

# The *Alternative* NEW LIGHT OF MYANMAR

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## INSIDE

### Loving the hand that hits?

Initially it was expected [...] that the judges [on 11 August 2009] would give [Aung San Suu Kyi] the maximum penalty for her 'crime', being 5 years imprisonment. Then during the verdict she got 'only' 3 years of imprisonment [...] changed by Than Shwe personally into 1½ years of house arrest. [...] Now, should we be glad and grateful to the judges and Than Shwe? Should we love them for their unexpectedly mild verdict? I can imagine that people are somewhat relieved, but love, respect and gratitude?

[...]

It should be clear that it is my opinion that in such cases one never should love and show gratitude. The 1½ year verdict for Aung San Suu Kyi is still 1½ years too many. In any case it is intended to rule out the influence of the opposition in the upcoming (2010) elections, not really fair and credible if the junta really wants to convert to democracy. That is why it is very much justified that Aung San Suu Kyi appeals to her verdict.

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(advertisement)

### HIV Information for Myanmar [him]

HIV Information for Myanmar [him] is a weblog and email list that is updated daily. If you have email access and an interest in the response to HIV in Burma then send a message to

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HIV Information for Myanmar [him] tries to get closer to truth because, as U Thant pointed out over forty years ago, "in times of war and of hostilities the first casualty is truth".



**Than Shwe, above the law, escapes conviction for genocide, crimes against humanity, while Aung San Suu Kyi has been convicted for offering hospitality to a stranger; all that because of the junta's excessive, rigid, invalid, unfair and undue laws and orders.**

# Loving the hand that hits?

James Russell Brownwood

04mar+27+29jul+14aug2009

(14aug2009)

*Example propaganda*

First of all some examples of regular and common deception by the junta government in (the English language version of) the New Light of Myanmar (NLM) is presented. Such articles generally serve only a limited number of goals: promoting the junta as the one and only legal body in Burma, promoting adoration for the junta (generals) for their material and educational achievements, promoting and worshipping "the desire of a patriotic unity by the entire people", degrading opposition parties, especially the NLD, attacking the West and bending the truth about the West's intentions, defending the junta's stance with regard to measures taken, e.g. against Aung San Suu Kyi in the Yettaw incident.

Next, the junta propaganda is compared to a fictive story of political and social brain washing and indoctrination. The main question asked there is whether one should show sympathy or love for one's opponents, and whether such feelings actually can be forced by manipulation and indoctrination. Finally the consequences of the attempted manipulation are being discussed in terms of confidence in the leaders and the stances to take towards the upcoming elections in 2010 and the demand for freedom now for all political prisoners.

(27jul2009)

The article 'On my return from Europe' by Wai Hmu, published in the NLM of 25 July 2009, made me smile. It made me smile of the rather childish way it was written, the interpretations and consequences drawn and the accusations made towards the EU. Especially the sanctions irritate him; they are directed towards the people of Burma he states. His view consists of a typical, junta prescribed view on Europe (or the US), disregarding the reality in Burma. Wai Hmu might have been right for a large part if Burma would be a democratic state, where the people live in freedom, but yet are threatened by foreign groups and states.

But we all know, and Wai Hmu knows that very well too, that Burma is not a democratic state where the people live in freedom. On the contrary, Burma is an utterly totalitarian state in which the people are not free at all (to say what they think), but Wai Hmu does not at all touch that point. He just does not mention the real situation in Burma. He suggests that the EU would be against the citizens of Burma. But the citizens of Burma should know by now (from the foreign news sources) that the EU is just supporting them against their hostile, repressive government. That division always is ignored or contradicted by junta supporters.

Talking of division, Wai Hmu also suggests that the EU would support a division of Burma by supporting the various fringe groups, borderline refugees, insurgents in his eyes. He does not mention the way the EU actually sees those groups, as victims of the Tatmadaw, of the generals. It is clear that the junta does not want any division, but Wai Hmu does not say that Aung San Suu Kyi neither would want a division. Opinions may be rather divided about this too, [mine is anyway, that is, I don't see that much disadvantages of divisions if the people from the concerning areas, the inhabitants of the states would really want it themselves as long as any disintegration takes place in the atmosphere of peace and respect and not leads to a civil war.

