CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL - BACKGROUND.
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Historical Background

Geo-political factor

The area which is known as Burma, lies within the most distinctive physical environment, shaped like an oyster. Burma is in the size of Texas which is bigger than Denmark, Netherlands, France, Belgium and Luxembourg. The political influence by outside nations on Burma is brief and transitory. Burma never proved himself a real bone of contention between rival imperialism. It is quite different from other territories in Asia. Burma lies in the tropics of Cancer, her southern most tip almost touching the Equator and she is an oddly shaped country. The North-western frontiers of Burma march with Assam, Manipur, the Lushai hills and the Cittagong hill tracts with upper Burma. The frontiers of Burma touching China to the North, India to the west and Siam to the east and to the South is Indian ocean. Six hundreds miles wide and twelve hundred miles long. The lower extension of Burma known as the tenasserim, extends for over four hundreds miles down along the Malay peninsula. The total area of the country is just over 261,000 sq. miles.

The population of Burma is approximately 26.5 million and in the normal times it is the world's largest exporter of rice. Burma is a link between two countries China and India. Burma is not only important to the economy of Southeast Asia but also to the strategy of Southeast Asia.

In the earliest times, the migration has come from the North and the Cultural penetration has come from and through India from the West. The easiest access to Burma is through the Bay of Bengal. There are few important features about Burma. The first is that she is an isolated country, and hence hundreds of years behind the rest of the world, she, also like all other isolated countries.

Not only in the world but also in Asia, so little heard or known about Burma that it might be "terraincognite in the icy wastes of antarctica and not a neighbour who within living memory was a part of the Indian empire. For the far reaching changes taking place in that country under the dynamic leadership of the Revolutionary council are of great significance to India.

Burma is the weakest link in the defence system of Southeast Asia and Singapore. If Burma falls the whole of southeast Asia collapses, the control of the way of Bengal by enemy power imperils the security of India. "Burma has at times secured to be an enigma in the modern age. The self imposed isolation of that country has been puzzle to the outside world.

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8. India and Southeast Asia, The publication Division, Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (Delhi Jan. 1953), p. 9
10. Special correspondent 'Co-operative farms in Burma,' Mainstream' (Delhi)
12. Tribune April 1, 1969 Ambala.
The annexation of Burma pushed India's frontiers eastwards to the borders of Thailand. In the North and Northeast, British diplomacy together with Chinese weakness, ensured India's security. For a long time India has no strategic problem on her eastern flank, but the invasion of Burma by Japan and its direct threat to India in 1942, changed this peaceful situation so in view of such a situation arising now and then it is quite necessary for both the countries to have friendly relations. The second world war has demonstrated the strategic importance of Burma. The Blockade of the Pacific coast of China by the powerful Japanese Navy compelled China to seek out new channels of intercourse, with the outer world for military supplies. The Burma road and the use of the port of Rangoon gave her the life and blood which she needed.

The big cities of India from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin and the industrial wealth of Bihar are within easy bombing range of any power which succeeds in subduing Burma. It is quite remarkable that the military operations for the liberation of Burma had to be entirely based upon India. There is no question of doubt that the defense of both the countries are interconnected. Sardar Panikkar said, ".........the defense of India

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is in fact the defense of India, and it is India's primary concern no less than Burma's to see that its frontiers remain inviolate."

If any hostile power controls Burma, it could threaten India's security from land, sea and air. India has to remain quite alert towards Burma because a power which is the friendly to India and in control of Burma, could not only send its ground forces across the border but also bomb the cities of eastern India, and it also paralyse Indian shipping in the Bay of Bengal and threaten India's communications with the pacific through the Malacca straits. It is quite beneficial for southeast Asia that Burma has comprehensively adopted a strongly isolationist neutrality which has so far obviated any need for the employment of foreign troops within her borders. India is also well aware that China could cross her territory in a matter of days if she wished and establish a bridgehead on the Bay of Bengal for more potentially damaging to western strategy than any communist take over of South Vietnam. The first and foremost effort of Burma is to seeking a protective cordon of sympathetic states around her borders, like that which Russia has managed to achieve in Europe.

