

**SUPPRESSION OF CHIN NATIONAL MOVEMENT FOR FEDERALISM
UNDER THE
REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL
AND THE
BURMA SOCIALIST PROGRAMME PARTY (1962-1988)**

By Pu Lian Uk

Introduction

The first British intrusion into the Khumi Chin territories in Paletwa in southern Chinland in 1826, the final whole scale invasion of Chinland throughout the Chin-Lushai land Expedition (1888-90) and other related political events during the British occupation are milestones in the political history of the Chin peoples' struggle for freedom. The Haka and Thado Chin resistance movements of the 1917-1919 in central and northern Chinland respectively, the burning of hundreds of Chin villages; and the mass arrest by the British that followed, where some died in captivity etc. are well recorded milestones as well. A mass arrest occurred again in 1939 at Kanpetlet in southern Chinland when leaders of the first Chin political party, the Chin National Unity Organization, led by Pu Vomthu Maung were arrested by the British for demanding independence for Chinland. Vomthu Maung later became the first Minister of Chin Affairs Council of the post-independence Chin Special Division. The British then arrested altogether 129 Chin leaders through six rounds of separate mass arrests and locked them up in different jails across the country such as Kanpetlet, Myingyan, Katha, Haka, Falam, Tedim etc. These historical events are well documented by various historians and scholars.

However, the Chin's struggle for the establishment of a peaceful and solid Federal Union of Burma and the subsequent suppressions of General Ne Win's Revolutionary Council and the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) Regime during the period from 1962 onward and prior to the 1988 nation-wide democracy uprisings are yet to be properly documented despite the facts that political events during this period have a lasting influence on the new generations of Chin leaders until this day. It is not an exaggeration to conclude that these events of the 60s and 70s Chin politics have in one way or the other influenced the political developments far beyond the realm of Chin politics but also have significant political impacts on that of other ethnic peoples' struggle for freedom, democracy and federalism for decades thereafter.

This part of our modern political history deserves a proper record and this paper will attempt to document and highlight the missing links between the political aspirations of the older generations of the 60s / 70s and the new generation Chin leaders of today. In so doing I will briefly touch the largely ignored Chin armed resurrections against the oppressive BSPP Regime during this period and highlight in more detail the events of the Chin attempts to lawfully reestablish a peaceful and prosperous federal Union.

PART I

A brief description of Chin armed resistance movements against the Military Regime known as the Revolutionary Council after 1962

On 2 March 1962 General Ne Win staged a coup d'état' against the democratically elected government in Burma and established the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) on 4 July 1962. U Nu, the ousted Prime Minister and the Union President Mahn Win Maung were put under custody along with several other elected parliamentarians.

General Ne Win started to nationalize all the country's major commerce and industry including banks and shops in 1964. Anticipating a communist-style totalitarianism falling upon the country, many Chin leaders like Ex. Col Pu Son Kho Pau, Pu Thual Zen (a former army sergeant) and former parliamentarians and politicians like Pu Hrang Nawl, Pu Dam Kho Hau, Pu Pa Cung Nung, Pu Mang Kho Pau, Pu Son Cin Lian, Pu Ral Hmung, Pu Hmun Hre, and Pu Ro Thang went underground. They all fled to India and established their bases along the Indo-Burma border to fight against the Burmese military regime. The Indian government offered them a refuge and financial allowances but on the condition that they refrain from political activities and stay within a 25-miles border zone. Undeterred by India's offer of political asylum, they planned to form an armed organization to restore democracy in Burma. Colonel Son Kho Pau and Pu Tun Kho Pum, a young prominent politician from Manipur State, joined hands in early 1965 and went to the then East Pakistan(now Bangladesh) with a contingent of 150 recruits who got their military training and weapons from there. This armed organization aimed to establish an independent Chinland encompassing all Chins in Burma and India. In 1966 some ex-parliamentarians negotiated with the Burmese government and returned to Burma. Col. Son Kho Pau and a number of volunteers were ambushed and captured in Nagaland by the Indian Army. They were eventually handed over to the Burmese government. Pu Son Kho Pau, Pu Hrang Nawl, Pu Thual Zen and others served eight to ten years of prison terms in Mandalay. Pu Thual Zen died in the prison. During this short-lived abortive armed movement Pu Hrang Nawl attempted to overtake Haka. Pu Tun Kho Pum was last seen in Mizoram/Manipur state boundary when the MNF took up arms against the central Indian government on March 1, 1966.

Starting from 1963 a number of young Chin nationalists began to establish contacts with the Kachin Independence Organization and various ethnic armed revolutionary movements in other parts of Burma. Among them were Pu Thang Za Dal, Pu Hau Za Cin and Pu Kam Za Lian. They subsequently formed the Zomi(Chin) National Front. Later when they expanded their activities and connected with Thai-Burma border based ethnic revolutionary forces Salai Myo Aye, one of the veteran revolutionaries of the Asho Chin armed movement called *Chin Oozi Apywet* (Chin National Vanguard Party) joined them. (The *Chin Oozi Apywet* was the offshoot of *All Burma Chin National Organization* မြန်မာနိုင်ငံလုံး ဆိုင်ရာ ချင်း အမျိုးသား များ အစည်းအရုံး, founded in 1948. *Chin Oozi Apywet* took up arms in 1956 and was defunct in 1965. When the General Ne Win's Revolutionary Council government made peace talks with various armed movements in 1963 the *Chin Oozi Apywet* also took part in the negotiations in alliance with the Communist Party of Burma, Karen National Union, Mon New State Party and Karenni National Progressive Party.). The ZCNF, however, remained as exclusive underground political movement rather than transforming itself into a mass or armed movement until it was dissolved in the mid 1970s.

Some Chin patriots, including Pu Tial Khar and Pu Hrang Bil Thang, joined the Mizo National Front (MNF), when its armed troops occupied Falam for two-days in 1968. Pu Hrang Bil Thang was killed in action under the banner of Chin reunification. MNF aimed to reunite all the Chins

in Burma, India and Bangladesh and to establish a nation and a sovereign state to govern itself. Mrs. Indira Gandhi initiated a peace accord in Mizoram and the final agreement between the Indian government and the MNF was reached under Shri Rajiv Gandhi in 1986. Mizoram was, thus, inaugurated as a federated State of India on February 20 1986. The day – February 20 – which coincides with the Chin National Day, is now observed as State Inauguration Day. This date is public holiday in Mizoram.

When U Nu fled to Thailand and started an armed revolution against General Ne Win regime in 1970, Pu Mangtling Cinzah also fled to Thailand and joined U Nu. There he formed up the *Chin Democracy Party* (CDP) in 1971, in alliance with U Nu's *Parliamentary Democracy Party* / ပြည်ချစ်လူငယ်တပ်ဦး: *Pyichit Lunge Aphwet*. Pu David Thang Za Pu Pau, Mang Kham and Pu William Sa Lian Zam went underground to join the CDP in 1971.

Later Pu Sa Lian Zam and his closest comrades formed up an armed group named the Chin Liberation Army and planned to launch an armed uprising in the Chin territory. In alliance with the Arakan Liberation Army led by Khaing Moe Lin, the CLA started its long march from Thai-Burma border in the late 1975 through Karenni, Shan and Kachin territories and reached the Chin territory in June 1976. Pu Sa Lian Zam, Pu Khaing Moe Lin, Pu Khaing Ba Kyaw and most of the Chin and Arakanses revolutionaries were killed extra judicial by the Burmese troops after they were captured. Pu John Mangtling Cinzah later took political asylum in USA, and became one of the founding members of the Ottawa-based CHIN FORUM in 1998. He died at the age of 72 in Washington DC in 2004.

