

THE CARETAKER GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF BURMA
(1st NOVEMBER 1958 – 4th APRIL 1960)

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บทคัดย่อและแฟ้มข้อมูลฉบับเต็มของวิทยานิพนธ์ตั้งแต่ปีการศึกษา 2554 ที่ให้บริการในคลังปัญญาจุฬาฯ (CUIR)
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รัฐบาลรักษาการแห่งสหภาพพม่า (1 พฤศจิกายน 1958 – 4 เมษายน 1960)

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วิทยานิพนธ์นี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตรปริญญาศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต

สาขาวิชาเอเชียตะวันออกเฉียงใต้ศึกษา (สหสาขาวิชา)

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วิทยานิพนธ์ฉบับนี้ได้ศึกษาช่วงเวลาสั้นๆ ที่ถูกหลงลืมในประวัติศาสตร์สมัยใหม่ของสหภาพพม่า โดยมักจะถูกละเลยจากนักวิชาการด้านประวัติศาสตร์พม่าสมัยใหม่ ทั้งในระดับนานาชาติและระดับท้องถิ่น ผู้วิจัยจึงได้ศึกษาช่วงเวลาสั้นๆ ของรัฐบาลรักษาการพม่าที่นำโดยผู้นำทางการเมือง ซึ่งได้เลือกคณะรัฐบาลด้วยตัวเอง โดยศึกษาจากแหล่งข้อมูลทั้งหมดที่มีการเปิดเผยและการสัมภาษณ์ส่วนบุคคล ผู้วิจัยยังได้ศึกษาวิธีการที่รัฐบาลรักษาการใช้แก้ปัญหาต่างๆ เกี่ยวกับความมั่นคง การฟื้นฟูหลักนิติธรรมและสันติภาพ โดยพบว่าการปกครองด้วยท่าทีที่แข็งกร้าวของรัฐบาลดังกล่าวสามารถใช้ได้ในระยะเวลาสั้นๆ แต่ไม่สามารถนำมาใช้ได้ในระยะยาว

ระเบียบวิธีวิจัยหลักของงานศึกษานี้ เป็นการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพโดยใช้ข้อมูลปฐมภูมิและทุติยภูมิ ด้วยหัวข้องานวิจัยนี้ไม่ค่อยมีการศึกษาและได้รับการตระหนักถึง ทำให้ผู้วิจัยไม่สามารถค้นคว้าจากเอกสารงานวิจัยอื่นๆ ที่ลงในรายละเอียดในการศึกษาช่วงรัฐบาลรักษาการได้มากนัก ดังนั้น ผู้วิจัยจึงให้ความสำคัญต่อการสัมภาษณ์บุคคลที่เกี่ยวข้อง อาทิ อดีตนักหนังสือพิมพ์ บรรณาธิการ เจ้าหน้าที่ทางการเมืองการทหาร ผู้นำนักศึกษา ซึ่งให้ความกรุณาอธิบายบทบาทและประสบการณ์ของตนที่เกี่ยวข้องกับรัฐบาลดังกล่าวให้แก่ผู้วิจัย

วิทยานิพนธ์นี้ได้ตั้งประเด็นสำคัญต่อการดำเนินงานและเป้าหมายของรัฐบาลรักษาการในช่วงระหว่างการปกครองสหภาพพม่า ตลอดจนการประเมินการทำงานของรัฐบาลรักษาการ และผลกระทบต่อสถานการณ์ทางการเมืองของสหภาพพม่าในปัจจุบัน

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This thesis examines the forgotten short period in the modern history of the Union of Burma which was widely neglected by the international and local scholars who studied the modern history of the Union of Burma. By examining this case with all the resources available and some personal interviews, the researcher clarified the neglected short sub period of the Caretaker Government which was headed by the Army Chief of Staff with his handpicked cabinet members. The researcher also clarified the way that the Caretaker Government discharged the problems concerning with the security and restoring of Rule of Law and Peace during its short period. It also found out the harsh rules could only carry on for a short period and could not be applied in long term.

In this study, the major approach is qualitative research methodology with both primary and secondary data. Because the topic is rare and it was not carefully recognized by most of the people, the researcher could not find many books written about that period and that government in details. Thus the researcher could only count on the personal interviews with the former journalists, editors, army officers, student leaders who kindly explained to the researcher about their roles in that Government and their experiences about that government.

This thesis mainly argues that the actions of the Caretaker Government and its goals during its time of ruling the Union of Burma. Also to evaluate the achievements of that Caretaker Government. Its impacts on the current political situations of the Union of Burma.

Field of Studies: Southeast Asian Studies

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List of Abbreviations

AFPFL	Anti Fascist Peoples Freedom League
aka	also known as
BCP	Burma Communist Party
BEDC	Burma Economic Development Committee
BSP	Burma Socialist Party
BSPP	Burma Socialist Program Party
DSI	Defense Services Institute
KNDO	Karen National Defense Organization
KNU	Karen National Union
KTA	Knappen Tippetts Abbett
Kyat	Burmese Currency
MNDO	Mon National Defense Organization
NLD	National League for Democracy
NPP	National Progressive Party
NSA	National Solidarity Associations
NUF	National United Front
PRP	Peoples Revolutionary Party
PVO	Peoples Volunteer Organization
Pyusawhtis	Home Guards during the AFPFL government period
SAMB	State Agricultural Marketing Board
SLORC	State Law and Order Restoration Council
SPDC	State Peace and Development Council
Tatmadaw	Armed Forces of Burma
UMP	Union Military Police
USDA	Union Solidarity and Development Association
USDP	Union Solidarity and Development Party

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1. Rationale

Myanmar, which is formerly known as the Union of Burma from 1948 to 1989 is the largest country in mainland Southeast Asia. Myanmar was known as Burma or the Union of Burma from 1948 to 1989, in the year 1989, the then ruling State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC), the predecessor of the current ruling council called the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) changed the country's name from Burma to Myanmar. Burma has many political upheavals and many kinds of governments and political systems in her modern history. Burma was colonized by the United Kingdom of Great Britain in the late 19th century. The British waged three wars against the Barman Kingdom in 1824, 1852 and 1885 respectively. From the 1st of January 1886 Burma was recognized as part of the British India. When the World War II broke out in 1939, the invading Japanese forces occupied Burma from 1942 to 1945. Burma suffered the impact of the Second World War as the main battle ground in the region. During the Second World War, the Burma army led by Major General Aung San, and other political parties united and formed the organization called Anti Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL). The three main political parties in the League were Burma Communist Party (BCP), People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) and People's Volunteer Organization (PVO). Burma Communist Party was led by Thakin Than Tun and Thakin Thein Pe Myint. People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) was led by Thakin Mya, and the final Organization called People's Volunteer Organization was led by Major General Aung San.

When Major General Aung San decided to become full time politician, he resigned from the army and assumed the name U Aung San. The League was united and recognized as the only organization of the Burmese Nationalists League. The movements of that organization were recognized by the west and the others as the Burmese

Nationalist Movements. The League's Chairman was U Aung San from the Peoples' Volunteer Organization (PVO) and General Secretary (GS) was Thakin Than Tun from the Burma Communist Party (BCP). During that time Burma Communist Party (BCP) tried to control the League by filling the important slots with the communists and when the other two parties did not accept the actions, the Communist Party tried to create problems and also gave false information about the League to the public and finally when the other two parties could not negotiate with Communist Party, they decided to expel the Communist Party from the League, that is better known as first crack in the League and it was in 1946¹.

The League and the British Labor Government of Prime Minister Atlee finally agreed to give of independence to Burma by signing of Aung San – Atlee agreement on the 27th of January 1947 in London. On the 19th of July the Governor's Executive Council's Meeting presided by U Aung San held and during the meeting the assassins from the political rival of U Aung San, the henchmen of U Saw, rushed into the meeting room and assassinated the members of the Governor's Executive Council. All the prominent politicians of Burma including U Aung San were killed on that day. Aung San's deputy Thakin Nu, later changed his name to U Nu was called by the Governor and given the post of Aung San as the leader of Anti Fascist People's Freedom League. Finally the agreement between the Britain Labor Government and the League was reached by signing the Nu – Atlee treaty.

On the 4th of January 1948 at 4.20 am, Myanmar regained its independence which it lost to the British more than hundred years ago. When the British left Burma, Burma got the Westminster style Parliamentary Democracy as the heritage left by the British Colonial masters. The Burma parliament consisted of two chambers called (1) the Chamber of Deputies and (2) the Chamber of Nationalities respectively. As soon as Burma gained its independence from Britain, the Burma Communist Party (BCP) declared the independence as sham independence and created the problems such as storming the rice mills, rallies presided by the communist party and giving false

¹ Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. P. 22.

information about the League to the public. When the ruling Anti Fascist People's Freedom League took actions against the leaders of the communist party, the communist party went underground and took up arms against the government. When the Burma Communist Party went underground the League was led by the only two factions called the Burma Socialist Party (BSP) which was changed from the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) and People's Volunteer Organization (PVO). The factionalism emerged within the People's Volunteer Organization (PVO). The two factions of PVO were those sympathetic to BCP and those who sided with the League.

The factionalism arose because of the Prime Minister U Nu's proposal on the Leftist Unity. Those who opposed the U Nu's proposal are better known as PVO (white) and they were led by Bo Pho Kun and Bo La Yaung, the PVO (white) were the majority of the Organization, and those who supported the Prime Minister U Nu's Proposal were better known as the PVO (yellow) and they were led by Bohmu Aung and Bo Sein Mann. Later on the PVO (white) went underground and took up arms against the government. That was the second crack in the ruling party, the League².

When the communist party and the PVO (white) went underground the battalions in the Myanmar army which were influenced by these two groups went underground and rebellion started against the government of Anti Fascist People Freedom League (AFPFL) led by Prime Minister U Nu and his socialist comrades. When the Burma Communist Party and the PVO left the League the only political party in the League was the Burma Socialist Party (BSP).

During the early months of the independent Burma, the Union government faced many insurgencies caused either by politically differences or ethnicity. Once Burma armed forces were headed by Gen. Smith Dun, an ethnic Karen, during his time as the Commander-in-chief of the defense services, the Karen nationalist movement called Karen National Union (KNU) was formed. Most of the Karen leaders from the KNU demanded that Karen state should be formed by the union government. When their demands were not met the Karen rebellion emerged. Because of the Karen rebellion, Gen.

² Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. Pp 22-24.

Smith Dun was replaced by Gen. Ne Win, an ethnic Barman. Gen. Ne Win was invited by the Prime Minister U Nu to be the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Home Affairs and Defense. That is the first time for Gen. Ne Win to hold ministerial post. While he was holding that post he also held the post of the commander-in-chief of the defense services and defense Yangon the capital of the Union of Myanmar against the communist and Karen rebels. Gen. Ne Win relinquished all the political portfolios to the civilians when the nation was stable and the rebellions were crushed, but he remained the commander-in-chief of the defense services since that time.

The unity in the ruling League was threatened again when the war broke out in Korean Peninsular and the government's decision on the war because some of the socialist members supported the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea) and denounced the government's decision to support the United Nations and the Republic of Korea (South Korea). Some of the socialists led by Thakin Chit Maung and Thakin Lwin disagreed with the League's decision and they were expelled from the League. The event was not strong enough to break the entire unity of the League but it reflected the splits of the League. Those who supported North Korea were expelled from the League and labeled as the "Red Socialists"³.

Final split broke the entire unity of the League; the split occurred in May 1958. This time the split was because of the personal rivalry and personal ambitions among the leaders of the League. One of the reasons of the split was the result of the 1956 general elections, the Prime Minister U Nu and his closed allied Thakin Tin believed that people supported the opposition party because of the corruptions in the government and League, but the Deputy Prime Ministers U Kyaw Nyein and U Ba Swe believed that the opposition party got many votes because of the threat from the rebels. U Nu's idea of cleaning the League was not supported by U Kyaw Nyein and U Ba Swe also U Kyaw Nyein and U Ba Swe's idea of using the army to crush the rebellions and tighten the security in the nation was not agreeable by U Nu and Thakin Tin. U Nu named his faction in the League as AFPFL (Clean) and U Kyaw Nyein and U Ba Swe named their faction

³ Thein, Pe Myint. **Kyaw Nyein** (in Burmese). Yangon: Shwe Pyi Tan, 1961. P. 14.

as AFPFL (Stable). That split paved the way for the Tatmadaw (Armed Forces of Myanmar) to intervene in politics and form the Caretaker Government of the Union of Myanmar headed by Gen. Ne Win.

The Caretaker Government or the Bogyoke (General) government as it was known among the citizens of the Union of Myanmar emerged on the 26th of September, 1958 when the then Prime Minister U Nu invited the armed forces chief Gen. Ne Win to form the government after his break away faction of the League, the Clean A.F.P.F.L could not control the political upheavals during the time of June 1958 to September 1958. The then Prime Minister U Nu gave free hand to Gen. Ne Win in forming the Caretaker Government headed by him. The ministers consisting in the Caretaker Government were chosen by Gen. Ne Win at his will. Prime Minister U Nu urged Gen. Ne Win to hold free and fair elections in six months time. On the 31st of October 1958, Gen. Ne Win announced the appointment of cabinet members in the Caretaker Government and it consisted of no politicians but highly trained civil servants. The Caretaker Government was formed with 14 cabinet ministers. Exception of five state ministers the entire cabinet was formed with highly trained civil servants and one Brigadier General. In its period from November 1, 1958 to 6th of April 1960, the Caretaker Government was formed twice, the first time was in November 1958 and the second time was in February 1959. During its time, the Caretaker Government had only three main tasks as follows:

1. Restoring law and order in the country.
2. Implementing democracy.
3. Establishing of socialist oriented economy.

As the interim government of the Union of Myanmar, the Caretaker Government laid out the main tasks and accomplished most of the important main tasks during the short period of its rule. Anyone who is interested in the modern history of the Union of Burma credited the Caretaker Government as the most effective government that Burma ever had in its modern history since 1948 to present time. The Caretaker Government ruled the Union of Burma seventeen months from the 1st of November, 1958 to the 4th of April,

1960. During that short period, the Caretaker Government accomplished most of its tasks with credits.

2. Objectives of the thesis

1. To study the “Caretaker Government” of the Union of Myanmar.
2. To evaluate the performance of the “Caretaker Government”.

3. Main arguments/hypotheses

In the mainstream of the modern history of the Union of Burma, there are two periods which are well known by the scholars interested in modern Burma history, the first period of the Union of Burma or the democratic period was from 1948 to 1962, and the second period was from 1962 to 2010, popularly known as the military ruled period, but there was a short sub-period in the parliamentary democratic era, known as the Caretaker Government of the Union of Burma from November 1958 to April 1960. During that period the nation was governed by the government of which ministers are non elected politician, but a group of highly trained professional civil servants and headed by the armed forces commander in chief as prime minister of the cabinet.

As soon as the Caretaker Government took the state responsibilities, it declared that the main task of its government was the restoring law and order and maintaining of security nation wide. The Caretaker Government adopted a parliamentary system in the political sector and socialist oriented economic policies in the economic sector of the state. Interestingly the Caretaker Government was the most effective government in the modern political history of the Union of Burma. During its short period in power, the Caretaker Government accomplished most of its tasks. and the main task of restoring law and order and maintaining security was accomplished with success. The task of crushing the insurgents which are threatening the security of the governing mechanism and the safety of the citizens of the Union of Burma was also accomplished with credits. Free and

fair elections were successfully held during that time by the Caretaker Government as promised. The economy was improved by controlling the inflation, and brought down the prices of the basic commodities.

One of the remarkable successes in the economic sector was the rice production during that period; the rice production reached four million tons a year and half of which was exported. This period of the Caretaker Government and its role had not received serious attention by both the local and international scholars who have written the modern history of the Union of Myanmar. Some of the scholars believed and considered this period as not important because it was very short, only seventeen months period and even some of them simply neglected this period as military dictatorship period. According to the events of that time and the situations occurred in the Union of Burma, the Caretaker Government period does not merit those considerations. First of all, it was not the military dictatorship period, and secondly it could not be simply neglected because of its short time in office, in the period of a ruling government of the Union of Burma.

The Caretaker Government period is one of the important periods to learn about the different kinds of the governments that the Union of Burma ever had through its periods from the independent democratic time of the Anti Fascist People Freedom League or the League period, through present time, the Republic of the Union of Myanmar (Burma). The Union of Burma had many kinds of governments during its modern history. They are the parliamentary democratic period governed by the Anti Fascist People Freedom League (AFPFL) or simply known as the League period (1948-58), the Caretaker Government period (1958-60), the Union Government period (1960-62), the Revolutionary Council period (1962-74), the governing period of the Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP) with the state policy of Burmese Way to Socialism or simply known as the BSPP era (1974-88), the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) era which was from 1988 to 1997, the government of the Union of Myanmar or the time of the government called the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) period from 1997 to November 2010 and the current government called the Republic of

the Union of Myanmar (Burma). From 2010, November to the present time is known as the period of civilian government under the name of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.

The only government which is not mentioned widely in the modern history of the Union of Myanmar (Burma) written by the local and international scholars is the period of the Caretaker Government of the Union of Burma from 1st November, 1958 to 4th April, 1960. With interest and respect of the achievements of that Caretaker Government, I do believe that this period is necessary and an interesting topic for those who study modern history of the Union of Myanmar (Burma) to understand more about the Union of Myanmar (Burma) from the early independent period to the present time.

4. Methodology

1. Using all the available and reliable sources written by the local and international scholars.
2. The main source about the Caretaker Government of the Union of Myanmar (Burma), *pyi-yee-ywa-mu* (the book printed and distributed by the Ministry of Information of the Union of Myanmar during that period, which unveiled the tasks of the Caretaker Government, the way of discharging the state duties by the Caretaker Government, the accomplishments of the tasks and the achievements of the Caretaker Government of that period.
3. Personal interviews of the prominent figures of that period including the former journalists, military officers, reporters and student leaders of the Rangoon (Yangon) University.

5. Significance/usefulness of the research

1. More information on the performance of the Caretaker Government.
2. The Caretaker Government serves as predecessor of military rule advocating maintenance of power and security.

6. Literature Reviews

In the modern history of the Union of Burma, many scholars both local and international divided the political period into two. The first one is from the day that Burma gained Independence from the Great Britain to 2 March 1962; Gen. Ne Win the chief of staff of Burma overthrew that democratic government. From 2 March, 1962 to the end of the regime of the State Peace and Development Council in the year of 2010 as the military rule period. But they had forgotten the short period during the democratic era of the Union of Burma.

There was a short period lasted only for 17 months in the history during the democratic era. During this period the government was not formed by election but was appointed by the National Parliament of the Union of Burma. That government was known as the Caretaker Government of the Union of Burma. The split in the ruling party Anti Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL) paved the way for the forming of the Caretaker Government led by the Army Chief as the Prime Minister and his handpicked ministers who were not politicians but highly trained and honorable Civil Servants of the Union of Burma⁴.

During its time the Caretaker Government undertook many tasks. Several tasks were accomplished when it handed the state power back to the winning party in the 1960 general election. Different kinds of views are found out about that government. It is a responsibility of the author to explain to the readers about all those different points of views on that government.

⁴ Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. Pp 192-193.

The Caretaker Government as we have known was not elected by the people of Burma but appointed by the majority of the members of the National Parliament. During that period the Caretaker Government policy as anti communism was popular among the civilians and army officers⁵. Some of the left leaning politicians and university students denounced the government as pro capitalist and US backed military government but on the other side, the right wing politicians and some nationalist students considered that Caretaker Government as nationalist government which protected the Union from the danger of the communism, which had high tide in the region called Southeast Asia and the whole of east Europe⁶. The Caretaker Government emerged on the 26th of September 1958, when the elected Prime Minister of the Union of Burma and leader of the ruling Anti Fascist People's Freedom League (AFPFL)'s Clean faction, handed the state power to the Army Chief Gen. Ne Win to form a new government which was led by himself as the Prime Minister to restore Rule of Law and Peace in the Union⁷. Even though Prime Minister U Nu had announced that he had handed the state power to Gen. Ne Win personally, the head of the National Progressive Party (NPP) of the Union which was one of the parties combined in the form of opposition National United Front (NUF) believed that if U Nu didn't transfer the state power in time, the army officers from the Northern Command would stage a military coup in the near future⁸. Some of the officers from the War Office in the capital, Rangoon (Yangon), were forced to accept the proposal from the Northern Command⁹. The staff from the War office and Northern Command forced Premier Nu to transfer the state power to Army Chief in time.

Some of the staff officers at the War Office did not agree with the proposal of the Northern Command, those officers for example, Colonel Maung Maung (BC 3507),

⁵ U, Thaug. (Kye Mone). **General Ne Win's Roles and Tactics in the Politics of the Union of Burma** (in Burmese). Morris Publishing, 2001. Pp. 101-103.

⁶ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 123-133.

⁷ Ohn, Myint (Atauktaw). **In the Face of the Armed Rebellion** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ingyin Myaing Press, 1990. (2nd Printing). Pp. 92-94.

⁸ U, Aung Than. **The Sixteen Years of Political Experiences** (in Burmese). Yangon: Gyo Phyu Publishing House, 1966. P. 158.

⁹ Callahan, Mary P. **Making Enemies: War and State Building in Burma**. Singapore University Press, 2004. Pp. 184-188.