15. Ibid., p.142.
Strategically, Burma controls one of the most important land routes from China southeastwards. The strategic importance of this "The Burma road" was such as to incite Japan to putting pressure on great Britain for its closure in 1938. The closing of this road provoked protests not only from China but also from the U.S.A. and the Soviet government. Burma road has a great significance that if Burma was used as a passage from Thailand to India, it could also be used as a passage from China to India. Nagas who live near the border area of Burma and India, may cause trouble to Indian government, so the neutrality of the government of Burma is necessary for India, after the partition of India and the creation of Pakistan, estate whose hostility towards India posed an important security problem. With the emergence of Bangla-Desh as a friendly state on the eastern border of India, this treaty has been removed.\(^{18}\)

Burma is divided into two parts: Upper Burma and Lower Burma. Upper Burma has a fearsome ribcage of mountains, the shape of a horseshoe, the open end facing the Bay of Bengal.\(^{19}\)

Lower Burma may be divided into two natural divisions—the costal region and Delta. The costal region is intersected by numerous hill range. The Delta is a large plain with a dense population.\(^{20}\)

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To the west along the border between India and Burma are the Naga hills, to the east lies the formidable Karen Range bordering on Siam, and to the North the Himalaya which rises beyond 20,000 feet high. The drainage from Burma's mountains bolstered by spring thaws in the Tibetan Himalayas and augmented by monsoon rains, slash across the land and change them in to huge, fast flowing rivers which empty into the Bay of Bengal. Because of its physiography, Burma is known as a "Valley State". The climate of Burma is generally tropical.  

Burma is a land of valleys and mountains lying between the massive ridges that fall off almost in perfect parallels from the Himalayas roof. The mountain-walls form excellent natural fogsters while the river Irrawaddy running through the two great countries of the east—India and China.  

Burma owes its distinctive homogeneity to its geographical situation. Neither India nor China, Burma partakes of the culture and life of both her more populous neighbours. Burma ancient and modern history is very much influenced by the movement of events towards or across these borders.  

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Geographically, Burma is an isolated country. Overland communication with India is difficult because of mountains and jungle covered ridges. The mountains play a very important role to make the boundary and separate Burma from China, it also makes a natural boundary with Burma's eastern neighbour Thailand. The sea has proven much less of a barrier. The heart of the country is the central Irrawaddy. The entire length of the country serves as a principle means of communication.24

In Burma, the valley of Irrawaddy, rising in the mountains of Tibet and transversing the whole country down to the sea, below Rangoon, and the valley of Sittang, running parallel to the lower Irrawaddy on the east, Salween river forms the eastern boundary of Burma and two coastal strips, Arakan bordering the Bay of Bengal and Tenasserim running down into the Malay peninsula, All round the Irrawaddy and Sittang valleys sanges of hills, off-shoots of the Tibetan mountain complex cut off Burma from its neighbours. Burma secluded from the outer world by maintains and the sea, appears destined for political unity by nature, anthropological relationship and economic circumstances reinforce the trend to unity.25


Burma is situated between Chindwin river valley and its delta, in which is located Rangoon, the capital which is also the largest city. The immense mountains masses of interior Asia, after forming the Himalayan bulwark across northern India, turn south along western Hunan and form a tumbled mass of parallel ridges and valleys running southeast through the great peninsula of Indonesia. Burma occupies the most fertile part of this peninsula. The geographical isolation and her frontier protection have been vital factors in her historical development and remain prime considerations in her politics today. The Chinese frontier plays a very important role to make Burma's politics.

The Indian influence is deeprooted in Burmese culture and politics because it lies to the east of Bengal, Assam and Bay of Bengal. Although Burma's shut off from the outer world by hills and the sea is fitted to be the home of a unified people. But even now the progress of unification, though accelerating, is incomplete; and when history began, the country was a medley of tribes, so Burma being more than the valleys of a river system.

