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1990 elections was the Montreal-based International Center for Human Rights and Democratic Development - the first in 1991 to come forward and give financial support to the government in exile- something of which Canadians should be very proud. Following this example, the Norwegians came on board and gave support. Norwegian support has been very important to the democracy movement as it has provided the opportunity to have a radio broadcasting station, one which has been broadcasting daily programs to Burma since 1992. In the beginning it was very difficult to run, as the taped broadcasts had to be mailed to the transmission stations on the Thai-Burma border. Now there is a professional studio in Oslo broadcasting 1 1/2 hours a day, and it being is transmitted by at least two stations in Oslo and Germany. There are now seven ethnic language programs, done by the different ethnic groups themselves. Through the radio, there is a democracy-building process taking place and the creation of a new society where different ethnic groups can present their views and work with one another.

Another achievement of the National Coalition Government was the creation of the Burma Donors Secretariat, an agency independent from the government. Most of the democracy groups on the border don't know where to go for funds, something the Burma Donors Secretariat can help with by channeling funds from various donors to projects in need of assistance..

The National Coalition Government also secured funds from the Swedish government, which led to the creation of an independent council of Burmese

economists focused on the Burmese economy.

Last year the European Union funded the European Office for the Development of Democracy in Burma. When things change in totalitarian governments, the people tend to do the same things they did under the dictatorship. The goal of E.O.D.D.B. is to prepare the people of Burma to be exposed to new ideas, democratic systems and democratic institutions, and to also conduct training sessions for those involved in the democracy movement.

One of the programs is to build the national goals by enabling the various ethnic groups the opportunity to meet and discuss what they want- such as the upcoming Chin conference in Ottawa. The next step would be inter-ethnic conferences, so that the different ethnic groups within each state could meet together to decide how they want to handle affairs in their own state. Then the next step would be to have all the ethnic states meet for consultations, eventually leading to the creation of a national convention in which all the ethnic states and Burman people could work together to decide on the Burma that they want in the future. The European Union has now agreed in principal to support Burmese scholars, professionals, etc. to form various groups, such as the economic research project, AIDS in Burma, redesigning the education system and the creation of a new health system.

We are moving forward - not only in the negative areas of being able to deny the regime legitimacy and resources but also positively in that we are now able to start to rebuild the Burma that we want. There is every reason to be encouraged and to continue on with the struggle.