Director of Military Training and Colonel Aung Gyi (BC 3509), who was the Colonel (General Staff) at the War Office¹⁰. But the proposal was made by the then Northern Commander, Brigadier Aung Shwe (BC 3505), Brigade Commander Colonel Kyi Win (BC 3572) and G I (General Staff officer Grade I) of Northern Command, Lt. Col Chit Khine (BC 3649)¹¹. All of those officers were very powerful at that time and they had combat battalions under their commands which they could count as their diehard men. When he failed to persuade those officers from the Northern Command, Col. Maung Maung, persuaded his closed personal friend at the War Office, Col. Aung Gyi to accept their proposal and with his (Col. Aung Gyi) agreement, those officers from the War Office agreed to carry out the plan of the Northern Command without diversity but with unity among the field officers from the Northern Command and Staff Officers from the War Office, but surprisingly the plan was not agreed and accepted by the Commander of the Southern Command, Brigadier D.A Blave (BC 5109) and his staff¹², anyhow finally, with the pressure from the Northern Command and the War Officers, U Nu had handed the state power to Army Chief to save the nation from the military coup. U Nu as a result could save the nation from the military dictatorship for a short time. Many politicians and researchers of the political history of the Union of Burma noted his action towards the officers who wanted to stage a military coup to remove the elected government by force as they (those officers) had won the battle but lost the war. U Aung Than, the leader of the National Progressive Party (NPP), met with Col. Aung Gyi and some of his officers he (U Aung Than) accused their action as military coup, and the Colonel replied without taking any minute with a smile as that was not the military coup but just a fake one¹³.

During the period from 26th of September 1958, to 28th of October 1958, Gen. Ne Win was busy collecting some senior civil servants as his cabinet members, after he had

¹⁰ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. P. 109.

¹¹ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. P. 109.

¹² U, Thaug (Kye Mone). **General Ne Win's Roles and Tactics in the Politics of the Union of Burma** (in Burmese). Morris Publishing, 2001. P. 89.

¹³ U, Aung Than. **The Sixteen Years of Political Experiences** (in Burmese). Yangon: Gyo Phyu Publishing House, 1966. P. 161.

collected all necessary men and staff, then he announced the list of the cabinet members and policy of the Caretaker Government on the 28th of October, 1958 at the National Parliament session. He had announced that he would not make up his cabinet with any politicians from any political parties but with honorable and highly trained civil servants with some defense officers from the Ministry of Defense as the helpers in the respective ministries. The Army Chief declared that the policy of the Caretaker Government as anti communism to relief his staff of their worry of the Communism and communist threat towards the Union. Because of that policy, many left leaning politicians, reporters, journalists and students were arrested and sent to the remote island which was created as a concentration camp invented by the Central Security Council at that time. Col. Maung Maung who was the Central Security Council Chairman and the Special Officer on Duty in the Ministry of Home Affairs was notorious among the left leaning politicians, journalists, reporters and student leaders of Burma as a stunt anti communist officer at that time. He never compromised with any kind of agreement with the leftists¹⁴.

Starting from the 2nd of December, 1958 the military arrested most of the politicians, journalists, reporters and student leaders who as they considered as leftists. Many of those arrested were sent to the CoCo Island which is a remote island invented as a concentration camp for them. At the camp the prisoners' human rights were denied without any consideration from the authorities. The main task of the Caretaker Government at that time was to restore Rule of Law and Peace in the Union. That main task was carried out by the authorities without considering on anyone's benefit but only sake of the nation.

One of the remarkable actions of the Caretaker Government was cleaning the capital, Rangoon with force during the short period to achieve the status of the world's capital of cleanness. The Rangoon (Yangon) mayor at that time was not elected but appointed by the Caretaker Government. Colonel Tun Sein (BC 3521) who was the brigade commander in the Northern Command took the mayor position of Rangoon (Yangon). The mayor brought his troops from the battalions to carry out the task of

¹⁴ U, Thaung (Kye Mone). **General Ne Win's Roles and Tactics in the Politics of the Union of Burma** (in Burmese). Morris Publishing, 2001. Pp.101-103.

cleaning the city with the help of the civil servants and civilians from the capital. The sweat brigades as they were known among the civilians were created by Col. Tun Sein to carry out his tasks to clean the capital. But most of the journalists at that time were concerned that period as worst period for violating of the human rights in the history of modern Burma. Col. Tun Sein was ordered by Gen. Ne Win to remove all the squatters from the capital and the Colonel carried out that task with great force without taking any consideration from the squatters' points of views¹⁵. He ordered all the squatters to leave the their slum areas after only 48 hours noticed and resettled them in the satellite towns like Okkalapa (North and South) and Tharkayta. With the help from the Army Engineers Corps the new farmlands were formed into the residential areas for those slums¹⁶. Some of the politicians also accused the Caretaker Government as fascist government at that time.

With the exception of dealing between himself and Premier Nu of not taking any army officers from the defense ministry as cabinet member, Brigadier Tin Pe (BC 3508) was appointed as cabinet member when the second Caretaker Government was formed in the year of 1959¹⁷. Because of the article 116 of the constitution of the Union of Burma, which do not allowed the non-elected person to be the Prime Minister for more than 6 months, Gen. Ne Win announced his resignation on the 13th of February, 1959 and requested the Parliament to amend that article if they wanted him to carry on as the Prime Minister of the Union of Burma. The majority of the MP accepted his proposal and amended the constitution; the action was loudly opposed by the opposition MP which made up the minority in the Parliament.

As soon as the parliament amended the article the second Caretaker Government carried out the tasks with great force. Many of the tasks were accomplished during that time. During that Caretaker Government the military extended their businesses beyond

¹⁵ U, Thaung (Kye Mone). **General Ne Win's Roles and Tactics in the Politics of the Union of Burma** (in Burmese). Morris Publishing, 2001. P. 107

¹⁶ U, Thaung (Kye Mone). **General Ne Win's Roles and Tactics in the Politics of the Union of Burma** (in Burmese). Morris Publishing, 2001. Pp. 107-109.

¹⁷ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 196-199.

the necessary standard, for example, the Defense Services Institute (DSI) extended their businesses from the local shops to the international shipping line and international banks and also some emporiums to strengthen the army budget. The government allowed the army to extend their business in all areas, including the transportation area, three wheels cars were imported and given to the officers as new taxi cabs in the capital. Many new buses were imported to create a new bus line for the DSI and that new bus line successfully operated with the funds from the DSI during its period. During that Caretaker Government the DSI established a new business conglomerate called Burma Economic Development Committee (BEDC).

For the army, the Caretaker Government ordered new military equipment from foreign nations and developed the new tactics in many operation fields. Before the time of the Caretaker Government, the army carried out its operations only during the dry season. Nevertheless, during the Caretaker Government, the army's capability was strengthened as all-season fighting force. The Caretaker Government suspended the amnesty towards the armed rebels offered by the previous government of U Nu and carried out continuous operations during its time. The Caretaker Government created new association called National Solidarity Associations (NSA) in the name of helping the Police to restore Rule of Law and Peace across the nation.

During the Caretaker Government period, various kinds of defense forces were brought into the command of the Armed Forces. Before the Caretaker Government, the Union of Burma had Union Military Police Force (UMP) which was established one year before Burma gained independence from the Great Britain. The aim of the UMP was to crash the armed rebellions and civil unrest across the nation, and it was not under the armed forces of the Union of Burma. As a separated defense force it was under the Ministry of Home Affairs. But during the Caretaker Government period, the army sent some of the high ranking officers like Colonel Thura Min Thein (BC 3591) and Col. Tan Yu Sai (BC 5090) to reorganize the force. According to that action, UMP was put under the command of the Army Chief of Staff. And some of the home guards called Pyu-saw-

tees were collected and put into the Reserve Police Force (RPF). By doing so, all the defense forces were put under the command of the Army Chief.

When the army extended their influences into both business and administrative sections of the union of Burma, many people demanded for the task that the Caretaker Government promised to U Nu when it accepted the state power from him, holding a free and fair election in an appropriate time. When that call was ignored by the Caretaker Government, the Clean AFPFL led by the former Prime Minister U Nu planned to stage a rally against the government. U Nu had decided to take step by step to challenge the Caretaker Government to commit its promise to hold the free and fair elections in the near future. Finally Gen. Ne Win, the Prime Minister in the Caretaker Government and the Army Chief decided to hold the free and fair elections not later than February 1960.

With all the preparations, and necessary securities that provided the situation secure enough to hold the free and fair elections, the Caretaker Government held the elections on the 6th of February 1960. After the elections, the Caretaker Government handed the state power to the Union Party which was renamed from the Clean AFPFL which won the landslide victory in the 1960 general elections.

The length of the period of the Caretaker Government was only 17 months which was regarded as the shortest period government in the history of modern Burma started from 1st November, 1958 and ended on the 4th of April, 1960. But it was undeniable that during the Caretaker Government many tasks were accomplished with efficiency. The developments of the Union of Burma during the 17 months Caretaker Government period were more than the developments of the Union of Burma during the AFPFL government which took a decade ago before the Caretaker Government. But in the point of views for the democratic rights of the citizens of the Union of Burma, it was the deteriorated period.

7. Union of Burma (Background)

Myanmar, sometimes called Burma, with an area of 261228 square miles which is the largest in area of all Southeast Asian countries on the mainland of Southeast Asia, sharing her borders with Republic of India, Bangladesh, People's Republic of China, Democratic People's Republic of Laos and the Kingdom of Thailand. This country with a population of about 55 million was a British Colony for more than 100 years and was for sometime in Japanese occupation during the Second World War. The Burmese Independent Army was instrumental in Japanese defeat by the British, initiating the revolution on the 27th of March 1945 led by General Aung San (Bogyoke in Burmese).

General Aung San aka Thakin Aung San led in forming the Anti Fascist Peoples Freedom League (AFPFL). The League comprised of three main constituents of People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) which became Burma Socialist Party (BSP) led by Thakin Mya, People's Volunteers Organization (PVO) led by General Aung San and Burma Communist Party (BCP) led by Thakin Than Tun. After the lost of General who was assassinated (19 July 1947) Thakin Nu aka U Nu led AFPFL¹⁸. Burma won her independence from the British and became an Independent country on 4 January 1948 at 4:20 A.M. Hitherto Burma became an independent as Union of Burma with a democratic parliamentary democracy.

The independence of Burma was seen from different points of view; Firstly Burma Communist Party (BCP) led by Thakin Than Tun denigrated the independence won from the British as bogus. With a motto of "Liberty and Independence is possible and could be achieved only with a fight", the Burma Communist Party criticized black washed and resisted A.F.P.F.L government. The Interior Minister U Kyaw Nyein planned to apprehend and jail Communist leaders but postponed at the request of People's Volunteer Organization for a short while but the political climate deteriorated resulting in

¹⁸ U, San Nyein and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 62 (Volume 1)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. P. 70

Burma Communist Party going underground and began an armed revolution on 28 March 1948. This was the first split in the League¹⁹.

Burma Communist Party was expelled from the League with only People's Volunteer Organization and Socialist Party remaining. The Prime Minister U Nu made a 15 points proposal for the leftist unity but on the verge of signing the agreement, the People's Volunteer Organization (PVO) disagreed with the plan and put up a new proposal which was not acceptable to most of the parties. The PVO party also has disagreements due to some with deep affiliation to AFPFL and some to the Burma Communist Party. A group supporting the Communists led by Bo Poe Kun and Bo La Yaung went underground and was called "White PVOs". The remaining PVOs joined the main A.F.P.F.L and were called "Yellow PVOs". This was the second split of A.F.P.F.L, leaving behind the Socialist Party and PVO members who did not go underground²⁰.

The third split came about when the Korean Peninsular War broke out with leftist members of the parliament led by Thakin Lwin, Thakin Hla Kywe and Thakin Chit Maung very strongly criticized and resisted the Government for supporting the South. The Prime Minister U Nu (Chairman of the League) and the Interior Minister U Kyaw Nyein (General Secretary of the League) led the party to expel all leftist members of parliament from the League. Those members led by Thakin Hla Kywe and Thakin Chit Maung became known as Red Socialists in comparison with other Socialist Party members within the League. This is the third parting and known as the third split of the League²¹.

After the so called splits due to basic political affiliations and basic differences in political and personal aspirations, the League led the country without inner party upheavals for 8 years after these incidents but the personals and no personals differences of government ministers and their followers of difference ilk the greatest split of all time without hope for reconciliation in 1958. Circumstances brought about a government of highly trained Civil Servants not of party politicians and led by the Chief of Staff of the

¹⁹ Thein, Pe Myint. **Kyaw Nyein** (in Burmese). Yangon: Shwe Pyi Tan, 1961. Pp 7-9.

²⁰ U, San Nyein and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 1)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 79-82.

²¹ Thein, Pe Myint. **Kyaw Nyein** (in Burmese). Yangon: Shwe Pyi Tan, 1961. P. 14

army General Ne Win, not including the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Ministers and Ministers with personal interests who were unable to come to an acceptable situation. Prime Minister U Nu invited Gen. Ne Win to form a Caretaker Government because continuation of the political government was untenable²².

The government led at that time by Gen. Ne Win was called in Burmese as the House Keeper Government by natives as well as foreigners indicating it was a temporary necessary arrangement. In such a short time the Caretaker Government of Gen. Ne Win achieved what was important and necessary at that time for the country. Undeniably in comparison to what had happened during the period before his non political administration.

The government led by Gen. Ne Win was undeniably successful to a great extent considering such a short period of 17 months. Even the old politician, who was head of state under the Japanese occupation during the Second World War Dr. Ba Maw, remarked regarding Gen. Ne Win's brilliant achievements as the following; "The government's machinery gears slackened and left in disrepair has been repaired and tightened again by the Caretaker Government led by Gen. Ne Win to function again".

Gen. Ne Win led government appointed respected senior civil servants as ministers of all ministries to administer effective governance of the departments lawfully and effectively.

The total duration of the Caretaker Government administration was 17 months with the first time from 1 November 1958 to 13 February 1959 and the second time from 27 February 1959 to 4 April 1960 with minor changes of the cabinet. Special emphasis was on not including a single party politician in the cabinet with the appointed ministers of all civil service high ranking officers and to effectively carry out their plans and wishes. Special duty defense services officers were appointed to work and serve these cabinet ministers in various departments under them²³.

²² Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. p. 4.

²³ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 -1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 154-156.

The Caretaker Government effectively promoted peace for country and citizens, the rule of law, reducing of basic commodity prices were regulated and affected with reduction of cost of living and also a free and fair election was held as promised.

The rule of law was promoted and conditions of sufferings and inequalities were eased with the slogan of the Caretaker Government which said “abide by the law to enjoy safety”.

In this world with the dual existence of the good and the evil, scrutiny of the efforts of the Caretaker Government will show the good effects outweighs the bad. Therefore, 17 months administration of the Caretaker Government is undeniably a good government, albeit if not the best.

Chapter II

Situation Leading to the Formation of Caretaker Government.

1. The Forming of the Caretaker Government.

Followings are the causes of the appearance of the Caretaker Government by Gen. Ne Win

Internal insurrection by various parties of ethnic and political affiliations.

Destruction of the main political party (A.F.P.F.L) and the attempts by various groups to acquire political power by inappropriate means.

Attempts to offer general amnesty to the armed groups in rebellion against the Union in disregards of the constitution.

Attempts to dissolve the parliament by dubious means.

Attempt to kidnap high ranking senior officers of the army.

The conflict of interest between the Clean A.F.P.F.L government and the army.

Demands of various political parties.

1.1 Internal insurrection by various parties of ethnic and political affiliations.

Together with National independence on 4 January 1948 internal insurrection by various groups of political affiliation began. Burma Communist Party led by Thakin Than Tun who was still in the League took up arms and revolted against the AFPFL government. Communist Party sympathetic army officers left the army and went underground siding with the communists in rebellion. Majority of the officers and soldiers of Burma Rifle Regiment (1), (3) and (6) left the Union army and siding with the insurrection.

Communist sympathizers of the People Volunteer Organization (PVO) also openly joined the communist and National government led by the AFPFL faced a great

danger of being ousted by the armed groups of communists and sympathizers within 3 months of National Independence. The maligned and immature uppity behavior of ministers and their followers undermined the efficiency in their duties of the police, officers and men of various government departments. This undermined the effectiveness to quell the insurrection. The relationship of officers and men who came from the British Army with the soldiers of the Burma Independent Army also was not good enough to be an efficient army.

Meanwhile, the Karen National Defense Organization (KNDO) led by Saw Ba U Gyi planned the forming of separate Karen State, while the Mon National Defense Organization (MNDO) of the Mons became active demanding for Mon State with something akin to independence. The Karen Regiments and military police within the Burma army also were planning to unite with the KNDO. While the AFPFL leaders were furiously working to prevent Burmese/Karen riots and armed rebellion of the armed Karens began in Insein on the 31 January 1949. The incident resulted in replacement of the Commander in Chief of the army Lieutenant General Smith Don, who was a Karen by Major General Ne Win on 2 February 1949 to quell the insurrection. The parties in rebellion of the Union Government were so many with different objectives that the AFPFL government named the insurrections, the revolt of multi colored rebels. While it was raging the office clerks from various departments initiated a strike but Gen. Ne Win's forebode and stops the strike.

While the internal armed rebellions were raging, the Socialist Ministers of the League resigned and the Prime Minister U Nu refused to give in to the communists and formed the a new cabinet. Gen. Ne Win was appointed Deputy Prime Minister, responsible for the Ministry of Interior together with Minister of Defense. This brought in General Ne Win to be responsible for the army and as well as ministries with his appointment as a minister but he went back to the army giving up the ministerial posts when rebellions and armed insurrections somewhat abated in 1950. This is the first ministerial appointment of high ranking military officer in cabinet. Nevertheless the emergence of the Caretaker Government of Gen. Ne Win, 8 years after the height of

insurrection is partly due to the aforementioned. (General Ne Win has had the experience of handling political power even as a not elected individual)²⁴.

1.2 Destruction of the main political party (AFPFL) and the attempts by various groups to acquire political power by inappropriate means.

The AFPFL which was united since time of struggle for independence became divisive beginning from the time when in 1952 the Pyidawthar (Welfare State) plans were initiated. In effecting to the plan of KTA (Knappen Tippetts and Abbett) led by Robert Nathan to develop Burma were seen in different views. The personal interests and rivalries became pronounced which affected the unity of the League. Socialist Party (social democrats) which was the major power in the League was led by U Ba Swe, U Kyaw Nyein, Thakin Tin and Thakin Kyaw Dun and these leaders have different views to develop the country. More over the difference in views of developing the country as well as personal interests resulting in rivalries and organizing factions, affected the efficient workings of the party machinery. Party's objectives became unclear and peace within party deteriorated.

The objectives of Pyidawthar plans were;

- (i) The country's economy, greatly damaged by the Second World War and the insurrection after independence, is to be repaired to the level of pre war period.
- (ii) To raise the standard of the living of the people of the country.

The effective implementation of the plan was seen in different lights and this was the cause of eminent disintegration of the AFPFL. The faction led by Ba Swe and Kyaw Nyein in the party were university educated and the faction led by Thakin Tin and Thakin Kyaw Dun were dubbed uneducated. The general conception was that Ba Swe, Kyaw Nyein faction was collegians and educated but Thakin Tin and Thakin Kyaw Dun came

²⁴ U, San Nyein and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume1)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. P 134.

from Buddhist Monastic Schools and uneducated²⁵. The so called educated faction wanted the country geared for industrialization and the other faction considered the country's basic economy depended on agriculture and believed in promoting the agricultural sector. This was the disagreement between factions but tolerance prevailed and the differences were covered with make up smiles temporarily.

The second disagreement/misunderstanding began between U Nu and U Kyaw Nyein. It so happened that the misunderstanding initiated in sale of rice in 1954. The sale of 150,000 tons of rice by State Agriculture Marketing Board (SAMB) to Pinlone Daw Nu Yin was approved by the committee attended by U Kyaw Nyein as a member while U Nu was visiting China. While U Nu was abroad the S.A.M.B under supervision of U Kyaw Nyein sold the rice with reduce surety fee of 2.50 kyats per ton instead of erstwhile stipulated rate of 5.0 kyats per ton. It so happened that U Nu had agreed to sell rice to China and the Chinese had sent a purchasing mission. The sale of rice to Daw Nu Yin was reported to U Nu, the Prime Minister who considered being hoodwinked by U Kyaw Nyein in relation to this and suspected lack of honesty. But, still the parties did not go their separate ways²⁶.

The third disagreement between parties evolved around the result of 1956 general election. Although AFPFL won the majority of the constituencies the opposition National United Front (NUF) won much better result than in the past. Examining the results and looking for answers, U Nu and U Kyaw Nyein disagreed again. U Nu thought the poorer showing in the election was due to some AFPFL members being too proud with inappropriate behaviors and misdeeds but U Ba Swe and U Kyaw Nyein considered the poor results were due to the threat of armed rebels at village levels, proposing to quell the rebels more strongly by the army, police and Union Military Police (UMP). U Nu and U Kyaw Nyein were on loggerheads again but polite dealings were still maintained.

Proposal for U Nu to relinquish a premiership and concentrate in party affairs to promote party loyalty also was one of the factors leading to disintegration of AFPFL.

²⁵ Sein Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. Pp. 28-30.

²⁶ Sein Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. P. 35.

Prime Minister U Nu temporarily relinquished the premiership to concentrate on repair of the undesirable situation of the AFPFL party. The vacated of the post of the Prime Minister was filled and the cabinet was headed by U Ba Swe²⁷.