World War II involved Burma in two devastating campaigns by Japanese troops which together destroyed two-thirds of the country's productive capacity, but it was not successful.

in their efforts to make the Burmese more international minded on the contrary, it reinforced their determination to rid themselves of all foreign imperialism and to win sovereign status by their own efforts.30

The larger Nicobar and Andaman groups, lying off southern Burma, have never been administered by Burma, although they have traded with Burma for centuries. Both groups were administered by the government of India.31

The geographical position of Burma protected her from any possible attack, on the north side, she is bounded by the mountains and undeveloped provinces of China. Like other countries in Southeast Asia, Burma is in no position to defend herself.32

Burma has engaged to develop modernization of every aspect, either economic or governmental. By 1940 with the single exception of the Philippines, no tropical appendage of any great power enjoyed a large degree of autonomy than did Burma.33

Burma has come into close contact with India. This is relatively modern features of Burma and came in two distinct stages. Firstly, in medieval times the trade and interchange between India and China skirted Burma to the North by way of Tibet over the mountain routes and southeast round the

Coast, Buddhism came to the Burmese along this sea-route followed in its time by Islam which has established little more than a minor cultural influence. The Burmese traditions developed in their own way and their own pace within the protective isolation of the interior. The East India Company came to the coastwise trade route, through which the British became associated with Lower Burma.  

Historical background and constitutional development in Burma  

The early history of Burma is obscure. The Burmese chronicles began with the supposed foundation of Tagaung in 850 B.C. But the stories, they tell are copies of Indian Legends taken from Sanskrit or Pali originals. The Burmese past comprises three district areas in terms of their contemporary impact, the precolonial rule of the Burmese kings, British colonialism, and the war time Japanese occupation, left the independent Burma of UNO and General He Win.  

The scholars appear to agree that the first migration into Burma took place about 500 A.D. Some of the Burmese dynasties were very powerful. The outcome of constant strays and clashes over eight hundred years between the different races and realms within the country. The first major state in the Irrawaddy Valley of which there is some record had a capital Sriksetra, north of Prome, founded.

37. Peers, R. William and Brolis Dean op.c.t., p.47.
around A.D. 638 by people called Pyu. The Kshatriya kings introduced the of Buddhism in Burma. The real existence of the history of Burma began with the great ruler called Anawrahta who founded Burma's first national kingdom of Pagan in 1044. The kingdom later conquered the Mon state of southern Burma and put down all resistance and unified the country. But at the end of thirteenth century the Pagan kingdom was destroyed by Mongol-Chinese armies (Kubla Khan), and the next form and half centuries were marked by the absence of even the semblance of unity in Burma except for the reign of Byinnaung(1530-1581).

The Mon Kingdom, which later moved its capital to Pagan, regained its independence only to lose it again in the sixteenth century when a new and powerful Burmese Toungoo dynasty emerged. In 1740, when the Toungoo dynasty was on decline, the Mons revolted and revived their kingdom and conquered the whole of Burma. Alaungpaya founded the last Burmese dynasty, which occupies the throne until the last king, Thibaw Min, was deposed by the British in 1885.

Burma came under British rule in the 19th century and Rangoon became the capital in place of Ava after the war between Burma and Britain of 1824, the British conquered parts of Burma which became technically a part of Burma in 1826, when the

41. Ibid., p.242-243.
43. Hall D.G.E., op.cit., p. 87.
British East India Company, acting for the throne. At this time
the treaty of Yandabo was drawn up at the village of that name
in 1926. The treaty of Yandabo provided for a British resident
at Ava, and claimed Arakan and Tenasserim for the British.45

The Second Burmese war was, therefore, undertaken in 1852
and this campaign was successful from the beginning to the end.
The governor-general of India was provoked into sending another
expedition against Burma, the immediate cause of his action be-
ing the treatment of British subjects and shipping in Rangoon.46

The Chief towns in lower Burma fell to the British and
the whole of the great maritime province of Pegu was annexed
by Lord Dalhousie. Lower Burma became part of the British em-

dire in 1852.47 The third war between Burma and Britain,

Burma’s defeat in the war on 1 Jan, 1886, the independent king-
dom of Ava annexed to British Burma its despotic monarch, Thibaw
had been deposed and exiled, and the absorption of Burma into
the British Indian empire was completed.48 The gradual annex-
ation of the country was the result of three wars. Burma was
administered as a province of India until 1937, when it be-
came a separate colony.49

The British colonial control over Burma was developed as
an extension of the larger Indian empire. Once firmly estab-
lished in India, the British felt obliged to assume control over
confused or hostile border areas such as Burma, which were in-

