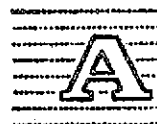


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COMPLAINT BY THE UNION OF BURMA REGARDING AGGRESSION
AGAINST IT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHINA

²⁸
Letter dated 27 September 1954 from the Permanent Representative
of Burma addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations

New York, 27 September 1954

In accordance with paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 717 (VIII),
I have the honour, under the instructions of my Government, to submit copies
of the following:

"Report to the ninth session of the General Assembly by the Government
of the Union of Burma on the presence of foreign forces in its
territories."

(Signed) J. BARRINGTON

Permanent Representative of
Burma to the United Nations

REPORT TO THE NINTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNION OF BURMA ON THE PRESENCE OF FOREIGN
FORCES IN ITS TERRITORIES

It will be recalled that when the complaint of the Union of Burma was first debated at the seventh (resumed) session, the General Assembly, at its 428th plenary meeting held on 23 April 1953, adopted resolution 707 (VII) of that date, by 59 votes to none, with only China abstaining.

The resolution runs:

"The General Assembly,

"Having examined the complaint by the delegation of the Union of Burma regarding the presence, hostile activities and depredations of foreign forces in the territory of the Union of Burma,

"Considering that these facts constitute a violation of the territory and sovereignty of the Union of Burma,

"Affirming that any assistance given to these forces which enables them to remain in the territory of the Union of Burma or to continue their hostile acts against a Member State is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations,

"Considering that the refusal of these forces to submit to disarmament or internment is contrary to international law and usage,

"1. Deplores this situation and condemns the presence of these forces in Burma and their hostile acts against that country;

"2. Declares that these foreign forces must be disarmed and either agree to internment or leave the Union of Burma forthwith;

"3. Requests all States to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of the Union of Burma in accordance with the principles of the Charter;

"4. Recommends that the negotiations now in progress through the good offices of certain Member States should be pursued, in order to put an end to this serious situation by means of the immediate disarmament and withdrawal of the said forces from the territory of Burma or by means of their disarmament and internment;

"5. Urges all States:

(a) To afford the Government of the Union of Burma on its request all the assistance in their power to facilitate by peaceful means the evacuation of these forces from Burma; and

(b) To refrain from furnishing any assistance to these forces which may enable them to remain in the territory of the Union of Burma or to continue their hostile acts against that country;

"6. Invites the Government of the Union of Burma to report on the situation to the General Assembly at its eighth session."

In accordance with the above resolution, the Government of the Union of Burma submitted its report, dated 31 August 1953 (A/2468 of 11 September 1953), to the eighth session of the Assembly, and in the report it was stated that nothing effective had happened by way of implementation of the resolution.

On 29 October 1953 the Joint Military Committee at Bangkok issued the following statement:

"The Republic of China has assured Thailand and the United States that about 2,000 foreign forces together with their dependents will be evacuated from Burma; that all foreign forces refusing to leave Burma under this plan are disavowed; and that it will not help those remaining with any supplies.

"This proposal was made to the Burmese Government through diplomatic channels and the latter has agreed that although she did not feel able to rejoin the Joint Military Committee in Bangkok, she would not interfere with the proposed evacuation; would assure co-operation with the Joint Military Committee as far as possible; and that military action against the evacuees would cease until 15 November, on provision that the Republic of China accepted these assurances. The Republic of China assented to this; therefore, there is agreement between Thailand, the Republic of China, and the United States on the evacuation, and Burma agrees not to interfere and to co-operate with the Joint Military Committee. On this basis, Thailand, the Republic of China and the United States have proceeded to take preliminary action, including arrangement for housing, security, evacuation team and air transport.

"The first group of evacuees is due to arrive at the border during the first week of November for reception by the Joint Military Committee and evacuation through Thailand to Taiwan."

The discussion in the First Committee began on 31 October 1953, and went on till 5 November. In the course of the debate it was reported that the evacuation was about to begin, and thus, in order to have a clearer picture of what was happening, the discussion of the matter was postponed. The discussion was resumed on 27 November. It continued till 4 December and, finally, at the 470th plenary meeting held on 8 December 1953, the General Assembly adopted the following resolution, by 56 votes to none, with one (China) abstention (resolution 717 (VIII)):

"The General Assembly,

"Having considered the report dated 31 August 1953 of the Government of the Union of Burma on the situation relating to the presence of foreign forces in its territory, and all other information on the subject laid before the Assembly,

- "1. Notes that limited evacuation of personnel of these foreign forces has begun as from 7 November 1953;
- "2. Expresses concern that few arms have been surrendered by them;
- "3. Appreciates the efforts of the United States of America and Thailand in striving for the evacuation of these forces;
- "4. Urges that efforts be continued on the part of those concerned for the evacuation or internment of these foreign forces and the surrender of all arms;
- "5. Reaffirms General Assembly resolution 707 (VII) of 23 April 1953, and in particular;
- "6. Urges upon all States to refrain from furnishing any assistance to these forces which may enable them to remain in the territory of the Union of Burma or to continue their hostile acts against that country;
- "7. Invites the Governments concerned to inform the General Assembly of any action that they have taken to implement the present resolution;
- "8. Requests the Government of the Union of Burma to report on the situation to the General Assembly as appropriate."

The first phase of the evacuation took place while the eighth Assembly was in session. It actually began on 7 November and ended on 8 December. A total of 1,810 men including the sick, the wounded, the infirm and children dressed as soldiers, plus 439 dependents, were evacuated. A very small amount of unserviceable and ancient weapons were surrendered and destroyed by the Joint Military Committee.