During this period in the early part of 1957, a secret meeting was held at the house of U Ba Swe in connection with documents confiscated at the “Aung Marga” military operation. The meeting was attended by U Ba Swe, U Kyaw Nyein, General Ne Win and Burmese Ambassador to the People’s Republic of China. The Ambassador U Hla Maung proposed that U Nu should be like Chairman Mao of the Peoples’ Republic of China remaining solely as Chairman of the party, but U Ba Swe said it was inappropriate to discuss the matter and it should depend only upon the wishes of U Nu. The matter was not discussed and gentlemanly and correct behavior of U Ba Swe should be noted²⁸.

In spite of this, Thakin Kyaw Dun, on return of U Nu from visit to Sri Lanka, suggested Thakin Tin, leader of the faction to see and warn U Nu in regards to what they thought as underhand dealings. Thakin Tin duly reported as such, instigating that U Ba Swe and U Kyaw Nyein were hatching a plot to oust U Nu from the position of influence and power. This made U Nu consider Thakin Tin and Thakin Kyaw Dun as loyal friends and decided to side with them in their disagreement against of Swe/Nyein faction. This also was one of the factors of disintegration of AFPFL²⁹.

Finally the ill effects of the two correspondences between U Kyaw Nyein and U Nu became the main culprits of disintegration of mighty AFPFL. As mentioned before hand in 1956 while U Ba Swe was acting as Prime Minister, U Nu holding the post as Chairman of AFPFL, U Kyaw Nyein wrote a personal letter to U Nu attacking him for misuse of power by appointing people of his own choice in important positions of the party but considered people like him who has the guts to differ with him as enemies. He also accused U Nu of attempting to oust Socialists from important party positions.

On receipt of the letter from U Kyaw Nyein, U Nu retaliated with a reply that U Kyaw Nyein accused him being too worried and with bias. The handling of sale of rice in

²⁷ Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. P. 39.

²⁸ Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. P. 42.

²⁹ Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. Pp.

1954, required to be examined and honesty of U Kyaw Nyein needed to be scrutinized. The two letters were handed to the newspaper *Burma Times* which posted the letters in the paper making them known to the public in general creating a furor. Thus, the split in A.F.P.F.L became public. Further to this, the followers of U Kyaw Nyein and Thakin Tin became belligerent in the districts³⁰.

The instabilities were watched closely as an opportunity by the opposition party, NUF. At that time U Ba Swe was the General Secretary the ruling AFPFL and U Nu wanted Thakin Kyaw Dun to be General Secretary but U Kyaw Nyein faction disagreed. U Ba Swe proposed a compromise to allow Thakin Kyaw Dun to be appointed General Secretary for 45 days and the problem was solved temporarily. In spite of all these, the AFPFL final split occurred with U Nu, Thakin Tin and Thakin Kyaw Dun opposing Ba Swe/Kyaw Nyein faction who were in power in the party³¹.

The faction of Nu/Tin and Kyaw Dun called themselves AFPFL (Clean) insisting to clean up the party and Swe/Nyein faction fashioned themselves as AFPFL (Stable) wishing the continuous of the party with the traditions and achievements dubbed themselves Stable AFPFL.

Clean AFPFL's effort to attack to Stable AFPFL with arms became a problem. Post parting news and jitters spread in the public with Ba Swe as defense minister, the so called Clean faction thought he would surely make use of the army. On the other hand Kyaw Dun was expected to use forest defense forces. Kyaw Nyein having been Interior Minister for a long period was expected by the Clean faction to have the loyalty of Union Military Police (UMP) with arms. These beliefs made the Clean faction to initiate the first strike to annihilate the Stable AFPFL. Various pocket armed groups belonging to masters in politics prepared for the open conflict to flare.

The public was in fear of the expected conflicts and situation of peace and stability deteriorated. The unrest was the main cause for the army to step in to stabilize the situation.

³⁰ Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. Pp. 39-42.

³¹ Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. Pp. 47-48.

1.3 Attempts to offer general amnesty to the armed groups in rebellion against the Union in disregards of the constitution.

The two camps of the split AFPFL were belligerent and prepared for the flare up. U Ba Swe checked the number of members of parliament who would side with him were more than who would side with U Nu planned to called an AFPFL Executive meeting and find out who would choose to remain in the original main body. U Nu with wiles found out this plan and cleverly proposed to make a parliamentary decision in the parliament regarding no confidence of his premiership. U Nu's plan was called inappropriate by veteran politician Dr. Ba Maw. As it was agreed to count the supporters of different camps Ba Swe moved the motion to propose a no confident vote of the AFPFL led by U Nu on 5 June 1958 and voting for the proposal was held on 9 June 1958 resulted in defeat of the no confidence proposal by majority of only 8 votes with the support of opposition party, National United Front (NUF) members with 44 votes. NUF asked for the grant amnesty to the rebels revolting against the government. The amnesty was announced on 24 June 1958 and action was watched by the army with misgiving. At the conference of military commanders, Colonel Maung Maung discussed the erstwhile control of power by miscreants as not understandable and not acceptable³². Colonel Aung Gyi added that present weak government has to carry out the wishes of Communist sympathizers (NUF) for the support and army was the only organized force to resist the Communists³³. Colonel Chit Myaing added that law breakers must be punished but the law being

³² Naw, Angelene and Daw Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 - 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. P. 97.

³³ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 - 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. P. 98.

misaligned and misplaced resulted in amnesty for the insurgents who broke the law and the Communists above ground had to be watched too³⁴.

These salient points of the reasons are the cause of handing over power to the Caretaker Government led by General Ne Win.

1.4 Attempts to dissolve the parliament by dubious means.

The Clean AFPFL government showed little respect for the constitution maligning the spirit of the constitution. In particular the appointments of States Ministers were as per wishes of the Prime Minister U Nu against the wishes of State Councils which were opposed by State Councils of Karen and Kachin States, but affirmed. Although the Clean AFPFL government defeated the opposition, Stable AFPFL by the help of National United Front (NUF), the more important National Budget passage through the parliament was not a give in. U Nu knew that the opposition, Stable AFPFL could put serious objections to allocations and the National Budget was arranged to be approved by the President of the Union of Burma without discussion in the parliament. That was also one of the bending of the constitution, albeit lawful³⁵.

The action of U Nu in the passage of National Budget by order of the President and in appointments of State Ministers was personal undertaking not strange to him. Even the arrangements to dissolve the parliament were made prior to the no confidence voting. Fortunate defeat of the no confidence vote made it unnecessary³⁶.

The undertaking of misaligning the constitution the people cringe with dislike and disgust. These events also were the causes in bringing about the transfer of power to the Caretaker Government of General Ne Win.

³⁴ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp 98-99.

³⁵ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 10-22.

³⁶ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 65-68.

1.5 Attempt to kidnap high ranking senior officers of the army.

The public was in fear due to instability of conditions beginning from the emergence of Clean AFPFL government from 6 June 1958 to 26 September 1958. During this period, the plan to annihilate the Stable AFPFL altogether and destroy the army in the present form was hatched. When the Clean AFPFL found that the rival Stable AFPFL group was very strong and organized, they worried and planned to destroy the opposition in a hurry without considering the consequences. Unexpected effects resulted from this.

Firstly transferring of senior civil servants considered not sympathetic towards the government were carried out and sent to remote posts, while the more hard headed were made to take early retirement. After transferring and relocating the senior civil officers as deemed suitable for the government, attempts were made to handle the armed groups. The pocket army called Pyusawhtis; the Para constabularies employed by the previous governments to guard remote districts against the Communist Insurgents were examined and found that the majority were in support of the Stable AFPFL. But, the groups loyal to U Nu and Thakin Tin of Clean AFPFL were gathered under the control of the Interior Minister Bo Min Gaung in readiness for eventualities. They numbered over 10,000 made up from Prome District (2,500), Tharyarwaddy District (5,000) and 3,000 from the Insein District³⁷. The Union Military Police (UMP) officers closed to the Stable camp were transferred to the district and the officers friendly and supportive to the government filled the vacancies. Some officers not siding with the new administration were sent and transferred to far off places like the Arakan and remote border outpost³⁸. The reliable officers from the UMP regiment (17, 22 and 7) were now gathered and brought to the suburbs of Rangoon and station in Kayber Garden near Prome Rode 6 and a half Mile area.³⁹

³⁷ Ohn, Myint (Atauktaw). **In the Face of the Armed Rebellion** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ingyin Myaing Press, 1990. (2nd Printing). Pp. 18-19.

³⁸ Ohn, Myint (Atauktaw). **In the Face of the Armed Rebellion** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ingyin Myaing Press, 1990. (2nd Printing). P. 19.

³⁹ Ohn, Myint (Atauktaw). **In the Face of the Armed Rebellion** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ingyin Myaing Press, 1990. (2nd Printing). Pp. 20-21.

It was declared that the loyal supporters would be rewarded appropriately and the UMP made the pocket army of the government. At the mean time the government noticed that there was a much more organized power which was the military (the army) that they feared. It was also formidable and it was the fact that most senior officers were closed to the Stable Camp since the time of Revolution and some higher ranking officers even were related to Ba Swe/Kyaw Nyein group leaders.

Final plan to handle the army was completed on 17 September 1958. They have listed the numbers of commanders including Chief of Staff Gen. Ne Win. They planned to hold Gen. Ne Win as hostage and force him to sign the loyalty of the army to the government. And if he refused then he would be assassinated. The others senior officers were included in the list to be dealt with. These officers were Brigadier Aung Shwe, the Commander of the Northern Command, Colonel Tun Sein of 2nd Brigade, Colonel Kyi Win of 10th Brigade, Colonel Thiha Thura Hla Maw of 3rd Brigade, Chief of Military Training Colonel Maung Maung, Colonel (General Staff) Aung Gyi, Colonel Thein Doke of 6th Brigade, Quarter Master General Brigadier Tin Pe and General Staff officer Grade I of Northern Command Lt. Col Chit Khine⁴⁰. The plot to gain the loyalty of army by kidnapping and forcing the senior commanders directly affecting the rule of law was the cause and reason of the emergence of the Caretaker Government led by Gen. Ne Win.

Albeit the Stable camp led by U Ba Swe claimed that they knew about that plot and were prepared to retaliate.

1.6 The conflict of interest between the Clean A.F.P.F.L government and the Army.

In planning to destroy the Stable faction, the government viewed the relationship between the army and the Stable faction with distrust. The officers of the army who had always fought the Communist insurgents with lost of comrades and friends viewed the government as too lenient. In distrust of the government actions the army prepared for emergency and to retaliate. At the Clean AFPFL conference at the resident of Prime

⁴⁰ Ohn, Myint (Atauktaw). **In the Face of the Armed Rebellion** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ingyin Myaing Press, 1990. (2nd Printing). Pp. 34-35.

Minister U Nu on 31 August 1958, the Representative from Hantharwaddy Constituency accused and dubbed the army as the Public Enemy No.1. The Civil Servants leaning to the Stable faction as Public Enemy No.2 And underground armed rebels as Public Enemy No.3. That was viewed with distaste and apprehension by the officers of the army and political repercussions were felt⁴¹. The dealing of government with the Communists also was criticized by the army officers and they wished the government to take action strictly under law. Senior military officers met the Prime Minister on 3 September 1958, and claimed that the people who criticized the army should be dealt with criminal proceedings individually⁴². In the mean time, Colonel Kyi Win from the Northern Command warned the government and issued a threat that the army would use force to deal with the unlawful activities deteriorating condition greatly. Prime Minister U Nu tried to ease tension between the Clean AFPFL government and the army but failed due to the belligerent state of the parties involved. The Commander of the Northern Command Brigadier Aung Shwe, Brigade Commander Colonel Kyi Win, and General Staff officer Grade I Lt. Col Chit Khine planned a coup d' etate at Mandalay and Colonel Maung Maung from the War Office tried to stop those officers but fail to do so⁴³. At the mean time, a group of members of parliament Clean AFPFL organized Pyusawhtis and loyal UMP forces to be moved to Rangoon and important areas⁴⁴. This action being made known to Colonel Kyi Win and group and the army prepared for the eventualities. This cause of unrest forced matters to have the Caretaker Government of General Ne Win came to existence.

⁴¹ Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. Pp. 159-160.

⁴² Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. P. 161.

⁴³ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 109-112.

⁴⁴ Ohn, Myint (Atauktaw). **In the Face of the Armed Rebellion** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ingyin Myaing Press, 1990. (2nd Printing). Pp. 19-21.

1.7 Demands of various political parties.

The Burma Democratic Party president Thakin Ba Sein demanded the resignation of U Nu to protest against him surviving with the support of Communists and leftists. He advised that an interim government with the leadership of the army should be installed. Sangha Party of Buddhist priests citing the divisions and misdeeds of the government urged the Army to take over the government⁴⁵.

2. Transfer of power to Gen. Ne Win's Caretaker Government

Prime Minister U Nu returned to Rangoon from political activities in the Upper Burma on the 22 September 1958 and was duly reported by Bo Min Gaung the Interior Minister, that the Army was planning to stage a coup and U Nu asked not to do any thing to destroy order and peace. And next day when he met the colonels he said that the country and the Army might loose respect internationally if a coup was stage and to make a temporary transfer of power and declared the martial law, but the colonels refused his proposal of declaring the martial law. The Prime Minister took a short time for consultation with his followers. U Nu explained to his people that the country is going through very difficult times and unrest to hold the free and fair election, to avoid the bloodshed and save the nation from disintegration by requesting Gen. Ne Win to take up Premiership.

Thus, on 26 September 1958, Brigadier Tin Pe, Colonel Aung Gyi and Colonel Maung Maung were invited to the Prime Minister resident and showed the letters between Gen. Ne Win and him regarding communications and agreements. The officers examined the documents and returned after minor changes in the arrangement and took back the letters to Gen. Ne Win.

⁴⁵ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 62-63.

The following letters of correspondence indicate how the Caretaker Government came into the political history of Burma:

PRIME MINISTER OF THE
UNION OF BURMA

Dated the 26th September 1958

Dear General Ne Win,

1. The Central Committee of the CLEAN AFPFL particularly wishes you to form a new government with you yourself as the Prime Minister, and to make necessary arrangements for holding a just and fair General Election before the end of April 1959.

2. If you can accept the Prime Ministership in accordance with this wish, I would like to make the following arrangements.

a) I shall advise the President of the Union, in accordance with Section 57 of the Constitution, so summon the Chamber of Deputies and the Chamber of Nationalities on Tuesday the 28th of October 1958.

b) I will resign from the Prime Ministership on the day of the first sitting of the Chamber of Deputies.

c) After thus resigning from the Prime Ministership, I will propose that you, Gen. Ne Win, be elected by the Chamber of Deputies as Prime Minister.

3. It will not be necessary to include members of the CLEAN AFPFL in the government formed by you.

4. To ensure that the General Election held by you will be a free, just and fair General Election, it is requested that particular care be exercised to prevent government servants and armed forces encroaching or interfering in the political field, apart from the due discharge of their duties.

5. I believe that the armed forces are generally well disciplined forces. But, during my recent tour of the country, I received in quite a number of places very sad complaints of acts of oppression, atrocious, cruelty and murder, committed by some members of armed forces. These complaints were made to me by the victims themselves, who showed me their wounds, and stated their sufferings with tears in their eyes. I would request the Government formed by you to give prior and particular attention to the suppression of such wrongful acts of violence.

6. It is also requested that prior and particular attention be given by the government formed by you to the suppression of such crime as rape, robbery, dacoity, kidnapping, and murder.

7. As you yourself are well aware that all the citizens of the Union are yearning for internal peace, with as such ardent longing as human beings in the beginning of the world prayed for the sun and the moon, I need not enlarge on this point. Therefore I would particularly like to request the government formed by you to secure to the fullest extent this glorious prize of internal peace.

8. In the foreign relations also, I would like to urge the government formed by you to continue and maintain the policy of strict and straight-forward neutrality.

May you be endowed with physical and mental well-being.

(sd) U Nu
Prime Minister

MINISTRY OF DEFENSE
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF STAFF
(LAND) FORCES

Dated the 26th September, 1958

Dear Mr. Prime Minister,

1. I feel hesitant in undertaking such a great responsibility as requested. However, since I have a high regard for your sincere wishes, I shall put forth my utmost endeavor in undertaking the task of guiding the country, if you think it necessary and essential for me to do so. As, however, I have had no experience in carrying out the great task of administrating the country, as I had never had any intention of doing so, and as I had never entertained any idea that I would have to do so, I believe that any short-comings on my part in sincerely discharging this great task would be view with indulgence, and I would like to ask for such indulgence.

2. I give my promise that, if the Chamber of Deputies elect me as Prime Minister, I would endeavor to the fullest of my ability to make all necessary arrangements for holding a free and fair General Election before the end of April 1959.

3. I give my promise that, if I am to form the government, I will not include in it any representatives from the political organizations in the main part of the country, apart from suitable representatives from the States and the Special Chin Division.

4. You are already aware that I myself abhor encroachment and interference in the political field by government servants and armed forces. Therefore, I give my promise that I will keep careful watch and wards against such encroachment and interference.

5. As I myself have often learnt of wrongful acts of violence on the part of some members of the armed forces, I have been made very unhappy. Therefore, I give my

promise that prior and particular attention will be given to the suppression of such misdeeds.

6. I give my promise that priority will be given to the task of suppression crimes as far as possible.

7. I am firmly convinced that the stability, progress and prosperity of the Union is greatly dependent on the existence of internal peace. Therefore, I give my promise that I will put forth my utmost endeavor to secure internal peace.

8. As the policy of strict and straight forward neutrality in foreign relations is a policy which serve the interests of our Union of Burma as well as those of world peace, I give my promise that the government which I am to lead will never and by no means deviate from such a policy of neutrality.

(sd) General Ne Win

The letters above between the Prime Minister and Gen. Ne Win showed how critical the conditions of the day were. Prime Minister U Nu in difficult and untenable conditions endeavor to transfer administrative powers to a politically unbiased chief of the armed forces. Thus, the Caretaker Government came into existence from 1 November 1958 to 4 April 1960 legally through the elected parliament without a military coup and a new chapter in the history of Burma opened.⁴⁶

⁴⁶ Sein, Win (Guardian). **The Split Story** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Guardian Press, 1959. Pp. 178-186.

2. U Khin Maung Phyu
Minister of Home Affairs,
Information, Democratization,
Immigration and National Registration.
3. U Chan Htoon Aung
Minister of Judicial Affairs.
4. U Ka,
Minister of Education,
Irrigation and Forests,
Land Nationalization.
5. U Kyaw Nyein
Minister of Finance and Revenue.
6. U San Nyunt
Minister of Transport and
Communication, Public
Works and Housing.
8. U Chit Thaung
Minister of Mines, Industry
and Labor.
9. U Ba Kyar
Minister of Trade
Promotion, Co-operatives,
Trade Distribution and
Supply.
10. Sao Hon Pha
Minister of Shan State.
11. Dr. Saw Hla Tun
Minister of Karen State.

12. Duwa Zaw Lawn Minister of Kachin State.
13. Sao Wunnah Minister of Kayah State.
14. U Htang Hlyan Minister of Chin State.⁴⁸

The cabinet took of oath of allegiance to the Union in front of the President of the Union of Burma and the President Mann Win Maung, requested fulfillment of the following duties:

1. To achieve National Peace.
2. To hold Free and Fair election.
3. To achieve full Democratic Rights.⁴⁹

The duration of the duties being so short for the Caretaker Government to achieve all only the important requirements could be fulfill by the Caretaker Government. Only the first two requests by the President could be achieve but the time for the government was too short to manage the third.

General Ne Win declared the followings to be achieve:

1. Maintain Law and Order and peace.
2. Free and Fair elections.
3. Reduction of Cost of Living.
4. Repair of Economy.⁵⁰

The cabinet was formed with the 4 points in aim and placed to be handed by the respected senior civil servants except the affairs of the Nationality States with justice and

⁴⁸ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 157-158.

⁴⁹ Myint, Thein (Yangon University). **Changing Governing Systems of the Union of Myanmar** (in Burmese). Yangon: Saite Ku Cho Cho Press, 2006. P. 83.

⁵⁰ Myint, Thein (Yangon University). **Changing Governing Systems of the Union of Myanmar** (in Burmese). Yangon: Saite Ku Cho Cho Press, 2006. P. 84.

efficiency. The Caretaker Government administer with efficiently and lawfully. The ministries grouped according to requirements by nature of requirements as the followings:

1. Administration Sector

- 1.1 Ministry of Home affairs.
- 1.2 Ministry of Defense.
- 1.3 Ministry of Judicial Affairs.
- 1.4 Ministry of Democratization of Local Administration and Local Bodies.
- 1.5 Ministry of Immigration and National Registration.
- 1.6 Office of the Prime Minister.
- 1.7 Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

2. National Economy Sector

- 2.1 Ministry of National Planning.
- 2.2 Ministry of Agriculture and Forests.
- 2.3 Ministry of Land Nationalization.
- 2.4 Ministry of Supply.
- 2.5 Ministry of Mines.
- 2.6 Ministry of Finance and Revenue.
- 2.7 Ministry of Trade Development.
- 2.8 Ministry of Industries.
- 2.9 Ministry of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications.
- 2.10 Ministry of Marine and Civil Aviation.

3. Social Service Sector

- 3.1 Ministry of Labor.
- 3.2 Ministry of Public Works, National Housing and Rehabilitation.
- 3.3 Ministry of Education.

