

UK-org.

Member Comment:

07 February 2008

Ref: Matthew Wilson's reply to PDP.

It's taken for granted that feedback was encouraged by the fact the comment was posted as an open letter therefore; I would like to add my interpretation of events and facts leading up to Burma's election of 1990, to the present day, on behalf of; Mr Wilson's apparent, inadvertently perhaps, lack of insight and understanding, as to the workings of real life. I do not criticise only offer alternate answers.

Let it be known, that I commit this comment under my own cognizance, and in no way is associated with the thoughts or practises of the; PDP, its Chairman, or any member there of:

Mr. Wilson, it is with utmost respect that I feel compelled to intercept the issues raised by you to the PDP's Chairman; Bo Aung Din.

I sincerely hope that this comment does not run into boredom, but I am attempting to condense my many years of experience into one offering in the hope that it raises awareness, not just to Mr. Wilson but all who read this. I do this because I have grown to love Burma and its people.

“Any comments I make are pure political reality, and bear no malice toward anyone”.

My credentials are: I have been actively involved in Burma's pro-democracy movement in one form or another for 30 + years. I am privileged to be friends with many of its founders, both alive and of late. I have spent long periods in the jungles of Burma, and along its border with Thailand. Alas, I am unable to participate further due to age and ill health.

My pattern of thought follows, just so the reader knows where I am coming from:

All of below is very relevant to Burma's situation today, though it requires intelligent interpretation!

A UK.org, comment posted 27, January 08, “Spectators or Participants?” gives a picture of present day Burma as far as political awareness and the consequences there of; is concerned

Introduction: As with both, serving and former military minds, more so with special forces, one assess things as they are now, and how situations can change in an instant, and in which direction, then react to them, so our minds tend to think more rapidly, see things the untrained eye cannot, expect what others believe do not exist or cannot,

comprehend, plan for the ground to open up and swallow you, plan for the very worst scenario, and then, in a mille second, transcribe ones thoughts into effective action.

The best way of describing this skill, which is precisely what it is; night vision, is accepted as a sense we either have or do not have, in fact we all possess the ability to improve our vision, or more correctly; 'instant subject recognition', ISR, in any manner of contortion they may adopt, in both night and day, enabling us to identify our surroundings in either, be it animal, vegetable or mineral.

i.e. How many times as a reader of this comment, bumped, tripped, failed to see what is clearly visible, walk along a busy road, without remembering what he/she may have passed on route, i.e. people and their clothes, cars and the makes of them, how many people in each car, what were they wearing, how many wore glasses, how balanced was the pressure on the vehicle tyres in accordance with its size and weight. How many windows were open?

They may seem trivial questions, but to a soldier on patrol in a hostile environment he must be aware of these examples plus many more, and ready to react with precision, and effect results which place him in a superior position to that of the contact which may arise from any one or more, of his surroundings, either, from his immediate position to far off. I hope the reader can relate scenarios to Burma 's political mine field. They differ in description, but draw the same results and consequences if one is unaware or chooses to ignore!

This mentality is absent from much of Burma 's pro-democracy movements. To take part in any sporting field a person must be trained and fit to go against others who may be seeking ways to defeat you. The less you are prepared, the more catastrophic and humiliating the result!

Presentation: My last great moment, was a visit by my good friend, General Bo Mya (Karen) during his trip to London some years back, where we reminisced over years gone by.

Naturally, most of my early friendships were made up from what is today's PDP, simply because they were the **only** group opposing the regime other than of course, the ethnic groups. While this was going on, Suu Kyi was safely tucked away in comfort and contributed absolutely nothing toward the struggle, whereas; perhaps, her connections could have funded U Nu's PDP (*who after all was her fathers number one*) struggle in the jungle, had she been at all interested, or the fact that she had perhaps, already sold her soul to becoming influenced by foreign life styles and their foreign policy in reference to SEA, something U Nu could very well have chosen for himself, had he not committed himself to the people of Burma years before. He spent seven years in prison, not confined to the comforts of home, and he even chose to die in his beloved homeland!