Wai Hmu neither defends the junta against the EU accusations, he only discredits the EU for what it seemingly does (wrong) to Burma. Well, he once reports the motives of the EU to act as it does, the three repeated goals "(a) the release of political prisoners including Daw Suu Kyi (b) the seeking of all-inclusive dialogue including the leaders of minority groups (c) the promotion of genuine democracy with standardized human rights", but he does not discuss or dispute these further; he only seems to reject them implicitly.

The value of Wai Hmu's article stands or falls with the truth about Burma. Wai Hmu doesn't talk about Burma so much, but he completely ignores and conceals the true relation between the junta government and the Burmese people. He implicitly suggests that these parties form a peaceful unity, while in reality they do not (there is sufficient evidence from that around). He clearly is lying (with permission from the generals) about the cooperation of the people with the government. He ignores the human rights violations, the lies, the neglect of election results, the lack of freedom, the risk of being imprisoned if criticising or not obeying laws; whose law's anyway? Who is 'we'? Who are 'the people'? Who's talking?

(29jul2009)

The article "Do with consideration and caution" by Soe Mya Kyaw in the 27 July 2009 NLM contains nothing new. Only repetitions of rigidly adhering to the agreed visit protocol, suggestive lies, nice theories and bad practices. Just about the (positive) cooperation of Myanmar with the UN, nothing about the (alleged) evident human rights violations all over Burma, the (alleged) suppression of freedom, the (alleged) jailing of political critics (creating the political prisoners). Nothing about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights that Burma supported/signed, but (allegedly) soon and since long violated extremely. Nothing about the opposition (allegedly) wanting the criminal Than Shwe to be arrested and stand trial for severe human rights abuse and genocide. Only (alleged) lies, half truths and untold truths.

Any interference from outside (the UN, Ban Ki-moon) is parried and declared not in accordance with the UN Charter. According to Soe Mya Kyaw the UN should better turn its attention to more important issues in the world, like the US and Israel. The reason that the UN and many (Western) countries want Aung San Suu Kyi on the throne would be that she would be a good puppet of the West, not that she actually was elected by the majority of the entire (see page 3)

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# Loving the hand that hits?

James Russell Brownwood

04mar+27+29jul+14aug2009

(from page 2)

people during the elections but not recognised as such by the selfish junta. No indication of compassion and care for the Burmese people. Just misleading political propaganda.

(14aug2009)

The New Light of Myanmar (NLM) of 7 August 2009 contains the article "From stability and peace to democracy" by Ba Nyar Aung. It is one of the many articles that appear in the NLM, praising the good deeds of the junta government, whether concerning material development or military actions against "rebels" and "insurgents". It takes the past (2008) referendum results for granted and looks forward towards the upcoming (2010) elections: "And the people relish the thought of enjoying a prosperous future of the nation."

The article also warns for "destructive elements wanting to disrupt the Seven Step Roadmap [...] there have been many demands for amendments to the constitution as well as comments on the forthcoming election associated with the role of a specific person and organization. What is worse is that certain persons are secretly as well as publicly deceiving the people into staging mass demonstrations and violence if they will not have their demands fulfilled." Deception and intimidation actually [jrb].

The article also tells the story of the 1988 uprising while justifying the Tatmadaw's intervention and taking over the state duties. All the fault of the BCP, MSPP and other opposition members, according to the article, who would be against the proposed multi-party elections, afraid of losing and went into the streets to demonstrate and commit violence. Ba Nyar Aung suggests that without the 1988 uprising a democratisation process would have gone more smoothly: "If the drive for political reforms had been carried out in the framework of the 1974 constitution, the tasks to make Myanmar political reforms would have gone smoother and more rapidly."

The article goes on to say that currently the government offers the people "a golden opportunity to realize democratization process in the framework of the constitution in Myanmar". It praises the Constitution for its meaning as "the foundation for democratization in Myanmar." and "The constitution was approved by the vast majority of the voters in the referendum." Now, Ba Nyar Aung continues, the opposition wants changes to the Constitution, claiming that democracy norms are not met. While the entire people were represented by delegates in the NC, it is not unusual that it is impossible to reach agreement with everyone, but the NC should not be blamed for that.

