and Science as separate subjects in regard to the 8th Standard final exam. However, the regime has changed this system.

Since 1992, the exam papers have been written by each individual school, instead of the central government, and the Arts and Sciences are no longer separated in the high school standard level. The high school education system has been changed 6 times since 1965.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>Entrance requirements</th>
<th>Remark</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1965-1986</td>
<td>Burmese, English, Mathematics, Geography, Economics, Sciences (Physics, Chemistry)</td>
<td>According to grades achieved</td>
<td>All subjects taught in Burmese, exp. English History,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995-1999</td>
<td>Burmese, English, Math, Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Arts (Geography, Arts subject, History, Economics)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>All subjects taught in English, (exp. Burmese and Biology)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the 1998-99 Academic Year, the regime changed the name of the 10th Standard Basic Education Standard to the Matriculation Level. The 10th Standard final exams are no longer standard exams the same throughout the nation. They are now written by each individual state or division. There are approximately 4 million students that sit for the 10th Standard final exam every year. Only 1/3 of these students pass the exam.

After the 1988 uprisings, the regime reopened the high schools in 1989. The students who passed the 10th standard final exam from 1990 to 1995 were able to attend University, Colleges and Degree Colleges. However, of the students who passed the exam from 1996 to the present, there are over 5 million still waiting to be admitted to institutions of higher education.

(B) Opportunities to choose Universities and Colleges

All universities, colleges, and institutions were closed in Burma due to the '88 uprisings. Then throughout the 1991-1996 period, the regime allowed universities and colleges to re-open for only a 4-month academic year at a time.

High School graduates from the 1990 to 1995 10th standard classes were able to attend University, Colleges and Degree Colleges at that time. However, those who have passed 10th standard since that time have not been able to attend University. Over 5 million are still waiting to be admitted to universities, colleges, and degree colleges. The military regime has not allowed students to attend civilian universities since the peaceful student demonstrations of 1996, but through state media and other forms of pressure, has persuaded them to join military universities, colleges, and institutes. The regime actively promotes their military education in an attempt to spread military society to civilian students.

The junta’s Higher Education Department, which controls all universities and colleges, became two departments in 1997; the Higher Education Department (Upper Burma) and the Higher Education Department (Lower Burma). These departments also manage the high school standard level, as the 10th standard is the final pre-university level. Prior to 1999, high school students were admitted to various universities contingent on their high school marks. Students were required to take majors in accordance with their exam performance, whether this aligned with their education desires or not. In this system, a student who achieved high marks was required to attend an institute and major in engineering or medicine, whereas a student with lower marks had only the option of attending regular universities and colleges. Under this system, many students did not apply their major to the working field, and were only disappointed. The regime practised this university entrance system from the 1960’s to 1998.

Then in 1999, the regime changed this entrance system to the matriculation method. The regime introduced the matriculation exam system to high school students in the 1998-99 academic year, and then changed the name of the high school level to “Matriculation” in 1999. The junta forced the new system on the students and teachers, but didn’t adequately explain what the new system meant. Therefore, even now the High school students and teachers don’t fully understand the matriculation exam system. Tutors merely explain to their students that the matriculation exam extends to another entrance exam the students must take to attend university. Under the matriculation examination system, students must now take two entrance exams for university; one at the end of the 10th standard, and another when applying for university.

For example, if a student is interested in engineering and wants to join the Technical Institute, he must first try to get very high marks in the 10th standard matriculation exam. If the student passes with adequate marks, he then has to sit for an entrance exam when applying to the Technical Institute. After he passes the two exams successfully, he can then attend the GTI (Government Technical Institute) for two academic years. After completing the GTI program, the student can attend the GTC (Government Technological College) for the third and fourth year of study.

For the fifth year and final step to a Bachelor of Engineering, the student must attend the Technological University. In the new education system, a student cannot easily and directly attain his diploma, he must go through many steps. 5 million high school students who took their high school final exam since 1996, and are now waiting to further their studies, and have not yet received the results to know which school to apply to. Without the opportunity to study, some students have entered the work field and attempt to earn money to either start a private business or attend language classes, computer training classes, and diploma training classes while
waiting for their higher education.

However, nearly 91% of these students have suffered from the economic crisis in Burma, and are too poor to even extend their education in this manner, thereby losing all education objectives. As a result, many students without education or employment opportunity have gone to neighbouring countries such as Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and China as migrant workers. Those with enough money have sought further learning and work abroad.

(C) High School Education and Tuition

The Military Regime has opened 1,527 high schools nation-wide. High school students are required to pay 3,000 Kyats per academic year in tuition to attend State High School when they enrol. In addition, students must spend about 200 Kyats per month for in-school tutoring classes. The government doesn’t distribute enough textbooks, exercise books, and other learning materials for the high education students, so even though the students have paid a fee for textbooks, they must buy them from other sources. The cost is around 2,200 Kyats for a high school level textbook set. Students also have to purchase their exercise books from external sources, which costs about 200 to 600 Kyats for a dozen, in addition to the government fee for exercise books. The salaries the regime pays to State High School teacher are low, and as a result, the teachers cannot give their full attention and energy to teaching their classes, and the classes suffer. Nearly 80% of students must therefore attend tutoring classes outside of school.

In Burma, tutoring has become a tradition in the education society and is widely practiced. After the 1988 uprising, businessman and graduate teachers instituted many tutoring classes outside of State schools as private/individual tutoring schools. Some Professors and Lecturers have instituted such private schools illegally for high school standard students to pass the government examination with flying colors.

So in addition to the high fees they must pay for their State school education, High school standard students must spend a lot of money for external tutoring classes. Students spend at least 200 Kyats to 2,000 Kyats per subject per month. Therefore, the total average expense per month for a high school standard education is between 3,000 and 20,000 Kyats. While some students can afford the additional cost of external tutoring, others cannot and have to purchase special textbook from sources outside of school.

Poor students, especially those who live in rural areas, are unable to attend external tutoring classes because of the high cost. Burma’s families are facing a severe economic crisis and cannot support their children’s education. The chances are less for these students who are poor and want to learn high school standard education. The paying of money for education never ceases for Burmese students under the military regime.

It is common practice for students with enough money to purchase and smuggle in the exam “Question Paper” from the relatives of the military society the day before the exam. Every year in the final examination period, this “Question Paper” is sold, but it overlooked by the regime, as it doesn’t concern them. The price is about 10,000 to 30,000 Kyats.

Some high school standard students use this paper to cheat on their exams and do not study. By their lack of control in this matter, the government neglects the moral behavior of the students.

The students then lose confidence in the education system, and the changes the government is bringing about in it. The regime believes that it has effectively controlled the civilian education system, and is proud and confident in itself for suppressing and oppressing this education. They believe that if the civilian education system is effectively destroyed, that the military education system will become the most powerful in the nation.

Chapter (4)
“Universities and Colleges in Burma.”

“Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.”

In 1920, Rangoon University appeared as the first institute in the British imposed university system. After Independence from colonialism, Mandalay University was established. The universities were never closed long
term without reason during these times, but the universities did close in the World War II period and at certain insecure times they were closed temporarily due to civil war.

However, the present Military dictatorship in Burma has repeatedly forced Universities to close since 1988, and for the last three years has refused to open the universities at all. The regime closed all civilian universities, colleges and Institutes in December 1996 after university students, nation-wide, boycotted the education system and staged a demonstration to call for their students’ rights and academic freedom. The universities have yet to re-open.

Record of the opening and closing of universities and colleges from 1988 to 2000

(1) In June 1988, the military government, the BSPP (Burma Socialist Programs Party), in response to the mass protests against their rule, indefinitely closed all universities in the country. Even after the multi party democracy election was held in 1990, the regime continued to neglect university education. It wasn’t until May 21, 1991, that the universities re-opened for the first time since their 1988 closure. However, seven months later, the regime again closed universities and colleges after university students held a strike to support Aung San Suu Kyi as she had been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

(2) Universities and colleges were re-opened again in June 1992. The academic year was only 5 months, however, as Universities closed again in November 1992.

(3) The regime again reduced the academic year when they re-opened the universities in March 1993 and closed them again in July of that year.

(4) Following their policy of short academic years, the regime opened universities and colleges again in September 1993 and then closed them in January 1994. Later in 1994, students were permitted to attend universities from August to December.

(5) From May to September 1995, universities were re-opened for a 4-month academic year. Then on November 29, 1995, universities reopened again as the Diamond Jubilee of the Rangoon University was near. The SLORC (State Law and Order Restoration Council) regime, believing that the generation of university students from the 1988 strike was already graduated and that the new generation wouldn’t dare to strike, allowed the academic year to last 5 months at that time, and closed universities in May 1996.

(6) All universities, colleges and institutes were re-opened on September 29, 1996. Then, on December 2, 1996, the university students staged a peaceful demonstration against the military regime to call for their student rights and the re-legalization of the student union. The regime was shocked and brutally crushed the student demonstration. Universities, colleges and Institute were then once again indefinitely closed on December 12, 1996.