Suu Kyi's 'self imposed' situation come about by her being influenced by the West, with the intention of keeping the election of 1990 in the minds of the world. It was felt, that her continued presence in Burma would legitimise any action undertaken by the West in efforts which suit their foreign policy. However; it must be emphasised, that Suu Kyi was not a part of the NLD during the election, therefore holds no electorate mandate as an MP or as its leader, which bars her from any office. (*I am*

aware of the circumstances) She must first become an elected MP, which of course calls for a new local election, which cannot be legitimised until constituencies have been constitutionally set up by a recognised government or power already serving, elected or otherwise?

This can of course be pitted against the fact that her marriage to a Westerner, bars her from entering office. This ruling, either by law or by cultural standing, must be respected if Burma is to keep its heritage.

Sein Win of the NCGUB, is well aware of this, and as an over ambitious individual, cousin or not, would use this in an attempt to replace her if the elections were ever recognised, or renewed.

Mandate: NLD, 1990, because a government was never sworn in, the election results become void, non-existent, it did not happen: in fact, they hold no more legitimacy than a popular vote taken for example, at a local restaurant or community gathering. Had they a mighty military force behind them, the story could be different, but they did not.

We must remember also, that the electorate consisted of only a fraction of the population, and constituencies such as they were; came as; ethnic groups and Burman NLD, not much democracy there, as; many of the ethnic political groups aligned themselves with the NLD in the hope of claiming seats. This action was more in tune with 'clutching at straws' than realistically understanding the process of democratic procedures. Suu Kyi was seen as a representation of Western freedoms, with anticipations of strong Western pressure that would bring down the regime. My late friend, and sadly missed, General Bo Mya who had years of experience, held these same dreams, whereas; he understood the true reality of the situation, and on those grounds, would have made a fine leader during any democratic infancy.

Election mandate:

Your idea, that was the regime to fall, stability could only be upheld if an already existing government were to replace them, is to say the least, rather a badly-thought out assumption is it not, Apart from the fact that U Nu was still alive in 1990, and still Burma's legally elected Prime Minister, and living members and/or newly promoted members, would still be his Ministers, your assumption of things, would in fact support his governments reinstatement. Not forgetting; if the regime imploded, how could a political party, with no military defence force waiting in the wings, ready to counter certain anarchy, within the regimes military, claim to be able to stabilise the country? I suppose the UN would have 10 divisions on standby, though it would require more, not to mention the logistics? I hear you ask; who then, could handle it? Because you cannot see it, does not mean it is not there, and no right minded tactician or strategist, is about to reveal their plans, now are they?

Reactionary:

The PDP's counter action in the mandate war or words, came about by the continued repetitive onslaught, of declaring an everlasting validity of the NLD's mandate, and does in fact, if one continues to exaggerate privileges in rather a infantile manner, invalidate the 1990 elections, due to the fact that; U Nu's government had neither reached the end of its term in office, nor did he call for an early election. U Nu's government was unceremoniously removed by Ne Win, under circumstances which have been incorrectly stated over the years. Therefore; if we are to continue this

façade, the PDP's declaration holds more legitimacy than that of the NLD, because U Nu's government, which is; today's, PDP, was in government at the time of the 1962 coup!

The other fact; if the regime was recognised as Burma's rulers, in 1962, as was the case, invalidating U Nu's claim to office, then its annulment of the 1990 elections, is also recognised, and places the regime back in the chair, invalidating the elections? This means it does not have to recognise the NLD, PDP, or any other political party. Leaving open; the only practical way to move forward, as the PDP have stated, and of that, which Suu Kyi has decided to adopt, after years of broadcasting non-alliance with the regime or the ethnics?

Of course the PDP know its own declaration over mandates is farcical, but it must fight fire with fire in order to ridicule it as unworkable formula, as mentioned above, otherwise, Burma's future will be dictated by those who make the rules to suit their own ends, just as the regime does?

You suggest that Suu Kyi's detention, qualifies her to lead government, what about any one, of the thousands who are perishing in absolute misery in the prisons, many of whom have made far greater sacrifices, and suffered extreme pain under torture?

Suu Kyi's confinement is luxurious compared to her colleagues, who do not have the diplomatic safety net of a British passport.

As far as attempted assassinations are concerned, they do not exist. If you believe that as the case, then you have your head in the sand, and your mind is heavily influenced by your emotions.

To the unfamiliar mind, it may have appeared as such, but in the real world, if the regime wanted Suu Kyi out of the way, then it would be as easy as falling off a chair.

The fact, that people term these episodes, as attempts, is no more than a publicity stunt to increase her popularity, plus of course naivety on the part of many.