That is the way Ba Nyar Aung tries to bend the truth around the 2008 Referendum. He concludes with saying that the Roadmap and the Referendum are the best opportunities for the Burmese people on the way to democracy. He paints the government(s) as do-gooders having the best intentions for the people and he implicitly suggests that the people should be very happy and grateful for that. I am neither going to talk about the Referendum and the rigging practices around it, nor about the black history of 1990, 1988 or before. His article is just one of the many recently published articles in the NLM serving as an example of praising the junta for its achievements and loving kindness for the people. And that's where the shoe pinches.

(04mar2009)

*View on Burma*

There are two possible descriptions of Burma from different viewpoints. The first one is about a hijacker and his hostages: the junta is the hijacker, violently kidnapping the hostages, the common, poor citizens of Burma; the perpetrators hold their guns pointed towards the victims who can't do anything to change the situation. The second description would involve a poor country and a hostile, alien occupation force; the point here is that the hostile

occupation force does not come from a foreign country, but from within the same country commanded by wicked generals; that makes it even worse.

(14aug2009)

*Big Brother*

In 1948 the Englishman George Orwell wrote his novel "1984" (published in 1949). In there he describes future Europe (particularly London) being ruled by a very cruel dictatorship "Big Brother" assisted by a large network of (social) inspectors using a kind of 2-way TV screens, that were always on and showed continuous propaganda and adoration for Big Brother. People should obey to the dictator's rules, which might be changed at any time. They also had to believe every rewrite (=falsification) of history according to the dictator's demands (following the course of the wars being fought). But above all the people had to love their dictator, Big Brother and to follow him blindly. Love for Big Brother was forced violently. Socially 'deviant' people had to be re-educated, rehabilitated (in mind, attitude and behaviour), brain washed, physically and mentally tortured.

Orwell's novel describes the story of a man, who works in the department where they rewrite the history books. He deviates from the 'straight path' and is arrested for that. But he hates Big Brother, that is the truth and he can't do anything about it. In order to force his love he is severely, physically and mentally tortured until he finally changes his mind on the necessity of Big Brother's way of ruling. The love for Big Brother comes from the gratefulness to the intermittent and final stopping of the intense torture and the insight in 'his own faults, wrong views and anti-social, mal-adjusted, criminal and destructive behaviour'. He is very grateful to (the inspector of) Big Brother for teaching him all that and accepts and believes all that he has been accused of. He has been mentally broken.

(see page 4)

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# Loving the hand that hits?

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(from page 3)  
*Similarities*

In what way compare the real situation in Burma and the fictive situation in Orwell's novel with each other? Well, both situations concern a dictatorship where there is no individual freedom at all, where one is forced to do and to think as ordered and where any 'criminal offence' is punished severely. A further similarity is that in both cases the rulers rule with iron fist while offering privileges to people who follow them blindly. Furthermore the rulers want to be praised and adored, loved by the entire people and use various tricks to force that love. Another similarity is the rewriting of history (in Burma: about the 1990 elections, about the NC during the past two decades, about political prisoners).

So, in both situations the rulers on one hand hit the people hard (in the case of Burma: repression, no freedom, killing, capturing, torturing, raping, chasing, forced labour, deception and more) while on the other hand also do some positive things (in the case of Burma: material development, health care, education) and promise a nice future (in the case of Burma: prosperity, democracy). The rulers hit the people hard and at the same time demand the people to love them. Can one love the hand that hits? And if one can is that justified?

In his novel Orwell makes it clear that he does not regard it justified, but rather as a pessimist view on the future (after 1948). I also think one can be forced to, both in individual and in collective cases. For example children being beaten by their parents or even (sexually) abused develop a feeling of hate and love at the same time. The love and obedience dominates when the abuse does not occur. The same can happen between men and women in a relation or between hijackers and hostages during a criminal act. I'm afraid the torture like Orwell describes can force such a kind of love. It is a kind of psychological manipulation, psychological warfare.