(7) The regime has not allowed universities and colleges to reopen since that time until now. The regime only permits university students to take examinations. On August 18 1998, the regime forced State school students to sit for university level exams. However, when the university students staged a strike to call for the people’s parliament and an end to the military rule, the regime stopped the exam. They brutally crushed the movement and arrested many students, giving them prison terms of at least 20 to 59 years. With the last 12 years, from 1988 to the present, the regime has opened the universities a mere 40 months.

The Military Regime’s Higher Education Department completely controls all Universities, Colleges, and Institutes. 2 Institutes, 2 Universities, 3 Degree Colleges and 8 Colleges are under the control of the Higher Education Department (Lower Burma), and 4 Institutes, 15 Universities, 4 Degree Colleges and 16 Colleges are under the control of the Higher Education Department (Upper Burma). University graduates who have received Bachelors from Universities from 1988 to the present have had difficulty finding jobs and entering the working field. Many companies and national businesses don’t trust the quality or quantity of education given by the authorities. (They also don’t recognize university Bachelor degrees, as students can obtain a Bachelor’s degree after studying only a short time in an academic year.) Therefore, most university graduates end up working in Government Offices and Departments as civil servants or else try and open private small business to earn their living. University graduates usually don’t attempt to use their degree in job application, as they are well aware that their degrees are not useful in the domestic
working field or abroad. The present military regime has brought great changes to the university education system within the past decade.

University courses were taught in English but the regime changed this standard to Burmese, except for a period in 1993 when English was again the classroom language. They have also made significant amendments to all the university courses and re-edited textbook to align with the expectations of military rule. Modern lab practical equipment and the latest edition of textbooks are also lacking, to the detriment of the universities.

Also within the last 10 years, the military regime has instituted new colleges and universities nation-wide. They changed the levels of education, so that the Degree Colleges became Colleges, and Colleges became Universities, but failed to upgrade the university education system at all. The Higher Education Department has taken out or disposed of 2/3 of the lessons from the original courses in order that the course may be taught within a 4-month academic year. In addition, since the 1988 uprisings, the regime has made it so students do not study in the same universities together for a long period of time, and students are forced to learn in various universities over the course of their studies.

Before 1996, the regime allowed the universities to open for regular term a mere 4 months. The rest of the time the universities were only open for post-graduate classes and Honors classes. Since the second week of December 1996, when all Universities were closed, the regime has not allowed them to be re-opened. The regime has permitted short-term diploma training classes on the university campus in order to show to the world that universities are open in Burma. Courses such as the Basic Law Diploma training course (Law Department), Basic English Diploma course (English-Department), and Basic Gem Training course (Geology Department) were opened on university campuses. So, faced with the long-term closure of the universities, and the desire to study their Bachelor degree at university level only, many students choose to enrol in the UDE (University of Distant Education). Nation-wide, the number of students enrolled in the UDE program is rapidly increasing.

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Chapter (5)  
“What is the University of Distant Education”

The Distant Education System originated from Rangoon University in 1973-74, as an alternative way to study for the Education diploma course. In 1978-79, the correspondence classes for the Education diploma were permitted to be taught from Mandalay University. In the 1981-82 academic year, the Higher Education Department permitted students to study Arts, some Science, Law and Economic majors by correspondence courses from Rangoon University. These programs were originally called the Correspondence Program. The lectures and lab practical were open only for one month, when the regular classes of the Rangoon University were finished for the academic year. Civil servants, basic education schoolteachers, soldiers, monks and businessmen who weren’t able to study in university full time were the main participants in the correspondence classes, seeking for their university diploma. Various other universities and colleges began the correspondence program from their campus in 1981-82. By the 1991-92 academic year, nearly 88,225 correspondent students were studying through the Correspondence programs of various Universities.

In July 1992, the regime changed the Correspondence program to the Distant Education Program. The University of Distant Education appeared as a new university for correspondence classes. Students who had dropped out of university for various reasons and couldn’t afford university education were able to attend the University of Distant Education (UDE). The subjects students are able to study under the UDE program are; Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Burmese, Asia Studies, Psychology, Philosophy, Economy, Botany, Zoology, and Pali. Later, when the regime closed all other university programs in Burma, the enrolment soared for the UDE programs, as it was the only program not continually shut down by the government. The UDE students studying Science majors are required to attend lectures and lab practical at the university campuses every Saturday and Sunday for 5 months. For the UDE students studying Art majors they only attend lectures on campus for 10 days prior to the final exam.

The students must pay tuition when they enroll to study through the UDE program. When the program opened for the 1999 academic year, the cost of the program was about 4,000 Kyats. In addition, the distant students were responsible to purchase the textbooks, cassette tapes, and lecture assignments required for the year. Yet the UDE textbooks and assignments aren’t useful for the students because the UDE tutors don’t use these texts for the final exam. Instead, they publish a new assignment book near the final exam time and sell it to the students. When the regime opened the UDE program in December 1999, they announced that the final
examination would be held in May 2000. However, the junta has temporarily closed the classes for these years’ students, and postponed the examination date to August 2000.

Even though the regime has closed the universities, colleges, and degree colleges in the entire country, the UDE program continued to function. Therefore, many day university students have moved to the UDE program. Nearly 2/3 of the university students has changed to study through the UDE, as they have suffered from the long-term closure of their universities. However, UDE students also face difficulties as the regime has increased the cost to study in the UDE program.

Cost to enroll in the UDE program for the 2000-2001 academic year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Major</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>7,000 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>4,000 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>5,500 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>4,000 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>5,000 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>4,000 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Arts</td>
<td>4,700 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>4,000 Kyats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Rangoon, the UDE science students must attend the lectures and lab practical in various universities and colleges.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>University and College</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Thanlyin College</td>
<td>South-east Rangoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dagon University</td>
<td>East Rangoon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Hlaing College</td>
<td>Rangoon suburban area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Kyimyindine College</td>
<td>Rangoon suburban area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Rangoon University</td>
<td>Rangoon suburban area</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the students majoring in the Arts, the students are only required to attend lectures 10 days prior to the final exam. The 10 days of study and final exam are held in the nearest State High Schools to the students.

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Chapter (6)
“Institutes in Burma”

“Technical and professional education shall be made generally available”

In December 1999, the military regime re-opened the Institutes, which had been closed for 3 years, or since December 1996. In addition, the regime reduced the number of years required to study in order to obtain a diploma in each Institute. The regime only re-opened the Institutes of Technology in Burma, other universities and colleges remain closed.
### List of the reducing term of Institutes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Institute</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Reduction of Years</th>
<th>Number of students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Institute of Medicine #1</td>
<td>Lamadaw, Kamayut Township</td>
<td>(7) to (6) years</td>
<td>- 750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Institute of Medicine #2</td>
<td>North Okkalapa Township</td>
<td>(7) to (6) years</td>
<td>- 750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Institute of Medicine (Mandalay)</td>
<td>Mandalay</td>
<td>(7) to (6) years</td>
<td>- 750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Institute of Dental</td>
<td>Rangoon</td>
<td>(6) year’s</td>
<td>- 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Nursing University</td>
<td>Lamadaw, Rangoon</td>
<td>6 to 5 years</td>
<td>- 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Institute of Veterinary Medicine</td>
<td>Pyinmanar, Mandalay</td>
<td>6 to 5 years</td>
<td>- 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Yangon Technological University</td>
<td>Kyokyon, Rangoon</td>
<td>6 to 5 years</td>
<td>-750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(8) Mandalay Technological University</td>
<td>Mandalay</td>
<td>6 to 5 years</td>
<td>750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9) Institute of Forestry</td>
<td>Pyinmanar, Mandalay</td>
<td>6 to 5 years</td>
<td>- 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10) University for Agriculture</td>
<td>Pyinmanar, Mandalay</td>
<td>6 to 5 years</td>
<td>- 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11) Institute of Computer Science (Rangoon)</td>
<td>Hlaing</td>
<td>6 to 5 years</td>
<td>-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(12) Institute of Computer Science (Mandalay)</td>
<td>Mandalay</td>
<td>6 to 5 years</td>
<td>-60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(13) Institute of Pharmacy</td>
<td>Rangoon</td>
<td>6 to 5 years</td>
<td>- 50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(14) University for Basic Health</td>
<td>Rangoon</td>
<td>5 to 4 years</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15) Medical Science</td>
<td>Rangoon</td>
<td>5 to 4 years</td>
<td>- 50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If high school standard graduates want to join these institutes and universities, they must apply to the High Education Department, and are accepted to of the institutes according to the marks of the high school exam. In the 1998-1999 academic year, the authorities changed the entrance system to these institutes. According to the new entrance system, the students must sit through another entrance exam to enter these universities. As the cost of tuition and other fees has increased in these universities, most students are unable to study.

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### Chapter (7)

"Technological Universities, Colleges and Institutes of Science."

Under the regime’s Ministry of Science and Technology, 5 Universities, 19 Colleges and 45 diploma training courses are now running.