Following the 1972 mass arrest of Chin leaders in Chin Special Division many people were convinced that lawful demands for federalism put up to the Burmese military dictators would not yield any meaningful result. Among them was Pu Thawng Sai who went underground and joined hands with Pu Tial Khar who was in the MNF. The former was killed in action and Pu Tial Khar, a former government servant under People's Police Force and a veteran of Mizo Revolution against India, whom I knew as respectable Chin patriots, set up the Chin National Front in March 1988. The organization was later joined by the Chin students who fled the country when the historic Four Eights Democracy Revolution was brutally crushed by the Burmese military dictators. Subsequently, Pu No Than Kap succeeded him as the organization's president. Currently the CNF, forming alliance with other democratic forces, is led by its president Pu Thomas Thang No, and its vice President Pu Zing Cung, who is one of the founding members of the CHIN FORUM.

PART II

1. Political Proposals submitted by the Chin Youths to the Revolutionary Council through the Interim Unity Advisory Board (IUAB): The First Phase of the Chin Federal Movement under the military regime.

After all the arrested leaders of 1962 military coup were released from jail in 1966/67 the Revolutionary Council (RC) set up an Interim Unity Advisory Board (IUAB) on 2 December 1968 comprised of the 33 members of formerly elected Members of Parliament including U Nu, the former Prime Minister, and the Union President, in their capacity as individuals. The IUAB, was informally known as “the Thirty-Three-Member-Advisory-Board” or သုံးဆယ့်သုံးဦးအကြံပေးအဖွဲ့ in Burmese. The main task of the Board was to advise the RC how to restore internal unity and to draft a new constitution to be submitted to the RC. General Ne Win might have expected the Board to come up with a proposal for a constitution in Unitary form

because the very reason the military staged a coup in 1962 was that the Parliamentary government was about to amend the constitution in federal form.

Pu Htat Hlaing and Pu Lun Pum, the two Chin ex-Parliamentarians from the then constituency known as Chin Special Division were among members of the IUAB. The RC also officially invited the public to give suggestions for the Union constitution either on individual basis or in groups through a Liaison Officer appointed by the government.

One day in 1969, Pu Thuam Kho Tin (Martin), a senior College student who was the Publisher of the Chin Student Magazine Committee 1968-69 came to my room at the University House on Prome Road, in Kamayut, Rangoon. At that time I was the Chairman of the Magazine Committee while also serving as Secretary of the Chin Literature and Culture Sub Committee, Universities - Rangoon.

Pu Thuam Kho Tin (Martin) informed me about a meeting held between Pu Htat Hlaing, Pu Lun Pum and Pu Ngin Za Thang and other Chin elders at the later's house at Lanmadaw, Rangoon, to discuss about the opportunity for the Chins to submit suggestions on the Union constitution to the RC Government through the IUAB.

We were both very disappointed that the University Chin student's leaders were not invited to such an important meeting though we had had expected as such. Even the Chin Affairs Council formed by the Ne Win government and led by Pu Son Kho Lian used to consult us, the University Chin Student leaders, whenever they deemed it necessary to do so. So, naturally we expected our elders who were members of the IUAB to consult us. When Pu David Thang Za Pau and I eventually met Pu Lun Pum at his Minmanaing Home in Rangoon, we found out that they did not have much idea on what kind of suggestions to make as the deadline for submitting suggestions was already too close then.

As a law student of the Rangoon University and having just studied the Constitutional Law, I was aware of the fact that the *Supreme Council of the United Hill Peoples* * (SCOUHP) had in 1961-62 made a resolution at the Taunggyi Federal Conference to amend the country's constitution into a federal form. (The SCOUHP was formed in 1947 by the ethnic nationalities, more commonly known as the "frontier peoples" at that time, as their common platform to deal with the issues of independence, federalism and their future political destiny.) So I started drafting the "*Proposal of the Chin Youths* / ချင်းလူငယ်များအကြံပေးတင်ပြချက်" in Burmese for which Pu Lun Pum was very helpful - allowing me to get access to his books and files at his home in Rangoon whenever I needed references. (Note: The term - Proposal Paper and *Proposal of the Chin Youths* will be used interchangeably in this paper. Author)

The following persons were also heavily involved throughout the process of publishing the said Proposal Paper: Pu Tial Hu and Pu Ca Lian Thang (third year University students) made the editing and re-writing of the draft. Pu Martin Thuam Kho Tin (BA final year at Bo Ta-Htaung Adult University in Rangoon) made the final editing of my Burmese. Maung San Thein (Gangaw) of Ko Kyaw Copying and Stationary Business Store, located in Bar Street had type-written the finalized version (he charged one kyat per page but it is worthwhile to note that he was very sympathetic to our cause); Pu David Thang Za Pau (a third year Law student), an intimate friend of mine and his cousin brother Pu Thang Za Dal (already involved with underground movements at that time) took care of the expenses incurred for the publication of the draft. Several duplications were made using cyclostyle.

Copies of it were then distributed to all the Chin University students in Rangoon and to all Chin youths we could reach. They all were requested to read and sign their signatures if they agreed with its contents as we had no more time for discussion and feed backs. Every Chin student in Rangoon took great interest in it and all liked it very much as it was the first ever written political document of the Chins. Some students waited for their turn to read it in their hostels almost until dawn as we could not afford to give them enough copies to everyone.

As a result many students joined as signatories of the proposal. Dr. Za Hlei Thang and Pu Salai Kip Kho Lian (both of them now in the CHIN FORUM) who were then studying Medicine and Architecture respectively were among the signatories. Because of a rumour circulated among the Chin students that signatories of the proposal in question would be arrested, one or two students came to my room to withdraw their signatures. But the majority students and youths stayed put and stuck to their commitments.

We were well aware that General Ne Win, far from accepting our proposal, would even throw us into prison for proposing a federal system that he abhorred. Nevertheless, we decided to go forward anyway with our Proposal Paper.

The rationale behind our determination were:-

i) the root cause of poverty in the Chin territory since the Union of Burma came into existence in 1948 was that, in the first place, because the Chins did not have their own State, legislative assembly and their own government. So, it is now in our hands to take the chance and act to restore our national self-determination enshrined in the Panglong Agreement;

ii) the Chin Chiefs - Pu Hlur Hmung, Pu Thawng Za Khup and Pu Kio Mang - who signed the Panglong Agreement in 1947, failed to secure a State for the Chins and we, the generations that followed had been blaming them for this grave mistake; if in case the present Chin generation and the intelligentsia failed again to take initiative to raise their voices and did not submit any suggestions and the Chins end up without achieving national self-determination and territorial rights in the Union of Burma, history would judge us as the irresponsible generation;

iii) the RC/BSPP Regime would decide our national destiny if we, Chins, would not expressed our desire;

iv) even if submitting proposals would result in the signatories being thrown into prison, the sacrifices we made would inspire Chins of the coming generations to carry on the struggle until our national aspirations were attained;

v) even if our proposals for federalism would be rejected we could take the opportunity to educate and raise political awareness among our people by distributing as many copies of the "*Proposal of the Chin Youths*" as possible among the Chin people. So our proposal would serve as guiding principles for the coming generations;

vi) if we could prove and display that a self-governing territory with our own State Legislative Assembly and federalism for the whole country is what the Chin people overwhelmingly supported and desired, we might be able to gain international supports, especially from that of the democratic countries etc in the event of eventual armed revolution against the regime should they reject our proposal.