3.4 Ministry of Information.

3.5 Ministry of Union Culture.

3.6 Ministry of Social Welfare, Religious Affairs, Relief and Resettlement.

3.7 Ministry of Health.

3.8 Ministry of Co-operatives and Commodity Distribution.⁵¹

The government of Gen. Ne Win who took control of National Government from 1 November, 1958 while laboring with development of “Rule of Law and Peace” also had to plan and worked to hold for a Free and Fair general election in April 1959. The period for this undertaking in 6 months was found too short to realize the objectives and the General resigned from the post of Prime Minister in parliament on 13 February 1959. In addition the General advised that the constitution in act 116 stipulate that a non-elected person cannot hold the post of Prime Minister more than 6 months and that he could not continue if the constitution was not amended⁵². The two factions of AFPFL agreed to reconstitute the requirement but National United Front (NUF) bitterly opposed the move⁵³. Thakin Chit Maung of Tharyarwaddy enunciated on one of the incarnations of Lord Buddha as “Weedura” to make his point and opposed the amendment of Constitution which would be considered making it a heartless body indicating the importance of the act to avoid future malpractices learning the lessons from one of the lives of Lord Buddha before the final Enlightenment⁵⁴. The opposition of the action was defeated by the majority of the House and General Ne Win accepted to return as Prime Minister, after the revision of the act. He returned as Prime Minister by support of the majority of House of Representatives on 27 February 1959. Following that, General Ne Win continued to be the Prime Minister until 6 February 1960 when U Nu led Clean

⁵¹ Myint, Thein (Yangon University). **Changing Governing Systems of the Union of Myanmar** (in Burmese). Yangon: Saite Ku Cho Cho Press, 2006. Pp. 85-86.

⁵² Maung, Maung Dr. **General Ne Win and Myanmar’s Political Journey** (in Burmese). Yangon: Bagan Publishing House, 1969. P. 378.

⁵³ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar’s Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 179-186.

⁵⁴ Chit, Maung Thakin. **Counter Parliamentary Speech of Widura Thakin Chit Maung upon the Parliamentary Speech of Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win** (in Burmese). Yangon Press, (not dated).

AFPFL won the General Election and transferred power to U Nu after 17 months in office ending his watch.

The second time formed Caretaker Government took the oath of allegiance on 27 February 1959 at 5 pm with General Ne Win led Caretaker Government cabinet in front of the President of the Union. The second administration of the General after the first 3 months had only one new minister after retirement of aging Deputy Prime Minister U Thein Maung. He was succeeded by Union Secretary U Lun Baw. Minister U Ba Kyar was replaced by the Director of Military Supply U Thi Han. As an only exception Brigadier Tin Pe of the Defense Department on 14 May 1959 to take charge of the Ministry of Mines and Ministry of Labor from U Chit Thaung from the three ministries he was administering and Ministry of Housing and Rehabilitation from U Tun Tin.

With this, the following constitute in the reorganized cabinet of the Caretaker Government.

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 1. General Ne Win | Prime Minister, Defense and National Planning. |
| 2. U Lun Baw | Deputy Prime Minister, Religious Affairs, Social Service, Relief and Rehabilitation. |
| 3. Sao Hon Pha | Shan State. |
| 4. Dr. Saw Hla Tun | Karen State. |
| 5. Duwa Zaw Lun | Kachin State. |
| 6. Sao Wunnah | Kayah State. |
| 7. U Rah Mong | Chin Affairs. |

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 8. U Khin Maung Phyu | Home Affairs, Information,
Immigration and National Registration.
Democratization of Local Administration
And Local Bodies. |
| 9. U Chan Htoon Aung | Foreign Affairs.
Judicial Affairs. |
| 10. U Kyaw Nyein | Finance and Revenue. |
| 11. U San Nyunt | Transport and Communications,
Marine and Civil Aviation. |
| 12. U Ka | Education,
Agriculture and Forests
Land Nationalization. |
| 13. U Chit Thaung | Union Culture. |
| 14. U Tun Tin | Health |
| 15. U Thi Han | Trade Development,
Co-operatives and Commodity Distribution,
Industries,
Supply. |

16. Brigadier Tin Pe
 Mines,
 Labor,
 Public Works, National Housing and
 Rehabilitation.⁵⁵

Restoring the rule of law and peace.

Essential duty of restoring “The Rule of Law and Peace” effectively to be in particular carried out, the Caretaker Government formed a Central Security Council with the membership of officers of the armed forces and the Police including the ranking special duty officer attached to the Ministry of Interior Colonel Maung Maung. The Ministry of Interior carried the requirements of the Council.

After forming the government on 28 October 1958 by General Ne Win effectively carried out the task of promoting “Rule of Law and Peace” policy was carried out in detail by the Ministry of Interior. The Ministry called a conference on 3,4,and 5 of November 1958 at Tatmadaw (Armed Forces) Theater on U Wizara Road named “The Conference for National Peace Program”. At the conclusion of the conference, decisions were made as the followings:

- (a) To find ways to reform Armed Forces (including Police and UMP) and Administrative Bodies.
- (b) To find ways to unite the Armed Forces (including Police and UMP) and Administrative Bodies in required activities.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar’s Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 198-199.

⁵⁶ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar’s Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 161-162.

The above partly reflect how the Caretaker Government was formed. In Government the respective Civil and Defense Officials united in their combine duties. The civil authority and military to be able to perform in unity efficiently, the above was emphasized.

In building the above, National Central Administration to the Village Level Multi Task were separated to be effected as followings:

- (1) Actions at National Level.
- (2) Actions in areas of Central Government Control.
- (3) Actions at Divisional Level
- (4) Actions at District Level
- (5) Action at Village Level⁵⁷

The followings were formed to support and manage the duties of Home Ministry.

- (1) Central Security Committee.
- (2) Awards Advisory Committee.
- (3) Administrative Promotions and Transfers Committee.
- (4) Internal Intelligence Management Committee.
- (5) Advisory Committee on Punishments.
- (6) Committee in Administrating the Police Force.

The main duty of the Central Security Committee was to allocate the duties of District Security Supervision and to solve their difficulties as required. The following members formed the Central Security Committee.

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| (1) Minister of Defense | (Chairman) |
| (2) Minister of Home Affairs | (Vice Chairman) |
| (3) Chief Secretary | |

⁵⁷ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.3.

- (4) Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs
- (5) Secretary of Minister of Judicial Affairs
- (6) Chief of National Police Force.
- (7) Deputy Chief of National Police Force.
- (8) Colonel (G.S) of the Ministry of Defense.
- (9) Staff Officer Grade I (Operation Command) of the Ministry of Defense.
- (10) Deputy Secretary of the Ministry of Home Affairs (Administration).⁵⁸

Following the appointment of the Central Security Committee, Divisional, Districts and Township Security Councils were promptly formed. The appointment had minor differences.

1. Divisional Security Council

The Divisional Security Councils to be appropriated with the areas were formed with Brigade Commanders as Chairman and included Divisional Commissioner or Special Commissioner of the National Police Force as members with Divisional Commissioner of Administration invited to attend to discuss and advise occasionally as required. Thus the military and civil officers were arranged to carry out their duties in harmony.⁵⁹

2. District Security Council

At District Level, the Battalion Commander of that District as Chairman and District Commissioner, District Police Commissioner, Commander of Union Military Police and Session Judge or Associate Session Judge was included in the District Security Council.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.4.

⁵⁹ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.4.

⁶⁰ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.4.

3. Township Security Council

The Township Security Councils were formed with Township Officer, Judiciary Officer and the Police Officer in charge of their departments as members.⁶¹

The Central Security Council had the highest authority among all the other Security Councils. The directives of Central Security was strictly followed by the Divisional, District, and Township Councils. Beyond these, the committees were formed to achieve security at Village Level.⁶²

At the Village Level the committees were formed with members including Village Headman, Security Headman, Event Announcer and Celebration Organizers assisted by 10 household's heads to oversee security matters.

The village group headman coordinated matters above single village headmen in connection with development requirements. Only civilians took duties in the committee at the Village Level and did not include the members of the armed forces⁶³. The operations at village level were organized thus due to village level mind set that the armed parties including the army and various police forces were viewed as haughty (say bossy) and cruel by the public⁶⁴.

There were different views in promoting "Peace and Rule of Law" countrywide. The late prominent newspaper journalist, U Aung Bala dubbed the 17 months period of

⁶¹ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.4.

⁶² **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.4.

⁶³ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.4.

⁶⁴ Sein, Win. Journalist (former), Ludu Newspaper. Interview, 10 March 2011.

rule by Caretaker Government as the time of Fascists⁶⁵. In attempt to handle matters of Peace and Rule of Law by the government, there were some excesses however minor they might have been. The army in handling the Communist threat made one of the main policies of the Caretaker Government as anti-communism. In accordance with this policy, the Communist Insurgents and Left Leaning Parties with sympathizers including leftist writers and newspapers' editors were hounded and dealt with harshly. Some were shipped away to remote places⁶⁶.

The special duty officer attached to the Ministry of Interior, Colonel Maung Maung was noted in connection of above. Colonel Maung Maung did not compromise any thing with the leftists. The strict handling of these matters thus was viewed by some as Fascist State. The CoCo Island of 7 miles x 7 miles was used for imprisonment of the leftists and communist sympathizers and also left leaning pressmen. Even some leftists, National United Front members of parliament were shipped there. The colonel allegedly in the name of nation and citizens had the numerous leftist politicians dealt with severely. Even U Aung Than the older brother of assassinated father of Independence General Aung San was incarcerated at Coco Island⁶⁷.

This caused Thakin Tin of Clean AFPFL to accuse the Caretaker Government at his party conference in December of 1958 that the countrymen were seeing the destruction of Democracy with threats of arms and this must be destroyed to nurture democracy to live⁶⁸. On the contrary, the old politician former Prime Minister during the Japanese occupation and former Chief Minister in some periods of British Colonial Rule praised the Caretaker Government's actions and criticized parties who espouse indiscipline and disturbance. The period of 10 years since Independence, was also denigrated as a period of indiscipline and praised actions for promotion of the Rule of

⁶⁵ U, Thaung (Kye Mone). **General Ne Win's Roles and Tactics in the Politics of the Union of Burma** (in Burmese). Morris Publishing, 2001. Pp. 101-103.

⁶⁶ U, Thaung (Kye Mone). **General Ne Win's Roles and Tactics in the Politics of the Union of Burma** (in Burmese). Morris Publishing, 2001. P. 102.

⁶⁷ U, Thaung (Kye Mone). **General Ne Win's Roles and Tactics in the Politics of the Union of Burma** (in Burmese). Morris Publishing, 2001. Pp. 103-105.

⁶⁸ U, Thaung (Kye Mone). **General Ne Win's Roles and Tactics in the Politics of the Union of Burma** (in Burmese). Morris Publishing, 2001. Pp. 105.

Law by the Caretaker Government. Albeit the government handled the promotion of the Rule of Law and Peace without bias to all and General Ne Win in detail reported this to the parliament declaring that opposition to this would be lawfully and strictly dealt with. The opposition to this was to be considered enemies to be eliminated effectively.

The Caretaker Government attached army officers in the Interior Ministry to effectively manage the efforts to promote Peace and Rule of Law. Colonel Min Thein from the army was appointed Chief of Union Military Police (UMP) to be made a disciplined effective force. The control of Union Military Police served to redevelopment the force effectively in the right direction but some politicians criticized the action as interference in politics⁶⁹.

To promote Rule of Law, the National Solidarity Association (NSA) was formed⁷⁰. In Rangoon Municipality, the non bias and disciplined 38 years old Brigade Commander Col. Tun Sein was appointed as Mayor of Rangoon instead of the usual internal appointment⁷¹. Before the appointment of the colonel, Rangoon was remarked by some foreign visitors as a deteriorating city. The action of Col. Tun Sein regarding the case of advertisement signboard of Khant Khant Gyi Photoshop was remarkable. The warnings and fines in the past were to no avail and the signboard was not removed. The Fines were not accepted during the colonel's time and just made to remove the signboard. Unruly youth and so called rode devil gangs were also severely and effectively dealt with making life impossible for these law breakers in their ways⁷².

The Central Security Council in the beginning of its work was helped by Divisional, District and Township Security Councils. In some of the activities connected with Social Services need the support of the public and found that the Government

⁶⁹ Maung, Maung Dr. **General Ne Win and Myanmar's Political Journey** (in Burmese). Yangon: Bagan Publishing House, 1969. P. 374.

⁷⁰ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.6.

⁷¹ Maung, Maung Dr. **General Ne Win and Myanmar's Political Journey** (in Burmese). Yangon: Bagan Publishing House, 1969. P. 377.

⁷² Charney, Michael W. **A History of Modern Burma**. Cambridge University Press, 2009. P. 96.

needed the help of a non political association. Hence, the National Solidarity Association (NSA) was founded⁷³.

The Association was formed to promote strictly for the public benefit only without consideration of creed and belief. The Association was formed with branches countrywide and amassed a great number of people as members⁷⁴. In different view of respected newspaperman U Aung Bala, the Association came to existence with military backing and without genuine support of the people and it disintegrated when power was returned to the elected government in 1960⁷⁵.

The National Solidarity Associations were formed in the districts by the Organization without a National Headquarters. The nation wide Association was orderly organized only after the national conference was held at No. (1) Armed Forces Training Camp Hall (Mingalardon) on 29, 30, and 31 October 1959 with a great ceremony. The conference agreed upon the constitution of the Association and elected leadership systematically. The Organization and Security Council in association began to operate for the benefits of the people of the nation.

Reinforcing the Armed Forces and suppression of insurgency.

The Caretaker Government of Gen. Ne Win not only planned the development of Peace and Rule of Law as a major duty, but also as the belief of the Armed Forces of the Union of Burma. Since the period of struggle for independence the aim of the army developed in stages and steps.

During the period of Burma Independent Army (BIA) and Burma Defense Army (BDA) at the beginning of Second World War,

⁷³ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. Pp 3-6.

⁷⁴ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. Pp 6-7.

⁷⁵ U, Thaung (Kye Mone). **General Ne Win's Roles and Tactics in the Politics of the Union of Burma** (in Burmese). Morris Publishing, 2001. Pp. 110-111..

1. Independence, first
2. Independence, second
3. Independence, third

During the period of Burma National Army (BNA) and Burma Patriotic Forces (BPF) in the national resistance to the Japanese,

1. Independence, first
2. Democracy, second
3. Socialism, third

During the struggle for Independence,

1. Independence, first
2. Democracy, second
3. Socialism, third

During the period of the Caretaker Government,

1. Rule of Law and Peace, first
2. Democracy, second
3. Development of Socialist Economy third⁷⁶

The Gen. Ne Win led Caretaker Government during their watch; the above aims and duties were adopted in particular and strived for.

The Caretaker Government's 3 points plan to defeat insurgency was carried out as the followings:

1. Recollection of proliferated illegal arms nation wide.
2. Fiercely fight the insurgency with the support and help of the people.
3. Unlawful acts were to be strictly and clearly dealt with.

⁷⁶ Pe, Kan Kaung. **Not the Authoritative Government Taken the State Power Through the Military Coup d'ate** (in Burmese). Yangon: U Hla Kyin News and Journals Press, 1996. P. 129.

The Caretaker Government planned and executed to win security and peace, promote efficient administrative machinery, punish unlawful economics dealings, and to promote social and economic development of citizens of the Union.

The Caretaker Government re developed the administrative machinery as a whole to forcefully develop the spread of Rule of Law and strict dealings in connection with criminals. In the period under Caretaker Government significant reduction of insurgency emphasizes in connection of peace was realized. This was the result of endeavors by the army and civil counterparts with the support of the public. Suppression of insurgency was in particular different from the endeavors of previous governments. In the past the operations were carried out only during the dry season, when the insurgents retreated, and return when the army retreated during the rains. But during the period of the Caretaker Government the rebels were hounded in all weathers and made the insurgents run with many killed or maimed.

The military campaigns were launched in all weathers with better operation with combine efforts of Land, Naval and Air force together with other official support arms such as Artillery command, armored command, Police, Union Military Police (UMP), Auxiliary Police Forces, Home Guards and Public Informers. With support of the public the insurgency was effectively suppressed. The armed organizations like Police, Auxiliary Police and the Union Military Police were not used for the purpose of dealing with the insurgents before. Dealing against insurgency by military operations were not only employed but psycho warfare, relief and Rehabilitation and Social services were also carried out. The effective social services together with strong military operations effected in many rebels surrendering and re entering into the legal fold.

The attack aims at the leadership of rebels in particular. The result of the 14 months operations with 108 major engagements and 323 local operations was the demise of numerous rebels. 386 major operations and 2743 minor skirmishes with the insurgents were fought. The types and names of the rebels were many with various objectives and affiliations. There were numerous parties of different ilk and color including Communist (Red Flag), Communist (White Flag), KNDO, MNDO, Shan Rebels, KMT from China

and Mujahidden Islamic Rebels naming the prominent parties who took arms against the national government. The Caretaker Government subdued them with (187) killed, (1959) wounded and (1238) taken prisoners, (3618) insurgents surrendered and return to legal union fold.

Due to concentrating on leaders of the rebels, (318) leaders including politburo members, divisional, district and township committee members were killed. This was the result of the actions of Gen. Ne Win led Caretaker Government to obtain peace and Rule of Law through these military operations. The losses of insurgents, captured of illegal arms, surrender and loss of many rebel leaders was the result of the victory of military, other armed organizations together with Civil Servants. This was the result due to combine endeavor of the people as a whole. The vastly different system of rule of the out dated administration, compared to the democratic system in Burma proper, under the heredities Saw Bwas (Rulers) of the high lands lagged behind greatly and was unsuitable in modern era. While the democratic government was in Burma proper the Shan State and Kayah State still practiced backwards heraldic system of administrations under royalties. The efforts to make the Saw Bwa to relinquish undemocratic rules were finalized with success after many postponements. Thus, uniformed democratic rule was achieved for all in the Union. This also was a significant achievement during the time of Caretaker Government.

On the day that the Saw Bwas, the heredity rulers, relinquished their power on 24 April, 1959, Gen. Ne Win personally attended the ceremonies and praised them for their sacrifice. The rulers were compensated for giving up their fiefdoms by the Union of Burma government. One of the heavy tasks carried out by the Caretaker Government was the solution of border demarcation between China and Burma and Burma Boundary Operation was affected successfully. A short while after the emergence of Caretaker Government problems regarding border demarcation with China after careful consideration were proposed to the Chinese on 4 January 1959. The General with Minister of Foreign Affairs, U Chan Htoon Aung, deputy commander in chief of defense services (army) Brigadier Aung Gyi, Attorney General U Ba Sein, and Chief of Frontier

Administration Col. Saw Myint visited Peking on 23 January 1960. The solutions of border demarcation problems between China and Burma were agreed to and also others regarding friendship and non aggression. The Prime Minister of Burma, Gen. Ne Win and Prime Minister of China Chu En Lai signed the agreement of friendship and non aggression on 10 January 1960.

The Caretaker Government managed to dissolve the various pocket armies formed in the period of AFPFL government in the past. The disbanded members of these were inducted into the Union army to beef up the army for more effective operations against insurgency. Senior military officers were appointed as special duty officers and attached to various ministries for the multi purposes of security and civil affairs. This action promoted rapid growth of good governance and economic conditions. Col. Saw Myint formed the new Frontier Areas Administration department to over see effective rule of law and security in border areas.

The other department dealing with security and rule of law was the Ministry of Immigration and National Registration. Prior to the Caretaker Government, the work of this department was only in a few districts and none in the areas of insurgency. Effective operations of combine forces of army and police were realized with the rebels running to remote areas and effective registration work was put on gear. The work of this department to be carried out effectively Col. Chit Myaing was appointed as special duty officer.

As par the promises of the Caretaker Government at the on set of this administration Brigadier Aung Gyi oversaw the repair of the economy as Chairman of Budget Allocation Committee, effectively to lower the prices of the basic commodities and taking actions against profiteering by merchants. The army was utilized to distribute basic food stuff and reduce prices. Col. Maung Maung in his position as the senior special duty officer attached to the Interior Ministry, being a member of Central Security Council effectively oversaw suppression of unrest nationwide and capture of illegal arms.

Some areas were very prominent in activities against the rule of law, security and peace and they were surprisingly not in remote countryside but in the capital Rangoon.

Where some illegal housing and unauthorized dwellings were situated poor displaced people due to unrest in the countryside, simple shortage of suitable housing for lower income families and individuals existed. On top of that, the capital city of Burma, Rangoon was required to be clean up appropriately to the ranks of great cities. Col. Tun Sein on accepting the appointment of mayor brought in a few military regiments to clean up the city of Rangoon where orderliness and cleanliness were neglected for decades. Col. Tun Sein from the day of accepting the post of Rangoon Mayor and Municipal Commissioner with the assistance of the army, police, and public servants cleaned up the city with declaration, "City of Rangoon shall be cleaned up with our sweats", rightfully to become a modern clean capital. The people from war torn country side escaped to the capital Rangoon and built huts and lived illegally developing into encroaching quarters. The AFPFL government dare not clean up these areas at National Revolutionary Park, Min Ma Naing and Ba Han quarters. The new mayor Col. Tun Sein chose to suffer hatred in carrying out the task of cleaning up these quarters. The areas are festered with crime and were in constant danger of fire. Every time the past attempted to clear and clean up the areas, they faced protest by the public of these areas. When the police were employed to carry the task, they were stoned without fear and every attempt was opposed by the public of these areas and screamed dirty things. The political parties in expectation of votes from the areas of these illegal dwellings did not handle to solve the problem. The Caretaker Government handled the problem effectively.

For the people of these areas the new satellite towns of North and South Okkalapa together with Tharkayta were built and provided. Army engineers built 50 miles of roads in these new towns and helped build these townships with enthusiasm. To dislike of some the illegal dwellings were removed and provided with new towns. These undertakings were criticized by some as dictatorial and even the previous Prime Minister U Nu criticized the government for clearing of these illegal dwellings at a public meeting on Martyr's Memorial Day on 19 July 1959.