#### Technological Universities

1. Yangon Technological University
2. Mandalay Technological University
3. Pyin Technological University
4. Yangon Institute of Computer Science
5. Mandalay Institute of Computer Science

#### Technological Colleges

1. Thanyin Technical College
2. Pathein Technical College
3. Hlaing Tar Yar Technical College
4. Malamyine Technical College
5. Mandalay Technical College
6. Sitwe Technical College
7. Monywa Technical College
8. Aye Thar Yar Technical College
9. Htarwae Technical College
10. Myintkyinar Technical College
11. Magwe Technical College
12. Thaungoo Technical College

About the Technological Universities (Formerly the Institutes of Technology) and Technical Colleges. In 1924, the first Engineering Department was set up at Rangoon University. Then, Rangoon Institute of Technology opened in KyonKon, Rangoon in 1936 in order for students to study engineering subjects, and later the Mandalay Institute of Technology was founded. The Rangoon Institute of Technology was the threshold for the beginning of the 1988 People’s Movement in Burma. Ko Phone Maw, one of the RIT students, was killed by military forces on 13 March, 1988.

Then the government closed the RIT on March 17, 1988. 4 years later, in 1991, the military regime reopened Rangoon Institute of Technology. However, the authority opened the classes for only 4 months instead of normal 10-month academic year.

The 1996 student movements were also started from the RIT students. Following the student’s peaceful demonstrations held on campuses nation-wide, the regime closed all classes at RIT, and all universities and colleges across the country. In August 1998, the authority forced the students to sit the exam for 1996-97 academic year’s course during the 10 days of opening the classes. Though the student had strike for the short-term study before the exam on 2 Sep 1998, the authority held the final exam and then shut down the institute. Previously, the RIT was under the control of the Education Ministry. When the Science and Technical Ministry took control in 1998, it was renamed as the “Technological University” by the military regime. In order to show the international community and governments, who had pressured Burma to reopen universities, the regime opened evening diploma courses for engineering subjects at RIT in July 1997, though they still closed the Day-time University courses.

In Jan 2000, the regime opened some institutes including Institutes of Technology. However, in order to disperse the student mass at the institutes, they have changed the system. In the past, students in the Institutes of Technology (IT’s) studied from their first year to their final year’s course in one university, at one location. The students who received high marks on their high school exam were able to join the Institutes of Technology, and work towards their Bachelor of Engineering, which was a 6-year course.

Students whose marks were lower previously joined the GTI, or Government Technical Institutes to obtain a GTI diploma (described below.) Now, students must study at 3 different schools in order to obtain their B.E.

Classes Location Degree first year and second year course Government Technical A.G.T.I third year and fourth year course Technical Colleges B (Tech) final year and Master course Technological University B.E/ M.E

Students can no longer join the IT’s (now University of Technology) directly from high school, all students who wish to get a B.E. must first apply to the AGTI, then try to get the marks necessary to join the Technical Colleges. If they’re grades from the AGTI courses were not outstanding, the students are not able to go on to the Technical colleges, and must settle for the A.G.T.I diploma. If they go on to the Technical College, and pass with excellent grades, then finally they are able to enter the Technological University. If they do not go on to the Technological University, they can receive a Bachelor of Technology.

The former Institute of Technology students, who were 1st and 2nd year when the Universities were closed in 1996 were forced, under the new system, to attend the AGTI program. The former 3rd and 4th year students were forced to attend the Technical Colleges.

Therefore, their opportunities to receive their B.E. were lowered. The former students were not at all happy with the new system. Some quit the Institute, and others staged a strike in February 2000 against the new system. After the strike, the junta promised the former students they would have no difficulty to receive their B.E., but it remains to be seen what will actually happen, and the junta has given the students little reason to trust them. In addition, most of the new Technical Colleges are located in new facilities, far away from the cities. There are many problems as they lack facilities, teachers, and lab practical materials. Also, the students are not provided with government hostels (dormitories) and so must pay for the cost for the living and food on their own.

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Chapter (8)
“Association of Government Technical Institutes (AGTI)"

Until 1996, these schools were under the Department of Technology and Institutes, of the Ministry of Education. On Oct 2, 1996, the Ministry of Science and Technology were formed according to the regime’s order #30/96. On January 1, 1997, when the Department of Technology and Institute was transferred to the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Association of Government Technical Institutes was also put under the control of the Ministry of Science and Technology.

The location and numbers of AGTI Schools are as follows:

Rangoon Division
1. Insein
2. Thanyin
3. Mawbe

Sigine Division
1. Sigine

Irrawaddy Division
1. Pathein
2. Mau Pin
3. Pyapon
4. Hintada
5. Wakhama

Pegu Division
1. Pyi
2. Thaungoo

Mandalay Division
1. Pyinmanar
2. Mattilar
3. Mandalay

Magwe Division
1. Chauk
2. Tayet
3. Yenanchaung
4. Magwe

Kachin State
1. Myintkyinar

Shan State
1. Aye Tha Yar
2. Thaung Gyi
3. Hae Hoo
4. Lashio

Mon State
Phar Out(Mawlamyine)

Subjects in AGTI schools
1. Mechanical Power
2. Machinery Tools
3. Electrical Power
4. Electronics and Communication
5. Civil Engineering
6. Mining
7. Food and Chemicals
8. Plastics and Rubber

The first GTI course was the GTI (Insein), which was founded in 1896 under the colonial rule in Burma. Later, this was extended, and 24 AGTI schools existed across the country. To attend the GTI, students who passed the high school exam with both A and B grades could sit for the entrance exam. (Under the previous system, high school students only received 2 grades for their final exam, A and B. Students who received a grade B had only 2 options, simply receive their H.S. diploma, or attend a AGTI program, as they could not enter any other university with a B mark) When the military re-took control after the 1988 uprisings, the entrance exam system changed. According to the new system, the A and B grade system was cancelled, and the new criteria for AGTI application was a mark of at least 140 from the final exam English and Mathematics subjects.

After the student movements of 1996, GTI schools were also closed by the regime, along with all other schools of higher learning. Later, in 1997, all GTI schools except one (Insein GTI) were reopened and students were forced to sit for their final exams with only one-month of lecture time. In March 1998, the Insein GTI was closed and the students were moved to Thanyin GTI. The monthly cost of the AGTI program is 300 Kyats. Only the top 20 students of the final year exam can enter the Technical Colleges to study for their B(Tech).

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Chapter (9) “Evening Diploma Course (Engineering subjects)”

In 1999, the authorities opened Evening Diploma Courses in every institute and university. At this time, evening courses for engineering subjects at AGTI Schools were also opened. The cost for the evening program in the Rangoon AGTI schools is 3,000 kyats per month (however, government civil servants pay only 2,500 Kyats per month). In other cities, the cost is 2,500 Kyats per month. The course term for the Evening Diploma course is 2 years. The certificate of this course is lower than the level of certificate for the evening diploma course at the Technical Colleges, which cost 4000 Kyats per month.

The subjects students can study at the GTI evening course are as follows:

1. Mechanical Power
2. Machining Tool
3. Electrical Power
4. Electronic and Communication
5. Civil

(More about the Evening Diploma courses below)

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Chapter (10) “Diploma Training Programs”

The evening diploma training programs first appeared in 1997. The authorities announced at that time that entrance applications for evening diploma training courses at Technological Universities would be accepted. High School standard graduates were instructed that in order to apply for the courses, they must first take an entrance exam. The evening diploma training programs are 2 years in length, and the subjects of Study are: Civil Engineering, Electrical Power, Mechanical Power, Architecture, Aeronautical Engineering, and English. The Cost of these courses is 4000 Kyats per month. The cost to receive engineering in this program is therefore over 80,000 Kyats. Therefore, the only students who are able to afford these programs are from rich families, usually from the military circle.
Ordinary students are simply not able to attend these classes. Currently, 2,500 students are enrolled for the engineering diploma course at Rangoon Technological University and 600 students at the Mandalay Technological University.

In 1998, the evening diploma course at University of Economy was founded. The term is 3 months to 6 months and the diploma courses of study available are: Accounting, Economy, and LCCI (London Chamber of Commercial Industry) A Masters course for graduates of Economy is also available. The total cost to get these diplomas is over 100,000 Kyats, including the 4000 Kyats per month tuition, and other expenses.

At the Institute of Computer Science, Basic computer knowledge training, Graphic painting, Accounting, and Software evening diploma training programs were also opened. The normal university programs are still closed, but the following evening diploma courses are available at the Institute of Computer Science in Rangoon. They are:
- A part time 2 year diploma course
- A full time 1 year computer science diploma course
- A full time 1 year computer science diploma course for the staff from the Office of Government Ministries
- A full time 1 year computer science diploma course for the persons from Defense Ministry
- A full time 1 year computer science diploma course for USDA members
- A six-month computer maintenance course for the staff from the Ministry of Science and Technology
- A six-month computer maintenance course for the staff from Defense Ministry.

The cost for these diploma training courses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of diploma course Term</th>
<th>cost per month</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineering diploma 2 years</td>
<td>4000 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting diploma 6 months</td>
<td>4500 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer diploma 2 years</td>
<td>10,000 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diploma in Gems 8 months</td>
<td>6000 Kyats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language diploma 4 months</td>
<td>4500 Kyats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Certificate Training Programs

In 1998, the regime instituted the Certificate Training programs, then claimed that the students were now able to attend classes. High School standard graduates waiting for University entrance can join these training courses at different schools across Burma. These courses are not diploma training courses, colleges, institutes or universities, as the students merely receive a certificate. The total cost of the certificate training programs are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject Term Total Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>English Language training 2 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Computer training 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accounting training 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training in Marine Science 1 year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for Domestic Science 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for painting 6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training for typing 6 months</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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“The Current Education Situation in Burma”
Year 2000 Education Report

Part-2
Chapter (1)
“Introduction and Summery”

This report is the 2nd part of the June 2000 Education Report, as documented by the Foreign Affairs’ Committee of All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU). Part One included (10) chapters, which emphasized the civilian education situation in Burma, whereas this part of the report will focus upon the army education system in Burma, in its various forms. Through this report, the ABFSU-FAC hopes to express deep concern over how the Burmese education system has come to be ruined, and how military centered institutes of education have come to their current prominence in Burma. The disparity between the education offered to the common populace and military personnel will be analyzed, including how the current regime favors those who are loyal to the army over those who are able in academics.