Pu Martin Thuam Kho Tin and I took 35 copies of the “*Proposal of the Chin Youths*” to the Government Guest House located on the AD Road in Rangoon where Pu Htat Hlaing was lodged by the government with some other IUAB members. We gave him all the copies for him to distribute among all members of the Board and two copies extra to be submitted to the Liaison Officer directly by Pu Htat Hlaing himself.

Pu Htat Hlaing slowly read through the Proposal and eventually asked us “Who wrote this Proposal?”. We told him that it was written by Chin students. He expressed heartily that he was so glad that Chin students could write such a good political document. So we were ensured of his full support. He promised us to distribute the copies to all the members of the Board and also to Colonel Than Sein, the Liaison Officer. The Proposal paper was directly addressed to General Ne Win, the Chairman of the Revolutionary Council / BSPP. This was very helpful when we distributed copies of the document because whenever we encountered agents of the most feared Military Intelligence Services (MIS) we could readily point out that the document distributed was not illegal underground political document but instead one that was submitted directly to the top leader of the country. Actually, we had not secured any legal permission to print out copies of the Proposal paper to be widely distributed for the consumption of the general masses but we took for granted on the ground that General Ne Win himself had officially asked for suggestions from the general public in the first place. It was as if we were openly distributing anti-government leaflets since we were aware of General Ne Win’s strong disgust for federalism.

In February 1969, U Nu submitted an 'interim report' recommending that General Ne Win hand over power back to him; that the Parliament abolished by Ne Win in March 1962 be reconvened. He proposed that the Parliament would meet and formally appoint General Ne Win as President. He also stated that he made this proposal in absolute sincerity so that the Revolutionary Council would not remain as 'usurpers' ('those who came to power through force') and the 'taint of illegality' of Ne Win's takeover could be erased. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U_Nu

Soon after submitting his 'report' or recommendations, U Nu, feigning illness, and under the pretext of a pilgrimage to India left Burma for India. When Ne Win made no response to his report, U Nu left India for London. In a speech given at the opening day of the Fourth Seminar of the ruling Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) on 6 November 1969, Ne Win formally rejected U Nu's proposal, saying that he took over power — and held on to it — not because he craved power but to uplift the welfare of the 'workers and peasants' and that U Nu's proposals amounted to 'turning back the wheel'. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U_Nu

In a press conference held in London on 27 August 1969, U Nu announced that he was the 'legal Prime Minister' and 'pledged to the people of Burma' that he would not give up his struggle for democracy in Burma and that Burma was under the 'same kind of fascism' which (Burma's independence hero) 'General Aung San had fought' (during the freedom struggle and the resistance against the Japanese occupation of Burma during the Second World War). http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U_Nu

The Revolutionary Council finally abolished the IUAD and went on its own way to draft the country’s Constitution.

Meanwhile many more extra copies of the Proposal Paper were re-cyclostyled and dispatched to all the nine townships of the Chin Special Division. At one point a bunch of copies of the

Proposal paper sent to Tedim were confiscated at Kalemmyo airport by the MIS. But the MI officers did not take any further action against the students who transported them when they realized that the documents were legally submitted to General Ne Win himself and his Revolutionary Council / BSPP government

Among those actively distributing the Proposal paper in Kalemmyo were Pu Suang Za Khup, Salai Sing Nang, Salai Al Thang, Salai Za Kung etc; Salai Kipp Kho Lian and Khai Za Nang in Tahan, Hang Cin Zam, Zel Kam Cin and others in Tedim, Than Sang, Ngun Uk and others in Falam. Manghram, Ngun Khuai and others in Haka, Sing Ki Gei (an Engineer student) and Ko Haki (a Law student) in Mindat, C. Hnalthang and Za Kho (both Engineering students) in Matupi.

Pu Put Pa, one of the four members of Chin Affairs Council (*Chin Oosi*) – a highest organ of Chin Special Division at that time - mentioned in one of his speeches to the Students of Tedim State High School that the “*Proposal of the Chin Youths*” prepared by the University Chin students for the Union Constitution currently circulated among the masses was unrealistic and the demands made were too high for the Chin Special Division and that they should not take interest in these proposals. This, contrary to his expectation, aroused more interests of the students and the masses. And it was learnt that copies of the Proposal paper were secretly sold at K 25.- per copy and borrowed at K 10.- per night in Tedim when a cup of coffee cost only 25 pyas at that time. The reason for such a hype was not because of Pu Put Pa’s speech alone but also because of the scarcity of the copies due to confiscation at the Kalemmyo airport as mentioned above. After all, due to heavy censorship imposed ever since General Ne Win took over the state power by force in 1962, the whole country was starved of such serious political documents at that time.

There were more demands for copies of the Proposal Paper and there were always some people who had cyclostyled more copies and distributed secretly at K 100 per copy in Chin Special Division. The re-production continued almost every year until 1988 democracy uprisings and the 1990 general election. Thus, the “*Proposal of the Chin Youths*” had become the unifying force that had brought the Chin general masses to a higher level of political and national consciousness.

Reprinted version is now available at the Ethnic Nationalities Council as part of the document titled ငြိမ်းချမ်းစွာ အတူနေထိုင်ရေးဝါဒ မှသည် စစ်မှန်သော ဖက်ဒရယ်ပြည် ထောင်စု စနစ် စီသို့ (တတိယတွဲ)၊ ပင်လုံစာချုပ်ကိုလက်မှတ်ရေးထိုးခဲ့သော တိုင်းရင်းသားလူမျိုးများ၏ ပြည် ထောင်စုအပေါ် ဝေဖန် သုံး သပ် သည့် စာတန်းများ။ ဆလိုင်းလျန်မှန်းစုစောင်းတင်ပြသည်။ [P. 166 to 136] in Burmese.

2. The Second Phase of Chin Federal Movement: Reaching out to the General Masses.

After the Revolutionary Council / Burma Socialist Program Party(BSPP) Regime had abolished the IUAB in 1970 it announced once again that citizens of the country could give suggestions for a future Union constitution directly to the government - individually or in groups - to the Constitution Drafting Commission. The Constitution Drafting Commission was to tour around the country – that is to all States and Divisions to collect people’s suggestions and opinions.

We heard the announcement when I was in Falam as a young lawyer defending Ex Lt. Col Pu Son Kho Pau who was tried in the Special Crime Court of Falam District under Unlawful Association Act Section 17(1)(2) for organizing an underground armed movement against General Ne Win's Socialist Regime with the support of Pakistan. According to what Col Son Kho Pau told me personally, Pu Hrang Nawl was taking the responsibility of President of their Political Organization and he was taking the responsibility of defense as Chief of Staff. Members of his troops who were called as witnesses in his case were Rual Uk, Mang Al and Thang Hrim. They told me that their political organization was known as Anti Communist Freedom League. At that time together with Pu Van Thio, my contemporary young Lawyer, we were defending also other Chin patriots like well-known artists Pu Hram Tlai, Pu Biak Lar and others (quite a number of them) including Pu Thawng Lian, Pu Ngun Hing etc.. accused of supporting the Mizo National Front (MNF) during their two-days occupation of Falam in 1968. (The MNF armed troops also occupied Tedim for one day and one night at that time) Through my experiences of defending Chin political leaders at the court I came to realize that the occupation of Falam by the MNF was made possible with the help of some Chin patriots like Pu Hrang Bil Thang and Pu Tial Khar. (Pu Hrang Bil Thang used to contact me at my place during May 1968 when I was preparing a thesis for my LL.B degree at the archive of the Deputy Commissioner in Falam.)

