

Revol. Council Honours Promise To Red-Flags

—:o:— Aug 22, 1963

Texts Of Peace Proposals, RC's Reply And Soe's Letter Released To Press

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Red-Flags Eager To Continue Talks, Even At Price Of Detention

From Our Staff Reporter

The Revolutionary Council yesterday kept the promise made to the Red-Flag Communist Party (Burma) to release for public information documents connected with the recent abortive peace talks.

The three documents which the Red-Flag Communist Party (Burma) had asked the Revolutionary Council to release to the Press, and which was done yesterday evening, were:

(1) A letter dated August 19, 1963, containing the final reply of the Revolutionary Council to the Red-Flag Communist Party (Burma),

(2) A letter dated August 20, 1963, containing the reply of the Red-Flag Communist Party (Burma) to General Ne Win, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council, and

(3) a memorandum entitled "Peace — Preliminary Stage" prepared by the Red-Flag Communist Party (Burma) (complete with amendments and an appendix).

In its letter dated August 19, the Revolutionary Council informed Thakin Soe, Secretary-General of the Red-Flag Communist Party, that it was impossible to continue negotiations because the act of the Party so far failed to show that it was motivated by a sincere desire for internal peace.

The Council added that in accordance with the offer it had made on June 11, arrangements would be made to send the Red-Flag delegation back to the area from which the Burma Army last fetched them. The period of immunity guaranteed by the Council would also be increased from three to seven days from the time the delegation reached the original rendezvous.

It was made clear in the letter that while the Red-Flag Communist Party would be permitted to issue a statement of its views on the peace negotiations, it would not be permitted to meet the Press or other persons. If, in contravention of the conditions laid down, the representatives of the Party hold lecture meetings or otherwise conduct political agitation or military operations before reaching their underground headquarters, the Council would treat them as having broken the terms of truce and take appropriate measures.

The letter was signed by General Ne Win, Chairman of the Revolutionary Council.

RF Party's Reply

The Red-Flag Communist Party's reply, dated August 20, requested the Revolutionary Council to release to the Press:

(1) the memorandum on "Peace—Preliminary Stage" prepared by the Party and presented to the Council on August 16,

(2) the Council's letter of August 19, and

(3) the reply of the Party thereto.

The Party also asked for an opportunity to continue discussions and offered to have members for the Delegation taken into custody, if such was considered necessary for further talks. If this proposal was not acceptable, the Party added, arrangements should be made for the conduct of further negotiations through correspondence between the Party underground and the Revolutionary Council.

As regards the Council's stipulation that representatives of the Party should not take political or military action before their arrival back at jungle headquarters, the Delegation said it would abide strictly by it. The Delegation however made a reference to the conditions about cease-fire as conveyed to the Revolutionary Council on August 13. The main points then stressed were:

(1) Halting of military operations

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by both sides and announcement by both sides to the country accordingly;

(2) Even if attacked, the side attacked should withdraw or by some means induce the attackers to stop fighting and withdraw;

(3) To refrain from counter-attacking even if the situation favours such action;

(4) To continue efforts to persuade the attacking side to accept a cease-fire;

(5) The Revolutionary Council and the Red-Flag Communist Party should both try to get all other underground armed forces to accept a cease-fire on the above lines;

(6) All armed organisations should accept as the minimum standard of human conduct that they should not employ surplus forces, which have become available as a result of a cease-fire arrangement with any other armed organization, to conduct operations against other organisations.

The Red Flag Communist Party's letter was signed by Thakin Soe, Secretary-General, Ma Ngwe San and Tint Lwin, Members of the Central Committee.

The memorandum of the Party submitted to the Revolutionary Council runs to 22 pages, but it contains only three main proposals. The greater part of the memorandum is devoted to elaborate explanations and clarifications of the proposals with a wealth of quotations from Marks, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. These proposals, as well as the ideological principles on which they are based, had indeed been disclosed to the Press by Thakin Soe himself at the Press Conference held at the BBS on August 13 (*The Nation*, August 14). They are briefly as follows:

(1) that a national convention of all political parties, aboveground and underground, in power and out of power, should be held. It is explained that this convention is a necessity, as no lasting "democratic" peace is possible unless founded upon the wishes, opinions and basic interests of different classes of the people;

(2) that of the peace programmes of various parties be submitted to the arbitrament of the people through the national convention. Adopting the analogy of a court of law, the Delegation suggests that the various political parties should consider themselves as litigants in a law suit, that the Press, the radio and other communication services should act as the "bench clerk" (i.e. explain to the people, who is in the position of the "judge", the case of each individual

party), and that the Revolutionary Council should act as the "convener."

(3) (1) that the Revolutionary Government should on its part—

(a) grant the right to publicize one's own views freely,

(b) avoid use of force in dealings with the people, including political parties and organizations,

(c) subordinate the claims of the minority to the interests of the majority, in case of dispute, controversies, etc. among the people.

(2) that opposition parties (i.e. parties not in power) should—

(a) avoid resorting to revolutionary methods in fighting for their demands, objectives etc.,

(b) adopt a policy of peaceful persuasion when trying to put forward their views on national, class, and minorities problems.

The memorandum in conclusion asks for grant of permission to the Delegation (1) to hold a Press Conference, (2) to meet various mass and class organizations in order to present to them the Party's proposals and (3) to address a mass meeting.