

Thailand: Steps To An Election?

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According to Thai Prime Minister Abhisit, there will be a General Election in Thailand soon. Whether we can believe him is another matter because Abhisit is an incurable liar. However, according to the rules that the present military-backed regime say that they abide by, there must be an election this year. The election could be postponed on “national security” grounds or the military might stage another coup. Both these options are not the preferred ones of the regime. Winning an election is the preferred option because it would give the regime legitimacy. Postponing an election solves nothing in the long term and another coup, putting soldiers in the front seat, would be stupid. Never the less, Thai generals are not the cleverest people in the World. They might allow their arrogance to cloud their judgement.

But how to win an election when the majority of the population is against you? We know the majority of the population supports the Red Shirts and used to support Thai Rak Thai (TRT) because of the results of a series of elections which were overturned by the military and the courts. So they have to cheat. But cheating like Ben Ali or Mubarak, getting 95% of the vote, is not on the cards. It would be too obvious. This is why the regime has been chipping away at the Red Shirt party. They banned TRT politicians from politics, used the courts to dissolve TRT and then Palang Prachachon, and stuffed the Electoral Commission with those who favour the dictatorship. The latter will be important in tipping the balance of seats after a future election. If Peua Thai win a majority, this can be eroded by giving out some red or yellow cards to disqualify them. In 2008 the army bullied and bribed Newin Chitchorp to change sides. Now they will be hoping that the odious gangster politician Chalerm Yubamrung will do the same. Slight changes to the Constitution in the field of “party list” MPs will help the Democrats gain at the expense of small parties, who might demand too much to support the Democrats. But such changes may help Peua Thai too. The fact that the media is totally in the hands of the regime and that there is draconian censorship will also help. So will the fact that some prominent and very popular Red Shirt leaders are in prison.

Peua Thai party is not helping either. It is a shadow of TRT and has no new policies to win the hearts and minds of the people. It could be proposing a Welfare State with taxation on the rich and/or root and branch reform of the military and the justice system. It should campaign to bring to justice the state officials and army generals responsible for the murder of nearly 90 unarmed pro-democracy demonstrators. Instead it merely relies on the past popularity of TRT and doesn't appear to want to change anything.

The election will not solve the crisis of democracy in Thailand, but it will be fought over in order to gain legitimacy. This fact is being debated within the pro-democracy Red Shirt movement. Clearer and more decisive demands need to be adopted by this giant social movement and the relationship between Peua Thai and the Red Shirts should be openly debated. More radical Red Shirt parties are needed.

There is one scenario where a military coup might not be such a stupid response. That would be the death of the weak, old and spineless King Bhumibol. He has been the rubber stamp for the military's undemocratic actions for nearly 60 years and the military and all those associated with the regime fear his approaching death. When he dies they might organise a coup, declare a state of emergency and install a “Government of National Unity”. Such actions should be resisted by all those who believe in freedom and democracy. The majority of Thais are now sick and tired of the military and

the monarchy. They want an end to the “ancient regime”. They will have to struggle to achieve this. But Tunisia and Egypt show that everything is possible.

Giles Ji Ungpakorn

“Thailand’s Crisis and the fight for Democracy” officially banned in Thailand

After struggling to read my book for over a year, the Thai police have finally banned “Thailand’s Crisis and the fight for Democracy”. No one is allowed to import it. But I have nearly sold out!! What is even more amusing is that there is a Thai version which is available on the internet to download for free. Anyone who wants a copy of the Thai version can just e-mail me at ji.ungpakorn@gmail.com or visit: <http://www.mediafire.com/?1la1shr4iy2rjie>

January 18, 2011

Abhi in Wonderland (*To-la Land*)

A bhisit’s military regime is a wonderland of perversion. Thais call it “To-la Land” and we even have a new national flag to celebrate it.

After killing 90 unarmed-prodemocracy demonstrators between April and May last year, events in the New Year have shown that the royalists and the elites are still as mad as a Junta of Hatters.

The Ministry of Culture has just banned the trailer for the teen love film “Love Julinsee, Rak Mun Yai Marg”. Shock horror!! The trailer showed two teenagers in school uniform about to kiss!! National Calamity!!! Yet the future Queen of Thailand has been forced by the Crown Prince to open her legs, full-frontal-starkers, for all to see on the internet. Now if this was part of a sex or anatomy education programme, one could understand, but the reality is that the future King is not into educating even his own brain. Of course the Thai elites know all this about the prince. They even tell the U.S. Ambassador that he isn’t fit to be King and that it would be better if he were dead and it gets leaked to the World by WikiLeaks. But these very same people have always sanctioned the murdering, jailing and banishment of Thai citizens on the grounds that they insulted the “holy institution of the Monarchy”.

Then we have the “Manically-crazed 7”. Those loony PAD Monarchists and “Democrat Party” members, who deliberately crossed over to Cambodia without papers in order to cause a war over their mad claim that a Khmer temple was somehow “Thai”. And all this is because the PAD and their New Order Party are disappearing down the plug-hole of history. Rallies in support of the Manic 7 have been supported by a growing number of groups with rapidly declining membership. Just do the maths. Three supposed “patriotic groups” mustered a total of 100 crazies in front of parliament. Some want to hand power “back to the King” because politicians are all corrupt. The fabulously wealthy King, who has lined his own pockets by not doing a single day’s worth of work, is definitely not corrupt in To-la Land.

The National Human Rights Calamity Commission in To-la Land, is well known for ignoring the killing of unarmed civilians by the military, the imprisonment of opposition activists for lese majeste, and the continued imprisonment without proper trials of hundreds of red shirts. This is not surprising because this National Human Rights Calamity is staffed by pro-coup Yellow Shirts, not very different from Amnesty International Calamity's office in Bangkok. The National Human Rights Calamity has just called on the Thai Government to defend the "Human Rights" of the Manic 7. In other words, the right to trespass over the border in order to start a war is much more important than freedom of speech, Democracy, or the right to live and survive a peaceful protest.

Abhi in Wonderland has just announced a 150 million baht fund to "reform the justice system". No doubt they wish to strengthen the sorry state of double standards in the land. Bribe the judges some more!! Spend millions setting up a new cavalry unit in the army so that more murdering generals can be promoted!! This must be the "welfare state" that Abhi and his Oxford side-lick Korn were talking about. Halleluiah!!!

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Giles Ji Ungpakorn