Pu Chan Peng, Pu Victor Kap Lian, Pu Van Thio, Pu No Zam and I with several others held meetings in September 1970 at Pu No Zam's home in Falam. We decided to respond to the RC/BSPP Regime's call for suggestions and to repeat the demands made in the "*Proposal of the Chin Youths*" which we submitted through the IUAB. We went to Haka and held meetings with other people like Pu Victor Kap Lian, Pu Khin Maung Win, Pu Chan Peng, Pu Van Thio, Pu, Van Lian, Pu Huat Chum etc. at Pu Dr. Ngin Thawng's residence at Dorthar block.

Pu Dr. Ngin Thawng and I became intimate friends when he was in Paletwa Civil Hospital as a medical officer and I was an acting Middle School headmaster as a Junior Assistant Teacher about 7 years before. A UK-trained Dr. Ngin Thawng was a very caring physician who was dearly loved and respected by the local people. He chaired the meetings while I was acting as the secretary. We selected important facts from the "*Proposal of the Chin Youths*" and re-edit it to suit the new situation. We cyclostyled and reproduced many copies of it. Pu Dr. Ngin Thawng took these copies in his departmental tour to all the townships in the Chin Special Division then. He held meetings with government officials in every town he visited to discuss about the suggestions that we had prepared. He was campaigning in Kanpetlet, Mindat, Matupi and Paletwa and in Tedim and Tonzang as well. Suggestions were to be legally given by citizens themselves regardless of whether they were government servant or otherwise. And he distributed copies of the original "*Proposal of the Chin Youths*" to several groups in all the towns he visited. Each interested person or group were to draft their own suggestions for a federal constitution based on the main document "*Proposal of the Chin Youths*" and to submit them to the Union Constitution Drafting Commission when they came to their towns to collect people's opinions, suggestions and proposals.

Pu Dr. Ngin Thawng suddenly passed away some months before the Constitution Drafting Commission came to Chin Special Division. I was greatly shocked and deeply saddened when I was awakened from my sleep in the midst of the night to be informed about his passing away of heart attack. It was a great loss not only for his family but for me personally as well for he was my most intimate friend in Chin politics. Indeed, it was also a great loss for the entire Chin people.

The whole Haka town people were so sad that in an unusual move they contributed a highly valued and expensive Chin traditional blanket known as *Congnakpuan* to cover his coffin and to be buried along with it as their last tribute to the respected Chin patriot. Such a display of respect – similar to covering political leaders’ coffin with national flags in the West.- is rarely to be seen in Haka except for persons they regard as man of integrity. Had he not died, he was also to be arrested later when the mass arrests of Chin leaders took place. His grave was even visited by the Military Intelligence Service to confirm his death.

After our first meetings at Pu Dr. Ngin Thawng’s residence, we held some other meetings at Pu Ngun To’s residence with elders from the whole city of Haka. Mr. Van Thio and I explained about the need for the establishment of a federal union based on the content of our Proposal Paper. We discussed about how Chin Special Division was totally neglected and how poverty had prevailed as the result of the Chin territory having no State Legislative Assembly and a government of its own. We all agreed to propose a federal form of Union when the Constitution Drafting Commission arrived in Haka.

We therefore drafted a Paper for a federal constitution and divided it into several parts to be read by selected representatives when the Constitution Drafting Commission came to Haka. I drafted all the papers basing on the “*Proposal of the Chin Youths*”.. Pu Pe Lein Mang from Mindat who was my intimate friend since University days secretly edited them at Pu Nein Ling’s residence in his bed room. Pu Pe Lein Mang was at that time a Senior Assistant Teacher at the No. 1 State High School in Haka and living at the residence of Pu Nein Ling, Secretary of the Chin Affairs Council in Haka.

When Pu Dr. Ngin Thawng was alive he allowed us to use the ground floor room of his Divisional Health Director’s office which was rented from Hlei Tialnu, Major Za Hup’s widow. After Pu Dr. Ngin Thawng’s death, she continued to let us use it for our meetings and had even supplied us type writers and gaslight as it was done before. It was all done at night in secrecy for security reason as we were afraid that we could be arrested before we had the chance to read and submit our Paper to the commission though we did not care much if we would be arrested after our suggestion had been read and submitted to the Constitution Drafting Commission.

Every single person we approached for financial help or other kind of services enthusiastically helped us in any possible means they could. Male and female typists from several governmental departments in Haka took turn beyond midnight to help us with the typing of all the documents at the office of Health Director of the Chin Special Division. Two of them who had helped us most were Pu Phun Kil and Pu Duh Lal.

After having typed the documents we cyclostyled them in several offices - some at Chin Affairs Council Information Office, some at the Haka Party Unit office of the BSPP, some at State Education office in the evenings after offices had been closed or on Saturdays. All the office staff contributed their services very willingly. It was Salai Al Thang from Kalemio and Mr. Thawng Sai of Sopum who happened to be in Haka visiting their relatives and took care of all this cyclostyling in several offices with me and together with the office staff as already mentioned. Binding works were all done by the youths led by Pu Thang Kio of Hriangkhan village at Haka Pyidawtha Block at Pu Ralkham’s house, which was close to the office where we typed all our drafts. When we had finished with the duplication of the Paper we held some meetings again as usual and we approved it and assigned several people to read them to the

Constitution Drafting Commission. The reading rehearsal was done at the Haka BSPP Party Unit meeting hall.

Copies of the Paper were also distributed to all over the townships of the Chin Special Division with the aim that other individuals and groups could use the Paper that we had drafted as guidelines in preparing their own suggestions when the Constitution Drafting Commission came to their respective towns.

Pu Khin Maung Win who was the Personal Assistant of Pu Vomthu Ha Shing and one of the four members of Chin Affairs Council took the assignment to organize the reading of our suggestion Paper and to distribute it in Southern Chin Special Division, Pu Victor Kap Lian, (Personal Assistant of Pu Tin Zam, one of the members of Chin Affairs Council, and Pu No Zam (Ex MP) took the assignment to mobilize the town people in Falam and also to distribute copies of it there and to read them before the Commission.

There were several other people who campaigned for the same kind of federal movement in Tedim and Tonzang like Pu Son Cin Lian (Ex MP), Pu Cin Sian Thang and several other youths.

As our strategy for a publicity coup, we organized school children of No.1 State High School in Haka to hold placards displaying the words “Genuine Federalism” written in Burmese at the welcoming scene of the Constitution Drafting Commission on the day of their arrival. Our idea at that time was that if the government’s propaganda documentary films would record the arriving events of the Constitution Drafting Commission, the placards held by the school children would be captured by their cameras and this would send out a strong message to the would-be viewers or to General Ne Win himself that the Chins are determined to establish a genuine federal union.

In December 1971 when the Commission arrived at the Assembly Hall of No. 1 State High School in Haka we started to read out our suggestions as planned to the Panel of the Constitution Drafting Commission led by Col. Than Sein. I read the introduction part of the whole suggestions that we had prepared and introduced the titles of other parts and the names of representatives who would present these suggestions. These suggestions were put up as the Chin people’s desire and wishes on how the federal union should be formed and what points or clauses should be included in the future constitution. The papers were systematically presented and read by our selected representatives - one after another. There were also some individuals who read their own suggestions.