*Reduction of verdict*

Another comparison with Orwell's novel can be made with a very current event happening in Burma: the conviction of Aung San Suu Kyi (on 11 August 2009). Initially it was expected (though condemned in advance) by almost everyone that the judges would give her the maximum penalty for her 'crime', being 5 years imprisonment. Then during the verdict she got 'only' 3 years of imprisonment (including hard labour). A surprising result. Even more surprising it was that after some 5 minutes that verdict was changed by Than Shwe personally into 1½ years of house arrest (he must have known of the verdict in advance and been preparing his special order to commute the sentence). Now, should we be glad and grateful to the judges and Than Shwe? Should we love them for their unexpectedly mild verdict? I can imagine that people are somewhat relieved, but love, respect and gratitude?

Let me draw another obvious comparison: a hijacker keeps someone hostage and demands a ransom. If the ransom will not be paid, he threatens, both hands of the hostage may be cut off. The ransom is not paid within the ultimate time and the hijacker announces to cut off just one hand for the time being. In the end, when the hostage is found and freed, it appears only one finger has been cut off. Should one be happy with that? Should one be grateful to the hijacker for cutting off just one finger? Should one love the hijacker for reducing the torture?

It should be clear that it is my opinion that in such cases one never should love and show gratitude. The 1½ year verdict for Aung San Suu Kyi is still 1½ years too many. In any case it is intended to rule out the influence of the opposition in the upcoming (2010) elections, not really fair and credible if the junta really wants to convert to democracy. That is why it is very much justified that Aung San Suu Kyi appeals to her verdict. In fact she should even demand financial compensation for the

past time (14 years) that she was detained illegally.

*Thick skin*

Even another conclusion that can be drawn here is that the junta has placed itself at the same position as the executioner in Orwell's novel and still dares to offer development, prosperity and 'democracy' (or whatever they call a continued dictatorship). It seems like they have no feeling, no heart, no emotional or affective sense and no feelings of guilt and shame. They only may have a strong desire for, an addiction to wealth, richness (money and property), adoration, power and sex (as far as that last aspect still applies at some of their's old age). They use the country's citizens as objects to play with and to influence, control and force as desired.

*Don't trust the hand that hits*

Of course I don't regard forcing love justified, whether in an educational setting, abusing other people or in an institutional setting as Orwell describes. It is no real 2-way love, no mutual respect. One party tortures or deceives and the other party has to obey and accept. In the case of Burma I would say one should in the first place beware of starting to love the rulers for their 'loving kindness' and material and educational development, while they at the same time restrict and control the people's life extensively. One should resist loving the repressive tyrants, in spite of their nice looking promises and deeds. One should never love and trust the hand that hits. Even an animal knows that; a maltreated dog can get unreliable, dangerous, vicious and never fully trust and love his master, he rather fears him and obeys him for that reason.

That also applies to people: one should not accept the 'good' deeds from the junta with gratitude, but as granted. And one should certainly not trust the nice promises of the junta on improvement in the near future towards more freedom, democracy.

(see page 5)

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# To unite or to divide

*James Russell Brownwood*

31jul+10+13aug2009

(13aug2009)

Some of the opposition parties (not the NLD) would want to split Burma into several independent states at the same time democracy would start. That is a bid too high I think. Risking a civil war doesn't do good to anyone. A division of Burma, if any, should be negotiated in peace among each other only after liberation. Currently the junta uses the wish of certain (ethnic) groups for dividing Burma also as an excuse for the repression, while promoting the indivisibility and unity of Burma. That argument has to be taken away from the junta in their attempt to keep and justify absolute dominance over Burma. Aung San Suu Kyi knows that very well and has always declared to want to keep Burma united. First of all a liberated, united Burma.

(31jul2009)

The arguments of the (ethnic) groups that want to be separated from Burma, vary from regarding themselves not historically Burmese, not liking the other population groups, via not liking other groups that support the junta to not liking the junta itself. In some cases they already fight for a separation right now, before Burma a democratic state. However, that is more or less unfeasible momentarily, because the junta violently takes action against any population group wanting to separate from Burma and possibly fighting the Tatmadaw. The strict rule of the junta presently prevents any division, though the idea remains slumbering, just like in the former Yugoslavia under Tito. Aung San Suu Kyi does not want to split up the

country either as she has made clear. As for me I'm rather neutral. I don't prefer disintegration, but I neither exclude it if it is the will of the people, even a minority; the people should decide.