On being assured that the Chinese were in earnest about further evacuation, a cease-fire was again declared as of effect from 3 January 1954 in respect of certain areas, which would enable the evacuees to group and to withdraw towards the border. In addition, the Burmese Government agreed to the request that arms surrendered be flown out of Burma.

Short of rejoining the Joint Military Committee, the Burmese acceded to every request made by the Joint Military Committee and, as things worked out, every co-operation was given by the Burmese observers and commanders of troops operating in the locality, and even if they did not formally sit on the Committee, the effect was the same. The Burmese observers were able to make their contribution to facilitate the evacuation.

In spite of these generous concessions the second phase of the evacuation began only on 14 February, and by 28 February, out of the expected 3,000 only 970 had been evacuated, inclusive of dependents. In deference to the wishes of the Joint Committee, the cease-fire was extended again in respect of certain areas. By 19 March, the second phase had ended. The total evacuated during this phase includes 2,791 men and 659 dependents. A fair quantity of arms and ammunition were surrendered and these were air-lifted from Kengtung airfield on 6 April. As a further gesture of Burmese generosity, 177 prisoners of war and seven dependents and 175 Chinese refugees who have expressed their desire to proceed to Formosa were air-lifted from Mandalay and Meiktila to Lampang in Thailand on 18 and 21 April respectively.

About the beginning of March 1954, the Burmese Army moved into the areas in respect of which the cease-fire had ended. Bombing on a small scale was also resorted to, and this led to the Permanent Representative of Nationalist China lodging his protest regarding alleged violations of the cease-fire agreement (document A/2643 dated 19 March 1954). The Permanent Representative for the Union of Burma in a letter dated 1 April 1954 (document A/2644 dated 5 April 1954) replied that the allegations were without foundation.

The army operations concluded with the re-occupation of the northern and middle sectors by 1 April, leaving the southern sector (Tennasarim) to be dealt with. In this latter sector, the Chinese had originally joined hands with the Karen insurgents, but at that juncture they had fallen out and the Burmese Government was informed that, with the Chinese in the north evacuating, there were some in the Tennasarim sector who wanted to do likewise. In order to enable the Chinese to withdraw, the Burmese forces slowed down the operations and a cease-fire zone was drawn up around Palu. In the Kawkareik area, however, the operations went on till Myawaddy, on the Thai-Burmese border, was re-occupied on 17 April. By this time the Chinese troops had withdrawn into the Palu area and therefore the cease-fire in respect of this area was extended to 15 May.

The third phase of the evacuation began on 1 May and ended on 7 May, the total number evacuated being 727 men and forty-four dependents. As there were no more troops willing to evacuate from this sector, with the consent of the Joint Military Committee, the cease-fire which was to be effective till 15 May was called off.

On 30 May, there was a news report emanating from Taipeh announcing the dissolution of his army by General Li Mi, thereby indicating that he would not hold himself responsible for the remainder who had not taken advantage of the facilities for evacuation.

Though at the end of this third phase the Joint Committee remained at Bangkok in the hope that some more would signify their desire to come out, no further evacuation has taken place and, by a statement made on 29 July, the Joint Military Committee announced its intention to keep facilities open up to 1 September. The Committee has ceased to operate as of that date.

The Burmese position has always been that there were some 12,000 troops operating in Burma. A total of 5,328 men and 1,142 dependents have evacuated the country, but about the same number still remain, complete with arms. The evacuation was solely on a voluntary basis, and thus some of the generals who had tasted the fruits of a monopoly in opium have chosen to remain behind. Added to this number would be those who did not want to go to Formosa, and those locally recruited.

While the Government of Burma desires to make known its sincere appreciation and gratitude for the assistance rendered under difficult circumstances by the United States of America and Thailand, and to their representatives on the Joint Committee for bringing about the evacuation of those that have left Burma, it would at the same time sound a note of warning that the matter has merely eased, and that the danger has not yet been eradicated. Of late, there has been an attempt at re-organization by the troops that stayed behind, and it is reported that the remnants have regrouped themselves, with concentrations on the northern sector of the Thai-Burmese border. With a lull in the operations, a substantial number has come back into Burmese territory and a serious but unsuccessful attempt was made to occupy the Mong-Ton Mong Hang valley late in June. The town of Mon Hkak, thirty-seven miles north of Kengtung, was besieged for twelve days by a force estimated at 500 strong. A re-enlistment drive in respect of stragglers is reported to be under way. An alarming report is to the effect that certain so-called anti-communist Chinese organizations of Singapore and Bangkok have decided to allocate 600,000 US dollars to maintain these troops in Burma.

The reports may be exaggerated but what cannot be denied is the fact that armed troops running into some six thousand are still hugging the Thai-Burma border, ostensibly to resort to an anti-communist drive, but primarily to enrich themselves by controlling the opium trade and manufacturing counterfeit currency notes at the same time. Obviously the situation is not one which permits of complacency.

This report would not be complete without an expression of the gratitude which the Government of the Union of Burma feels towards the United Nations. The strong moral support which the Union of Burma has received, without a dissenting vote, from this Organization has undoubtedly contributed substantially towards the easing of this problem. In reiterating its sincere thanks for this support, the Government of the Union of Burma is confident that it will continue to receive the support of the United Nations in such measures as may still be necessary to liquidate the problem in its entirety.

(Signed) Sao HKUN HKIO
Foreign Minister
Government of the Union
of Burma

New York, 27 September 1954