45. Jesse, F., Tennyson, op. cit., p. 28.
46. Vandenbogen, Army and Butwell, Richard, op. cit., p. 212.
47. Jesse, F., Tennyson, op. cit., p. 23.
48. Tinker, Hugh, “The Union of Burma”, Oxford University Press
49. Mendo, Tiber, “Southeast Asia between two worlds”, Turnst-
capable of withstanding of the mobilized power of the subcontinent.\(^\text{50}\) At that time the Governor-General, Dalhousie of India wanted to avoid an expensive war but he delivered an ultimatum for redress and for dismissal of the offending Burmese Governor (Myowun). The unprepared Burmese government accepted the terms of ultimatum, Dalhousie proposed to London, that the occupation of lower Burma be made permanent.\(^\text{51}\)

From the beginning of 1886 the guerrilla warfare was going on between British troops and the Burmese. After the several years of guerrilla warfare, of death and disease, the chief leaders of rebellious had failed to suppress it in lower Burma.\(^\text{52}\)

The guerrilla war came to an end suddenly. Those rebellions which spread to lower Burma defeated by the British Indian troops.\(^\text{53}\) The abolition of monarchy and Burma's incorporation into India meant the lower dignity of a proud nation with a long tradition of masterful achievement.\(^\text{54}\)

After the annexation of Burma in British-Indian empire, the Civil administration of upper Burma was divided into fourteen districts, each under a Deputy or Assistant Commissioner with a police assistant. But the local administration of lower Burma was based on the circle with its hereditary headman.\(^\text{55}\)

Until the end of nineteenth century there was little change in the machinery of the central government, which functioned very much like that of any other Indian province. However, Great

\(^{51}\) ibid., p. 386.
\(^{52}\) Jesse, F. Tennyson, op. cit., p. 82.
\(^{54}\) Allen, Richard, op. cit., p. 95.
\(^{55}\) Hall, D.G.E., op. cit., p. 143.
changes were taking place in the outside world. The transformation began in Burma in 1837 with the promotion of the Chief Commissioner to rank of Lieutenant Governor, assisted by a legislative council of nine nominated members, including five non-officials. The judicial system was also introduced in Burma, which was based upon the British principle of the separation of power. Burma constituted a local administrative unit under chief commissioner assisted by his secretariat, until in 1897 it was raised to the status of a separate province of the Indian empire with its own Lieutenant Governor and a small legislative council. The local government is capable to make laws for Burma, but important matter such as finance were still reserved to the central government in India on whose councils of Burma was unrepresentative. To take the example the government of India, the municipal institution were introduced into Burma. In 1874 nominated municipal committees were established in a few towns. In the rural areas districts councils were first set up in 1881, also at the instance of the government of India. The urban areas had four separate communities with differing interests as Burmese, Indian, Chinese and European. After the turn of the century a department of Jails and hospitals, a chief court of judicature with a judicial service, a commissioner of land revenue, a chief

56. Ibid. p. 147
conservator of forest—a director of agriculture, an exercise commissioner and a public health department were established. State education was extended after 1900. 61

The events within Burma were matched by other outside countries, such as Japan's victory over Russia in 1905, which provided vivid evidence that the white man was not unconquerable. The protest activities of the congress party of Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Nehru in India, of which Burma was a part until 1937, was another important factor for Burmese nationalism to take inspiration. For this, Burmese founded Youngman Buddhist Association in 1908. It acquired political significance as a channel for the tentative expression of nationalist goals. 62

After the Minto-Morley reforms of 1809, the government of India increased the size of the Burmese legislature council to a membership of thirty with a non-official majority. Only one of these was elected and he was chosen by the Burma chamber of commerce, an entirely European organization. 63

World war I hastened constitutional progress in India and as a part of it, in Burma. The British government had done this in order to appease rising Indian nationalism and was India's support in the war. Nationalism in Burma, peculiarly enough, grew out of Buddhist organisation. Burma was aware of actual political development. 64 The first national sentiment