There were some difficulties in obtaining current data about the military institutions in Burma, as information concerning the military and their society is tightly controlled in Burma, and the information that is publicized ultimately consists of military propaganda with few tangible facts. Publications produced by the military about their schools and society boast of how the “Army is like the peoples’ parents”, yet neglect to give details of how the army is working for the best of their people and their education.

However, despite the paucity of data, it is expected that this report will clearly demonstrate how the military institutions have risen in influence in Burma, to the detriment of the civilian education system, and how the regime has created this system, which destroys the broad, valuable civilian education system, in order to protect, promote and prolong their own power. If the people, and specifically the students of our international community are able and interested to learn about the plight of Burma’s education system and Burma’s students through this report, then the ABFSU feels that the work of its members in documenting this report has been valuable, and appreciates the recognition of such activities.

(A) Summery

Burma has been a military country since 1962. At that time, the army, under the notorious General Ne Win, believed that they were superior forces in the country, and able to run the civilian and public affairs. Due to their popularity and success during the time of Independence, the army was able to take a stronghold in their own towns. Burma was quickly transformed into a military state, with everything controlled by the army, and the people had no say. The people of Burma have endured numerous crisis brought about by the mismanagement of their country under the hands of the army, and their once prosperous nation has been given the status of ‘least developed country’.

In 1988, the people of Burma unanimously called for freedom from army rule, and for Democracy. Their protests were brutally met by the army, and thousands were gunned down in the streets and imprisoned. The call was made again in 1990 during elections in which the Democratic Party won, yet the people of Burma were again denied their rights to choose their destiny. The regime repeatedly tells these people that the army is the parents of Burma, and that the ideas of democracy and human rights are not for the Burmese, that they come from the west. Any attempts to resist or protest the military policies are met with bitter brute force. For the last 38 years the common people have been struggling to survive, while the army mechanism has grown and blossomed. The army government has spent its national budget to further militarize Burma, to the neglect of the welfare of its people.

Burma has been unable to transform itself into a modern nation, and this is largely due the government’s failure to provide for adequate education for its population, thereby improving the quality of its workforce. Military rule has brought to Burma a decline in standard of living, as less and less emphasis has been placed on investment in education, and discrimination against the educated has transpired. In the search to upgrade education in Burma, the military government has turned to battalions and squadrons.

Since the beginnings of military rule, the army has sought to promulgate its power through rewarding those loyal to the military. Military personnel and their relatives are favored in Burma to receive education and employment. This has created an elite military social class in Burma, and has left the common people of Burma out in the cold.

Under the rule of the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), several military institutions were
established to further promote this military bias. While civilian schools deteriorated in lack of educational supplies and resources, and were closed for several months at a time, the schools training army personnel remained open and enjoyed adequate resources and supplies. Civilian students may be accepted into these institutes, however, the government has created a strict system of application, which includes a mandatory recommendation from various government officials.

This system ensures that the applicants, or the applicants’ relatives, have had no history with opposing political parties and no history in other “crimes”. The applicants must also promise not to involve in politics, and pledge to serve in the army. The military government provides well for its army students, and provides them with stipends, scholarships, and for the very elite, chances to study abroad. The opportunities afforded are minuscule in comparison with world standards, yet many youth in Burma are drawn into the military circle through these promises of position and chances at power that are otherwise unattainable in the harsh economic environment of the country.

The military regime, under the current pseudonym of the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) has continued this process of rewarding those loyal to the regime, and severely punishing those resistant to it, to the severe neglect of the education system in Burma.

(B) Facts and Statistics of the Burmese Army

Current Population of the Burmese army: 
Over 400,000

Commander-in-Chiefs of the Burmese Army 1943 - 2000
(2). Gen. Let Kyar (1948-1949)
(3). Gen. Ne Win (1949-1962)
(8). Senior Gen. Than Shwe (1992- present)

Number of times the Burmese Army has seized state control:

Designations of Burma’s military regime governments 1958-Present


(C) Background information concerning Burma’s Army and the Militarazation of Burma

The roots of the modern military establishment in Burma began in 1941, when, desiring to free themselves and their country of the British imperial forces, a group of progressive university students led by Aung San, and known as the ’30 Comrades’, founded the Burma Independence Army (BIA). This army, formed in Thailand with the support of Japan, assisted Japanese troops in their successful advance to oust the British from Rangoon. Britain’s forces withdrew, and Japan anointed a Prime Minister for Burma and set up the Burma Independent Army (BIA) with Aung San as commander. This army became the Burma Defense Army (BDA) in 1943, but it soon became apparent that state control was yet to be in the hands of the Burmese.

In 1944 the Anti Fascists People’s Freedom League (AFPFL) was established, and the BDA aligned with Britain and the allied forced of WWII. The following year Rangoon was recaptured from Japan by the British troops, and the BDA was recognized as a component of the Allied forces, and renamed the Patriotic Burmese Forces (PBF). With the end of WWII, the Churchill government issued the ‘White Paper’, which granted rule
and land-rights back to the pre-war British and attempted to demobilize the PBF. General Aung San, who had been commander-in-chief of Burma Army since its birth in 1941, resisted the demobilization of the army, and initiated a campaign against the White Paper. He resigned his position in the army, and turned to work full time in the political field as the leader of the AFPFL, which had reorganized as a united front.

The new People’s Volunteer Organization emerged as the army of the AFPFL, and in September 1946 a general strike was organized. Aung San was still known at that time as “Bogyoke” or General, and had already been elevated in the eyes of his countrymen as the national hero, yet he never related his previous rank as army general to his new position of civilian leader and politician. In fact, Aung San repeatedly emphasized that the army’s task as an institution was to protect the nation, but that it should never interfere with the nation’s politics. In speeches to the public, and to the Burmese forces he further warned that the armed forces must stay clear of state politics, as the army is unfamiliar with political matters and is ready to use guns and force to solve any problems that arise. Detached from the military, General Aung San was able in January 1947 to sign the agreement with Britain that would ensure independence and also succeeded in gaining the trust of Burma’s minority groups. In February of the same year a historical agreement was signed in Panlong, Shan State that would ensure the unity of the Union of Burma.

However, on July 19, 1947 General Aung San and members of his cabinet were assassinated. Burma achieved its independence, but the newly independent government found it onerous to cope with the ensuing chaos. The path for a unified Burma that had been laboriously built by Aung San was broken by the corruption and distrust that filled the resulting power vacuum of his death. Civil war erupted, and the new national army struggled to survive amidst the various factions that developed. Yet the armed forces, experienced from their fight against colonialism, and popular with Burma’s people as a result of that fight, did survive.

By the end of the 1950’s, the rebel threats had been moderately subdued, and the army had turned its focus to economic affairs, through the Defense Services Institute, and to the civilian government. The people of Burma trusted the army as their protectors, and the armed forces and top military generals had come to believe the army to be the highest and holiest power in the country.

Hence, in 1958, when the civilian government, led by U Nu, asked the army, headed by Ne Win, to form a “caretaker” government the army was ready and didn’t hesitate to step into civilian political affairs. This was the first time the army took over state power in Burma, yet the Burmese had faith that the army would not overstep its bounds, and would allow the civilian government to resume its role once it was reorganized. Power was returned peacefully to the U Nu government in 1960. Yet, contrary to the words of Aung San, the military had decided that they were able, and more, that it was their duty to run the affairs of the civilian state, and in 1962 General Ne Win with the support of all army regional commanders, staged a coup. The new military leadership called itself the Revolutionary Council, suspended the constitution, announced a socialist revolution in the country, and set up the Burmese Socialist Program Party (BSPP) as the only recognized political party.

The All Burma Federation of Student Unions (ABFSU) condemned the army’s nation-wide seizure of power. While the political parties, common people and the academics were silent about the army take-over, the student unions objected. This was the beginning of the ongoing strife between the military and the student union, for they feared the students’ counter action, and supposed that the students would challenge their power in future. The military imposed strict regulations on university life. On July 7, 1962, university students held a strike against the new rules, and the military responded by killing hundreds of the student protesters. The next morning the historic student union building was bombed, and all student unions in Burma were banned.

The military built the socialist system, based upon Ne Win’s Burmese Way to Socialism, and the country was thrust into the hands of a one-party state ruled by the hands of military personnel. The Revolutionary Council set a new standard in Burma by filling the leadership of public posts and the newly nationalized economic enterprises with men in uniform, who had been schooled intensively with BSPP doctrine. The military gained further power in civilian affairs through the support of socialist politicians, and through the creation of the military intelligence apparatus, which was and is a key player in military power. In addition, the military established a monopoly of information, and effectively closed off Burma from outside influence.