(10aug2009)

Various junta supporters have made it clear that in their view the military government with the army (Tatmadaw) is the best option to maintain law and order, peace and stability, and to prevent a possible civil war, aimed at a division of Burma. My question is: is that worth it, that the people pay such a high price, giving up their freedom (in the broadest sense), being oppressed severely, to prevent possible other (uncertain) violence? And who is deciding for the people what is best for them? The people themselves or the generals? Have the generals ever taken the people wishes into account? Have they ever shown any move in the direction of a democracy other than in words? Is it worth to prevent a division of Burma (if the people would want it themselves) at the cost of imprisonment for political criticism, lack of free press, rigid laws drawn up by the current or previous juntas, forbidding people to receive guests, while at the same time there apparently are no laws (or no means) to charge the generals for their obvious crimes, human rights violations and genocide. Is that justified?

(31jul2009)

After the liberation from the repression in the near future, after being really free, able to say what one thinks and

wants, it may quite well be possible that the groups who want to be separated from the rest of the country again raise their voice. The arguments against the junta and its supporters then would not apply anymore, so the main arguments would be limited to social, economic and historical ones. How should a future government deal with those desires? I think it will be a very difficult situation, both for the government and the people themselves. Any new and democratic government presumably would not be happy with one or more divisions, but if stopping any attempts in that direction the result may be a civil war. And that is the worst that anyone would want.

If, however, giving in to the desires of some minority groups too easy, the country might fall apart quickly. I can't say which side it will go or what would be the best decision. I can only express my hope for any decisions in good harmony as characteristic to a democracy. A division does not necessarily involve violence (see the Northern parts of former Yugoslavia and the former USSR), but trying to avoid any division might increase the chances of an undesired and violent civil war. I hope my view of the future is too pessimistic in this case. I hope I am totally wrong and the Burmese people want to remain living in peace with each other after being relieved from the dictatorship. Maybe the wish or need to separate then will be not so strong as it is now.

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## Those from Chinese and DPRK Embassies visited SPDC (Headquarters) 30 times in July

06aug2009

### Monthly spy report

RANGOON, 4 Aug-The State Peace and Development Council (Headquarters) kept in touch with the Chinese and North Korean embassies and is living up to their instructions. The people are criticizing such

acts of the SPDC and keeping a watchful eye on them. Those from the Chinese and DPRK embassies visited the SPDC (Headquarters) at Bayint Naung Yeik Tha in Nay Pyi Taw 30 times in July 2009. During their visits, they met with high ranked military of the junta and gave small and large envelopes and parcels to them. - NLM

## Loving the hand that hits?

(James Russell Brownwood)  
(from page 4)

Instead one should say: we don't want to accept all that from the junta having hit so hard during the past and still now, we want another body that we elect (or have elected) to carry out those tasks. The junta is not the right party to perform such tasks, it isn't representative, it has not been elected and it is extremely repressive, a proven enemy of the people. \*\*\*\*\*

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# Guilty or innocent

James Russell Brownwood

12+14aug2009

*Seven reasons for knocking  
over a judicial system*

(12aug 2009)

Even while junta supporters say the opposite they and everyone knows that the sanctions, including the new ones to come (if any), are primarily directed towards the criminal rulers of Burma, not towards the weak and poor citizens of Burma. It is a punishment (though still very moderate) of the dictators for the oppression and violations of human rights in general and locking up innocent people, political prisoners for more than 20 years in particular. In this case Aung San Suu Kyi is innocent because she was detained illegally and unlawfully for some 14 of the past 20 years. If she hadn't been detained she neither could have violated the terms of her house arrest. The ones who are the direct cause for (more) hardship and suffering for the common people are the armed, violent Molochs in Nay Pyi Taw. They all should be arrested, jailed, tried and convicted as soon as the opportunity arises. The goal is freedom and independence for the Burmese people, independent of Russia, China, Nay Pyi Taw and North Korea (in this order increasingly dictatorial states).