Due to the above the Caretaker Government without hesitation did what was necessary and what was required because winning votes in elections was necessary for

them. The effort to clean up the city of Rangoon was also affected without fear, hesitation, and bias.

The Caretaker Government within the period from 1 November 1958 to 4 April 1960 carried out the following duties:

1. Reducing Insurgency with a great number of military operations.
2. Reducing the cost of living
3. Dismantling of illegal quarters and building of new towns, although this could not be finalized during their watch. These were not completed due to lack of time but the next government stops the work before completion although what was built was not destroyed.
4. China-Burma border problem was solved and the borders demarcated.
5. Heredity rule of the Shan and Kayah States were ceased and outdated system of rules were made to end.
6. Supervised the free and fair Third General Elections.

The above were achieved during a short spell of time by the Caretaker Government of Gen. Ne Win and administrative power was returned U Nu and Thakin Tin led Clean AFPFL which won the election. The uncompleted other works due to lack of time were left for the elected government were not satisfactorily continued. The promise endeavors to achieve these completely were not done lightly but with enthusiasm as they were considered a national duty, and the followings were achieved:

1. Suppression of insurgency and development of national security.
2. The Rule of Law and Peace.
3. Reduction of people's cost of living.
4. Dismantling the feudalism which was not suitable in a democracy.
5. Raising standard of capital city, Rangoon to that of a good other capitals in the world.
6. Solving China-Burma border issues.
7. Holding free and fair general elections.

The above undertakings showed that the Caretaker Government achieved what was not possible during the time of previous governments. The Caretaker Government period of effective dealings to achieve law and order in all areas and suppression of insurgency to promote these were affected as a serious duty and the set operations resulted in 1300 rebels being killed with much more than that captured or surrendered. This greatly reduced the insurgency. The leftist sympathizers and other kinds of rebels united among themselves and formed the Organization called “Burma Democratic United Front” in 1959 to ease those conditions.

Nationwide search and confiscation of illegal arms was done and action was taken against gangs of criminals and abductors and hostage takers connected with politicians suppressed and obliterated. Although article 97 of the constitution disallowed military like organizations, armed bands were gathered as pocket armies in various forms during 10 years of rule by AFPFL governments, for example, Lay Way Thakin Kyi Shein’s and Kyite Ma Yaw U Thwin’s pocket armed bands. These gangs were disbanded by the army and inducted into the legal Union Army and Union Military Police.

The systematic reorganization of politically disoriented with multi organizations the Union Military Police was reorganized and reformed. Col. Tan Yu Sai and senior officers from the army were assigned to reorganize the UMP. Due to the effective handling of matters relating to peace and the rule of law, significant reduction of criminal cases were observed. The unbiased treatments of all cases by the government made possible the effective result. For example, a leader of Clean AFPFL, Thakin Kyaw Dun was taken prisoner for his alleged role in kidnapping for ransom of the millionaire Musa Madar. This is to prove that everybody is equal under law, emphasizing the government’s policy on crime and punishment.

The rule of law was observed lacking and very slaked during the time of AFPFL governments of the past and crimes by murder increased noticeably in Insein Area. The culprits of these were from the illegal housing areas of Rangoon which crept from the outskirts into the inner parts of the city. These areas were festered with dealing in illegal

liquors, gambling, and prostitution which led to increase criminal activities. These areas not only promote crime but also the danger of fire. These causes led to the abolishment of the illegal areas and relocating of inhabitants. Col. Tun Sein, the Rangoon Mayor became responsible for the thankless job of clearing these areas to promote Rangoon as a clean and legal living area fitfully efficient. The inhabitants of these areas were forcefully moved to their allotted areas in new satellite townships of North and South Okkalapa and Tharkayta and it was dubbed fascist-like by some politicians. Some inhabitants hated the action but after the settlement in their own legal dwellings, most people changed their attitudes and thanked the government regarding to these moves by force. These made the thousands and thousands of displaced people gained their own houses to live in and came to realize the good intention of the government carried out taking the misunderstood steps with blame by these people at that time. The Caretaker Government not having to win votes by favors, unlike previous governments carried out their duties strictly with enthusiasm became hated by some who were used to favors from previous governments. Some politicians who lost power accused these activities as fascism and dictatorial. The Caretaker Government was not bothered by these accusations and stayed on cause with their undertakings.

Lack of disrepair in the administrative machinery for a decade was corrected with efficiency to rebuild rule of law and peace. These undertakings were affected with the support of the officers and the low ranks of the army as per advice of the educated senior civil servants without being detracted by baseless accusations of being a military dictatorship. The lack of government authority was repaired and effective rule of law was restored reaching to the far off areas by effective military operations. In addition, the lack of Nation Registration in completion made ineffective the Rule of Law and Peace. Irregularities in elections due to lack of proper registration which was numerous and effected the result of elections. It was essential to correct the existing National Registration system in the country.

For a decade, the AFPFL government left this work in such a state partly because politicians understood that these uncertainties of voter eligibilities to be manipulated. The

National Registration also greatly assisted in the work of Immigration Department. It also affected security and promotion of peace and the rule of law.

The defense minister Gen. Ne Win was the chairman of the Central Security Council and in the event of the defense minister taking up the Prime Minister post the chairmanship of the Central Security Council was taken up by Vice Chairman, minister of Interior U Khin Maung Phyu. In the council, Col. Maung Maung took responsibility over co-ordination with the army assisted by Col. Ba Than and Lt. Col. Kyi Han. The illegal arms were searched and confiscated, illegal gangs were searched and destroyed with none budgeted maintenance of pocket militias disbanded and inducted into the army and Union Military Police (UMP).

The Union Military Police (UMP) was utilized during the British rule, policing borders and in normal police works. The UMP was regarded as part of army and part of police and it had to be reorganized. During the high point of insurgency the UMP was very effective being commanded by senior officers who returned to the army when the insurgency was abated, it lost good organization and leadership. There were UMP officers who came from political bases and some were being used by politicians for various purposes. The efficiency of the UMP decreased thus. The politicians became daring in influencing the UMP for various reasons and there was an instant when one whole regiment of UMP disappeared to affect politics at the university. Col. Min Thein and Col. Tan Yu Sai were assigned tasked to repair and reform UMP. The reformed members were inducted into the army to beef up the army. The UMP was not acceptable to be a pocket army which had the sole purpose of pleasing the various masters.

Transportation is crucial for the economy. Hence, senior officers of the military were sent to manage, In Land Water Transport by Col. Kyaw Soe, Railways by Col. Khin Nyo, Burma Airways by Air Commodore T. Cliff and Telecommunications by Lt. Col. Ba Ni. They all strived to manage their departments with efficiency and speed.

As the good knowledge of land and area is essential, Col. Hla Aung was appointed to oversee the department of Land Records, in correct measurement and mapping. Gen. Ne Win advised to do the right things without fear and outstanding

services were rewarded and detractors from duties were punished. There were a few detractors but majority considered that it was time for special efforts and perform their duties with distinction.

The Ministry of Judiciary was significant in building “Peace and Rule of Law”. One of the main pillars of the Rule of Law, the judiciary, was found in disrepair when the Caretaker Government of Gen. Ne Win came to power. Government of Gen. Ne Win repair the judiciary as lawfully required. During the time of AFPFL governments, unconstitutional acts were committed by the government’s orders. The court of Justices was empowered by the constitution to abolish unconstitutional laws enacted by the parliament during the time Caretaker Government. The government after independence respected and relied the court of justices in all matters of law. For example, the two proposals for the presidency were put up to the court of justices to decide the constitutionality and the proposal was thoroughly scrutinized. U Ba Oo was elected president from the two proposed persons U Ba Oo and U Chit Hlaing.

The AFPFL government bestowed awards of honor to the justices. There were judges who accepted honors and some of the judges passed decisions in favor of the government, beyond the natural boundaries of good judgment to win coveted awards and honors. People saw the injustices and look at these in contempt and disdain. This kind of disfigured judiciary structured with lawyers, attorneys and judges was viewed with disrespect by the AFPFL government.

General Ne Win desired laws to be not only in words but also in effectiveness. The laws were expected to be clear and simple. Legal experts who said everything is possible under law were not desired. Accordingly instructed government attorney general to state clearly what was possible and what was not, and leave judges to decide freely without pressuring them to lean to what the government wanted. This showed the respect of law and efficient operation of judiciary by the Caretaker Government. In the time of this government it may be simply observed. That the illegal dwellings were removed because they were unlawful. The Caretaker Government took steps to raise the standard

of living of the illegal dwellers in a real sense to encourage living in peaceful and lawful manner. That assisted the process of restoring Rule of Law and Peace in the Union.

Similarly to make possible living in order and peace in these areas by mayor of Rangoon Col. Tun Sein, in the ministry of Public Works, National Housing and Rehabilitation minister Brig. Tin Pe and the senior special duty officer attached to the ministry Col. Sein Win oversaw the construction of new housing projects at the new Satellite townships with distinctions. The estimated 300,000 people were relocated in the clean and hygienic quarters with discontent at that time but thanked the Caretaker Government later and praised the heavy handed action at that time for the good of people. The people who hated the actions of Caretaker Government at that time later praised when they realized and enjoyed the self ownership of livable houses of their own.

The appropriate living of the numerous people were made possible by the work of Housing Department, Public Works and Irrigation Department supported by the army engineers to built the new Satellite townships. South Okkalapa, was built on uniformly divided plots of land on 1,485 acres for 10,374 house holds. The department of Housing and Land Corporation with the support of army engineers built a total of 74.5 miles of roads and walkways. For water supply 136 wells were dug and 4 deep artesian wells of 50,000 gallons per hour were also sunk. Water supply by 12 inches main pipes were fitted to supply water to the smaller distributing pipe. The supply of electric lighting was built expressly. Good planning made possible the contribution of extra dwellings in 1,500 acres of land between Nga Moe Yake creek and Rangoon – Mandalay railway track were also maintained for the development.

North Okkalapa was built on 1,423 acres of land with 7,579 plots of 40 ft X 60 ft. 15.13 miles of 80 ft wide roads, 13.14 miles of 50ft wide roads and 41.3 miles of 30ft wide roads were laid. 8,000 ft long water ways and 215ft bridge was constructed. In addition, buildings for department of health, posts and telecoms, fire department, engineers' office, market place, and 2 X 300 students' schools were built and constructed fit for a small town. For water supply, Gyo-phyu reservoir piping was tapped to supply

350 tanks with 46 pipe connections for fire engines and also 350 supply connections. In addition 4,000,000 gallons tank was built for emergency water supply during shortages.

New township of Thakayta was also constructed east of Rangoon on 11,509 Acres. It was plotted and built by Housing Department. During the responsibility of the Caretaker Government of Gen. Ne Win took responsibility divided 5,248 plots of land and helped construction of homes on those areas. A bridge crossing over Pasundaung Creek for railways and human crossing was refurbished by military engineers for easy and safe crossing between Rangoon and Thakayta new town. Similar to Okkalapa, buildings for health services, fire services, schools, water supply, electricity supply and hospitals were allocated and built.

These well intended works were conceived by some as dictatorial but the demise of the ruling party due to irresponsible damage had the Caretaker Government installed strapping it with numerous and heavy duties. Even the former government members who had to transfer ruling power, began to criticize and politicians began to use the perceived heavy handedness for reelection in the coming general election.

The Caretaker Government took up a great burden to realize peace and the rule of law and the Inspector General of police took the duty to be responsible for both the police and Union Military Police. The administrative commissioner of police was given the duty of especially administrating police department in individual under the Inspector General.

The police work became much more effective and brisk. 64 new police stations were opened to diminish biased mishandlings due to lack suitably enough stations effectively handle police cases. This made the public saw significant reduction of number of police cases, criminal and civil. The Caretaker Government saw the reduction of criminal cases including murder and others. From (9,635) in hand before compared to (6201) cases in 14 months period of the Caretaker Government. The Caretaker Government handled (1,749) murder cases, (1,568) robbery cases, (2,438) theft and (446) abduction for ransom compared to the comparable period before with reduction of (639), (1,166), (1,377) and (252) relative to the similar cases. A normal year (1936) in prewar time, countrywide (1,175) murder cases, (701) robbery cases and (1,613) theft cases were

found less in comparison but considering the factor of much increased population and post war conditions of unrest, the figures in the time of Caretaker Government were in comparison more acceptable.

During the time of Caretaker Government, there was more number of operations against the insurgents with many of them surrendering and returned to legal fold. Those surrendered returnees were well looked after and resettlement was treated very important and prioritized. They were treated as patriots with their requirements of subsistence and housing were taken care of. In place of the former Deputy Prime Minister led 12 members committee of resettlement for returnees, a new 7 member board of resettlement was formed on 5 June 1959. Resettlement of returnees to legal fold was considered the duty of the nation. This resulted in surrender of the followings between 1 November 1958 and 31 December 1959,

1. Communist (White Flag)	2,206
2. Communist (Red Flag)	283
3. K.N.D.O	928
4. M.N.D.O	9
5. Shan Rebels	97
6. Mujarhidden Rebels	4 ⁷⁷

The number of insurgents who surrendered was 3,527 in total. The needs of those who returned were well taken care of, by the government and that promoted peace and lawful existence for all. Lawful and peaceful existence is a very important work of Ministry of Judicial Affairs. Legal decisions of the courts were crucial and could not be separated from lawful verdicts. They are crucial in promoting development of fair legal proceedings. The timely attendance of witnesses from both sides of the cases made possible with the support of Civil Servants and considerable assistance by National Solidarity Association (NSA).

⁷⁷ Tatmadaw, Researcher. **A Brife History of Myanmar in the Period Between 1948 to 1988 and the Role of Tatmadaw (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: News and Periodical Enterprise, 1990. P 32.

Progress was made possible and effective in the time of Caretaker Government in their support resulting in fair and quick legal decisions. To support these, it was found on examination that in 14 months of the caretaker government, 50,774 witnesses appeared in courts compared to 33,473 attendances in 14 months before. In addition, 58,021 cases were heard in the courts for decisions during the time of Caretaker Government compared to 44,138 in similar time before. Those results were not due to the increases in legal cases, but due to the efficient handling of the cases left unattended or delayed during the period of former governments. In the time of the Caretaker Government, more qualified judges were appointed and cases were open and heard in the vicinity of the places where offences happened, making quick and easy reaches of law. The government showed no favors to anyone, for the judges to freely exercise the legal decisions.

The punishment of crimes was exercised in view to prevent further offences with passing heavy and effective punishment. For example, the entry and robbery at the Presidential Palace by Maung Kyaw was severely punished by the verdict of 7 years in imprisonment with additional 7 years in view of previous offences, totaling 14 years. Two others who abetted were also punished with maximum punishment stipulated by law. The case involved 100 witnesses for the government and 18 for defense was heard and verdict passed in 5 months and 11 days. Another instance was the case of the Communist “Colonel” Chit Kaung who was sentenced to death for high treason by the District Magistrate, Rangoon, sitting as a special judge. Thus the judiciary with severe judgments contributed towards peace and rule of law⁷⁸.

One of the remarkable things in the Caretaker Government was the establishment of the Department of the Frontier Areas Administration⁷⁹. The War Office sent Col. Saw Myint (BC 3518) as head of that department. The department had to undertake the developments of the remote areas which are at the borderline with the neighboring countries. The department established the local councils at those remote areas, with the army captain as head of the respective councils. During the period of carry out the tasks

⁷⁸ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P. 69.

⁷⁹ Saw, Myint. Colonel (retired), Ministry of Defense. Interview, 13 March 2011.

the members of the defense forces co operated with the local chief and local people with respect to their customs and law, because of that attitude towards them, there were no problem between the local people and the newly established councils. The department built roads, schools, hospitals, bridges and administrative offices at those remote areas. People from those remote areas helped the department staff with great affords⁸⁰.

At that time, the Shan State in Burma was governed by the local chief at their remote areas, so the department's another task was to restore central authority at those areas. The local chief established pocket armies for his area and that was not allowed in the time of the Caretaker Government. All the pocket armies were disbanded and the police and army units from the central government took their places.

During the Caretaker Government time, southern part of Shan State was declared military administrative zone by the Central Government. The Military Administrative Council was headed by Col. Saw Myint as the Military Governor and Division Commissioner U Nyi Pu from the civil servant section acted as Public Administrator and Chief Inspector U Ba Aye of the National Police Force as the Police Administrator. During the Caretaker Government period, there were no big clashes between the local people and the staff from that Administration⁸¹.

The Caretaker Government, which was formed with the Civil Servants with the help of the officers from the defense ministry, undertook the policy of anti communism. The government targeted the left leaning people as the enemy of the state. First of all, the Caretaker Government took strong actions against the Student Union of the University of Rangoon as they considered them as left leaning pro communist students. The Chairman of the Students Union was arrested along with Executive Council Members. Some of them were sent away to the concentration camps which are located at the remote areas away from the capital. The leftist politicians, journalists, reporters and workers unions were also sent to those concentration camps, where their Rights were denied to accept by the Caretaker Government.

⁸⁰ Saw, Myint. Colonel (retired), Ministry of Defense. Interview, 13 March 2011.

⁸¹ Saw, Myint. Colonel (retired), Ministry of Defense. Interview, 13 March 2011.

Another remarkable fact during the Caretaker Government was the friendship between the United States of America and Union of Burma. Even though, it had declared the foreign policy of the Union as the strict neutralism, the Caretaker Government was friendlier with the United States of America than the previous government. Some of the officers from the defense ministry were so closed with the US and they were considered as pro west and anti Chinese and anti communist officers of the defense services. That group was headed by Col. Maung Maung (BC 3510). During the Caretaker Government, the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win had no great influence over the armed forces but the Northern Commander, Brigadier Aung She (BC 3505) and some staff from the War Office like Col. Maung Maung (BC 3507) and Col. Aung Gyi (BC 3509).

The event was happened during the Caretaker period among the defense officials was the clashes between Colonel (later Brigadier) Maung Maung and his boss Army Chief Gen. Ne Win (BC 3502). During that period Gen. Ne Win ordered Col. Maung Maung to establish a new Intelligence Service and the latter formed the Intelligence Service with the help of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the United States of America. Then one day, one of the officers asked the chief administrator of the Frontier Areas Administration to allow their research unit to station at the borderline with the Peoples' Republic of China. When the Administrator found out that some of the members of that research team were members of the CIA, he (the administrator) reported back to the Army Chief and the result was that Brigadier Maung Maung was released from his command⁸².

Most of the journalists and the reporters described the period of the Caretaker Government as the fascist period due to some harsh rules laid down by the government. The police and army personnel took some harsh rules while they restored Rule of Law and Peace in the society. Those who did not cross at the Zebra Crossings were taken actions by canning with bamboo sticks without any consideration from the side of the civilians/public. That kind of harsh treatments towards public gave the chance to the

⁸² Saw, Myint. Colonel (retired), Ministry of Defense. Interview, 13 March 2011.

reporters/journalists/politicians and students to name the Caretaker Government as Fascist Government and the period as Fascist Period⁸³.

Even though, some people accused the Caretaker Government as fascist government and its period as fascist period, the army personnel could not take actions as they like toward any one else⁸⁴. During the Caretaker Government, all the military officers had to follow the 1947 Constitution of the Union of Burma⁸⁵. The Caretaker Government allowed the judiciary sector with free hand to carry out its duty. The case between the judge of the court and the high ranking officer showed it was not the fascist period and the army officers could not handle the case according to their will without applying to the constitution⁸⁶. During its time, the chief commander of the Arakan Forces of the armed forces of Burma caught those people who illegally entered from the neighboring Bangladesh into the Union of Burma. The commander had to take them to the court for taking charges against them. At the court, because of the lack of evidence to evict those from the area was not allowed by the court. The commander was so furious and accused the Judge as not a patriot then the judge told the commander not to accuse him again like that but the commander was as furious as he continued the accusations toward the judge⁸⁷. Finally, the judge complaint the commander actions and filed a lawsuit against him, the commander was summoned to the War Office and face the charges filled by the judge against him⁸⁸. According to that case it was not a fascist period as some other claimed.

⁸³ Sein, Win. Journalist (former), Ludu Newspaper. Interview, 10 March 2011.

⁸⁴ Win, Tin. Journalist (former), Hanthawaddy Newspaper. Interview, 19 March 2011.

⁸⁵ Win, Tin. Journalist (former), Hanthawaddy Newspaper. Interview, 19 March 2011.

⁸⁶ Tin, Oo. General (retired), Ministry of Defense. Interview, 19 March 2011.

⁸⁷ Tin, Oo. General (retired), Ministry of Defense. Interview, 19 March 2011.

⁸⁸ Tin, Oo. General (retired), Ministry of Defense. Interview, 19 March 2011.

2. The Effort of the Caretaker Government to hold a free and fair general election as promised by Gen. Ne Win

The Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win, pledged to hold free and fair general elections, when he accepted his duties. After accepting power and relative countrywide peace was realized, the constitutional requirements to hold a free and fair election was drawing near. A third conference of Central Security Council was held on 21,22 and 23 of December 1959 at Tatmadaw (Armed Forces) Theater. The main aim of the conference was to consider and discuss how the free and fair general elections were to be carried out⁸⁹.

On the opening day of the conference, Gen. Ne Win explained clearly how the free and fair elections were to be held and involvement of the administrative machinery and the people of administration and other ranks. The minister of Interior, U Khin Maung Phyu added that the work for peace and rule of law must continue during election time without slacking and suggested ways to work towards promoting Parliamentary Democracy and peacefulness in the lives of Civil Servants. Minister of Judicial Affairs, U Chan Htoon Aung, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, U San Nyunt, and Election Commissioner U Ohn Pe explained in detail to Divisional Commissioners, Special Divisional Police Commissioners, District Commissioners, and District Police Commissioners regarding the general elections and laid down rules to follow⁹⁰.