In 1974 the Revolutionary Council was changed to the State Council, and a new constitution was enacted which permitted the BSPP to take over the leadership of the nation. The visibility of the army was lowered at that time, yet over 80% of the BSPP members were armed forces personnel. By this time the economy was already in serious decline from mismanagement and incompetence of the regime, and several laws had been passed which compounded their economic oppression with expressive repression.

When the pro-democracy movement emerged and overwhelmed the entire nation in 1988, the BSPP government whom had been the recipient of the protests responded with brute force killing thousands of the protesters. Ne Win, who had continued to rule, was compelled to relinquish his open leadership as a result of the protests,
yet the army remained in a force in the shadows, and prepared for the opportunity to seize back full state control. Prominent political leaders and student activists were arrested and attempts to defame their character were made. The army also tried to instigate trouble by hoarding rice and supplies from the people, then accusing them of terrorism if the food was stolen back.

The military, re-established as the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) reclaimed full state power on September 18, 1988. To appease the people and international critics, a democratic election was promised, and the army pledged its duty to transfer state power to the hands of the civilian elected government. The National League for Democracy (NLD), headed by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, the daughter of the national hero, Aung San, rose to the scene.

Aung San Suu Kyi was detained under house arrest in 1989, yet the NLD still won the national elections, which were held on May 27, 1990, with over 82% of the vote. The SLORC government refused to hand over power, or convene the people’s parliament, and instead proceeded to oppress the members of the newly elected party. Aung San Suu Kyi was held in house arrest by the military for 6 years, and in 1991 was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1995 she was released, due in part to international pressure, yet her freedoms of expression and movement are to this day severely restricted by the regime. The military regime conceded that one day they will have to transfer power to the civilian government, yet they insisted that the elected parliament could not convene, and instead must, under the National Convention, draw the new Constitution. At the end of 1995, the elected persons of NLD withdrew from the regime’s National Convention, which was attended by military academics and technicians.

In 1997 the military government changed their name to the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). The name changed, but the system has not. The Burmese military regime has strengthened in its confidence that it is meritorious for themselves and Burma if military institutions influence national fate. Hence, since the military first gained power, and especially over the last 12 years since 1988, the military has actively encouraged the appearance of the military class in society. The military class person emerged not only to run the military mechanism but also to control all resources of Burma by creating the military educated persons and military intelligentsia. This system ensures the perpetuation of a military, not a democratic Burma, and is a path dangerous for the future of Burma.

(D) Background of the military educated elite in Burma

Similar to many authoritarian regimes, the military government of Burma has sought to retain its power by interfering with one of its countries precious resources, their minds. To the junta, it is far more valuable to breed “loyal”, rather then “able” people around them. Therefore, a military mentality has been forced upon the populace, and those adhering to this mentality are rewarded. This discrimination is evidenced by the fact that out of the 19 military commanders of the SPDC, only 3 hold an equivalent college degree, from the Defense Services Academy. With the exception of Lt.-Gen. Khin Nyunt, the director of the Defense Services Intelligence and most prominent leader in Burma, who is a Rangoon University dropout, the rest of the commanders are a product of the in-service training called the Officer Training Services.

The policy of promoting people loyal to the military dictatorship is evidenced from early 1965, when the Chawdwin Gone Civil Servants Training School of the pre-military U Nu government was transformed into Civil Servants Training School. This school became a center of forced army training, political indoctrination, and civil service administration.

In 1977, after the ‘Law for Selection of Civil Servants’ was passed, the school was elevated to the status of a college, as the Hpaung Gyi Central Civil Servants Training College. This institute was compulsory for students wishing to obtain jobs as civil servants in the high-unemployment economy of the BSPP State. The national education system created by the military was also instituted in such as way that students graduating from other institutes, civilian institutes included could only find employment if they were at least peripheral members of the BSPP.

The policy of discrimination began at an early age, as a ‘Sharp person’ exam was held across the country including children of the 7th standard and up. This exam was to recruit BSPP party members. If a student passed the exam with high marks, then that student would receive college stipends, or a scholarship of 75 Kyat per month, as well as other privileges such as being sent to various recreation sites, such as Ngapali Beach, in order to be further indoctrinated in the BSPP.

However, students designated as ‘sharp persons’ were only granted these privileges if they joined a BSPP youth party. This system continues through the Union Solidarity Development Association (USDA) a “social
organization” sponsored by the military that students, teachers and the general public are forced to join in order to obtain privilege in the military society. The presence of the USDA in civilian public education was covered further in Part One of this report. Under The SLORC rule, during the 1988-1995 period in which the military worked to build a modernized army, the military regime established military institutions; universities, colleges and science institutes to further promulgate the military mechanism that runs the country. All of the military institutions were controlled by the Office of Strategic Studies (OSS) under the ministry of defense.

The current military government, the SPDC, has been eager to upgrade these military institutions, and has budgeted for them from the national budget, as well as the civilian education budget. State scholarships are awarded to intelligentsia in military society and many children of generals and state servants have opportunity to travel abroad for further education. The regime has proved that they are willing to spend the budget necessary to maintain their power, and can afford to give birth to academics and technicians for the military society, yet they have been unable to upgrade the standard of the national education system, or improve the economy. Indeed, they have persecuted and imprisoned students, party members, and politicians who are not closely connected with their militant standards.

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Chapter (2)
“Schools directly controlled by the military regime”

“Uplift of health, fitness and education standards of the entire nation”
(One of the four social objectives of the SPDC)

It can be acknowledged that all schools in Burma are ultimately controlled by the military regime. In Part One of this education report the ABFSU researched and proved this to be true. However, this chapter will focus on 4 institutions that have been specifically designed by the military to train military students, and that are officially termed as “military” schools.

These schools are:

(1). Defense Services Institute of Medicine
(2). Defense Services Institute of Technological
(3). Defense Services Academy
(4). Defense Services Institute of Nursing

(A). Defense Services Institute of Medicine

The Defense Services Institute of Medicine was founded on November 19, 1992. Prior to the opening of this institute, the military had trained their military students in medicine at civilian institutes, the most prominent being the Institute of Medicine No#2 at Migalardon. After the founding of the Defense Services Institute of Medicine, the regime changed the Institute of Medicine No#2 to the Military Medicine Institute. The Defense Services Institute of Medicine awarded its first Bachelor degrees in the 1999 academic year.

Application to the institute is open to civilian students who have passed the high school matriculation exam, and who are willing to join the military, yet students who are related to the military elite are favored above the civilian applicants. The military regime provides the education at the institute free of charge to military students who are accepted. Civilian doctors, on the other hand, must come up with their own money to participate in the program.

Students who graduate from the Defense Services Institute of Medicine become military service personnel and earn salary and rank. As doctors, they are able to serve in the military department as Captains or Majors. Attendance figures are not clear, as the military regime has yet to publicize information concerning the number of students who have attended the institute, or who are currently enrolled.

The Defense Services Institute of Medicine is amply supplied with lab materials and modern textbooks, in stark contrast to civilian schools. As intern surgeons, the military students are required to take a field practical at Military Hospitals, where they are occasionally able to learn from professional surgeons from abroad for short-term training. In addition, military students at the institute are eligible for various state scholarship programs. Remarkably, during the numerous times that civilian schools of higher learning have been closed by the regime,
including civilian medicine institutes, this Military Medicine Institute has been consistently open for class. Also notable is the fact that while the Defense Services Institute of Medicine offers 12 months of study in an academic year, civilian institutes have been restricted to offer a mere 5 months of study in an academic year.

(B). Defense Services Institute of Technology

The majority of engineers and technicians in Burma are products of military training, and serve in the armed forces. The Defense Services Institute of Engineering was established in 1994, and awarded its first Bachelor of Engineering degrees in the 1999 academic year. The same year the Institute was moved to Ba Htoo City in Mandalay, and its name was changed by the military to the Defense Services Institute of Technology. This Institute is an elite military school, and upon completion of the 2nd year program, the students receive a Bachelor of Engineering. Graduates of the institute are given the rank of commander in the army, and are required to serve in the army for a minimum of 10 years.

Military students entering the Institute must have finished 4 years of higher learning; 2 years at an A.G.T.I. school, and 2 years at a technical college. There are now 2 colleges that fall under the Defense Services Institute of Technology: the Defense Services College of Technology and the Defense Services for Technical Science. Defense Services College of Technology and the Defense Services for Technical Science A.G.T.I students, who have been awarded a certificate upon completing their second year final exams, are eligible to apply the college. Applicants are required to pass an entrance exam, consisting of English and Mathematics proficiency. The students are then checked by the military to ensure that they have sufficient “qualities”. If they are approved by the military, they can then enroll in these schools.

Following 2 years of study at the schools of technology, a Bachelor of Technology is awarded to those who finish this fourth year level with good marks. Upon completion, military students are easily accepted into the Defense Services Institute of Technology.