Given Aung San Suu Kyi's innocence she should be released immediately and demand a very large sum of money from the generals as compensation for the time of detention. Anything less is unacceptable and should be turned away. But the criminal tyrants quite likely are insensitive to such arguments. They are the armed hijackers and the political prisoners are the victimised hostages. What ransom would they demand for selling those prisoners to the poor people? Ask them a price.

(14aug2009)

Each of the following arguments on itself is a sufficient reason to claim innocence of Aung San Suu Kyi to the alleged crime of offering unauthorised hospitality to a stranger:

1. The rule of the generals always has been illegal. They have been voted down in 1990, but didn't recognise those results. They chose to stay with the authority of the gun. They also kept the law "Law to Safeguard the National Burmese State Against the Dangers and Threats of Those Insurgents Desiring to Cause Subversive Acts and Against the Dangers and Threats of Those Insurgents Thinking About Desiring to Cause Subversive Acts and Against the Dangers and Threats of Those Insurgents Possibly Thinking About Desiring to Cause Subversive Acts and Against the Dangers and Threats of Those Insurgents Not Yet Thinking, but Possibly Anticipated Thinking About Desiring to Cause Subversive Acts and Threats of Those Insurgents Not Even Born Yet Who Maybe Might Start Thinking About Desiring to Cause Subversive Acts at Later Age" from between 1974-1988 in force. As they were and are illegal, their whole legal and judicial system is unlawful and invalid. It should be regarded to have no authority. Actually it is one-sided anarchy. That is why Aung San Suu Kyi never could have been arrested, regarded criminal and convicted in the first place.

2. Aung San Suu Kyi has been (intermittently) detained for about 14 of the past 20 years, completely illegal, without any (fake) trial. If she would not have been detained during the time that Yettaw arrived, Yettaw would not have arrived that way and there would not have been any violation of law. The junta, Than Shwe personally is guilty of her detention and all its consequences, including any 'unlawful' actions that might emerge from the detention.

3. Aung San Suu Kyi did not do any harm to anyone, not to the people, not to Yettaw, not to herself and not to the authorities. Oh yes, she harmed Than Shwe's narcissistic ego, self-respect and dignity and his feelings of security. You have to know that Than Shwe is very much paranoid, suffering from OCD, an obsessive-compulsive disorder. He has to check everything a hundredth times; he has

a psycho-neurotic feeling of not being safe personally if not checking every detail of his national's private life. The people might start close relationships with insurgents without letting him know. That is why he abused the above stated Law-with-the-long-name saying that she perpetrated that law and, hence, was/is a criminal by definition. This is the only sin of Aung San Suu Kyi.

4. The Law-with-the-long-name is a morally despicable law and falls in the category 'Ignore from civil disobedience'. That is what Aung San Suu Kyi did. She did what is morally seen most justified. Would you hand someone over to the enemy, knowing that he would be arrested and imprisoned or killed? No, you would keep it silent, just like during e.g. WWII people were kept in hiding against the order of the occupying forces. Handing them over would really kill them (and yourself).

5. The Law-with-the-long-name stems from the time period after the 1974 Constitution and actually was only valid under that. From the 1988 YAC (yet another coup) that constitution was invalidated and from mid 2008 a new (though very much disputed) Constitution was officially valid. If the junta would have been consequent and honest they would not have abused the old Law-with-the-long-name for this purpose. Yet they did because they are not consequent and honest. But actually that awkward law was not valid. And one is only a criminal after being proven and convicted, not before. As she could never have been tried she is no criminal. She is a do-gooder.

6. Is a judicial system, which is able to try and convict Aung San Suu Kyi for virtually nothing, a reliable system? I don't think so; after all, the system is not capable of arresting, trying and convicting the junta, Than Shwe in particular, for their crimes against humanity, killings, imprisonments, stealing freedom and privacy, and so on (details below). Than Shwe is morally very much guilty of committing crimes, but is he legally guilty or at least suspect in Burma?