Our suggestions for the future constitution were submitted to the Commission after all parts had been read out to them. The BSPP later published these documents. According to their publications, there were 150 papers of constitutional suggestions from the nine townships of the Chin Special Division alone. Among them altogether 75 papers that were read and submitted to the Constitution Drafting Commission were advocating genuine federal union. The other 75 papers were not acceptable to the BSPP-Regime as constitutional provisions. Nevertheless, there were not a single paper that was against federalism. So we were certain that all the 150 papers submitted by the Chins were supporting federalism.

The total number of 150 papers submitted in Chin Special Division were indeed significant. We were overwhelmingly satisfied with the fact that we had harvested our many years of sacrifices. All those who contributed their services and financial supports generously for the realization of the Chin people's aspirations and the general masses that were very much awakened to be fully aware of their rights - deserve a due credit and recognition for their noble contributions for the establishment of a peaceful federal union.

According to the publications by the BSPP, throughout the country there were altogether six forms of suggestions submitted to the Constitution Drafting Commission at that time and one of which was a federal form. There were all together 111 papers in the whole country that had advocated for pure federalism and out of which 75 were from Chin Special Division alone. In other words, that numbers made up about 70% of the entire papers submitted throughout the country for federalism. This proved the comparatively significant scope of political awareness among the Chins at that time. This clearly indicated the success of the three years of tireless campaign – the Chin Federal Movement. We had harvested the fruits of our strategy in taking advantage of the BSPP Regime's calls for advices and suggestions for the country. And it was a golden chance or opportunity for us to educate and mobilize our people.

3. The mass arrest of leaders of Chin Federal Movement in 1972/73.

In the late September 1972 I went to Rangoon for a job interview for the post of Law Officer. I was among the first batch of graduates obtaining LLB degree in the country. In October, 1972 I went home as a Law officer to Haka to sort out some of the legal cases. On my way home I went to Mandalay by train and in the evening when I was in the night bazaar a stranger approached me and asked several irrational questions. Being suspicious that I am being traced by the military intelligence I let Pu Ca Mang to fly with my flight ticket to Kalemyo. But nothing happened. Had Ca Mang, using a ticket bearing my name been arrested, I was to flee the country for India or Thailand to avoid detention.

But since Ca Mang was not arrested, I bought another ticket and at the airport I noticed some one shadowing me even when I went into the rest room. At the time our plane landed at the Kalemyo airport on October 31, 1972, an officer I knew to be from the Bureau of Special Intelligence (BSI) received me. The other officer politely requested me to follow them for "a while" as they have some questions to ask me. (Note: This is a very commonly known method used by agents of MIS. They would never say "You are under arrest". Instead they would ask you to follow them for "a while", which could also mean ten years in jail or one may even totally disappear forever without a trace.) Upon arriving at a guest house they searched my bag and bed-roll. Then I was taken to the army compound where I was put on a truck full of people from the Chin Special Division. The person sitting close to me was Ex Captain Hei Er, a leading member of the BSPP Regional Party in Chin Special Division and there had been no slightest thought in my mind that he would be arrested.

We were not supposed to speak to each other but I whispered to him asking how all of them from the Chin Special Division happened to be there. He whispered back and told me that they were all arrested. The truck drove us off to Kalewa in the evening. From there we were taken in a motor boat to Mongywa, where some were left behind and some of us were taken to Shwebo. On the same night Pu No Zam, Pu Cin Sian Thang and I were taken to a certain Mandalay army unit

cell. We came to learn that we were arrested under an operation known in Burmese as “*Sin-Phyu-Daw* Operation” which means White Elephant Operation.

The next day we were taken to Mandalay jail inside the ancient palace. There we were interrogated for four nights without sleep and finally we were taken to Rangoon by train on November 4, 1972. The Jail officer asked me if we were physically tortured. When I answered “no”, he told me that he did not allow the MIS to torture our group, though they asked for permission to do so. He further mentioned that the MIS are told that they were not allowed to torture in civil-controlled jail as they, the civil jail authorities, could not take any responsibility on any consequences resulting from torture.

In Rangoon we were taken to Yekyi-aing, the notorious MIS detention camp north of Rangoon, where we were kept until 4 January 1974. We were assembled to be sent back to Mandalay Jail by train and there Pu Son Cin Lian, Pu No Zam, Pu Hei Er, Pu Suang Za Khup, Pu Cin Sian Thang and I from Yekyi-aing detention camp and Pu Bohmu Kyin and Pu Dr. Suan Za Dong from Insein jail were surprised to meet each other as we were unaware of one another’s detention before that.

Later, I learned that most of the Chin and other detainees under “*Sin-Phyu-Daw* Operation” were released on 3 January 1974, the day the RC Government declared the “promulgation” of the socialist Constitution in accordance with the nation-wide “referendum” in which more than 90% voted “Yes”. We also learned later that at every poll station country-wide the people overwhelmingly voted against the BSPP Regime’s socialist Constitution but all the poll results were rigged and declared as more than 90% “Yes” vote. It was apparent that General Ne Win was determined to declare himself a legitimate ruler of the country through this “referendum” and for this very reason he might have chosen the name of the operation “*Operation Sin-Phyu-Daw*” to arrest us – all those who advocated federalism – because white elephants are regarded by the Buddhist ethnic Burmans since the olden days to be sacred and belong only to monarchs “*ruling with justice and the kingdom is blessed with peace and prosperity.*”

Later Pu Suang Za Khup and I were on trial at the Mandalay North East or North West township Special Crime Court inside Mandalay Session Court building. I was defended by an intimate senior lawyer U Hla Nyunt who did not charge me any fee. I usually defended several accused together with him before I was arrested. Pu Suang Za Khup was defended by other lawyers and he was given a bail. All of my co-accused were released in May, 1974 after some of them were examined as witnesses of the Prosecutor in our case at the Special Crime Court. Pu Suang Za Khup was acquitted in the case. They were all reappointed in their respective postings.

All of their arrears pay while they were in detention was paid back by the Government in lump sum. Pu Lian Kung and Pu Tum Khar joked later that they would not be able to build their houses were they not arrested and without the lump sum arrears received as back pay.

I was convicted with two and half years term of imprisonment. The prosecutor himself argued before the judges of the Special Crime Court of Mandalay Township Session Court that there was **not** enough evidence to convict me. However, he argued further that I must be convicted as the case involved government “policy”. That means, since the government had arrested me, I should be convicted no matter whether there was enough evidence to convict me or not. But I had been more than two and half years in jail on the day the judgment was pronounced. So, I was released soon after the judgment was passed and that was the government policy. I was

arrested on October 31, 1972 at Kalembo airport and the trial of my case was held at that Mandalay Special Crime court and was released from Mandalay jail on August 9, 1975.