61. Allen, Richard, op. cit., p.93
62. Vandenbosch, Army and Rutwell, Richard op. cit., p.p. 243-244
64. Maung, Maung, op. cit., p.p. 79-80.
developed in Burma in 1916-17. An announcement by the secretary of State Mr. Montague in 1917-1918, that Burma was incapable of exercising the degree of self government, planned for India because Burmese lacked experience in representative government. The Montague Cheilmsford Report of 1919 had introduced into India a new constitutional experiment known as 'dyarchy.' According to this system, a new constitution for Burma was introduced. But 'dyarchy' was not a great success.66 The nationalism was then in their point and in 1921 special legislation for Burma led to the establishment of dyarchy. The Shan states and certain other areas were excluded from the operation of the new scheme. Burma was given five scales in the new Indian legislature at New Delhi which dealt with what were known as 'Central subjects.' A great income was made in self governing local bodies as municipal committees and rural district committees.67

The 1922 Constitution of Burma provided for legislative council, of 193 members of whom 79 were to be elected on a democratic franchise, two were ex-officio and twenty two nominated. The government was entrusted to a governor with an executive council of two members in charge of reserved subjects and two members in charge of reserved subjects and two ministers, responsible to the legislature, in charge of transferred subjects. The franchise was granted to householders without sex disqualification and with eighteen as the minimum age limit.68

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68. ibid., p. 150.
"At that time the movement for nationalism at the grassroots level divided in 1924 to 1925, into two principle factions. The home rules joined the parties that were participating in the 1925 elections for the legislative council." 69

In 1928 the Simon commission came to review the working of the reforms institute five years earlier, Burmese demand was for immediate full responsible government and separation from India. Because of increasing Indian immigration's and economic competition, the Burmese feared that his country might one day become a 'vassal state' of an Indian commonwealth ruled by Indians. The Simon Commission reported in favour of separation while a special Burma Round Table Conference set in London between Nov. 1931 and January 1932 to discuss the main lines of a constitution for a Burma separated from India. The British Prime minister Ramsay MacDonald, announced that Burma would be separated from India if her people wished it. 70

The agitation in Burma provoked with the formation of a strong anti-separation league which advocated joining the proposed Indian federation. General election were held in Nov. 1932. The League won a complete victory for the "anti-separation" of the two countries 71. But the British government decided to implement the policy of separation as recommended in the Simon Commission. "A new constitution embodied in the government of Burma act 1935 came into force on 1 April 1937. The new constitution introduced full responsible cabinet government." 72

70. Jesse, F., Tammyson, op.cit., p.162.
71. Hall, op.cit., p.62.
72. Hugh, Tinker, op.cit., p.4.
It set-up two chambers of parliament, a senate and a House of Representatives, half of the members of the senate were to be nominated by the Governor, but the lower house was entirely elected under an extended franchise. Among the 132 members, 22 members were elected by special communal constituencies to represent the minority peoples. There were also nine European members. The government of 'Burma proper' developed into a cabinet led by a premier and responsible to parliament. The government control over the national life, excepting only defence foreign affairs and monetary policy. These subjects remained the direct responsibility of the governor, who was appointed by the British government. The Shankarmani, Salwen Districts and remaining hill areas remained under separate forms of administration.  

The first election had taken place under this Act one effect of this was that several political parties came into political picture. The largest was the United General council of Burma Association led by U. Ba. Po, but he was unable to find sufficient adherance to command a majority. But the first prime-minister was Dr. Ba Maw whose Sinyetma Wanthana party had no majority. But in Feb. 1939 he was defeated and a new ministry was formed out of Ba Pe’s group. In September 1940 U. Saw captured the premiership which he held until January 1942. After this Sir Paw Tun then became the fourth prime minister until Japanese invasion.  

73. ibid, p.6,  
74. Purcell, victor, op. cit., p.83.  
75. Tinker, Hugh, op. cit., p. 6.
After Dr. Ba Maw's downfall, his party linked with the Thakins to form a new front called the Freedom League. It followed a policy of anti-separation from India. Mr. Ba sein for leadership of the Thakins and in 1940 he attended the Ramgarh session of the Indian National Congress with Mahatma Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru. On August 1, 1942, a Burma executive administration was set up with Ba-Maw at its head. He withdrew from his own sinyetha party and from the Thakins leader, and both the parties were merged in 'Halibama Aslayons' (Radical nationalist) Aung San, who belongs to this party went to Japan as a leader of the Thirty Commandos they returned to Burma with the invading Japanese. The other thirty nationalists who adopted the name "Ne Vin" meaning "bright sun" It is a military figure. It renamed in place of Burma Independent Army the Burmese defence army The Burmese Nationalist hoped to use. The Japanese to suit the British and gain their independent so the Ba Maw government become mainly a vehicle for protecting the Burmese from the harshness of Japanese rule. The Ba Maw government organised a movement to rid their country from colonialism. This organised movement became the antifascist people's Freedom League. 

