

may pit the KPA against the DKBA in the future, and if the KNU (Karen National Union) continues to fight both groups, then the SPDC will likely take a step back, simply supplying and encouraging the war in Karen State until all of the resistance movements are so weak that they can be crushed and controlled one by one.

In areas where there is full SPDC control and no resistance, the villagers become completely at the disposal of the Army. They must continually do rotating shifts of forced labour as servants at each of the Army camps near their village, and new Army camps are always being established. They must also go for up to two weeks per month of forced labour on infrastructure projects, such as roads, railways and hydro dams, which the Army implements to consolidate control and attract foreign investment. Villagers must also pay the costs of these projects; the SPDC controlled media often describes "self-reliance basis" projects, meaning those which are constructed entirely with the forced labour and money of villagers; the money forced out of villagers for these infrastructure projects is listed as "people's contributions" and usually amounts to one-third to half of the total budget. However, in reality any money provided by Rangoon is simply pocketed by local and high-level authorities, while villagers are forced to pay anywhere from 100% to 300% of the actual cost of the project to these same authorities. In addition, many Army camps confiscate their farmland without compensation and then force them to do labour growing rations and cash crops for the Army or for export. They must also do forced labour gathering building materials for Army camps and participating in moneymaking activities for the local Army officers, such as logging and brickbaking. An average family must send one person for each 3 or 4 types of forced labour every month; women must often do this labour because men are more likely to be beaten by soldiers at the worksite, and children must often go because their parents need to work the fields for the survival of the family. If the village fails to comply with requests for forced labourers, materials or money, the village elders are arrested and often tortured, houses are burned down, or the army simply storms the village and takes two or three times as many people for labour as were originally requested.

In urban areas the SPDC has decreased its demands for forced labour, because it fears the possibility of uprisings in the cities and because forced labour in the cities is more visible to foreign visitors. Instead the regime uses convicts for forced labour in the cities or brings in villagers from rural areas, while those who live in the cities simply pay cash in lieu of doing forced labour. In some forced labour projects on tourist routes the SPDC has even taken to paying forced labourers, though the amount paid is usually 20 or 40 Kyats per day, which is no more than 25% of the money needed for daily food. This allows them to show foreigners that forced labourers are "paid", even though the rest of the country forced labourers are never paid.

In some rural areas thousands of acres are confiscated and the villagers must do forced labour establishing fishpond projects and rubber plantations. These projects are often promoted in the media as "local income generation", but all proceeds go to the Army. Officers also steal the wages and rations of rank-and-file soldiers and then order their soldiers to survive by looting the villages. All farmers who still have land must hand over 25-50% of their crops as a quota to the Army and are paid only 10-20% of market price. The quotas increase every year, even when there are bad crops and natural disasters, and farmers often have to sell their belongings to buy rice at market price just so they will have enough to pay the quota and avoid arrest. Many of the crops grown by forced labour and those handed over as quota are used to support the Army, but local officers take and sell a great deal of it, and it is likely that much of it is also sold to foreign companies for "countertrade" export; "countertrade" is a practice whereby foreign companies convert profits earned in Kyat, the local currency which cannot be exported, into exportable goods by buying agricultural products from SPDC agencies. Cash crops and rubber are often used for this.

Every army camp demands money from every village in its area, and usually this is calculated to amount to all the money a village can raise each month. With the arrival of new Army camps, the amount increases proportionately. In 1995 the Karen Human Rights Group studied a group of 28 villages averaging 50 families in size and found that each village was paying an average of approximate-