The General Elections of 1960, unlike the elections in 1956, had significant increase in the number of voters. The increases was due to detail compilation of voters list and preparation of additional appendix list of voters omitted in the past. Due to the increase in number of voters, more members of parliament were necessary to be elected. Adequate numbers of ballot boxes were made available in time and more numbers of electoral vote casting places were provided for the increased number of voters. In addition, to ensure law and order which was required in holding of free and fair elections,

⁸⁹ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P. 7.

⁹⁰ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P. 7.

over 20,000 Special Police Reserve (including women constables) had to be recruited for the whole country.

Every effort was made to ensure free and fair elections and in all matters related to this, political party leaders were consulted where necessary. Out of 250 constituencies in the Chamber of Deputies, free and fair elections were held in 229 of them. Elections in 15 constituencies were postponed due to insurgent activities, 5 had to be postponed pending court decisions and 1 constituency election also had to be postponed due to the demise of one of the candidates. Preparations for elections of 125 members for the Chamber of Nationalities was made with polling date fixed to be on 29 February 1960⁹¹. At the third conference of Central Security Council held at Tatmadaw (Armed Forces) Theater on 21 December 1959, the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win gave a speech emphasizing on how the government employees should behave at the election to be held in 1960. At 1960 election he told the government employees including defense personnel should not be bias to either side, neither favoring nor pressing one side or the other. This should be followed strictly and allowed the country to choose what it wanted.

As suspected by some political parties, the Caretaker Government could prolong their rule until the end of time allowed by the constitution up to June 1960. Further to that it could take 60 days of election before installation of the new Government by elected parliament with the transfer of power by the Caretaker Government. Although the constitution allowed the above, the Caretaker Government without prolonging, dissolved the existing parliament considering that it was fit to hold elections before the end of 1960. Concrete steps were taken with dates for the elections to be held indicated that parliamentary democracy was in deed protected.

When Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win was asked by the foreign press while he was in India on an official state visit on 7 July 1959, he replied that the General Elections in Burma would be held in April 1960 concretely. In fact it had not been announced in Burma, exactly when the elections would be held. The question of election was begun to be discussed in the parliament on 13 August 1959. At that parliamentary meeting it was

⁹¹ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P. 72.

discussed whether it was true that the Caretaker Government plan to hold General Elections within 1960 and if true, would the elections be held at the same time for all the constituencies for the whole country or in any other way. The minister for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Judicial Affairs U Chan Htoon Aung replied that the General Elections would be held at the end of January or beginning of February 1960 and efforts would be made to hold the elections at the same times for all constituencies.⁹²

The question on the number of eligible voters and numbers in different constituencies was asked at that Parliamentary meeting. The question was answered by the same minister U Chan Htoon Aung that there were 250 constituencies with a total of 9,915,216 eligible voters. Whether list of eligible voters in each constituency would be printed and distributed was answered clearly by the same minister that except for Rangoon there was no program to print the list of eligible voters.

When National United Front (NUF)'s member of Parliament, Thakin Chit Maung, on 14 August, 1959 asked in the Parliament whether it was the truth that General Elections would be held by April 1960 as stated by Gen. Ne Win in India, Minister U Chan Htoon Aung replied the same as he did on 13 August, 1959. In view of this, the political parties looked at this matter regarding the pledge of government to hold the General Elections with apprehension. Some parties thought that the Caretaker Government was only a military government and the stooges of Stable Faction of the AFPFL, and on contrast the politicians of the Stable AFPFL faction, said that the Chairman of Clean AFPFL and former Prime Minister U Nu was the one who invited in the Gen. Ne Win government. On 17, August, 1959, the minister for Finance and Revenue, U Kyaw Nyein, while National Budget for fiscal year (1959-60) was put up for examination and debate, added that National General Elections would be held in the last week of January 1960 or not later than the first week of February 1960. Not even the minister of Judicial Affairs, U Chan Htoon Aung, but also the minister for Finance and Revenue, U Kyaw Nyein, announced that the Caretaker Government was preparing for

⁹² Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. Pp. 283-285.

the General Elections to be held not later than the first week of February 1960, confirmed that the General Elections would certainly be held⁹³.

Only after examining the past elections, the way that the General Elections of 1960 held, would be understood. The Union of Burma, which practiced the Parliamentary Democracy since it gained Independence in 1948 halted general elections due to the internal insurgency (1948-50), because at that time the government was busy with putting down the insurgency, restoring peace, rule of law and others. During that time the first priority of the government was to safeguard the Independence and Sovereignty of the Union. Democracy as second priority could not be concentrated. When the insurgency abated by 1951, the General Elections were held in parts, then Democracy, the second priority of the Union was gradually promoted. The first General Election was held on 12 June 1951, but it could not be held in all constituencies together at one time. They were held in groups, because only the constituencies which were free from the effect of insurgency could be held. In that election, a part from the ruling AFPFL, Burma Workers and Peasants Party, Association of National Peace, People's Volunteer Organization, Democratic Party (Burma), Greater Burma Party, Patriots Alliance Party, Arakan Nationalist Party, Burma Muslim Congress, Aung San Party, Victory Party, Independence Party, and Individuals contested to be elected. In that election, although numerous parties contested, the AFPFL won 60% of the votes for 180 out of 233 seats while the opposition parties won only 53 seats in the Parliaments. The tragedy of that first election was that unlawful acts were committed by some politicians. To defense and defeat the insurgencies the AFPFL government formed Home Guards. Later on the original aim for those Home Guards to defend from the insurgency was lost and they turned into the form of pocket armies of the AFPFL members of the parliament in their respective constituencies. The opposition accused the ruling AFPFL that they use some pocket armies to win vote in the 1951 General Elections.

⁹³ Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar's Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. P 285.

Armed with illegal weapons and loosely formed local Home Guards with inadequate supervision and disciplines, those Home Guards turned into the undisciplined pockets armies of the politicians⁹⁴. With the protection of their masters, the Home Guards bullied the public in remote places with the government supplied arms⁹⁵. The ruling AFPFL in power also became infamous in the eyes of the public for employing pocket armed bands to win elections⁹⁶. The mighty AFPFL which won the support of the people since the beginning of the struggle for independence gradually lost the respect of the people. The lost of public support to the AFPFL could be clearly noticed in the General Elections of 1956⁹⁷.

The second General Election was held on 27, April, 1956. The various opposition parties united and formed the National United Front (NUF) emerged as the main opposition party to the ruling AFPFL in this election. Even though AFPFL won that election the difference in votes won was not large in number compared to votes won by the opposition. During that election, the AFPFL used the slogan “ holding state power for 40 years” but the opposition used the slogan “Internal Peace”. The ruling AFPFL misused power including murder, torture, threat and some unlawful acts to win the election.

During that election, the AFPFL won 1.7 million votes against 1.1 million votes won by NUF, but the AFPFL won 144 seats compared to 46 by NUF. In the Parliament the opposition NUF won 1 third of the seats although they won 2 third of the total number of the votes against the AFPFL. It's showed that the power of AFPFL had been diminished and decreed in popularity by the pubic. Anyway, in the parliament, the AFPFL with the significant majority of member wielded power unchallenged. The opposition party with their insignificant numbers of members in the parliament could not support their proposals nor oppose the proposals of the ruling party. Since the independence time the Union of Burma practiced the multi party parliamentary

⁹⁴ Ko, Gyi. Journalist (former), Mandine Newspaper. Interview, 18 March 2011.

⁹⁵ Thar, Ban. Journalist (former), Kyee Mone Newspaper. Interview, 18 March 2011.

⁹⁶ Ko, Than. Ex-Politician, National United Front Party (now dissolved). Interview, 17 March 2011.

⁹⁷ Ko, Than. Ex-Politician, National United Front Party (now dissolved). Interview, 17 March 2011.

democracy as a political system but in reality the ruling AFPFL had all the authority for many years, the opposition party pointed out that situation and accused as the single party dominated authoritative political system. Even the ruling party used the name of AFPFL, the real power is rested with the Burma Socialist Party which dominated the League since the break up of the Communist Party and People's Volunteer Organization. At this point, it should view the connection between the Socialist Party of Burma and the Tatmadaw (Armed Forces of Burma), because Tatmadaw emerged from the politics of the Union of Burma, the top brass of the Tatmadaw were politicians as well. The top commanders of the army at that time were the members of the Burma Socialist Party since the anti colonial and anti fascist periods. The top commanders of Tatmadaw at that time including Col. Kyi Win, Col. Tin Maung, Col. Thein Doke, Col. Aye Maung, Col. Chit Khine, Regional Commander Brig. Aung Shwe, Chief of Military Training, Col. Maung Maung, and Colonel (G.S) of the war office Col. Aung Gyi were members of the Burma Socialist Party⁹⁸. While some of those officers known the Socialist Leaders in person and some of them were relatively connected, for example, Brigade commander Col. Kyi Win and the leader of Burma Socialist Party, U Ba Swe whose wives were sisters⁹⁹. The acts of some of the commanders who prioritize the personal relationship with the politicians effected not only to the army but also to the multi party parliamentary democracy of the Union¹⁰⁰. Some of the commanders helped to win the vote for the Burma Socialist Party in the elections emerged in the General Elections of 1951 and 1956.

In the 1956 General Elections, for ruling AFPFL party to win the votes in some constituencies which were believed to have strong opposition against the candidate of AFPFL, the army sent one or two regiments to those places before the election day and counted their votes in favor of the AFPFL candidate for the respective constituency to make sure that the ruling party won in that constituency. In some places by using power and force the people to vote for AFPFL member. In some districts, armored cars, tanks

⁹⁸ Nyan, Yin. Editor (former). O Way Magazine. Interview, 15 March 2011.

⁹⁹ Nyan, Yin. Editor (former). O Way Magazine. Interview, 15 March 2011.

¹⁰⁰ Nyan, Yin. Editor (former). O Way Magazine. Interview, 15 March 2011.

and heavy weapons vehicles were used to intimidate the public. This indicated the army's involvement in politics.

The difference in policy emerged among the leaders of AFPFL after the second General Election. The reason for the difference in policy was due to winning fewer votes than the first election. Although, the Chairman of the AFPFL, U Nu strongly believed that the reduction in support of AFPFL was due to misuse of power which made the party lose popularity, the General Secretary and some other leaders thought that unlike what the Chairman saw, it was due to use of excessive funds and due to threat by Communists.

During these factional differences and when it was debated whether the Chairman of the party should continue as Prime Minister, the differences grew wider. At that time Chief of Staff, Gen. Ne Win invited the leaders of the AFPFL to his house and warned that the army would be taken away from the politics. Since independence time, the nation used the multi party parliamentary democracy, the ruling party used the army to win the popularity and favor from the public, that kind of actions should be stopped, the army should be separated from the politics and if not then it would be not good for the army in the future. He also explained to them that in the coming election the army won't help the ruling party as they had in the previous elections. The army won't sided with any side in the coming election and made sure that it would be the army for the whole nation and not for the ruling party. Thus Gen. Ne Win asked the leaders of the AFPFL to control the League in their own way to be well disciplined Party for the people of Burma. Anyway the leaders who had connections with the top commanders neglected the warnings of the army chief.

When the ruling AFPFL broke into two main parts, the leaders of the army pleaded the politicians to be reunited for the National Unity and Interest of the People of Burma. But some politicians did not take that plead as sincere advice from the army and considered that action as soldiers' interference in the political affairs. When they could not be reunited and split away into two parts, the army leaders pleaded them to solve the problems in peaceful manner and by using the rule of law according to the constitution. Also warned not to use any unlawful act, and blood letting political assassinations, if they

do so then the army would prevent the bloodshed by the use of force to bring back peace and rule of law and when they have to do they won't hesitate to take action against any side which committed those crimes. The commanders at that time ordered all the troops, they had nothing to help the politicians but they had duty to safe guard and help the ordinary citizen of the Union.

By using the arms and use of force during the first and second General Elections could be found in 4th and 5th points of the two letters exchanged between Gen. Ne Win and Prime Minister U Nu. In the elections before the time of the Caretaker Government, the ruling party at that time used some of its pocket armed bands to win favor, popularity and votes by threat, use of arms, and torture. It was difficult for the first two elections which held during the time of AFPFL to be regarded as Free and Fair elections. Many people with doubts and carefully watched whether the General Election which would be held on 6 February 1960, under the watchful eye of the Caretaker Government might be as same as the first two elections or a free and fair election as different from the pervious elections.

Gen. Ne Win of the Prime Minister in the Caretaker Government, carefully studied the first two elections and took the lessons of imbalances, and firmly assured that the elections which would be held during his time as the Prime Minister of the Union is different from those elections by not allowing any kind of unlawful actions to any sides. He had ordered the election commission to take legal actions against those who break the election laws and to carry out their orders strictly during the elections.

Although the General urged to follow the election laws strictly, the Caretaker Government lost its face because of the actions of some of the commanders who could not divide the personal friendships and duties. To make sure that the General Election of 1960 be considered as Free and Fair election, the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win ordered to follow the rules for the elections which provided the election as free and fair in the armed forces where he was acting as commander in chief. The Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win personally ordered and warned about the election to be free and fair all the time when he hand chances to give speech. At the conference of the Central Security Council which

was held on 21 December 1959, the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win laid out the rules for the Defense Personnel, members of the National Police Force, Union Military Police (UMP) members, and all levels of Civil Servants to follow during the coming General Elections. In that speech the General urged all the attendees to help the General Elections to be free and fair and not to be sided or biased. He also explained to them that his Government came to power not because they want to hold the state power but could not bear the situation which could break the Union in near future, if the politicians could take lessons from the past situation before his government that was great but if not they will only be responsible but not the others.

The commanders from the army, navy and air force, had taped the speech of the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win regarding rules to be followed for the election and replayed it again and again at all the offices from the Regional Command Level to the regiment command levels, and made sure that all the troop had a chance to hear the speech of the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win and to follow those rules strictly during the election time. The Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win emphasized and clearly ordered those rules to be followed as he had heard that some of the top commanders who had political aims and closed relations with some of the politicians would be biased in the elections. Before the elections, commanders who had good relationship with the Burma Socialist Party openly asked the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win not to hold elections and not to transfer the state power to the politicians, giving example as if the Prime Minister carried out his task to hold free and fair election, and handed the state power to the politicians the situation of Burma would be liked the same as before the Caretaker Government time. Thus, the army should take the leading role in the national politics and building the Socialist Society which was the dream of the nation founding father Gen. Aung San and his closed associates.

At the 1960 General Elections, the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win had ordered the members of the armed forces not to be biased in the election as follows:

‘ I warned you many times that it is so important to follow, what I said. From now on you have to follow these rules

until the end of the elections. Remember in your minds that in this election our Tatmadaw will not side with anybody to be fair with everyone. I have already told this many times including in last commanders' conference, but I heard that some of the commanders agreed between them as it were only words and not my real intentions, so they sided with some and if it is found out later they will take responsibility for that. By doing so they will save my image as well. Today I want to tell you that it was not my real intention as I was clear in my mind like it was at the last conference, and it is a clear cut order and you should not be confused with that order, I repeat that, do not be biased in the coming election.'

According to the above statement, holding the 1960 General Elections to be as free and fair election was very important at that time. The Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win not only ordered but also took some action to make sure about that issue for the army. Gen. Ne Win changed the rules for the troops for voting principles. To prevent some unlawful acts in the past elections, the Caretaker Government corrected the voting system for the troops, in the past the troops had to vote at the constituencies where their command was stationed, but in the 1960 General Elections all the troops stationed at the remote areas had to returned and vote at their mother units. That action prevented the case of voting in favor of the AFPFL candidates like in the first and second elections. The Prime Minister's order of not to be biased in the elections not only reached the armed forces but also to the Civil Servants' society. In addition, the Caretaker Government, released all the politicians who were charged with Article No. (5) of Emergency Probation Act, to feely contest in the elections. By doing so, the Caretaker Government made sure that the election held in 1960 was free and fair to all.

In spite of all these orders and actions from the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win, to prevent bias in the elections, the army had found out that some commanders did not follow the orders and took side. The Prime Minister who was also the Chief of Staff did not hesitate to take actions against those rule breakers according to the army code of conduct. Anyhow the actions that carried out by the Caretaker Government or in other words the Government with the support of the armed forces, solved many problems which could not be solved and left during a decade of Political Government, especially the problem concerned with the national interests.

In the 1960 General Elections, the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win clearly ordered not to take side with any side, but some of the commanders took side with political party which they had close connection. Those commanders who had good and closed relations with the Stable AFPFL committed some unlawful acts of bias in their command areas, by changing of the votes from the Clean AFPFL ballot boxes into the Stable AFPFL box, using the bayonet to open the ballot boxes and took the votes for the Stable faction. In his book called “50 years experiences” the author, Lt. Gen (Retired) Tun Kyi mentioned those kind of actions happened during that time as follow:

‘On the election day of 1960, (6 February, 1960) one of my friends and I went around the area with an army jeep for the public safety, we drove along the Samone stream and we found out one big tree with lovely red colored leaves, the officer with me was the one who had a closed connection with the Stable AFPFL, pointed at that tree and told me that the victory is only for the Stable AFPFL because even the tree showed and he smiled himself. The color of the Red represents the Stable while the color of yellow represents the Clean AFPFL. I did not say any thing to him as actually the original color of the leaves of that tree is red. I would like to repeat about the experience that I had during that election. We (army officers) went to one

of the polling booths which were on the Rangoon-Mandalay highway. We heard that the whole village supported the Stable AFPFL and as soon as we arrived there we saw a lot of women wearing black longyi (sarongs) and white shirt with big red roses. Every one of them was happy and warmly greeted us as we arrived there. After we counted the votes from the ballot boxes to my surprise, there was not even a single vote for Stable but all went to Clean AFPFL. There were many townships and districts which were similar to that constituency, 203 members out of 250 seats in the parliament elected were from the Clean AFPFL while the Stable faction won only 39 seats.¹⁰¹

Clean AFPFL faction led by U Nu and Thankin Tin successfully beat their Stable rivals in the parliamentary election with landslide victory in the 1960 General Elections but the opposition Stable AFPFL strongly accused that U Nu violated the principle on Religion and Politics founded by Gen. Aung San. During his campaign for the General Elections in the year 1960, U Nu persuaded the public by promising the declaration of Buddhism as the State Religion for the citizen of the Union. That promise made the public vote for U Nu's Clean AFPFL. By doing so it hurts the unity of the nationalities between the ethnic Burman and others on the different point of view on that issue.

U Nu's led Clean AFPFL held the General Conference in September, 1959. At that Conference, U Nu promised that Union of Burma would accept Buddhism as State Religion, because of that U Nu got support from the Buddhist majority of Peasants and farmers also from the Sahgha (the Buddhist monks) too. While U Nu was persuading the voters by the slogan of making Buddhism as State Religion, Tatmadaw was also launching the Psycho warfare against the Communists insurgents by using of pamphlets

¹⁰¹ Tun, Kyi. **50 Years Experiences** (in Burmese). Pyin Nyar Shwe Taung Press, 2011. Pp. 273-277

named the “*Danger of religion*”. That action also supported U Nu’s policy on State Religion. Those leaflets were distributed into the public in millions.

Swe/Nyein (Stable AFPFL) accused U Nu as the one who messed up the Religion with the Politics. U Nu replied their accusation by announced that making Buddhism as the State Religion was in his mind since the League was in unity and it started at the beginning of the ceremony of the 6th Buddhist Synod. After the accusation made to one another U Nu stood as the one who was a puritan against his rivals from the other faction. U Nu did not live in the mansion but in a small house and used a simple economical jeep as his car after doing so he invited the pressmen from various newspapers and indicating that he had no intention to make any personal benefit from doing politics but on contrary U Ba Swe and U Kyaw Nyein led Stable faction members lived in big mansions and driving Mercedes limousines not to be looked down by the press.