(C). Defense Services Academy

The Defense Services Academy was founded in 1955, as the first true military school in Burma. It remains the military’s most prominent Arts and Science school. This academy has taught hundreds of thousands of military students and is based in Pyin Oo Lwin, Mandalay division. Before 1988, the Defense Services Academy (DSA) restricted enrolments to second year university students from certain universities, and allowed them to directly join the school. Then in 1988, after the regime reasserted their power, and formed the SLORC government, the entrance forms to this academy were changed, and students under the age of 18 who had passed the high school matriculation exam were able to apply.

Even though thousands of students have applied to the DSA, the regime favors for enrolment those who are offspring of military families and their relatives. For the 1999-2000 academic year, nearly 4,000 application forms were received by the army, but they selected only a few hundred students. The military regimes has never publicized the number of military students in their educational institutions, however, some students who neglected their applications to the DSA have reported that the regime allows a mere 200 students for the 4 years of training at DSA.

The military students who are accepted into the DSA have good health and they and their families are generally uninvolved in Burma’s political scenes. In addition, the military students and their families have promised to the army, prior to their acceptance, that they will never involve in politics, or relate to those who do. If the military finds any instance of a student, or a student’s family’s involvement in politics or activities deemed to be against the regime while the student is attending DSA, the military student is kicked out from the DSA and has to face severe punishment at an interrogation center of military intelligence.

The average number of years of study at the DSA is 4 years, during which time the military students must remain at DSA. However, with permission of the army, students are occasionally permitted by the army sometime military student to visit to their family during summer holidays. DSA teaches courses in the Arts and Sciences, which utilize the teaching methods of lectures and lab practical. Lab tools and materials are sufficiently provided for, something which cannot be said for civilian schools.

It is a requirement at DSA for every military student to take a course in Computer Science, and the school is equipped with enough computers to provide each student with a computer to learn on. The military regime also conceived a Computer Department at the academy for students pursuing a Bachelor of Computer Science. With the establishment of this department, the regime expects their students to compete with international hi tech standards, and to upgrade their ability with special teaching. However, the Internet has yet to be allowed or
taught at the institution. There is a strong emphasis on physical strength and fitness at DSA, and the regime has provided well for the sports and exercise equipment, which is used in such classes. These have been instances where the government has made it possible for students at DSA to learn under trainers from abroad.

Students at the DSA are continuously encouraged to protest local opposition forces and politicians, and to believe in the militarism around the country. The students are taught that the opposition groups who call for democracy are destructive elements and therefore must be crushed as common enemies of the Burma Armed Forces.

(D). Defense Services Institute of Nursing

The military regime declared in 1999 its intent to open the Defense Services Institute of Nursing in the year 2000, and that the purpose of the school will be to train highly qualified nurses to serve in the military and its related society. Hence, in 1999, the Military Defense began accepting applications for the planned institute. The following is the list of qualifications that the applicants are required to have before acceptance:

(a). Certificate of completion of the high school matriculation exam and exam results.
(b). English and Biology proficiency.
(c). Recommendation from the local Ward Council.
(d). Recommendation from the Township Police station, citing a lack of criminal record.
(e). Recommendation from two military gazette officers.
(f). A promise not to relate with political parties and never to involve in political activities.
(g). A pledge to serve at least 10 years under the military government.

The military has promised to provide its first year nursing students with a 750 Kyats salary, 800 Kyats for its second year students, 900 Kyats for third year students and 1,000 Kyats for final year students. Upon completion of the program, nursing students will receive a Bachelor of Nursing Science (B. N. Sc.), and will be required to serve in the military, or its related circle for a minimum of 10 years. During that time of service, the military has pledged to provide 1450 Kyats salary.

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Chapter (3)
“Schools indirectly controlled by the military regime”

The following schools exist under the strict control of the military government, yet are not given the same official recognition as the military institutions mentioned in Chapter 2 of this report. Graduates from the following schools must serve the military regime in government service, as it is their only option for employment. Academics and educated persons who learn in these schools are unable to find work unless it is related to the military and its society. Hence, these schools are indirectly controlled by the military force. Of the many institutions that fall under this type in Burma, 6 have been highlighted in this report, which are distinguished in their history of supporting the military mechanism of Burma.

They are:
(1). Marine Institute
(2). Central Institute for Civil Service
(3). Central Co-operative College
(4). University for Foreign Language
(5). The National Race Development University
(6). Cultural University

(A). Marine Institute (MI)

The Marine Institute is situated in Rangoon, at Kamayut Township near the Hlaing River, and was founded in 1972. Since its establishment, its purpose has been to bolster the force of Burma’s Navy and train students to take duty in Burma, and join the military circle after the training term. Until 1988, second year students from certain universities who were majoring in Mathematics, Physics or Chemistry were readily accepted into the
Marine Institute. However, when the SLORC government came to power in 1988, the military regime changed the entrance form to the Marine Institute, and began only accepting students from a lower educational level, those who pass their high school matriculation exam with high grades. The Marine Institute originally permitted only 20 to 50 students per year. Then in 1995, 100 students were accepted. In accordance with the regime’s instruction, the Marine Institute allowed 150 students to join for the 1996 school year, and in the 2000 school term this was extended to 200 students. Students who apply for acceptance into the Institute are required to supply the following documents, and attach the said-signed promises.

- (B). Recommendation of the Township Police station, concerning a criminal record.
- (C). Recommendation of two military gazette officers.
- (D). An applicant promise not to relate with political parties and never to involve in political activities.
- (E). A pledge to serve the military government at least 10 years.

Students pay the fees for the training from their own resources, and during the one-year training term are obligated to comply with military sentiment and regulations. There are 37 subjects taught at the Institute, fewer than 5 offered majors.

The 5 majors are:
1. Training for Commercial Cadet
2. Training for Local Cadet
3. Training for Mechanical Engineer Cadet
4. Training for Coastline Cadet
5. Training for Navigable Channel Cadet

Cadets serve Burma’s Navy as Marine Technicians for several years following graduation from the program.

(B) The Central Institute for Civil Service (CICS)

The Central Institute for Civil Service was established in January 1965 under the rule of the Burmese Socialist Program Party (BSPP) military dictatorship. In 1977, the regime upgraded the school to University level from its previous standing as a training school. The selected Board for Public Service directly controlled the Central Institute for Civil Service. As of 1997, the regime had trained a total of 82,020 teachers around the country, and a total of 8805 public servants in various departments of government. The military regime founded the Central Institute for Civil Service (Upper Burma) on February 7 1999, in Mandalay Division.

Even though the Central Institute for Civil Service (CICS) has declared its purpose to be in the education of civil servants, in fact is a place where students are trained in all services that promote the military ideology. The current military regime, the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC), has instructed the teachers at this institute to control their students through strict rules and propaganda so that they will believe the military objectives and principles. The Central Institute for Civil Service has become a training ground that is dangerous for Burma and is a large obstacle to forming a democratic country.

The Central Institute for Civil Service offers 17 training courses. The trainers for these courses are officers from Office of Strategic Studies (OSS). Management for People Affairs (MPA), Law and Military Administration officials supervise all training. The 17 training courses are:
1. Basic Service Training.
2. Basic Service Training for Intermediate Level.
3. Clerk Service Training for Supervisors.
4. Basic Clerk Service Training.
6. Upgrade Course for Police Sergeants.
7. Training for Police Officers.
8. Training for Basic Policemen.
10. Upgrade Training for University and College Teachers.
11. Upgrade Training for State, Division, District and Township members of the Peace and Development Council.
12. Upgrade Training for Doctors.
13. Upgrade Training for Basic Schoolteachers.
14. Upgrade Training for Police Officers.
(15). Upgrade Training for General Administration Officers.
(16). Upgrade Training for Red Cross Executive Members.
(17). Upgrade Training for Municipal Officers.

The Central Institute for Civil Service (CICS) is not a figurehead military school, yet it regularly trains people for service in the militarized society of Burma, and therefore promotes the survival of that society and the military regime.

(C). Central Co-operative College (CCC)

The Central Co-operative College was founded in 1993 under the Ministry of Co-operative. Its main purpose was to offer upgrading courses for the co-operative services. Then in 1994 the regime changed the training form, and the Central Co-operative College began to accept students who passed the matriculation level. The Central Co-operative College offers 2-year courses and trains students in the following subjects.

(A). Basic Account Training.
(B). Basic Computer Training.
(C). English.
(D). Mathematics.

(D). University of Foreign Languages (UFL)

The Institute of Foreign Languages was first set up at Pansodan Street, Rangoon on January 16, 1962. On July 2, 1966 it moved to University Ave Rd, Bahan Township, Rangoon. In September 1996, the system was changed and the school was renamed as the University of Foreign Languages. In 1964, only 53 students were enrolled and the subjects were French, Japanese, German and Russian.

The subjects were extended later to include Chinese in 1965, English in 1969 and a Burmese course for foreigners was opened in 1974. Until 1989, only seven subjects were taught. Before the 1996-97 academic year, only government civil servants that had graduated from university were allowed to enroll. They paid monthly fees for the courses, and received a diploma after finishing the course. After the system and the name were changed in 1996, all students who passed the high school exam could apply for the school’s entrance exam. The monthly cost increased to 2,500 Kyats per month, and the authorities opened a two-year full-time course, as well as a part-time 6 months course.