When the Japanese had conquered Burma with four divisions they now began to build up their strength for an attack on India. On August 1, 1942, Japanese gave Burma executive administration with Ba Maw at Its head. On 1 August 1943 Burma was declared an independent state receiving recognition from

76 Ibid., p. 7-8.
77 Ibid., p. 10.
79 Hall, B. C. S., op. cit., p. 169.
all the axis powers. Ba Maw assumed the title of 'Adipati' he has the cabinet of sixteen ministers. The army was under control of Japanese force.

At the Quebec conference in August 1943 a big step was taken by the formation of southeast Asia Command with Mountbatten as a supreme commander and Stiwell as Deputy Chief.

When Japan surrendered on account of two atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Japanese Commander in Burma signalled Mountbatten that he had ordered to ceasefire. Burma has been called "Britain's principles shop window in the war against Japan". The Japanese occupation of Burma wrecked the country's economic system. Burma suffered more from the war than any other Asiatic country.

From 1st January 1944 the actual administration of liberated Burma was handed over to the supreme allied commander, southeast Asia, Admiral Mountbatten, for an undefined period of time. On 17 May 1945 the British government issued a statement of policy. The Constitution of 1935 would be in abeyance until December 1948. The governor would be responsible for the entire field of administration. He would shortly set up an executive council. It expanded later by the inclusion of non-officials Burmese. During the interim period a general election would be held, and the elected representatives would be invited to draw up a new constitution. Subsequently Burma was promised full self government within the commonwealth. The Shan states and other hill areas would remain separate regime under the governor.

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80. Tinker, Hugh, op. cit., p. 10.
82. Tinker, Hugh, op. cit., p. 18.
In July 1946 the Red flags went underground and there began a campaign of violence against the government. In the same month a four-men delegation representing the Karens went to London to put the case of Karen 'Home Rule.' During the first six months of 1946 the A.F.P.F. pursued a policy trying to overthrow the government.

On 20 Dec. 1946 Mr. Attlee announced a new policy for Burma in the House of Commons. A Burmese delegation invited to London for discussion of the transfer of power. The Prime Minister also declared that it would be left to Burma to decide whether or not to remain within the commonwealth.

On June 16, 1947 Aung San moved a resolution in the Constituent Assembly proclaiming Burma an independent sovereign republic on the same day thinkor NU’s to London obtained Mr. Attlee’s assurance that the British parliament would introduce legislation to give effect to the transfer of power. The NU-Attlee Agreement recognised the Republic of Burma as a fully independent sovereign state as of January 4, 1948. A three years defence agreement was also signed as a part of the agreement.

But just after the independence the new union of Burma was plunged into civil-war. On top of this came the mutiny of the regular force.

83. ibid., p. 29.
84. Purcell, Victor, op. cit., p. 83.
85. Hende, Tibor, op. cit., p. 123.
86. Purcell, Tibor, op. cit., p. 86.
87. ibid., p. 88.
Fear of a possible coup had led UNO to order the arrest of "Than Tun" and other communist leaders. But certain 'People's Volunteer organization leaders had intervened and urged UNO to continue negotiations. The fifteen point "Leftist unity programme" was announced by UNO. The programme of the "Leftist Unity" of UNO failed completely to appease the Burmese communists and their P.V.O. supporters. These extremists did not want to share in a coalition government, they wanted to control the government. They did not want a foreign policy of non-alignment, but they wanted the closest relations possible with the communist bloc. On July 16, UNO offered his resignation as prime minister. But the socialist were unable to take the parliamentary support to form a government and UNO was persuaded to remain in office heading a "Caretaker" government. It was announced that UNO and his caretaker cabinet would stay in command until the regular parliamentary elections, scheduled for April 1949. The Burmese A.F.P.F.L. leaders against the Karens in spite of containing negotiations. In September some of these leaders began the organizations of the Karen National Defence Organization a para-military force formed supposedly to protect Karen communities, but soon started action against the government. The outbreak of the Karen insurrection in early 1949 posed an even greater threat to existence of the A P F L government. The A P F L also worried about the Chinese communists expanded their control