During the election period there were some commanders who did not follow the instructions from the department of Defense Services. During the campaign, one of the commanders inspected his district command met a group of pressmen, the pressmen asked his opinion about the election winner in coming election of 1960 between the Stable AFPFL which used the Red color as its official color for the party and the Clean AFPFL which used Yellow as its official color, the commander. The Colonel just put a smile on, and did not answer with words, but he showed that he favored Stable faction by pointing his cap which was wrapped in the color of red. By doing that he gave a strong and silent message to everyone that he favored the Stable faction and it should be understood that he wanted that constituency would elect the Stable candidate. That kind of silent support from the army could be seen in various constituencies and in some constituencies the local army commander openly and clearly supported the Stable faction. Finally some hardliner commanders ordered their men to openly support the Stable AFPFL by allowing them to transfer the votes from the Clean faction ballot boxes into the Stable faction ballot boxes. Later on Brigadier (retired) Aung Gyi , who was the deputy commander in chief of Defense Services (Army) confessed that during that election, some of the commanders took side with those political faction which they had

strong relationships. That kind of bias was also mentioned in his (Lt. Gen. (retired) Tun Kyi) as follow:

'xxxx, after clearly making a decision for an exact date for the general election Gen. Ne Win invited all the top commanders to his house and he had a private conversation with them at the Boat House which in the compound of his residence, and again told all the commanders not to take side with any political party, but some commanders could not resist the personal friendship between them and the politicians, took biased in the elections. It was happened and it was confessed by the Deputy Commander in Chief of Defense Services (Army) Brigadier Aung Gyi. He pointed out that not only some commanding officers but also the commander of Northern Command took side. The regional commander had ordered his staff to help the Stable AFPFL. At this point we have some confusions as Brig. Aung Gyi might remarked mistakenly between the Northern Commander and Southern Commander as at that time the Northern Commander was Brig. San Yu (25/2/59 – 16/10/61). Brig. San Yu was famous as one of the lieutenants who followed Gen. Ne Win's orders exactly all the time and someone like him won't commit such deviation. In addition to that I was an officer at the Northern Command during that election time, we won't dare to take side with the Swe/Nyein (Stable faction) openly and not even dare to ask followers to take side with Stable faction. If the Northern Commander himself committed in taking side with Stable we won't hesitate to take side with Stable faction. Although Northern

Commander, Brig. San Yu had not violated the instruction of Gen. Ne Win, the commander of 1st Division stationed at Makehtila area violated and took side with the Stable faction. Brig. Aung Shwe, who was the Chief of Southern Command from 25/2/59 to 12/2/61, was given an early retirement for his alleged role for taking side with the Stable faction. Thus the regional commander that Brig. Aung Gyi mentioned was not the Northern Commander but Southern Commander. Some of the commanders including Southern Commander Brig. Aung Shwe (BC 3505), Col. Aye Maung (BC 3512), Col. Tin Maung (BC 3517), Col. Thiha Thura Hla Maw (BC 3570), Col. Kyi Win (BC 3572), Col. Thein Doke (BC 3647) and Lt. Col. Chit Khine (BC 3649) were found out to be biased and all of them had to take early retirements'

The election which was held during the Caretaker Government time gave indication to the public, that some commanders had closed relationship with the Stable AFPFL. But there were some controversies about the retirements of those officers. In his book name "*General Ne Win and Burma Political Journey*" the author Dr. Maung Maung mentioned that those officers who took side with the Stable AFPFL could not accept the election result (the result with landslide victory for the Clean AFPFL). Finally they approached Gen. Ne Win and supported him to launch an army coup, but the General strongly believed that it was not the way to solve the political problem at that time ordered them to take an early retirement. In the book about the interview with former Brig. Aung Gyi by the editor of SNAP SHOT journal Myat Khine, the former Brigadier confessed that some of the commanders planned to overthrow the Clean AFPFL government by force that was why they had to take an early retirement.

During the election campaign both the Clean and Stable factions utilized the Caretaker Government's actions to win votes from the public in their own ways. In the

early times both parties gave message to the public as they were closed to the Caretaker Government, and showed that which side was friendlier than the other side. In the early times, when they persuaded the public the members of the Stable AFPFL showed their friendliness towards the army by calling the officers “our men” or “our comrades”. But later on when they found out that some of the government’s activities in development and shifting of some illegal dwellings, the Caretaker Government lost public favor, they (the political parties) switched side and persuaded public favor by accusing the actions of Caretaker Government as fascist actions toward the public. At that time both parties showed that they were not closed enough to be friends with the Caretaker Government by promising the public to halt the actions that the Caretaker Government had been doing. During his campaign the leader of the Swe/Nyein faction, U Kyaw Nyein, promised to the public that if their party were elected they would take back the army to the barracks and separate the army from the politics once and for all, but at that time the decision had been made by the army leaders that the army won’t take any political responsibility any more, U Kyaw Nyein’s announcement made nothing new to the public. Because of that situation, the army decided to stay away from the politics and political parties to save its’ good image. During that period the political parties accused the actions of the Caretaker Government as fascist like and gave the image of themselves as those who brought democratic rights to the public. During one of his campaigns, the former prime minister and chairman of the Clean AFPFL, U Nu asked the public to vote for his faction if they did not want Fascism and love Democracy. By doing so he accused the Caretaker Government as fascist government indirectly. The politicians from both sides took the weakness of the people by seeing some of the actions of the Caretaker Government for disciplines as fascist like rules. They named the Caretaker Government as fascist government and that period as fascist period of the Union of Burma.

In the 1960 elections, the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win clearly ordered all the defense personnel not to take side with any political party and if they break that rule they would be taken into action according to the army code of conduct. During the previous elections *Tatmadaw* helped the ruling party at that time of the AFPFL but in the 1960

elections it had been ordered strictly not to help any political party in anyway. During the previous elections the troops had to vote at the local polling booths where their regiments were stationed, but in the elections of 1960, all troops had to vote at the polling stations where their mother units were stationed. By doing that all the nationwide polling system was equal as every place. The commander in Chief, General Ne Win ordered as follow:

'In this election, I would like you to follow the rules and regulations which were laid for this election. Do not side with any political party, by saying directly, the Stable AFPFL. I heard that in some places, some middle ranking officers openly take side with the political party that they were affiliated with. In some places not only the middle ranked officers but also some high ranking officers too, I told you many times that those actions are unacceptable. I want every one of you to strictly follow the orders from the war office, not to take side with any political party. In 10 days time there would be an announcement from the war office for the officers, the rules that they had to follow strictly during the election time. You may ask why I have to tell you again and again about this, my answer for your question is clear as I want 1960 election as free and especially fair election in our time'

Apart from that the General also warned the defense personnel about their attitude and behaviors towards the public, the public benefit would be put in a priority for every member of the defense services. And not to be dogmatic against any citizen even they favor the party which the officers could not accept.

The Stable AFPFL announced that there were no state religion for the Union of Burma, during the early days of the campaign period, but later on, they too used some

propaganda which was not clearly differentiated between the politics and the religion. “Declaring the Buddhism as the State Religion” was the election slogan for the former Prime Minister U Nu led Clean AFPFL during the election campaign of 1960. The opposition party accused U Nu that he broke the principle of secularism of the nation founding father Bogyoke Aung San and using Buddhism to win votes for his benefits in the election. But U Nu replied the accusations by saying that his plan for declaring Buddhism as the state religion was in his mind since the time of the 6th Buddhist Synod.

At that time the army psycho warfare department distributed thousands and thousands of leaflets concerning Communists and their atheism. This helped U Nu’s policy of election campaign in many ways.

There were lots of problems that the Union of Burma faced because of declaring Buddhism as the state religion. Although the Buddhists liked U Nu’s policy on state religion, non Buddhists of the Union worried for their future. After preparing all the necessary steps for the security of the General Election, the Caretaker Government, U Chan Htoon Aung, the minister for Judicial Affairs fixed the date for the General Elections as 6 February 1960. That date was confirmed as the election day for the 1960 general election by another minister in the Caretaker Government, U Kyaw Nyein, who was responsible for the Finance and Revenue Ministry.

After confirming of 6 February 1960 as the Election Day, all the political parties persuaded the public to vote for them. The personal attacks were common among the candidates of the political parties during the election campaign. Some even used arms against their political rivals and some even committed the political assassinations while they were campaigning for the election in 1960. At that time the Caretaker Government was busy with their efforts to promote Rule of Law and Peace in one hand and on the other hand they tried their best to hold the free and fair election for the Union. Some commanders committed taking sides during this period. Anyhow the Caretaker Government successfully held the free and fair election in February 1960.

When the Caretaker Government led by Gen. Ne Win accepted the invitation from the Clean AFPFL government in 1958, Prime Minister U Nu asked Gen. Ne Win to

hold the general elections not later than 6 months from the date of the transfer of power. Gen. Ne Win who accepted the transferred of power on 28 October 1958, promised that he would try his utmost to arrange the holding of a free and fair general election before the end of April 1959. Thus the holding of a general election became the prime task for the Caretaker Government. With the unsettled conditions prevailing in the country Gen. Ne Win knew full well that the holding of elections was an impossible undertaking. After successfully carried out the task “Rule of Law and Peace” the Caretaker Government tried its best to arrange the holing of a free and fair election as soon as possible, it was in the second half of 1959. In June 1959, the Caretaker Government declared that a free and fair general election would be held either in the last week of January or not later than in the first week of February 1960.

At this point we have to explain about duty of the Caretaker Government to arrange the holding of free and fair election in the Union. The Caretaker Government or the General’s Government as it was known did not come to power as military governments like in some other countries, but as the interim government which came to power during the time of the deteriorating of law and order in the nation and its main duty or task was to restore “Rule of Law and Peace” nationwide. As the national interim government, and appointed by the members of the parliament, according to the constitution of the Union, the Caretaker Government respected the democratic constitution and rights of the Union of Burma. As a government which was handed power by the previous in accordance with the democratic principle of the Union, all the ministers and the prime minister in the cabinet of the Caretaker Government respected the democratic principles and constitution of the Union of Burma. Thus according to the principles of the parliamentary democracy, the general elections would hold every 4 years or on the time as it had arranged. Actually the year 1960 was the exact time for holding the general election for the Union as the previous elections were held in 1956. As an interim government of the Union, the Caretaker had no intentions to hold the state power for long but to restore “Rule of Law and Peace” nationwide, after the political situation was stabilized the government had to hold the election.

On the side of the opposition parties, U Aung Than, the leader of the National Progressive Party explained to the public of their aim for demanding to hold elections in the nation as they do not doubt or suspect the Caretaker Government and its governance but to defend the Parliamentary Democratic principles for holding the elections as a basic concept, they had demanded the government to hold the elections.

Although the Caretaker Government promised to hold the free and fair election, as they are the promoters of democracy and non-bias. Some of the politicians still suspected the actions of the government so they suggested for establishment of an Advisory Board for the elections, composed of representatives from all participating parties, but the Stable AFPFL response for that demand was cleared. They stated that the Caretaker Government would act as an umpire and hold a free and fair election. The establishing of an Advisory Board would mar the Government's reputation. Whenever a problem arises the Caretaker Government always discussed the matter with all the parties. The present difficulty, they stated lay in distrust and doubt. They believed that this sort of motion should never be tabled as it would cast doubts on the Government of Gen. Ne Win. It depends totally on the participating parties for the elections to be free and fair. This time there would be no coercive measures employed by unruly elements in getting their votes.

Another Member of Parliament from the Stable AFPFL explained to the public that holding the free and fair election is the duty of the Caretaker Government and asked the government to arrange for the followings:

1. All political parties must adhere to the prevailing parliamentary elections law and bye – laws.
2. All government servants should not align themselves with either group but remain strictly neutral, and
3. Government should see to the welfare of the voters and give adequate protection for the holding of free and fair elections in insurgent infested areas.

The Minister of Transport, Posts and Telecommunications, U San Nyunt, stated that during the elections the District Commissioners would act as election officers, their duties are as followings:

1. The completion of electoral votes.
2. Fixing of election day according to section 34 of the electoral law
3. To vet and decide list of candidatures.
4. The construction of polling booths
5. The appointment of polling booths supervisors.
6. To postpone the election in case of trouble.
7. To declare election results.
8. To report the results to the government.
9. To see the justification of expenditure submitted by the contesting candidates.

There may be doubts that the DC acting in his capacity as Administrative Officer might carry out unfair practices on the powerless political parties. But polling officer, polling booth supervisors and all other could cast their votes on whichever side they prefer. Apart from these they have no right to canvass for votes and do other unfair practices. Section 62 polling bye – laws prohibit all such practices. If they transgress those regulations they could be imprisoned up to six months. Regulations prohibiting unlawful practices to the candidates themselves have also been issued. If the candidate transgressed the regulations he would have to forfeit his candidature and be debarred from standing for election for the next five years. Thus regulations have been issued to offset unlawful practices. The Caretaker Government has no linkages or ties with either party. Hence one need not cast doubts on their declaration to hold a free and fair election. The setting up of an Advisory Board would only complicate matters.

From time to time, the Caretaker Government had to clarify on the news that senior military officers would be participating in the elections. That this was a rumor and was erroneous was clarified by Colonel Maung Maung on 8 May 1959. He continued to state that officers of the Tadmaw (armed forces) were out to stabilize the country's

“topsy – turvy” situation and were not governing the country for the sake of power. The Tatmadaw’s principle aim was to inculcate democracy in the rural areas. This would enable the rural folks to defend and resist injustices in the future. They would then be able to cast their votes on men of their choice without being hamstrung.

During the election campaign, the Clean AFPFL persuaded the public votes by announcing that their party’s future plans were making of Buddhism as the state religion and forming of the state for the Araken people. The Clean AFPFL accused the army/ the Caretaker Government as the men of the Stable AFPFL. On contrary, the Stable faction accused the Clean faction as the faction which gave the army power of the state.

Just as the Clean AFPFL leaders used various persuasive tactics with added tempo to canvass for votes, the Stable AFPFL leaders also did likewise. Bo Khin Maung Galay, for instance spoke until he went dizzy at the public conference held on 1 January 1960. Bo Khin Maung Galay stated:

‘The election which will decide the country’s future will be coming within 36 days from now. If vote casting went awry then this election might turn out to be the last one for us. We do not want good looking men to go round cheating with rosary beads in their hands. Although they appeared to hold the five percepts they went round chanting ‘the vote is clean but the man is stable’

Then he queried from the platform:

“who brought in the government of General Ne Win? Who was it that requested General Ne Win to hold the portfolio of Defense and also six other military officers to take ministerial posts?”

The public answered:

“U Nu, it was U Nu”¹⁰²

¹⁰² Naw, Angelene and Daw, Myint Kyi. **Myanmar’s Politics of 1958 – 1962 (Volume 2)** (in Burmese). Yangon: The Historical Research Center of the Union of Myanmar, 1991. P 363.

Finally the Stable AFPFL prepared to persuade the public with some incentives like announcing Buddhism as a state religion, but it was too late as the public loved U Nu and his Clean AFPFL so deeply and they were ready to vote for him. At the same time some of the actions of the commanders who took side with Stable drove the public to vote for U Nu and his Clean faction.

On 6 February 1960, the General Election was held and the followings are the results of the election:

9,915,216 people came to the polling stations and voted which was 59% of the eligible voters for the nation. Out of all the votes 52% went to the Clean AFPFL and 31% to the Stable AFPFL, the National United Front won only 5% of the entire votes. The NUF contested 135 constituencies but none of them was elected. In the parliament 159 represented the Clean while only 39 were from the Stable.

3. The Reconstruction of the Economy of the State by the Caretaker Government

After successfully carried out the first task as Rule of Law and Peace in the nation, and second task as to hold the general elections in February 1960, now is the time to explain that the reconstruction of the economy of the Union of Burma by the Caretaker Government. The two main tasks that the Caretaker Government to carry out were (1) To reduce the living cost of the citizen of the Union and (2) To repair the Economy of the Union. To achieve the above goals the ministries from the National Economic Sector tried their best.

The Ministry of the National Planning was the main ministry taking the responsibility of reduction of the living cost and repair of economy of the Union of Burma. The minister for that ministry was Gen. Ne Win who also held the position of the Prime Minister of the Caretaker Government. The Ministry of National Planning improved its efficacy as the central body advisory to the Cabinet on broad issues of

economic, social and technical policy. Forward strides were taken in the collection, collation, analysis and interpretation of basic statistics and economic intelligence¹⁰³.

A close observation was kept on program and project implementation. Encouragement, assistance, or initiation provided by the ministry resulted in marked improvement in the operating practices in the various agencies of Government. The most important committee in this ministry was Budget Allocation Supervisory Committee. The committee's responsibility was allocation of government expenditures as between the various sectors and departments should be guided by a consideration of national priorities. The chairman of that committee was Brig. Aung Gyi who was also the deputy commander in chief of the defense services. The committee was consisted of 4 officials from the Ministry of Defense (including Brig. Aung Gyi), 1 officer from each from the Ministry of Finance and Revenue, Ministry of National Planning and Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The committee anticipated, watched, and suggested means of dealing with important questions involving economic policy, especially those which owing to their generality or novelty extended beyond the spheres of any department. It gave connected forethought to economic, social and technical matters, including production, trade and prices. It explored and determined realistic levels of domestic and foreign financial resources and expenditures.

The progress of the implementation of Government programs was observed and measures to overcome difficulties were instituted. In the discharge of its functions the committee sought the advice and co-operation of all Government and quasi-Government organizations.

Another committee was named Trade Co-ordination Committee which was also under the ministry of National Planning. The resources of the Ministry of Trade Development, the Ministry of Supplies and Co-operatives and the Ministry of National Planning were pooled in deliberation and action was directed towards the solution of

¹⁰³ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P. 123-125.

problems of trade imbalances, shipping space, procurement and distribution, production and export¹⁰⁴.

The Ministry of National Planning implemented the Investment Act. Legislation designed to attract foreign investment, which has so long been pending, receive early consideration of the Government. The Union of Burma Investment Act was passed in September 1959 with the economic and social development of the Union, the increase in output and productivity, the raising of the standard of living and the encouragement of long term investment as its declared aims and objects.

The act applies to manufacturing, mining, fishing, tourism, processing of agricultural, forest, mineral or fishery, products and such other economic activities as may, by rules, be brought under the Act.

The Act grants complete exemption from income – tax for the first three years of an enterprise and partial exempting for additional periods, exemption from Custom Duty on raw materials for the first three years' commercial production, guaranteed non nationalization of an enterprise for a period of 10 years from the date on which commercial operations commence, the period being extendible up to 20 years. Other facilities and benefits are also granted.

The passing of the Investment Act was but one of the many measure undertaken by the Government to create an encouraging climate for foreign investment. Many basic economic improvements have been made and many previously effective barriers to new foreign enterprise have been removed¹⁰⁵.

During the Caretaker Government time, apart from the Ministry of National Planning was the Ministry of Transportations, Posts and Telecommunications.

Defense, internal security, the economic life of the people, their standards of living and general welfare depend on a large measure on efficient means of transport and

¹⁰⁴ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P. 124.

¹⁰⁵ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese) . Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P. 124.

good post and telecommunications. Therefore, the Caretaker Government accorded priority to all these matters concerning transport and communications.

For the welfare of the public in general, the Government had the following three objectives in dealing with transport:

1. Lower the cost of living.
2. Provide speedy and low cost transport, and
3. Transport as fast as possible to the ports, and the foreign exchange earning export traffic.

In pursuance of this policy, the Railway Board and the Inland Water Transport Board were directed to reduce by 20 percent to 30 percent the freight rates on common consumer goods. This reduction in freight charges was one of the factors which contributed to the effective manner in which the cost of living was reduced during the term of office of the Caretaker Government. Arrangements were in hand also to review the freight charges on other goods.¹⁰⁶

All available transport resources have been utilized to the fullest possible extent to avoid waste and to provide cheap, fast and punctual services for the carriage of passengers and goods. Privately owned public transport has been allowed to operate in fair competition with state owned transport.¹⁰⁷

Special attention and priority have been accorded by the state-owned transport undertaking to the speedy transport of the main foreign exchanged earning commodities such as rice, teak, pulses, and minerals. They have also kept a close watch on the distribution of transport facilities for seasonal products for both internal and external consumption. Special arrangements were also made for the carriage of commodities such as petroleum, cement and sugar which effect saving on foreign exchange although not directly earning it.

¹⁰⁶ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.315.

¹⁰⁷ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese) . Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.315.

As it was considered, both desirable and necessary to bring about the co-ordination of all forms of transport, this ministry enunciated the following four guiding principles to achieve this end:

1. Each form of transport to be used within its proper sphere.
2. There should be controlled coexistence where more than one kind of transport is necessary, so that there will not be any unhealthy or wasteful competition.
3. There should be no over supply of transport facilities in some areas and an inadequate supply in some areas.
4. There should be co-operation in providing facilities for an easy interchange of passengers and goods between areas served by different modes of transport.

This Ministry believes that the faithful implementation of this policy will lead to the achievement of the three aforesaid objectives concerning the people's welfare.¹⁰⁸

The Posts and Telecommunications departments were at last emerged with effect from 15 January 1960. The amalgamation is effective not only in the directorate but also down to the lowest levels, and more than half the task of merging has been accomplished so far. When all the posts and telecommunications offices in the districts have been combined as in pre-war days, it is anticipated that an annual recurring saving of 800,000 Kyats will accept.

The Post Office permits the family remittance (postal money order) from foreigners residing in Burma. Previous to the introduction of a control scheme, remittances exceeded 35 million in 1948. Rigid control was exercised beginning with 1950 with further tightening in 1957.

The figures (1959) indicated a reduction of nearly 49 million kyates as compared to those of 1948.

The third Ministry is the Ministry of Trade Development. When the present Caretaker Government took over, the economic conditions in the country were

¹⁰⁸ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese) . Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.316.

deteriorating fast. All economic activity was stagnant with a gloomy future ahead. It was left to the Caretaker Government to galvanize the economic activities and to create conditions for revitalization of the economic well being of the country.¹⁰⁹

The dedicated task of the Caretaker Government has been to bring down the cost of living which had been spiraling. To this end, drastic measure was adopted and swift action taken to boost up both foreign and internal trade. In the past, trade policy was directed towards conserving of foreign exchange by restriction of imports and fostering of domestic production. The policy of Caretaker Government enforced is for earning of more foreign exchange by diversification of exports and by an intensive export drive. The Caretaker Government has taken a revolutionary step in giving top priority to the export trade by relegating the import trade to second place.

At the beginning of 1959, a Council known as the “Exports Promotion Council” was formed by the government with the specific charge to plan and implement an export drive. Represented in the council were the ministries of Trade, Finance, National Planning, Agriculture and Forests, Mines and Defense.

The most revolutionary measure affected was the relaxation of monopolies in the export of rice, rubber, cotton, and teak. Previously, the export of rice, rubber, and teak were the sole monopolies of the Government and export of cotton the sole monopoly of a Co-operative Society.

This policy of “demonopolising” the trade in these products was truly revolutionary in the context of the previous concept of economic panaceas. In the case of rice and teak, officially there is still a state monopoly but private trade is encouraged to participate in the export trade of these two commodities by affording incentives and facilities especially to Burmese nationals.

