

Harper + Aung San Suu Kyi + G20 Protesters = Hypocrisy

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Sunday, November 14, 2010

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On Saturday, Stephen Harper issued a fantastic statement explaining why Canada is happy that the Burmese totalitarian regime released Aung San Suu Kyi.

The amazing thing is how many of his criticisms of the despotic regime apply to him and his treatment of G20 protesters. The DFAIT/PMO bureaucrats must have had an awesome time crafting this statement. Let's track the similarities:

Statement by the Prime Minister of Canada on the release of Aung San Suu Kyi

13 November 2010

Yokohama, Japan

Prime Minister Stephen Harper today issued the following statement on the release of Nobel peace laureate and pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi:

"I am pleased that Aung San Suu Kyi has finally been released from house arrest in Burma. She is an unwavering champion of peace, democracy and respect for human rights in Burma, despite being held in detention for 15 of the past 21 years.

via [Statement by the Prime Minister of Canada on the release of Aung San Suu Kyi - Prime Minister of Canada](#).

Peace: the G20 featured thousands of peaceful protesters who consistently argue that the neoliberal capitalist agenda of the G20 undermines peace around the world by exacerbating material disparities and preventable poverty and despair. Hundreds of peaceful protesters were rounded up in terrifying fashion, then detained and charged with either NOTHING or non-existent breaches of the criminal code.

Democracy: the G20 is a patently anti-democratic body that sets the global economic agenda from the perspective of...take a breath here...the 20 richest nations in the world. Protesters oppose this kind of wealth totalitarianism.

Respect for Human Rights: the beatings and Charter violations of G20 protesters in Toronto are widely documented and a stain on Canada's reputation as a nation that respects human rights. Mind you, this is not surprising when the [Harper government "endorses" the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#), but with this disclaimer: "in a manner fully consistent with Canada's Constitution and laws" which means the government will nod happily at what it likes and ignore the rest if it contravenes our current despotic relationship with indigenous peoples of Canada...much like [Bush's](#)

[signing statements.](#)

“Neither her trial nor appeal process were conducted in line with international standards. She was not granted due process and should never have been detained.

Due process: I laughed out loud when I read this when I considered the absolute lack of due process afforded to hundreds of detainees at the G20 in Toronto. The Canadian regime that enforced the draconian response to peaceful protest in Toronto failed to meet Canadian standards, let alone international standards.

“Canada has long supported Ms. Suu Kyi in her efforts to bring genuine democracy to Burma. In recognition of her struggle to promote fundamental freedoms and democratic principles, she was granted honorary Canadian citizenship by the Parliament of Canada in 2007.

Genuine democracy: we have no democracy when people have legitimate fears of being rounded up and detained for dozens of hours, perhaps beaten and intimidated, certainly abused for peacefully protesting, partaking of a "free speech zone" or merely walking in public near a protest. The chill factor created by the G20 abuses is designed to discourage future protests/demonstrations. The Orwellian bail conditions foisted upon Alex Hundert and many others undermine fundamental freedoms, the rule of law and democratic principles.

“Canada stands resolutely with Burma’s democratic forces and like-minded members of the international community in the quest to restore civilian government to the Burmese people. We continue to call on the Burmese authorities to release all political prisoners and allow the meaningful political participation of all Burma’s opposition and ethnic groups.

Restoring civilian government: I would like to see a return to civil government that respects the Charter pro-actively, rather than gambles that it can violate the Charter and our rule of law, then hope it avoids/delays sufficient scrutiny until the psychological trauma has been fully embedded in the population.

Release all political prisoners: I call on Stephen Harper to release the G20 protesters still held, initiate a non-partisan public inquiry into G20 security abuses, and initiate judicial review of all charges and bail conditions.

Meaningful political participation: I call on the prime minister to apologize for G20 security excesses and abuses and enact restorative measures towards the protesters and the public at large to affirm for Canadians that his regime is not designed to undermine meaningful political participation in Canada.

“In December 2007, Canada imposed the toughest sanctions in the world against the Burmese regime to indicate its condemnation of the regime's complete disregard for human rights and its repression of the country's democratic movement. Those sanctions will remain in place.”

Toughest sanctions in the world: I call on the global community to condemn the behaviour of the Harper government's G20 security abuses. Harper likes to spin "tough on crime" rhetoric, in this case championing our sanctions on Burma, but he clearly refuses to permit democratic expression at home. His "complete disregard for human rights and...repression of the country's democratic movement" stemming from the G20 abuses demand that the world community act in whatever way they deem suitable to pressure the Harper regime to acknowledge and actually champion the rule of law, for the sake of democracy in Canada.

The delusion/arrogance that Stephen Harper must now be carrying to have the gall to release this statement condemning the Burmese totalitarian regime and its treatment of Aung San Suu Kyi that also apply to his treatment of G20 protesters is unfathomable.

As long as Canadians permit this kind of abuse of our democracy, Harper will continue to beat us, in full irony, with the text of our Charter.

Please, feel free to forward this post to our irony-loving prime minister at pm@pm.gc.ca so you can let him know that he needs to live up the standard he demands of...of all places...Burma!