(see page 7)

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# Laws or justice

James Russell Brownwood

31jul2009

What is the law? The law is the law, is it? The law is the law is the law is the law is the law..., is it? People have to comply to pieces of paper written and signed by the junta, do they? One of those pieces of paper forbids the citizens to offer friendly, welcoming hospitality to anyone without an official permit, is that it? Aung San Suu Kyi did not obey the law, right? Violating such a rule from the junta is criminal, is that what is regarded criminal in Burma? Criticising the law and the junta also is risky and criminal, what is not criminal in Burma? Is killing peaceful demonstrators not criminal? Is raping (ethnic) women by the Tatmadaw not criminal? Is burning down thousands of (borderline) villages not criminal? Is putting Aung San Suu Kyi under house arrest (without a trial) not criminal? Is neglecting the election results and not keeping promises not criminal? Is committing genocide, restricting (foreign) aid to cyclone victims not criminal? Is lying to and deceiving the people not criminal? Is enslaving people, forcing unpaid labour, not criminal?

Actually that is exactly what is terribly wrong in Burma. The laws exist for the benefit of the generals, to suppress any opposition or even any attempt of opposition. People are not free in saying and

doing what they want (within democratic limits); they are prisoners and slaves of the generals in their own country. Given the unlawfulness of the existence of the junta, all their fabricated, rigid and ridiculous laws are unlawful, illegal. No one is morally bound to comply with those 'laws'. Those are no more than means of oppression. Only as long as the tyranny still will last it is necessary to take care not to be caught because of those laws. But when caught violating any such law one has to know that one is on the right side, while the so called 'laws' are on the wrong side. This situation should be compared with the resistance in occupied countries during WWII, punishable by the occupying force, but morally justified and legal from the viewpoint of humanitarian justice and exiled and subsequent governments. So, logically reasoning from the point of an unlawful and criminal government, the good ones oppressed and jailed and the bad ones ruling with iron fist (Tatmadaw), it is the world upside down; and that has to be corrected.

Dictatorships after military coups already exist for almost half a century in Burma. Not only in Burma of course, but in many more politically and humanitarian uncivilised countries in the world. Medieval situations. Given the globalisation, the

development of communication techniques such self-isolated states can not exist too long anymore, certainly no 1000 years. See the collapse of the USSR, the changes in Eastern Europe 20 years ago. It may be very well possible that in Burma the dictatorship will fall within 10 years. Then a completely new and legal constitution will be drawn up, an elected, democratic government installed. It won't be paradise; even a democratic government has to cope with many problems, social, economic, political, ethnic (separation wish). But the people will be free at least, able to say what they want and to criticise the government's policy if necessary. Justice will return. And then still living SPDC members will be prosecuted for crimes against humanity under (international) criminal law. Traitors will be caught and tried too if they don't fly from the country. Power will be to the people, not because they have to come under the influence of the West, but because they have a right to enjoy democracy, which the West also enjoys. The (majority of the) people's will will be done.

See also "To obey or to resist" in the 19th @NLM of 29 June 2009:  
<http://jrburma.surge8.com/@NLM/Alt%20ONLM%2029jun2009.pdf>  
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## Dictatorship begets dictatorship, not democracy

### Guilty or innocent

(James Russell Brownwood)

(from page 6)

According to international interpretations, norms and definitions he is! The judicial system in Burma is nothing more than a fake judicial system, serving as puppets to the junta. They are not the judges who convicted Aung San Suu Kyi, but it was Than Shwe personally. He knew about the verdict in advance and had his replacement order ready. Than Shwe personally wanted to clear up Aung San Suu Kyi before and

during the 2010 elections.

7. To make the issue even more clear let me draw the following (imaginary) situation: suppose I would step into the office of Than Shwe and say "I'm taking over, your laws are hopelessly soft". I would immediately proclaim a new law, saying that anyone wanting to visit the toilet each time would need written permission from the (higher) authorities; a violation would be a crime. Would you obey that law? ..... I already thought so, neither would I. But now the authorities are going to arrest you, pointing a gun at your criminal head. At that moment would you wish to have been more obedient

or would you question the law and claim innocence? ..... Exactly, it is a fabricated, ridiculous, rigid, useless law, not serving or protecting the people and not made by the people's representatives, only made to oppress the people by (socially) controlling all insignificant details of their private life, stealing their privacy and disdaining their needs.

There may be more legitimate arguments, but I think enough is enough to justify stopping the injustice.