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89. Ibid., p/p. 48-49.
over the mainland area.\textsuperscript{90}

But in 1950 the big success for the government was the capture of Toungoo, the capital of the rebel Karen state, the rebel P.V.O. came to surrender and K.N.D.O. received a heavy blow. The rebels no longer stood as alternatives to the AFPIF government, so the security returned to Burma.\textsuperscript{91} The year 1953 was not entirely dominated by the Kumantag problem. The Burmese Army was now a much larger and more efficient force.\textsuperscript{92}

After independence, the government of Burma is in form of an English-style democracy. The president, elected by a joint session of parliament, is little more than a constitutional figurehead. Parliament is bicameral, its cabinet body and the chamber of deputies. Every citizens of Burma over eighteen having the right of vote. It is popularly elected.

The chamber of nationalistics or upper house is composed of elected representatives from the six states which make up the union of Burma. The head of the government is the prime minister and cabinet are collectively responsible to the chamber of deputies. Nominally the union of Burma is a Federation but the policy of the union government is to unite all the peoples of Burma.\textsuperscript{93}

\textsuperscript{90} Ible, p. 55.
\textsuperscript{91} Tinker, Hugh, \textit{op.cit.}, p. 48-49.
\textsuperscript{92} Ible, p/p. 52-53.
\textsuperscript{93} Mills, C. Leunox, "Southeast Asia", University of Minnesota Press, (Minneapolis: 1964), p. 29.
After the establishment of the Republic, the first election took place in 1951, then the government was gaining the upper hand in the civil war. The AFFFL won three quarters of the seats in the legislature. In the next election in 1956 the AFFFL ran against the communist dominated National unity front. In the election AFFFL won 173 seats in 1958 when the AFFFL split into two factions, one headed by UNU and the other by U3eswo. Although the AFFFL had suffered a setback in the general elections of 1956, this had caused only momentary alarm among leaders.

On 5th June 1956 UNU announced that he would relinquish the premiership for one year in order to undertake the reorganization of the AFFFL. During this period UBA Swe became prime minister with three deputy premiers. Despite NU’s withdrawal from formal leadership, the AFFFL was divided, but both factions clung to the AFFFL image and ran with its association connections with nationalism and Aung San. The other Swe Nyain group became the “Stable AFFFL” and UNU group called itself the “Clean AFFFL” each faction organised its trade unions. The crisis appeared in August when the budget had to be presented in parliament. When the situation was not under control then UNU called Ne Win for premiership. The election of Ne Win was unsupported.

94. Tinker, Hugh, op.cit., p. 34.
95. Mills, A. Lennox, op.cit., p. 34.
97. Tinker, Hugh, op.cit., p. 90
99. ibid., p. 349.
The army did not consider the democratic government of UNU, as a true champion of socialism. Revolutionary council stated, "In the union of Burma...... parliamentary democracy has been tried, tested,...... but has not only failed to serve our development but also due to its abuses and the absence of a mature public opinion lost sight of, and diviated from, socialism.

Religious policy of UNU's government cause for the coup. UNU remained closely associated with government policy. He resumed the premiership in June 1957. But now the disturbing factor was the growing power of the mass political organization. The relations between two friction AFPFL group made worse rapidly and on 4th June 1958 fifteen ministers and twenty-two parliamentary secretaries resigned from the government. To solve the party deadlock and to restore law and order, Premier UNU announced that parliamentary would be dissolved and a general election was fixed for November and on Sept. 26, 1958, Premier UNU announced to hand-over power to general Ne Win. Ne Win accepted and the changes took place on Oct. 28. Ne Win's government announced its decision to hold a general election but Ne Win government including only military men in administration.

When general Ne Win took office, he made seven reassuring commitments:

1. Fair and Free elections before April 1960.
2. To exclude from government this active leaders of the political parties.
3. To stop the army from interfering in political matters.
4. To control and punish acts of violence and lawlessness by military personal.
5. To act to suppress crime so far as possible.
6. To preserve the international peace.
7. To maintain Burma's foreign policy of neutrality.