In the 1996-97 academic year, 1300 students were enrolled for the regular course and around 500 students were enrolled for the part-time course. This university was closed along with the other universities and colleges in December 1996 but permitted to re-open a few months later.

(E). The National Race Development University (NRDU)

The National Race Development Scientific Institute was founded on October 20, 1964 under the BSPP military dictatorship government. This school was directly controlled by the BSPP government until the 1988 pro-democracy movement spread throughout the country. The Scientific Institute was upgraded to a University by the reincarnated Military regime, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), in 1991.

The military has continued to hold the reins of control at the universities, and military ideology dominates the school’s educational content, although the university is no longer directly and openly controlled by the government. The National Race Development University (NRDU) is a vital advocate of the military society, and is the only university to implement in its policy the SPDC objectives to be free from political activities and people movements.

NRDU offers 6 programs of study in accordance to its university rules. They are:

(1). Master of Education (M.Ed.)
(2). Master of Philosophy (M. Phi.)
(3). Bachelor of Education (B. Ed.)
(4). One year Training for Middle standard schoolteachers.
(5). Four years regular training for Basic Standard schoolteachers.
(6). Special Training for Basic Standard schoolteachers.

The Foreign Affairs’ Committee- All Burma Federation of Student Unions, previously released information
pertaining to the NRDU and the university entrance system of the military regime. The following information was first released in May 2000.

The military regime, SPDC, has placed restrictions on university and college level entrance exams. The National Race Development University is preparing to open the Primary teacher-training course # 35 in June 2000. Many people have applied for this course, but the authorities are strictly checking their applications and only some of those who apply are chosen for the entrance exam. The people who are selected to write the entrance exam for the course have been investigated by their regional police and local military intelligence concerning the following:

a) Whether the applicant has ever had contact with any opposition group.

b) Whether any of the applicant’s family members have gone underground or are a member of an opposition (insurgent group).

c) Whether the applicant has any criminal record.

d) Whether the applicant has been involved in politics, or a political party.

e) Whether the applicant has been involved in the student struggle.

f) Whether the applicant’s character is ‘good’ or ‘bad’.

The local authorities gather information concerning the above criteria to decide who can and who cannot take the entrance exam for the teacher-training course. The Military Medical Institute, the Military Technological Institute, as well as the Military College of Technology and the Military Mechanical College, which will open for classes in 2000, also all have strict entrance requirements. Students who attend these institutions must first take an entrance exam, and meet the same criteria as written above. The students must get a recommendation from their local intelligence and police stations before they are allowed to take the exams. While taking classes in these colleges and universities, the students receive a monthly stipend from the military. When students from these institutions have completed their programs, they must sign a bond promising 10 years of service to the military. These universities and colleges are only for students who have been born into military or government families. Therefore, the National Race Development University and the Military universities and colleges entrance exam requirements are extremely selective and strict. The civilian student mass is concerned that the military will apply these entrance standards to all colleges, universities, and diploma training courses in Burma.

(F). The Cultural University (CU)

The Cultural University was founded at Kabaaye Road, Bahan Township, and Rangoon on September 24, 1993. It was moved to South Dagon Township in 1996. All students who passed the high school exam could apply for the entrance exam to this university. Each year, it accepted only 100-150 students. The university was closed in December 1996, but allowed to re-open two months later, as the cultural students had not been involved in the 1996 student mass peaceful demonstration.

Cultural University students are subject to regulations of the military regime, and are seen as distinct from other university students. In order to enroll in this university, every student must be a member of the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA). This criteria is more important then talent as a prerequisite to admission, as the authorities at the Cultural University admit students to CU without first learning of the applicants’ artistic qualities. In addition, the Minister of Culture of the SPDC has told CU students that if they do not participate in any student strikes or demonstration, the regime will ensure them positions as gazettes officer in government administration.

In the 1998-99 academic year, 27 students were enrolled for the Arts (Music), 48 Students were enrolled for the Arts (Performance), 29 students were enrolled for the Arts (Painting), and 5 students were enrolled for the Arts (Sculpture). Aside from courses of cultural content, students are required to study other minor subjects including History, Geography, Biology, Physics and Chemistry. In addition, every student is required to study Burmese, English and Mathematics.

At the CU, students of Music and the Dramatic Arts are denied the chance to study international music and
western plays, according to the prohibitions of the military regime. The regime has often expressed its fears concerning the influence of western culture on Burmese culture. The professors, lecturers and schoolmasters of the university are academics from the elite military society and military servicemen.

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Chapter (4)
“Basic Education for the Burmese Military”

Basic education in Burma has been managed by the government since the time of Burma’s independence from Britain. The current military regime, however, in addition to managing all basic education schools in the state, founded and operates basic education schools in their army as special schools for the children of the military elite. According to a statement from Lieutenant General Tin Oo, Secretary 2 of SPDC, which was published in the official state run media, “The main purpose in founding these basic education schools is to encourage the emergence of modern educated persons from the army with good qualities.” The army further declared in their State media that they, “.... deeply support the appearance of basic education schools in the army, in order that the students trained to control and manage Burma will be educated persons from the military forces, so that in the future of Burma the army will be uplifted.”

There are currently 15 basic education army schools run by the military regime. These schools fall under the control of the Office of the Administration of the People’s Relations and Psychological Campaign, which is under the Ministry of Defense. The children of military officers and other government officials have the option of attending civilian state schools or these army schools. The army provides well for these special military schools, and the sons and daughters of officials who attend them seldom need worry about adequacy of educational materials. During summer holidays, the military opens Computer training, English language training and vacation trips for students of army families. Upon completion of the high school standard level in these military schools, students are usually easily accepted into any military Institute.

The regime also awards scholarships and scholastic awards to the students of army families who complete their basic education at the army schools. In the basic education schools of the army, the regime trains the children of army families to believe and accept in their minds the supreme role of the military in Burma as the saver of the country. The existence and import of military monopolisation is also praised and promoted in the classrooms of these schools. The students of these schools are, in addition, required to be full members of SPDC-led Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA).

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Chapter (5)
“The Widening Gap between Military and Civilian Education”

“War can be won only if the warriors are skilled. So ‘training’ must be given top priority”

This chapter, which covers more extensively the military of Burma, the military upgrading of Burma, and the widening gap between military and civilian education, has been divided into 3 parts. Whereas the previous chapters have covered the military education system from an outside perspective, this chapter will cover military education and military expansion utilizing information from the military itself. Part A will cover military education, part B the modernization of Burma’s military equipment, and part C will compare the graduate rates of the military and civilian education systems. Again it is recognized that this information concerning the role of Burma’s armed forces in the country’s education system will not be thorough, as precise information concerning this subject is not publicized by the regime.

It is hoped this chapter will be valuable in deepening understanding of Burma’s military and how it has effectively divided the country and the education system through its emphasis on the education of military personnel. Also, it is hoped the chapter will clearly show how this division, and resulting social elite of a military class has effected the nation, and contributed to the suffering of the people.

(A). Military Education
The emphasis upon military education has been thematic throughout this report. Here, however, the modernization of the military, stress on military education, and the military control of public education will be further analyzed, including several quotes from Burma’s army regarding their training system. Burma’s Army inherited the divide and rule policy of Britain’s colonial ruler’s, whose colonial army gave birth to technicians and educated persons to systematically run the military mechanism to the neglect of public education. Then, following the Japanese occupation of the Second World War, Burma’s army continued to utilize the oppressive ruling methods of Japan.

The Burmese army, far from democracy, forgot that originally the desire of the armed forces had come from the people, that it had been students of civilian institutions that had formed the army to fight the war of independence. The regime, through propaganda, consistently attempted to make the people hate politicians and adore the army. Meanwhile, aided by the long-term closure of all civilian educational institutions, the regime trained their military students to run the civilian education system. One third of graduates of military schools enter civilian universities as lecturers and tutors.

The regime has divided the education of civilian students and military students, favoring the education of military and thereby systematically creating a military elite. While the Burmese people suffer for their children’s education and expenses as a result of the economic crisis in every family, the military’s students peacefully learn education with the financial support of the military regime. Civilian students have therefore become interested in some military institutes due to the lack of further learning opportunity in civilian institutions, and the expensive cost of such institutions. Chances are, the regime has created the military elite in Burma because they want to ensure that all things depend on the military and re-serve the military circle so that their power is guaranteed in the future of Burma.

The regime believes and practices according to the motto; “only if the Armed Forces is strong, will the Nation be strong”. It seems clear that the regime’s only desire is to build the military capacity of the nation, treating the people of Burma as mere pawns in their authoritarian game. Following the coup de’tat of 1962, the BSPP military dictatorship, led by Gen. Ne Win, neglected to further develop the army or emphasize military education. However, following the experience of the 1988 national pro-democracy movement the army decided that it was vital to strengthen the armed force and systematically began to build the army and set up military institutions for education. According to a top military official, “Burma’s Armed Forces is made up of people from different classes and strata of society. These highly divergent people have to be trained to achieve a certain basic uniformity and be given a firm foundation in discipline, orderliness and to learn to obey commands. Good training is the most essential factors in developing the human resources of the Armed Forces which is composed of officers as well as other ranks.”

In a report by the military about their educational training, there are three aspects to the training of their officers in order for them to join the Burmese Armed Forces circle.