Governments around the world, make people disappear every day, without so much as a trail, do you really think that the regime as it is today does not have the capacity and capabilities to eradicate one individual?

Those accusations alone, reveals the true level of naivety among many people as to the power and capabilities of the regime?

The regimes tactics during these events was to disrupt, to show the people that they still hold the reigns!

Leadership qualities?

As much as losing a partner and being separated from ones children, is upsetting, it does not warrant a ticket to leadership. I alone could name many who for decades, have sacrificed and endured immense suffering, to difficult for me to put into words. People, who survived in terrible conditions, surviving below ground, falling to sickness, loss of whole families to deacease and conflict, I have seen individuals voluntarily walk into a minefield making a safe path for others. People who cannot show themselves even to wash their clothes or perform human functions, everything has do be done under complete cover and isolation. They barely have enough to eat. They live in the most abominable conditions. All of this is for love of their country

and their loyalty to the struggle and each other! I pay honourable tribute to every single individual who endures such punishing hardships, with only death or maiming to look forward to, and all for a country where many do not even officially recognise their existence, because everyone thinks the NLD and their non-violent opposition holds more clout with the west. So they allow their own blood brothers and sisters pay the price? And you Mr. Wilson, talk superciliously of sacrifice, and have the audacity to confront a man whose friends and comrades in arms, have all been to hell and back and more to the point, repeatedly and voluntarily, risking life and limb every time, walk back in, and you ask; “who else is there to step up to the plate”?

What sympathy and respect do you pay to these people, or come to that, why don't you join them?

Sympathy vote:

If a member of the electorate is overcome by sympathy and it influences their judgement, it means they are not ready for democracy, because, **voting from either; the fear of, or sympathy for,** indicates that they are vulnerable and open to manipulation!

You recognise naivety in the NLD, but ask who else has stepped up to the plate. I have already made suggestions in part to the question: Cont: If I may say so; you have obviously been looking in the wrong direction, or, your eyes have been closed, or dare I say, you have never grasped the plot or, have studied all the players?

From day one, the PDP has been at the forefront of all opposition against the regime. Those who lead the party today, all actively participated in armed action during the past 40 years, all suffered and made immense personal sacrifices, all experienced prison and the pain it includes, all gave everything they possessed, all respected and supported the NLD and the 1990 election result, all sat back to allow the NLD to drive forward, all kept quiet while corruption set in, all believed that the west would clear the way, until finally, someone had the courage to stand up and speak out what the people were too fearful to say aloud. Bo Aung Din, after putting himself on the line many times in armed conflict, now placed himself firmly and steadfastly, on the political platform of freedom of speech and self-determination, precisely what his party stands for.

Conclusion: To understand Burma's dilemma, one must understand the world. Burma as we know it today, was created by British institutionalisation, bringing about, as regarded by some, but I might add, not all, a common foe amongst those which were now under one roof as it were, considering that for generations, was in conflict with each other.

Today there is another common foe that of their own doing, but the unity is split, just as it was under the British. What Burma needs is a completely new approach to its dilemma, one which is isolated from any outside manipulation!

With Suu Kyi, the NLD, NCGUB, this is not possible, as it will only prolong Burma's isolation from its own dream of a complete democracy.

People have said; Burma needs the help of democracies in order to learn. What it does not need however; is for the teacher to impose their own personal doctrines?

We all learn from school, how we use that knowledge depends on whether or not we succeed. It's how we interpret and convert knowledge into action, which proves our worth. We do not want our teacher to sit on our shoulder through life; schooling is about learning the preliminaries, we then have to study the best way to assemble the puzzle from life's experiences, of which my own, in conclusion; though it holds no influence, judges the newly vitalised PDP, as Burma's most prominent hope, for reasons I have hopefully revealed in one form or another, depending on ones scope of understanding?

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Note:

In civilised democracies, with high moral attitudes, where we in the west, like to place ourselves, even though it may be a contradiction in terms, politicians can and do, play with time, and seldom relate their actions to consequences. Military commanders on the other hand, place consequence high on their list of priorities, which often creates tension between the two, as many former 4 star chiefs of Staff have made apparent in recent years. Those who play for time on the Burma front are not particularly bothered about consequence, life still goes on for them, whereas; those who know what it is to fight and survive every day are only too aware of the consequences of time!