The Ne Win government quickly took on the characteristics of a "good government" and 'reform government'.

But the election of 1960 came overwhelming victory for UNU and his party. On April 4, General Ne Win stepped out of office and back to his role as commander in chief of Burma's defence forces.

The policy and administration of Burma during the period of Feb. 1960 to 1962, were not changed when UNU realigned as a prime-minister. It is quite similar as it was in 1957. Religious policy of UNU government also provided a cause for the coup. The election of 1960 gave Burma a second chance to establish democracy.

In March 1962 General Ne Win again took over control, UNU was arrested along with a large number of other politicians.

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104. Ibid., p. 142.
105. Ibid., p. 152.
legislature was suspended. Ne Win became both prime-minister and chief of state.\textsuperscript{106}

Immediately after the overthrow of the UNO government, a Revolutionary council was formed on March 2, 1962, under the chairmanship of General Ne Win, consisting of himself and sixteen other members belonging to the armed forces. The Revolutionary council on the following day dissolve both the chambers of parliament, and the general Ne Win exercised full legislative powers.\textsuperscript{107} The dissolution of the union parliament would produce a chain reaction under the Burmese constitution. It would first result in the dissolution of the state legislature; also, the union ministry shall however, continue in office till the new ministry is put into power after first elections.

The Revolutionary council dissolved the state councils of shan, kachin, karen and kayah, and he erected five state supreme councils consisting of its own ministers. Full executive powers were conferred on Ne Win.\textsuperscript{108}

The Supreme Court and High Courts were abolished and new tribunals with military appointees instituted in their stead.\textsuperscript{109} Not only legislature but also executive powers vested in the hands of chairman of the Revolutionary council, he was also given full judicial powers. March 1962 in place of high court and supreme court, the new state judiciary was established consisting of a chief judge and five other judges. The new state

\textsuperscript{106} Mills, A. Lennox, \textit{op. cit.}, pp. 38-39.
\textsuperscript{107} Johnston C. William, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 155.
\textsuperscript{108} Venkatavaradan, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 231-232.
judiciary possess all the powers but full judicial powers are vested in General Ne Win. The Revolutionary council founded a central security council headed by a military officer. He announced the nationalization of the export trade in rice and the taking over of the entire import trade. 110

He allowed only one party, the government’s Burma socialist programme party. But it has not really played any significant role at all since its establishment, opposition of the Ne Win government has come from at least five sources: 1. The Communist 2. Karen rebellions 3. The Shans who are related to neighbouring Thai. 4. Press and 5. Buddhist clergy. 111 Unlike NU, Ne Win is pursuing a policy of maximum rapid modernization rather than seeking to effect. 112

The new document, the Burmese way to socialism there must be unified economic plan, commerce and industry must be nationalized and private enterprise eliminated, agricultural and production of raw materials must be expanded and modernized and real national unity among all peoples of Burma is a virtual police state today. The Ne Win regime is basically totalitarian in 1965 he nationalized the country’s private schools. 114

The party’s secretary general Brig. Yu Saw said, “Burma would in future have a prime minister and a council of ministers. General Ne Win who is also the party chairman, pro-

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110. Venkatavaradan, op. cit., p. 293.
112. ibid p. 262
mised a new constitution for Burma in a May day message. He further said, "he wanted to switch from the centralized power structure towards democratic socialism. The constitution must include guarantees for non-exploitation of man by man, race by race and for full human rights. He emphasised on framing a socialist constitution and following a neutral policy."

The report of the Burmese socialist party, pointed out that "establishment of a socialist state based on a socialist economy was the ultimate aim of the proposed constitution and the Revolutionary government will transfer power to the National Assembly after the constitution is adopted." 115

The Revolutionary council had tried to synthesize materialistic concepts and the tradition of Burmese society and in doing so has shown itself to be Burmese and nationalist above all. 116

The Revolutionary council has taken tremendous changes not only in the political sphere but also in the economic and social sphere. The slogan of Revolutionary government is that a "system of Socialist democracy based on a socialist economy." 117