

Thakin Soe To Start Peace Talks With Govt. Tomorrow

Wants Countrywide Cease-Fire, All-Parties National Convention

Says Burma Must Go To Socialist Goal Through Three Evolutionary Stages

From Our Staff Reporter

The most important prerequisite for the success of the present peace parleys between the Government and underground organizations is a countrywide cease-fire, Thakin Soe, Red-Flag Communist Party President now in Rangoon, reportedly told Thakin Pe Htay, Patron of the Youth Front, yesterday.

As Thakin Soe had expressed a desire to meet him, Thakin Pe Htay was taken from his house in Kem-mendine by Army officials at about 11 a.m. He was given a warm welcome by Daw Ngwe San, a top-ranking Red-Flag leader at the entrance of a two-storey building in Mingaladon Cantonment where Thakin Soe and his party are now accommodated.

Thakin Pe Htay was then taken upstairs to Thakin Soe, and the two comrades had their morning meal together. As Thakin Pe Htay was suffering from high blood pressure, Thakin Soe himself gave him soup and a plate of fried vegetables. Casting a tender eye on Thakin Pe Htay, he said: "I hear that you have high blood. Don't eat meat and fatty food. Also avoid taking too much salt. Eat more of vegetables."

Daw Ngwe San suggested that Thakin Pe Htay should get treatment at the Base Military Hospital at Mingaladon by arrangement with the Revolutionary Government. Thakin Soe however intercepted her and said: "We have brought our own medical corps. They can be of service to you." On a command by him, some members of the Red-Flag Delegation gave Thakin Pe Htay injections of Vitamin B 1 and B 12 as well as Glucose.

Thakin Soe then disclosed to Thakin Pe Htay that General Ne Win, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, had paid a courtesy call on him Sunday night. No discussions were held at the time, but General Ne Win asked him (Thakin Soe) whether he had everything ready for

Thakin Soe-Thakin Pe Htay:

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the start of the peace talks. He replied he would be prepared for the talks in the next four days.

Thakin Soe also told Thakin Pe Htay that two representatives of the Government would first discuss with him about the details of the agenda for the talks.

Second Preliminary Talks

On a question by Thakin Pe Htay, Thakin Soe explained that the forthcoming discussions with the Revolutionary Government would be in the nature of second preliminary talks, as a natural follow-up to the first preliminary talks which the advance mission of the Party, led by Bo Kyaw Yin, had had with the Government last June.

He told Thakin Pe Htay that after the present talks, he would return to his jungle headquarters and convene an all-Party congress. He would submit to this congress the result of the talks which the Party had had with the Revolutionary Government, and at the same time call upon it to lay down a comprehensive programme for presentation to the Revolutionary Government at the third and the final talks.

The final talks, he added, would have to be followed by a national convention of all political parties, both underground and aboveground, at which the individual programmes of the participants would be discussed freely and frankly, with a view to arriving at a common programme acceptable to all.

"What is important," he reportedly told Thakin Pe Htay, "is that the Government should declare a countrywide cease-fire at the time when peace talks with underground organizations are going on. So far as the Red-Flag Communist Party is concerned, directives have already been issued to all its units in the country to stop fighting. Even if Government forces fight them, these units are not to retaliate but to stage a discreet withdrawal."

He made it plain that without such a cease-fire, the current peace talks with insurgent organizations could hardly succeed.

Political Programme

Asked by Thakin Pe Htay what political programme he favoured for present-day Burma, Thakin Soe reportedly replied that the most important thing was to have a common programme approved by all political parties at a national convention.

He said that a kind of coalition Government will then have to be formed to carry out this programme. In the initial stage, this Government would have to take on the features of a capitalist parliamentary democracy. Later, the country could advance one stage further and adopt people's democracy. Only when people's democracy had been firmly established, would it be advisable for the country to proceed to the final stage of her political development—socialist democracy.

He pointed out that no country could bypass these revolutionary stages and jump to the goal of complete socialist democracy.

Arrest Of Leaders

According to Thakin Pe Htay, the Red-Flag leader expressed disapproval of the recent arrest of 11 leaders by the Revolutionary Government.

He said that Thakin Soe regarded these arrests as undesirable, specially at a time when the entire people of the country were striving for peace. What Thakin Soe wanted to be done was not to arrest them, but to expose their activities to the country, if the Revolutionary Government believed they had been wrecking the prospects for peace, in order that the people themselves could decide and brand them as enemies of peace.

Thakin Pe Htay also told *The Nation* that he had asked Thakin Soe whether it was true the Revolutionary Government had also been having talks with former Prime Minister U Nu over the problem of peace. Thakin Soe, he said, replied to him that if General Ne Win could hold peace parleys with underground leaders living miles away from Rangoon, there was no reason why he could not have similar parleys with U Nu who is right here in Rangoon.

Thakin Soe also disclosed to Thakin Pe Htay that he would start "official" negotiations with the Revolutionary Council, headed by General Ne Win, on August 14. In the meantime, he would meet members of the Committee for the Success of Peace Parleys formed by aboveground political parties. He would also visit and pay respects to Thakin Kodaw Hmaing, Chairman of the Internal Affairs Committee, on Tuesday (today).