To summarize the mass arrest under the *Sin-Phyu-Daw* Operation :-

- i) We all were arrested separately and put in different detention camps across the country like in Monywa , Shwebo, Rangoon, Insein, Yekyi-aing, Mandalay, Mingin, Mingyan etc;
- ii) The arrests took place in Tedim, Falam, Haka, Thantlang, Matupi, Mindat, Kanpetlet, Rangoon, Insein and Natmawk etc. Pu Lua Thawng (who died during his captivity) was arrested in Taunggyi, Shan State and there were also several other towns from which the Chin leaders were arrested, including even Rakhine and Magwe Divisions wherever there are numerous Chin settlements;
- iii) From among the nearly fifty Chin arrestees only Pu Suang Za Khup and I were put on trial. Pu Suang Za Khup was acquitted. Through the mass-arrests of all high ranking Chin officers, student leaders, Chin intelligentsia and the arrest of the Chin Programme announcer Pi Van Hnuai Thluai of the Burma Broadcasting Service (BBS) and the further accusation made upon us of having connections with Pu David Thang Za Pau of the underground Chin Democracy Party etc. the military government seemed to be convinced that they could easily convict us in the court. Eventually I alone was convicted even though no evidence was found to charge me under the Unlawful Association Act 17;
- iv) Most of us were arrested from October 1972 onward. Except for myself and Pu Suang Za Khup, most arrestees were released on 3 January 1974, after the “promulgation” of General Ne Win’s one-sidedly drafted socialist constitution;
- v) In a nutshell, it became apparent that it was the government “policy” to put behind bars all those who advocated for federalism, at least before and during the “referendum” period that took place on 15 December 1973. This was because we had already mobilized a wide range of political awareness among the Chin people across the country and the Military Junta wanted to silent the leaders who had enthusiastically taken part in the Chin federal movement;
- vi) Were we not put behind bars, we would have had staged a mass protest when they forcefully “promulgated” their socialist Constitution. Discussions were tentatively going on among us for this option though – by the time of our arrest - we had not yet reached the point of laying down any practical strategy as such;
- vii) Under the new Socialist Constitution the Chin Special Division became “Chin State” – the status we demanded in our proposal. But in reality it is a “State” by name only, without any trace of national self-determination for the Chins or federalism. The “States” in name only without any function of statehood – were being “created” by the military dictators. It could best be described in a Burmese usage as “ပေးထားပေးရန် မရပါ”, meaning “Given, but not received”
- viii) It became apparent that General Ne Win, from the very beginning, had no intention of seeking the genuine desires of the people; being a fascist in nature, as U Nu has accused him of, he had been extremely intolerant of differing opinions; *so as a person who so abhors federalism demanded by the ethnic nationalities, Ne Win is also determined to suppress any attempt to restore democracy which had long been advocated by most anti-Ne Win Burmese political movements. Thus, for Ne Win or for the Burmese military dictators, in order to deny federalism, denying democracy is a must;*

- ix) The cross-section of the mass-arrests of the Chin leaders, encompassing peoples of all walks of life – students, high ranking military officers and BSPP functionaries, intelligentsia, high ranking government servants, teachers, lawyers, doctors etc. belonging to all tribes and regions – undeniably proved that the Chin people overwhelmingly supported and desired federalism.

Dr. Maung Maung describing the creation of three new States wrote: “To placate restless minority groups, the three separate states [Chin, Arakan and Mons] were to be created within the Socialist Union of Burma” in the book: “Constitution of the Countries of the world (1974) P. 3 by Albert P. Blaustein & Gisbert H. Flanz”. Dr. Maung Maung implicitly mentioned that the Rakhine State, Chin State and Mon State were nominally “*created*” under the constitution of the Socialist Republic of Union of Burma 1974, because of the decision that had been made in the parliament in 1961 and because of the continuous demand made by political leaders and activists of these States. But as mentioned above, these are just given-but-not-received kind of “states”.

The scope of the Chin federal movement under the BSPP Regime at that time covered far beyond the official Chin territory known as Chin Special Division. For example, meetings were also held at that time at the house of Pu Bohmu Kyin (Major Kyin) in Insein in the vicinity of Rangoon during 1970. Pu Bohmu Kyin, one of the arrestees was an Asho (Plains) Chin. The meetings at his place were attended by Chins from Arakan Division (later Rakhine State), Magwe Division and other parts of the country. I still remember that [there were in the meeting](#) some Chins from Paukhaung, General Ne Win’s home town, who were known as elephant-owners (*Sin Paing shin*). We all discussed about advocating for federalism. Discussions with those Chins from areas adjacent to the Chin Special Division involved their desires to join and incorporating their areas into the future Chin State if they were asked by the Constitution Drafting Commission. We learned that those involved in discussions at Pu Bohmu Kyin’s residence were also arrested. We were unable to collect and record the names of arrestees from these areas as we were locked up in different places across the country. In the future when the opportunity allows us we need to keep into record the names of those arrestees from the Asho Chin areas

Somewhere around 1970-71 while I was traveling through Kalemmyo for some days, we were able to hold a public gathering through arrangement initiated by prominent Chin leaders in Tahan, Pu Lian Hrang and Pu Gopal. I knew both of them to be whole-heartedly supporting our federal movement. I went to Tahan, Kalemmyo with Pu Sang Awr and Pu Uk Mang and met with the community leaders there including Pu Thang Hlei-a, another prominent political leader of Tahan who was also a staunch supporter of the federal movement. Taking turns, we all gave speeches to the general public so as to mobilize the Chins in Kalay-Kabaw Valleys to opt for joining the future Chin State if in case a referendum might take place. Local music groups and popular singers entertained us with inspiring patriotic songs promoting unity between the peoples of Mizoram and the Chin territory. The timing coincided with the armed revolution of the Mizo National Front led by Pu Laldenga, so our campaign there created a deep sense of brotherhood and intimacy between the Chins and Mizos.

In 1970 during the periods of drafting the “*Proposal of the Chin Youths*” Pu David Thang Za Pau (a third year Law student) , Pu Mang Kham and Pu William Sa Lian Zam (Burma Navy) went underground to join the Thai-Burma border based Chin Parliamentary Democracy led by Pu Mang Tling. Pu Kipp Kho Lian connected Pu William Za Lian Zam and Pu Mang Kham to Pu Hau Za Cin, who personally led them through KNU-controlled areas to the CPD camp. We knew

that this group whole heartedly supported our peaceful federal movement as I had personal relationships with them before they decided to go underground. After all, Pu David Thang Za Pau himself, who was one of my most intimate friends for several years, had been actively involved in the publication and distribution of “*Proposal of the Chin Youths*”, as mentioned earlier above, before he left us for underground.

Pu Thang Za Dal, Pu David Thang Za Pau, Pu Kipp Kho Lian, Pu Victor Kam Za Lian (*the Aces Music Band*) and Pu Hau Za Cin and I worked out in 1968-69 a concept of forming Chin National Council (CNC) which was supposed to lead an armed struggle should our peaceful attempts to establish a federal union failed. We worked out some kind of military strategy dividing the Chin territory into Northern, Southern and Central Regions. Owing to many obstacles following the mass arrests of those who opted for above-ground peaceful movements and the brutal suppression of the armed underground movements lead by Pu Sa Lian Zam etc. our plan for an armed struggle did not materialize.

The emergence of the Chin National Council in 2006** at Sinai Camp, the HQ of the Zomi National Congress is a welcoming move for us as a materialization of a political organization conceived forty years ago.

4. List of high ranking officers, political leaders and student activists arrested in 1972

1. Pu Sang Awr, B.A., LL.B., Lawyer, Thantlang
2. Dr. Suan Za Dong, M.B.,B.S, Rangoon
3. Pu Hei Er, Ex Captain, Zeya Kyaw Htin, Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP), Chin Regional Organizer and BSPP Central Committee Member, Haka
4. Dr Ni Hei, M.B. B.S., Medical Officer, Matupi
5. Pu Om Hung (Hlaw-wah) Secretary, Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) Township Party Unit Committee, Mindat

6. Pu John Ling Hung (Luk Ghei) Trade Corporation, Trade Department, Mindat
7. Pu Hmun Iap (Thantlang -Lungler) Township Agriculture Officer, Mindat

8. Lt. Col. Thian Kho Khai, Secretary of Chin Affairs Council, Haka
(father of Pu David Thang Za Pau). He was forced to retire from the Burma Army after his release.
9. Pu Tum Khar, Chairman, Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP) Township Party Unit, Haka
10. Pu Suang Za Khup, Senior Assistant Teacher, State High School, Kalemryo and Township Inspector of Schools, Later transferred to Haka.

