

**LABOUR ORGANIZATIONS AND THEIR MOVEMENTS
IN MYANMAR (1948-1962)**

Ph.D.(DISSERTATION)

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ABSTRACT

Until the outbreak of World War II, labour movement in Myanmar had been in its infancy and was not a significant force to be reckoned with in politics. There had been a strike of BOC oil-field workers in 1938, against the exploitation of the Company. After that, the Doh Bama Asiayone organized labour in the All Burma Trade Union Congress (ABTUC). But it saw its demise at the outbreak of World War II. The Communist Party revived the ABTUC in 1945 in the form of All Burma Labour Union, but it also met its oblivion when the Communist Party went underground. It was only after the AFPFL government was formed after independence that a labour union came into being under the sponsorship of the Socialist Party which was a core organization of the AFPFL. It was called the Trade Union Congress (Burma) or TUC(B). The TUC(B) was also able to emancipate the labourers from being exploited by the capitalist owners of large industries. But it was not long before the TUC(B) saw a cleavage in its ranks and the appearance of a rival labour organization in the Burma Trades Union Congress (BTUC). The latter was formed by the left leaning splinter group of the original TUC(B) members. While the TUC(B) followed the leadership of the Socialist Party, the BTUC was at the behest of the Burma Workers and Peasant Party (BWPP). Strife and clashes between the two rival unions became rampant and much labour unrest ensued. The umbrella organization AFPFL itself was torn asunder in 1958 due to personal grudges and vendettas among its members which saw the split into Clean and Stable factions. The Clean formed a new labour organization in the name of the Union Labour Organization (ULO). Thus there were three rival labour unions, namely, the TUC(B), BTUC and ULO. Strife

and clashes between these unions became more intense. The Care-taker government of General Ne Win tried to restore some semblance of unity among labourers, but its tenure in office was short-lived. The chaotic condition of labour resumed at much more proportion under the Union Party Government of U Nu. Only when the military staged a coup in March, 1962 that the labour problem was brought to an end. Finally, for the first time in history the diverse labour unions were forged into unity under the Burma Socialist Programme Party (BSPP).

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