As a “one crop economy” can sometimes be very dangerous for the country, the Government is directing its efforts to diversify its exports by exploration of markets for domestic products other than traditional items. Thus the State Agricultural Marketing

¹⁰⁹ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.319.

Board (SAMB) is making all out efforts for the marketing of Potatoes, Tapioca, and Virginia tobacco.¹¹⁰

The main functions of State Agricultural Marketing Board are as follow:

1. Procurement of paddy and rice within the country.
2. Sales of rice and rice products abroad.

The new method of buying the rice was introduced, the SAMB has been buying paddy by opening of buying centers throughout the length and breadth of the country and the same price was fixed for the whole year whether purchase was made at the beginning of the season when paddy was still full of moisture or whether it was late in the season when there was less moisture content in the paddy.

In these circumstances, the Caretaker Government found it necessary to introduce radical changes in the pattern of procurement. Thus, varying prices are fixed for the paddy according to the period of purchase.

Under the present pricing system, price of paddy varies upward with each of the 3 periods, viz, January and February; from March to June; and from July to December. This change in procurement system by varying the price of paddy according to the time of season when paddy is actually bought has brought about advantageous result not only to the SAMB but also to the cultivators and stockists.

The foreign sales of rice by the SAMB fall under two categories; one on government to government basic and the other, through private buyers. About three quarters of rice are sold on government to government basic and the balance one quarter is sold through private buyers.

In the past, instead of the seller going round to the customers, the reverse has been the case. Now this practice is found to be out-moded as it is against usual commercial practice. Accordingly, the SAMB is now sending out rice selling missions abroad in a true commercial style and this practice is now bearing fruitful results.

When the Caretaker Government took over, there was a large stock of more than 160,000 tons of unsold old rice which was carried over from the period between 1952-57.

¹¹⁰ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. P.230.

sales of rice during 1959 amounted to 1.75 million tons. Out of this total, 1.38 million tons of rice were sold on government to government basis and the balance of .37 million tons through private trade, only a balance of 50,000 tons was carried over to 1960.¹¹¹

One of the dedicated tasks of the Caretaker Government, in line with the policy objective of internal trade has been to lower the cost of living. The first campaign to lower the prices of commodities was launched against the “Economic Insurgents” as the profiteers, hoarders, and blackmarketeers were called. A high power committee known as “the committee for suppression of economic insurgents, consisting of army and civilian officials was formed to deal effectively with this anti-social crime.

Concurrently with the actions taken against the economic insurgents, the committee for suppression of Economic insurgents took other measures to impose stringent controls on the prices of essential commodities, to improve transport facilities, to reduce the high freights and to change the distribution system of the SAMB, co-operatives and the JVCs.

The maximum profit margin on the essential commodities was fixed at 7.5 % for the importer, further 7.5 % for the wholesaler and a further 10 % for the retailer. All shopkeepers were also required to fix prices tags on all were placed on display for sale. These measures have undoubtedly proved to be a veritable set-back for the hoarders, blackmarketeers and profiteers.

Transport facilities were also improved by making the public high ways safe for journey by day and by night. Another measures taken in to this respect was the reduction of freight rates on all the state own carriers. Apart from the high prices of consumer goods, considerable hardship had been experienced previously owing to lack of access to the goods. There had been a multitude of defects in the system and mode of distribution resulting in plenty in some quarters and a dearth in others.

To remedy these defects, the Caretaker Government took effective measures to overhaul the distribution system of the CSMB, co-operatives and JVCs by circumventing

¹¹¹ **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. Pp 234-235.

superfluous procedural limitations. Accordingly, rationing system was replaced by a wider and direct distribution system.

Role of the Defense Services Institute (DSI)

Another association which also takes the responsibility of lowering the prices of the basic commodities was the Defense Services Institute (DSI). The DSI, which previously had looked only to the welfare of the Armed Forces, accepted the challenge to enter the battle on behalf of the non self profit economic organizations for the welfare of the people and the economic progress of the country, brandishing the war banner entrusted to it by the Caretaker Government.

The DSI procured for the Army peanuts, split yellow peas and peanut oil, so as to ensure their quality and satisfactory prices. It was perceived that the people had to buy fish and pawn at high prices so that they never had enough. Moreover, no company or any individual had been able to operate the sea fishing industry successfully. Therefore, the DSI studied ways and means to successfully operate the industry.

When the Caretaker Government was formed, the DSI had already begun the sea fishing industry with fishing vessels and complete fishing gear from Japan, with the assistance of Japanese experts. At that time, fish brokers and traders on the one hand and fish co-operatives on the other were competing with each other in marketing fish.

However, this failed to benefit the public by bringing down the prices or the fishermen by ameliorating their conditions. For the relief and welfare of the people the Caretaker Government fixed the price of meat, poultry, fish, and dried fish. But because of greedy traders these became unavailable causing great hardship to the people of Rangoon. It was to solve this problem that the DSI planned and implemented the Fresh Water Fish Project. The DSI and the government were able to offer relief to the people by bringing down the price of fish, meat, and Poultry, and by making them available to quantities sufficient to meet the demand. The reductions of basic commodities are as followings:

Name of foodstuff	Quantity	Former Price (In Kyat)	DSI Price (In Kyat)
1. Chicken	one viss	6 to 7	5.00
2. Pork	one viss	5 to 6	4.50
3. Duck	one viss	5 to 6	4.50
4. Goat	one viss	6 to 9	4.50
5. Hilsa Fish	one viss	8 to 9	3.50
6. Butters	one viss	8 to 9	4.50
7. Lobster	one viss	6 to 8	3.50
8. Prawn	one viss	4 to 5	2.50
9. Hmyin Ngapi	one viss	2 to 3	1.55
10. Firewood sticks	100	3 to 4	2.30 ¹¹²

¹¹² **Is Trust Vindicated?** (in Burmese). Yangon: Ministry of Information of the Union of Burma, 1960. Pp 246-249

Chapter IV

Analysis and Conclusion

Analyzing the actions of the Caretaker Government's main tasks

When we analyze the actions of the Caretaker Government's main tasks, we have found out that in some areas of its actions on the main tasks could be accepted but not all of them. The actions on the Restoring Rule of Law and Peace, we could accepted the way that it discharged against the armed rebels and the removal of the squatters from the downtown of Rangoon. Even we could accepted of the action of removal of the squatters from the slum areas the harsh method should not used without explanation to the squatters the reason why they should be removed from that areas but with force. The better way to carry out that task should start with explanations to them with deep concern of the policy of the Caretaker Government to upgrade the level of Rangoon to the status of the capitals of other developed nations, instead of explained to them with showing the good deeds of the Caretaker Government, the government used the harsh methods to clear them all from the slum, may be the government had no time to explain to them in details with good deeds as the Caretaker Government was an interim government which had only a short period to govern the Union and to get a credit the government used all its affords to accomplished the mission that they had planned to do.

To accomplish its tasks they used the harsh rules like controlling the leftist politicians, journalists, reporters, students could not be accepted as those actions directly violated the democratic and individual Rights of every citizens of the Union of Burma. Its actions toward the Student Union Executive Members was so bad as it directly violated the student's right as well as human rights of those arrested student leaders.

The actions and its fulfillments to hold the free and fair elections as its promise is a remarkable and could be given a credit to the Caretaker Government of the Union of Burma. The actions of some of the commanders during the time of 1960 elections of biased for the party which they wanted to be the victors of the elections could not be

credited as they could not keep their promise as the elections which would be free and fair to everyone.

Their actions in the field of economy of the Union of Burma to reduce the prices of the basic commodities by selling goods with the help of the army's DSI center could be accepted as they used the army personnel to bring down the prices. Like the way that the soldiers carried the meats, fishes and other basic commodities to sell at the low prices and ordered all the shops to put the price tags are the acceptable and should take lessons from them. But expending of the businesses owned by the DSI beyond its need and competing with the individuals in the markets is not acceptable as it could harm the individuals in long term.

The actions of the Caretaker Government in every aspect have good and bad deeds. The Caretaker Government used some harsh methods in the economic sectors too. The establishment of the council to crash the economic insurgents is not a good action and idea for a long term as it could be like some autocratic actions toward the individual business persons.

Overall we have found out that the Caretaker Government of the Union of Burma's actions was only good enough for a short periods and it could not be effective in a long run. After we have learnt the actions of the Caretaker Government, we could noticed that in the development sector it has a progress as the capital Rangoon achieved the status of the international capitals but in a political sector, its actions harmed the progress of the democratic principles of the Union of Burma and the idea and experience of the democratic rights for the citizens of Burma was decreased as in whole.

Conclusion and Discussion

At first we have found out that while transferring the power to Gen. Ne Win, the Prime Minister U Nu urged the General to undertake some difficult tasks as he might believe that Gen. Ne Win, who had never had an active job in the governing mechanism, could not carry out those tasks. He may plan to kill him politically once and for all. (U

Nu had to hand the ruling power as he believed that he was being threatened by some army officers to handover the governing powers.)

On the contrary, Gen. Ne Win who had some knowledge of governing mechanism found out the weakness of the political government neglecting the highly trained Civil Servants, so he asked the help from those officials in governing the state effectively. By doing so, he saved his image as someone who took the responsibilities of the state during the hard times. The army which he headed was credited for that 17 months long period in the modern history of Burma.

The whole process is an important first step in politics that Gen. Ne Win took step to interfere in the politics of Burma, to taste the ruling power and from the Prime Minister U Nu's that was his last attempt to halt the actions against him by some of the officers, for example, Colonel Maung Maung, Colonel Aung Gyi and some fellow officers from the Northern Command who wanted to overthrow him and his democratically elected government by arms and using the deterioration of Law and Order and Peace as an excuse. In doing so, Prime Minister U Nu, utilized the democratic principles which were active under the Parliamentary Democracy, to save the nation from the military dictatorship. In doing so, the image of Burma and Burma Army was not hurt in the international community. He did not allow the army coup to take place in the nation but transferred it in democratic principle by allowing the parliament to practice and be above the Caretaker Government. (During the rule of the Caretaker Government, the General who held the Premiership had to answer questions in the parliament)

During its time as ruling machinery, the Caretaker Government successfully undertook the tasks. It was successful as the Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win gave a free hand to all the ministers, highly trained Civil Servants, to take responsibility of their respective ministry. During that time Gen. Ne Win always took the advice of those highly trained Civil Servants before he made any implementation of necessary tasks which he and his government had to undertake. (According to the fact from Lt. Col Hla Moe (retired) who served the General as his ADC during that period)¹¹³.

¹¹³ Hla, Moe. Lt. Colonel (retired), Ministry of Defense. Interview, 11 March 2011.

The Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win who also served as the Commander in Chief of the Defense Services, allowed the ministers to use force and help of the army whenever they needed it for the quick and successful completion of the tasks. (For example, the case of eliminating the slums of Rangoon and cleaning the capital by troops).

The Caretaker Government did not abolish the parliament, and instead of that the Caretaker Government acted as a defender of the constitution. Due to that, the Prime Minister of the Caretaker Government Gen. Ne Win could not over rule the power of the parliament, and he has to act as the Prime Minister who was appointed by the parliament with the support of the MPs.

Gen. Ne Win did not give the ministerial posts to his fellow army officers, but the army officers were barred from taking the top jobs. During that time, the General sent a strong message to the public as his government was not a military government like others in the region of Southeast Asia.

The last one reason for the successful achievements of the Caretaker Government was respect the Rule of Law. Even those who they considered as their ideological enemies, leftists and left leaning writers were only be sent to the concentration camp and punished according to the criminal laws of the Union of Burma but not for their political beliefs.

It is not an exception compared other governments, that the Caretaker Government led by Gen. Ne Win had good and bad points. The worst was amendment of the article 116 of the constitution of the Union of Burma. The article 116 stated “*A member of the Government who for any period of six consecutive months is not a member of the Parliament shall at the expiration of that period cease to be a member of that Government*”. But the majority of the Parliament wanted to amend that article in favor of Gen. Ne Win who could not accept the Premiership without amending that article. Only the Opposition Party (National United Front) members had seen the negative outcome of the amendment of that article. The opposition MP Thakin Chit Maung stated that if the Parliament allowed the amendment of the constitution of the Union of Burma, It would become like a heartless body of a human being.

Other armed organizations like the National Police Force, Union Military Police, some Defense Home Guards became the sister organizations/put under the authority of the Army Chief, as excuse of concerning National Security. The Prime Minister Gen. Ne Win sent Col. Min Thein and Col. Tan Yu Sai of the Defense Department to the National Police Force and the Union Military Police and put them in charge of those armed organizations for influence with the power of Army Chief to those forces. Some of the Home Guards were abolished and inducted into the various army regiments, and by doing so, Gen. Ne Win has consolidated his power at that time and became the sole leader of all armed organizations. The action helped him to overthrow the democratically elected government in 1962.

The Defense Services Institute (DSI), which was established in 1951 got privileges of spreading their businesses in the commercial areas of the Union of Burma, during that time the DSI had expended it businesses beyond the army, the aim of the establishment of DSI in the early times were for the troops who needed some basic stuff in prices which were lower than in the non army areas. But in 1958-60 during the time of Caretaker Government, DSI had expended its businesses in many fields, including Banking, Shipping Line, Commercial Bus Lines, and some Taxi Cabs and even also in to a businesses like Emporiums and some other stores beyond requirements of the army. That action gave lucrative businesses for the army in the eyes of the officers. (Deputy Army Commander Brig. Aung Gyi using his influences over the Budget Allocation Committee, which he chaired, to give some extra budgets to the army for doing business in the private sector of the Union of Burma). While they (army officers) were battling the economic insurgents, they strongly believed that they could beat those economic insurgents as they had beaten the insurrections countrywide earlier than that time. That belief supported them to launch an army coup in the next 4 years time.

At the time of the Caretaker Government, more than 100 officers from the rank of Colonel to Lieutenant were sent to the various departments of the ministries as Special Officers on Duty with the reason to make sure of the smoothing of the daily works of respective ministries. But indeed these officers were placed for working experiences of

those departments, and that action supported the military coup in the year of 1962. (Majority of the members of the Revolutionary Council which overthrew the democratic government in 1962, served as the special officers on duty at that period).

Gen. Ne Win launch an army coup in 4 years time from that period, believing that by appointing those officers as ministers in the ministries, who served as the Special Officers on Duty of the respective ministries at that time could run the ministries smoothly. (For example, Brig. Sein Win (BC 3525) who served as the Special Officer on Duty of the department of the Ministry of National Housing, was appointed as minister of that ministry in 1962).

The Army Chief Gen. Ne Win, who headed the Caretaker Government, got personal benefits from that government, as removing some of the high ranking officers, who he believed as competitors to him in the near future, from the active posts. By doing so he gained the unchallengeable power in the army which supported him to launch an army coup in 1962.

After serving as Prime Minister of the Caretaker Government, Gen. Ne Win was overconfident in heading the cabinet not as difficult as he thought in the past. and that point also supported the army coup in the year of 1962. (In the first paragraph of his letter to then Prime Minister U Nu he explained his feelings on the matter of heading the government by stating, *“I feel hesitant in undertaking such a great responsibility as requested. However, since I have a high regard for your sincere wishes, I shall put forth my utmost endeavor in undertaking the task of guiding the country, if you think it necessary and essential for me to do so. As, however, I have had no experience in carrying out the great task of administrating the country, as I had never had any intention of doing so, and as I had never entertained any idea that I would have to do so, I believe that any short-comings on my part in sincerely discharging this great task would be view with indulgence, and I would like to ask for such indulgence.”*

After taking the Premiership in the Caretaker Government, Gen. Ne Win tasted the life of the chief of the cabinet and leader of the nation which drove him to overthrow the government of U Nu in 1962.

Starting in the period of the Caretaker Government, Burma Army stepped into politics and interfered in the national politics of the Union of Burma until the present time. (Many of the army backed politicians always reminded the outsiders that the army is the only united institution in the Union of Burma and could not separate the army from the daily national politics of the Union of Burma, given the example as the Caretaker Government of the Union of Burma (1958-60) which was considered a success).

When we looked back the modern history of Burma from the Caretaker Government to the present time, we have found out that the historical wheel turned again in the year of 1988. After the Tatmadaw (Armed Forces of the Union of Burma) took the state responsibilities on the 18 September 1988, the State Law and Order Restoration Council (SLORC) immediately announced that their main tasks were the restoring of law and order and pave the way for the democratic reforms in the nation. One of their promises was to hold free and fair elections in the appropriate time. Then the Chairman of the SLORC and Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Saw Maung declared the date of the elections as 27 May 1990. During their time, the SLORC copied many things from the Caretaker Government of the Union of Burma. One of them is cleaning the capital Rangoon (Yangon) with the help of the troops brought from the various battalions from the remote areas. They have cleaned the streets and main roads in the capital with sweats and labor. They believed that by doing like that the citizens would remember the time of the Caretaker Government of the Union of Burma in the year of 1958.

Another thing that they have copied from the Caretaker Government was the establishment of the National Election Commission with the honorable civil servants from the past. Retired Brigadier Saw Kyar Doe, who held the rank of Chief of Staff (Army) in the early time was a member of that National Election Commission, due to that the SLORC showed the whole world that they had sincere intentions to pave the way for the democratic reforms in Burma. When the elections were held on the 27 May 1990, the SLORC took the lessons from the 1960 elections and ordered all the commanders not to sided with any party and gave all the members of the armed forces and civil servants to have a free hand to vote any political party they want to vote, the SLORC believed that

the Popularity of the National Unity Party among some civil servants and business people could secure some seats in the National Parliament. The National Unity Party was a party which was renamed the political vehicle of the autocrat ruler of Burma from 1962 to 1988, Gen. Ne Win, and Burma Socialist Program Party (BSPP). But as everyone knows that the National League for Democracy (NLD) which was led by Daw Aung San Suu Kyi won the majority in the elections (392 out of 492) and the National Unity Party which only secured 10 seats in the National Parliament, the SLORC could not control the situation and they could not accept the out come. The result of the elections turned the blind eyes by the SLORC to recognize the result. Anyhow most of the people inside and out side of the Union of Burma believed and accepted the 1990 elections as the cleanest and most freely and fairly elections that every held in the history of the elections of the Union of Burma.

The SLORC also copied the forming of the Association for the nation from the Caretaker Government too. The current Union Solidarity and Development Association which now turned into the political party was formed under the guidance of the SLORC in 1993. They had copied that from the National Solidarity Associations from the era of the Caretaker Government. During its time as the government of the Union of Burma, the Caretaker Government established the non partisan National Association called National Solidarity Associations (NSA) for helping the Police Force in the actions of maintaining law and order across the nation. First the National Solidarity Associations (NSA) were formed in all the places in the nation but later on the main body of that association was formed in Rangoon (Yangon) with the help from the Ministry of Home Affairs, but sadly after the elections in 1990, there were no members at all to attend the assembly for that Association and finally the Association was abolished without any credits for its role in the time of the Caretaker Government. The SLORC took that lesson from that Association and when they established the Union Solidarity and Development Association (USDA) they declared that the Association was for the whole nation and the citizens of the Union of Burma, but they had lesson from the previous association from the Caretaker Government so they turned the Union Solidarity and Development

Association into the political party for which they can use as their political vehicle for the 2010 elections. This time they could not accept the elections result as it did in the 1990, they made sure that their Union Solidarity and Development Party (USDP) won the majority in the National Parliament.

The last thing that they did for the army also take from the experiences of the Caretaker Government period of 1958-60, the former Rangoon (Yangon) Commander and ex minister for the Religious Affairs retired Lt. Gen Myo Nyunt explained to the local and international correspondents at the interview section, that the Tatmadaw had taken the state responsibilities whenever the nation and the citizens need its help. He pointed the period of the Caretaker Government and the political disorders of the previous political government of the Anti Fascist People Freedom League. He explained to the correspondents that when the political governments could not control the situations of lawlessness the Tatmadaw (Armed Forces of Burma) took the responsibility of restoring rule of law and peace in many times, including the Caretaker Government time, because of that he continued his comment as the Tatmadaw should have a leading role in the national politics of the nation. After that comment the SLORC planned to form the new kind of parliament which allowed the selected members from the Tatmadaw to be members of the National Parliament without contesting in the elections but as direct appointees from the Armed Forces of the Union of Burma.

The above actions of the then ruling the State Law and Restoration Council (SLORC) which was renamed as the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC) are the lessons that they took from the Caretaker Government of the Union of Burma which ruled the nation with good intentions but somehow mishandling in some places.

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Persons of interviews

1. Col. Hla Moe, the former ADC to Gen. Ne Win.
2. Col. Saw Myint, the former Frontier Area Administrator.
3. Gen. Tin Oo (NLD), the former Armed Forces Commander and Defense Minister.
4. Ko Than (Kye Myin Dine), the former member of the National United Front Party.
5. U Ko Gyi (Thatkatho Ko Ko Gyi), the former journalist of the *Mandine* NewsPaper.
6. U Nyan Yin, the former student leader and editor of the *O Way* Magazine.
7. U Thar Ban, the former journalist of the *Kyee Mone* Newspaper.
8. U Sein Win (Ludu), the former journalist of the *Ludu* Newspaper.
9. U Win Tin (Hanthawaddy), the former journalist of the *Hanthawaddy* Newspaper.

BIOGRAPHY

Myo Tun Myint was born in Rangoon (Yangon), Burma (Myanmar) in 1977. He graduated with Bachelor's degree majoring in History from the Yangon (Rangoon) University Distance Education in 2006. In the year of 2008, he decided to pursue a Master Degree Program in Southeast Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University.