11. Pu Ha Kee (Bong) Junior Assistant Teacher, State High School, Mindat
12. Pu Khaw Gei Kee (Shit Hmawi) Chairman, Township Worker's Asi-ayone , Mindat.

13. Pu Mang Gin Kee (Vomthu) Headmaster (Middle School), Education Dept. Makuimnum, Mindat

14. Pu Hniar Kio, B.A., LL.B, Lawyer, Haka
15. Pu Hre Lian Kio, B.A., LLB., Lawyer, Haka

16. Pu Lian Kung, Headmaster, State High School , Haka
17. Pu Bohmu Kyin, Ex Lt. Col., Insein, Rangoon
18. Pu Salai Kipp Kho Lian , Tahan- Kalemmyo. Arrested as a student leader while studying Architecture at the Rangoon Institute of Technology. He was arrested under the *Sin-Phyu-Daw* Operation on December 11, 1972 and released on January 3, 1974, but arrested again on December 11, 1974 for taking part in a student strike against the BSPP Regime. In 1976 he was eventually expelled from the RIT for life for his relentless roles in the anti-government student's movements during 1974/75 & 76. He is now based in Germany. As one of the founding members of the CHIN FORUM, he is at present the Coordinator of the Chin Forum Managing Board.

19. Pu Son Cin Lian, Ex MP , Tedim constituency and Ex Chairman of Chin Affairs Council. Leader of the Chin National Organization (CNO) with Pu Vom Thu Maung (Mindat) and Captain Mang Tung Nung (Tedim).
20. Pu Victor Kap Lian, Personnel Secretary of (Ex Captain Pu Tin Zam, Member of Chin Affairs Council) , Haka

21. Pu Khuang Ling, B.Sc, Township Inspector of Schools, Mindat
22. Pu Shing Phe Ling (Shuitha) Junior Assistant Teacher, Mindat
23. Pu Lian Khan Mang, B.Sc. (Agri.), ARDC, Tedim
24. Pu Thang Kee Mang (Ham Bung) Health Assistant, Health Department
25. Pu Sum Mang, Inspector of Schools, Chin Special Division, Haka
26. Pu Aung Ling Mawng (Vomthu) Headmaster (Middle School), State Middle School, Makui Imnu, Mindat township. Education Dept.
27. Pu On Za Nang, Township Administrative Officer in Tedim, later promoted to State Law Officer.

28. Pu Yaw Om (Vomthu) A body guard to Pu Vomthu Ha Shing
29. Pu Kham Khan Pau, Township General Administrative Officer, Matupi
30. Salai Kyaw Sein, Chairman , Township BSPP Party Unit, Natmauk (The birth place of General Aung San)
31. Pu Gin Khui Shing aka Pu Khin Aung (Vomthu) Member, BSPP Township Party Unit Committee, Mindat
- 32..Pu Ngun Soe (Thantlang Hmunlipi), A Chin Student leader Mandalay University

33. Pu Cin Sian Thang, B.A., B.A., LL.B, Lawyer and Former Regional Leader of AFPFL led by U Ba Shwe and U Kyaw Nyein, Kalemmyo. He was elected as Chairman of the Chin Students Union during the academic year 1963-64. As a university student, he attended the Taunggyi Federal Conference in 1961 representing the Chin people. Pu Cin Sian Thang was elected as a Member of Parliament in the 1990 general election under the ticket of Zomi National Congress . He became one of the leaders in the Committee Representing People's Parliament (CRPP) led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi. Since 1988 he has been arrested many times by the Burmese military regime. Until today, despite his failing health, he keeps on fighting courageously against the military regime from within the country using non-violent means.

34. Pu Ngo Deih Cin Thang, Township Administrative Officer, Kanpetlet

35. Pu Vul Za Thang, B.A., B.Ed. Senior Head Master, State High School, Mindat (It was very heart breaking to have lost a great teacher like him, who died of the disease he extracted in the jail soon after he was released . I knew him very well as a very efficient teacher serving as senior Headmaster in several High schools in Chin State.

36. Pu Do Thawng, Health Assistant, Kanpetlet He critically discussed about the BSPP-drafted constitution in the public meeting when the Constitution Drafting Commission came to Kanpetlet in 1972. He was detained for 22 months in Myingyan jail and released on 3. January 1974. Pu Do Thawng is an elected MP from Kale Constituency 1 on NLD ticket during the 1990 general election. Currently he is the chairman of Kalemyo NLD. He was arrested the second time on 20 May 1996 while he was about to travel to Rangoon to attend the NLD-MPs Conference called by Daw Aung San Su Kyi. He was sentenced to 7 years imprisonment without any trial and was released on 2 June 2003. Now he lives in Tahan, Kalemyo. His son, Dr. Roding (NLD- LA), one of the founding members of the CHIN FORUM, is now based in the USA.

37. Pu Lua Thawng, District Cooperative Officer, Mindat District, during the Chin Federal Movement. He worked in Taunggyi, Shan State, at the time of his arrest. Pu Lua Thawng was interrogated in Mandalay prison inside the old palace. He died in the prison ward of the Mandalay General Hospital. His death attracted Chin students of the Mandalay Universities and other Chins residing there who paid their last tributes at his funeral.

38. Dr. Za Hlei Thang, M.B., B.S. (Arrested as a University student leader), MC 1, Rangoon. Pu Dr. Za Hlei Thang was elected as Member of Parliament as the Chin National League for Democracy (CNLD) candidate in 1990 general election. He shortly joined the exile government – National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma - and served as Minister of Health. He is now based in Washington DC area and an active participant of the Members of Parliamentarian Union (MPU) and a member of the CNC. He is also one of the founding members of the Ottawa-based CHIN FORUM.

39. Pu Van Thio, B.A, LL.B, Lawyer, Haka

40. Pi Van Hnuai Thluai, B.Sc., Burma Broadcasting Service Announcer, Chin Section, Rangoon. She was the only Chin female arrestee under the *Sin Phyu Daw* Operation.

41. Pu Lian Uk, B.A., LL. B. Lawyer (Author of this article), Haka. Pu Lian Uk was elected as MP - an independent candidate from the Haka constituency in 1990 general election. He is now based in the US since 1994 since he fled the country through India in April 1991. He was black-listed to be arrested for drafting the framework of Chin State Constitution to be adopted by the Chin National League for Democracy (CNLD) while he was inside the country. He could smuggle out with him the document - Chin State Constitution Frame Work – which was based on the “*Proposal of the Chin Youths*” and the Constitutional Suggestions submitted to the Constitution Drafting Commission in 1971. The First Initial Draft of the Chinland Constitution produced by the CHIN FORUM was based on the said Chin State Constitution Frame Work smuggled out of the country. He is one of the founding members of the CHIN FORUM, formed in 1998 in Ottawa, Canada, to carry on the Chin Federal Movement in exile . He is now actively taking part in the MPU and in the CNC as Chairman of the Constitution Drafting Committee.

42. Pu Khin Maung Win aka Pu Law Ha Om (Vomthu) Personal Assistant to (Ex Major Pu Vomthu Ha Shing , Member of Chin Affairs Council, Haka. (I had been so saddened that he

died of the disease he contracted in jail soon after he was released as he was my personal intimate friend and co-worker in this programme to give suggestions on federal form to the ruling Burmese military regime).