(1). Officer training
(2). Training for other ranks
(3). Foreign exposure and experience
(1). Officer Training

According to current surveys, the educational status of military officers is as follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Military Levels</th>
<th>University Graduate Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>57.8 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navy</td>
<td>96.9 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Air</td>
<td>87.9 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1) Officer Training

61.1% of the officers (army, navy and air) of the whole Armed Forces were university graduates in 1997. A modernized-armed force requires a high standard of science and technology. Hence for its needs, extensive programs have been drawn up and are being implemented to recruit officers with secondary education; to give graduate officers further post graduate training in military technology, medicine, engineering, computer science, foreign languages and international relations.

Officers with high potential are also dispatched to attend post-graduate courses in the Rangoon and Mandalay civilian Institute of Technology, to the civilian Institute of Medicine 1 and 2, the civilian Institute of Nursing and the Institute of Dental Medicine. In addition, the regime introduced the M.B.A postgraduate courses to the military officers at the Civilian Institute of Economics and programs to send military officers to learn foreign
languages at the University of Foreign Languages. After the officers finish their studies at the postgraduate level at the civilian institutions, they are given permission by the military regime to go abroad for short-term and long-term courses.

(2). Training for other ranks

According to the military report, there are many levels of education in the armed forces. 1.39% are university graduates, 4.39% are undergraduates, 19.59% are high school graduates, 41.48% have completed middle school and 33.16% have completed elementary school. As there are indispensable warrant officers, sergeants and corporals in between the officers and the other ranks, there is a gap between the educational level of the higher and lower officers. Therefore, the regime opened the Burma Army Training Depot, the Command Training School, the Burma Army Non-commissioned officers Training School, the Administrative Support Training School and the Burma Army School of Education. These schools are to train these in-between ranks, in order to give them the same opportunities as the junior officers and to farther their education and improve their capabilities. The military regime then sends these military officers abroad for specialized training, as well as sending them to the civilian ‘Institute of Computer Science’ in Burma.

(3). Foreign Exposure and Experience

As the regime believes that the high-ranking members of its military forces need practical experience in Burma as well as abroad, they send the military officers who have completed the highest levels of military training to Burmese Embassies in foreign countries. These officers also work jointly with military forces and missions of other countries in order to gain international experience. They are given these opportunities to enable them as members of the Burmese Armed Forces. In addition, they are given opportunities in rotation to attend academic and military courses abroad, accompany Burmese delegations, and attend high-level conferences and seminars as members of military missions and study groups. The graduate military officers also are given chance to attend exhibitions and workshops in the region together with other ASEAN (Association of South East Asia Nations) countries. In addition, when some of the foreign countries such as Germany, Israel, Japan, China, Pakistan and the Russian Federation give scholarships for Burmese students to study in their nation to the Burmese military regime, to show their friendship, the Burmese regime only gives these scholarships to military students.

(B) The Modernization of Burma’s Military Weapons

“Good ships and good guns are simply good weapons and the best weapons are useless save in the hand of men who know how to use them”

The Burmese military regime has continuously sought arms with which to extend their power and defeat the ethnic minority insurgency groups, giving the reason of protecting the nation. In addition, the SPDC reasons that spending the national budget on weapons expansion programs is necessary in order to fully equip their army as a modern force which can compare with the modern nations of the world. A report of Colonel Thein Swe, of the Office of Strategic Studies (OSS), complained that Burma’s Armed Forces needs to be equipped with modern weapon for the safeguarding of the nation. He also highlighted that the world has entered into a modern war period, where high tech equipment is essential.

“The People’s Republic of China aims to have a fully modernized army, navy and air force by 2003 AD. The Thai Armed Forces intends to mobilize its army strength to 80,000 and transform it to an up-to-date modern force by the year 2005. It is thus necessary for the Burma (Myanmar) Armed Forces to keep pace with the progressing time and reorganize itself into fully equipped modern force, which is the equal of other modernized military forces. At a time when the trend of international armies is to revise their policy of basing strength on manpower and substitute high-tech weapons in some areas, Burma (Myanmar) must also keep up with the changing and condition and make necessary reforms to upgrade its technology.”

Regarding weapon set-up in Burma, the regime always denies that there is civil war in Burma, yet always strives to build its armed forces and neglects to publicize real facts to the country.
(C) Comparison of the graduate rate between military and civilian students 1997

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels</th>
<th>Military students</th>
<th>Civilian students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1). University Graduates</td>
<td>1.39%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2). Undergraduates</td>
<td>4.37%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3). High school Graduates</td>
<td>19.59%</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4). Elementary school Graduates</td>
<td>41.48%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5). Primary level graduates</td>
<td>33.16%</td>
<td>71.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Based on a test group of 7,164,106 participants.

The following conclusion focuses on how the civilian education has been ruined under the military dictatorship system even as the regime tries to portray to the international community that they are trying to build civilian education. The conclusion does not merely represent the views of the All Burma Federation of Student Unions, but also reflects the real situation and concerns about Burma’s education system.

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Conclusion of the Year 2000 Education Report

Burma has existed as an Independent State for over 50 years. Throughout this time, Burma has held an Education Seminar only once, in 1958, led by Burmese students. From 1948 to 1962, the Burmese government, academics and students tried to implement a new educational system for Burma, in order to transform the national education system brought about by the colonial rulers into an independent national education system, thereby uplifting the education standard. Unfortunately however, Burma faced a split in National solidarity and the education system was also destabilized as a result of the Civil War.

In 1962, however, Burma’s army seized state power, and educational freedom began to disappear because of the tight rule of the military regime under the Socialist system. Also, the outlook and desires of academics and students were subsequently neglected. Moreover, Burmese students lost the rights to represent their desires concerning national education and their other student rights. The standard of Burma’s education system was lowered and the military regime often changed the education system.

As a result of Burma’s socialist ideology, Burmese students grew further from the international educational scene and the students’ ability to learn and opportunity to find jobs was decreased. Rangoon University, once famous in the Southeast Asia region, is now suffering from a low university standard under the Generals. After the Military seized power in 1988, the third time such a thing had happened in Burma, the education system suffered from further disorder. The system has failed under the long time mismanagement, and over the last 12 years since 1988, Burma military regime has only allowed civilian universities and colleges to be open a mere 40 months. Burma’s civilian universities and colleges have only been permitted to run 3 months for one academic year.

Also, the regime has oppressed and crushed students whenever student movements appear. Burmese students have been forced to enter the working field as school dropouts due to the economic suffering of Burma. Other students have been forced to flee from their homes and hide throughout the nation as the regime tries to capture them for their involvement in student strikes and political activities. Some students have been detained in several prisons and sentenced to long prison terms.

When the history of Burma’s education system is reviewed, it is found that instability has been the rule. Instability due, not only to the low education standard, but also to the regime’s oppression and suppression of students, which the regime apparently believes will contribute to state stability. All rulers of Burma have always explained that the instability of their country is due to the politicians and students who are involved in political activities which attempt to crush the nation’s education. Yet, in fact, it is the military authorities that crush all student movements, and therefore, the nation’s education.

As Burma has faced national instability, it follows that other national aspects have also been unstable, especially Economic, Social, Health and Education aspects. Of these other aspects, the educational situation has been lowered to the greatest extent, due to the fact that education is closely linked to state politics. Under the rule of the military dictators, Burma’s education has fallen into a hopeless position and the regime continues to create new problems for Burma’s future. The military regime exclusively endeavors to uplift military education, favoring a
military elite, while neglecting and oppressing civilian education. The regime, which ignored modern technology as part of their previous isolationist policy, has now turned to technology as a means to further enhance their military nation.

The military regime re-opened universities and colleges in June this year due to international pressure and local desires, yet they still tightly control the learning at the schools have yet to improve the academic situation. The generals addressed academic issues at a Human Resources and Education Seminar led by the OSS (Office Strategic Studies), and attended by approved national academic scholars and professors, but this seminar was in vein, for it lacked implementation. Academic experts and authorities have faced many troubles in pointing out the weak points of the educational system, because the regime orders them not to criticize the governments policies or the political system of the current military regime.

We, the All Burma Federation of Student Unions - Foreign Affairs’ Committee, are compelled to inform the military regime that they must resolve and successfully implement the following terms of our conclusion based upon this, the year 2000 report, in order that the education system of our country be saved.

A. To release all student prisoners, including Min Ko Naing, the Chairperson of the ABFSU.
B. To permit the formation of student unions in Burma, which can work for academic freedom and other educational activities.
C. To maintain a regular academic year in all schools.
D. To allow for the freedom of expression and open discussion of education.
E. To revoke all military institutions that are unnecessary for military activity and which only promotes the military elite.
F. To increase the budget for civilian education and to reduce all military expenses from the national government budget.
G. To implement an Education System controlled by students, teachers and the government alike.
H. To draw a new education system in accord with the national character, including modern subjects and modern ideologies with the support of national scholars and professors.
I. To solve with peaceful dialogues the demands of the students, instead of a military response, which violates their rights.
J. To solve, through dialogue with the democratic forces, all problems which have caused the national instability, economic disorder and social crisis in Burma.

Foreign Affairs’ Committee
All Burma Federation of Student Unions
Year 2000 Education Report

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