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# Change Burma, change

*James Russell Brownwood*

30jul+13aug2009

(30jul2009)

Change Burma, change! Only the junta can change the opponent's opinions and prejudice. But they have to do something about it, they have to offer something. But it is well-known that they can't, they are old, rigid and stuck in their habits. It means that the political and human rights situation in Burma almost certainly will not change before the Big Boss, Than Shwe has died of old age or illness. So, he probably will not experience and witness a real democracy and real freedom of the people. That is a pity, it would be good to have him observe the people's power and to convict him for human rights abuse and genocide before a court of law. But he should know that his empire will collapse after his domination. He can not do anything about it or rather, he does everything about it. Until then we have to continue to fight with words for even the smallest improvements.

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Many people in and outside Burma would want much more diplomatic pressure from the West; some of them even would want military pressure, possibly military intervention. Though such intervention might be morally justified it would also have several serious drawbacks: the loss of many (innocent) lives on all sides, many people wounded, escalation of the war to surrounding or even more distant countries, in the end a larger loss than in the beginning. I think, how much the people would long for radical or gradual, but real changes, any foreign military intervention is not feasible (and not really successful, see Iraq and Afghanistan), unless legalised by the UN, so only if China and Russia would support such intervention too.

A revolution, if any, should rather come from inside Burma, preferably like the example of Romania (1989), largely peaceful, where the army chose the side of the population. Yet I know that the opposition parties politically are rather weak, topped and divided. That is in their disadvantage. Yet there also are military

officers who would be willing to change the current absolute domination of the dictators. That is an advantage. It is just a matter of getting the ball rolling, but it could also roll the wrong way if not pushed carefully.

Some of the opposition parties (not the NLD) not only would want a free and united democracy, but at the same time they would want to split Burma into several independent states. That is a bid too high I think. Risking a civil war doesn't do good to anyone. A division of Burma, if any, should be negotiated in peace among each other only after liberation. Currently the junta uses the wish of certain (ethnic) groups for dividing Burma also as an excuse for the repression, while promoting the indivisibility and unity of Burma. That argument has to be taken away from them in their attempt to keep and justify absolute dominance over Burma. Aung San Suu Kyi knows that very well and has always declared to want to keep Burma united.

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Dialogues are also lacking in Burma where the generals only want to hear themselves. If the junta would really be prepared to hold free and fair elections they would already have released \_all\_ (about 2200) political prisoners, including Aung San Suu Kyi. Until now they did not show any sign of such a practical preparedness yet, unlike the promising words of Than Shwe and I don't think they will do so. Their interpretation of free and fair is quite different from the usual interpretation. Free and fair to them means state controlled, influenced and without disturbing incidents. The 2010 elections will be as unfair and invalid as the 2008 referendum. They just don't comply to international humanitarian standards.

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My expectation is that the junta won't sacrifice a milligram of its power and that the current dictatorship continues, also after the 2010 elections. Changes are to be expected gradually during the course of years, especially when the current generals,

particularly Than Shwe will have died of old age. Patience and endurance are the necessities for the people, supported by many people abroad. Possibly Burma might gradually evolve to the state that China presently has reached: a lot more freedom and technical communication facilities than it used to have (during Mao's tyrannical regime), but still far from a democracy and still some condemnable human rights violations going on, but improving.

Until then the international community can and should only continue to condemn the junta's crimes, the atrocities, the political imprisonments by way of reports and declarations. Once the UN gets more united (China and Russia) firmer actions may be taken, like strongly influencing and forcing the generals to give in. An option for now is to start an official, dedicated, international justice tribunal on the crimes against humanity by the junta, to distribute official arrest warrants and to give it sufficient media attention. And we have to continue writing and protesting from abroad as it is not allowed to do so from within Burma. This should be a never-ending story.

Of course the situation will change drastically if and when it becomes obvious that rogue state Nay Pyi Taw is developing nuclear arms with the aid of North Korea, endangering the area's peace and safety. In such a case it is more likely that China will support the UN in taking more vigorous measures against NPT, e.g. forcing NPT to allow international inspections, forcing to dismantle possible developing facilities or destroying those sites by air from foreign countries and in the ultimate case arresting the responsible authorities. Let's hope and pray that it won't come that far.

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