43. Pu Mawng Yaw (Vakok) Judicial Clerk, Chin State Session Court , Mindat Judicial Dept. Mindat

44. Pu Bawi Zam, Farmer from Falam township

45. Pu No Zam, Ex MP and Former Regional Leader of the Pyidaungsu Party led by Former Prime Minister U Nu., Falam

46. Pu Thawng Do Zam, Sub Divisional Officer(General Administration) He later became Secretary of the Office of Chin Affairs Council. Chin State, Haka

47. Pu Lian Kho Zam, Township Officer, Tonzang. He was later promoted to Deputy Commissioner of the Mindat District General Administration, Mindat.

48. Pu Tha Zul, B.Sc., Senior Assistant Teacher, State High School, Falam.

- Pu Dr. Ngin Thawng. His name was in the list to be arrested. But he had died before the operation took place.

- Pu Thang Sun was black-listed to be arrested, but his name was misspelled as Thang San. I was asked whether I know and I said I did know him while I was interrogated.

- Pu Khai Za Nang, A high school student (A very close friend of the author), Tahan, Kalembo. He was listed to be arrested but he was already in his death bed in Mandalay hospital suffering from bone TB by the time the *Sin-Phyu-Daw* Operation started. Three strangers, believed to be from the MIS, visited him before he died at the hospital. While lying on his death bed he heard all the news of Chin leaders being arrested. After his death his relatives found medications he stacked under his pillow cases, apparently opting to die instead of being arrested. He died on the same day with Pu Lua Thawng, mentioned above, and both were buried in Mandalay on the same day.

- Pu David Thang Za Pau. When U Nu surrendered to General Ne Win's government, Pu Mang Kham surrendered along with Bohmu Aung in 1974. It was from him that we learned about Pu David Thang Za Pau being killed in the Karen National Union-controlled area.

- Pu Hau Za Cin. It was learnt from his relatives that he later joined the Burma Communist Party to become a commanding officer in Shan State and was killed in action during a fierce battle with the Burma Army.

Col. Khen Za Mung was the Chairman of Chin Special Division Peace and Security Council in Haka during the period the *Sin-Phyu-Daw* Operation took place. But he seemed to know nothing about it.

Conclusion

As already mentioned earlier the participations of peoples of all walks of life and the subsequent mass arrest of Chin intelligentsia, and even included military and the BSPP functionaries, proved the undeniable truth that the cross-section of the Chin population strongly desired a self-governing territory (State) in the federal Union of Burma. The armed uprisings in Chin State - abortive or otherwise - all originated from the strong desire for national self-determination. So,

Chins of the next generations should take their cue from these historical facts and relentlessly carry on the struggle for national self-determination until we reached our ultimate goal.

I hope this document has properly recorded the Chin national movements during 1962 and 1988 and vividly proved that despite the Chin people's sincere attempts to re-establish a peaceful, prosperous and united *federal* Union of Burma, the Burmese dictators had geared the country towards chaos, poverty and disunity ever since they took over the state power by force. The peoples of the Union of Burma, including the Chins, voted vehemently against the one-sidedly drafted 'socialist' Constitution during the December 1973 referendum. Again during the May 2008 referendum, after 35 years, the Burmese dictators have repeated the same mistake again and forcefully "promulgated" their one-sidedly drafted 'democracy' Constitution. The military dictators are fond of giving name-only "States" in response to the ethnic nationalities' demand for genuine federal states. Now they are preparing to give another name-only "democracy" for the country. In 2010 there will be election sponsored by the Burmese dictators. They will deliver a "ပေးထားပေး၏ ၊ မရ" or *given-but-not-received* kind of "democracy" for the peoples of the Union of Burma in response to their overwhelming demand for freedom and democracy.

For so long, the peoples, actually, deserve true freedom, federalism and democracy. It is high time that the "federal forces" and the "democratic forces" join hands and find a common ground and establish a solid alliance (not a name-only superficial alliances) of *federal democratic forces* to establish a truly united, peaceful and prosperous *Federal Democratic Union of Burma*. The longer the two forces remain disunited both will end up with "ပေးထားပေး၏ ၊ မရ" or given-but-not-received kind of freedom.

Feedbacks from any one who could help update this article and make it more complete is heartily welcome.

Lian Uk

(Edited by Salai Kipp Kho Lian)

Footnotes:

* *The Supreme Council of United Hill Peoples*

1. *Hon'ble Sao Sam Htun, Saohpalong of Mongpaw, Counselor for Shans, President of Supreme Council of United Hill Peoples*

2. *Hon'ble Vum Ko Hau, Counselor for Chins, and Vice President of Supreme Council of United Hill Peoples*

3. *Hon'ble Sinwa Naw, Duwa of Sama, Counselor for Kachins, and Vice President of Supreme Council of United Hill Peoples*

SOURCE: *Profile of A Burma Frontier Man by Dr. Vum Ko Hau Published 1963 p. 111*

** *The formation of CNC (2006) is a follow-up of the Chin Consensus Building under which the Political Affairs Committee of Chinland was formed in 2004 at the Victoria Camp, the HQ. of the Chin National Front. Dr. Vumson Suantak and other colleagues from the CHIN FORUM such as Dr. Salai Lian Hmung Sakhong, Dr. Sui Khar, Pu Victor Biak Lian played crucial roles during the formation of the PACC, along with other political leaders like Pu Thang Lian Pau and Pu Thawng Do Cin and many others of Zomi National Congress, Pu Thomas Thangno and other leaders of Chin National Front, CNLD) Pu Samau Cinzah of Mara People's Party etc.*

CNC is now an umbrella organization representing all the major Chin political organizations in the Ethnic Nationalities Council (ENC). The ENC, which promotes peaceful co existence of all nationalities in the federal Union of Burma, represents the ethnic nationalities in exile. The ENC, the National Council of the Union of Burma(NCUB) and the National Coalition Government of the Union of Burma (NCGUB) and other organizations together formed the Federal Constitution Drafting and Coordinating Committee (FCDCC) which has completed the drafting of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of the Union of Burma in 2007-2008

Referent books

1. Pioneers, Trail, Trial and Triumph by Laura Carson
 2. Burma's Constitution by Dr. Maung Maung
 3. ငြိမ်းချမ်းစွာ အတူနေထိုင်ရေးဝါဒ မှသည် စစ်မှန်သော ဖက်ဒရယ်ပြည် ထောင်စု စနစ် စီသို့ (တတိယတွဲ)၊ ပင်လုံစာချုပ်ကိုလက်မှတ်ရေးထိုးခဲ့သော တိုင်းရင်းသားလူမျိုးများ၏ ပြည် ထောင်စုအပေါ် ဝေဖန် သုံး သပ် သည့် စာတန်းများ။ ဆလိုင်လျန်မှန်းစုစောင်းတင်ပြသည်။ [P. 166 to 136] in Burmese.
 4. Constitution of the countries of the world (1974) P. 3 by Albert P. Blaustein & Gisbert H. Flanz
 5. Constitution of Socialist Republic of Union of Burma 1974
 6. Za Hre Lian of Burma by Dr. Steven Hre Kio
 7. Zo History By Dr. Vumson Suantak (Pu Vumson was one of the founding members of the CHIN FORUM)
 8. Burma: Insurgency and Politics of Ethnicity by Martin Smith.
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