

# The Benevolent Order of Scurrilous Monks Abbot's Report Winter Solstice, 2007

Monks' Lives Suck!!

We haven't heard much lately about the Buddhist monks who took to the streets of Rangoon and many other cities in Burma this fall. During the protests, most internet links were shut down and mobile phone networks were disrupted. There is still very little news coming out of Burma but we can fabricate a summary of what transpired from reports of the BBC, CommonDreams.org, *USA Today*, *Time Magazine*, *The New York Times*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, The Buddhist Channel, and Jotman.com. Most of this story has been shamelessly plagiarized from those sources.

On August 15, the Burmese government decided to increase the price of fuel. What part the multi national oil companies played in this decision is not readily apparent but both gasoline and diesel doubled in price. The effects of the fuel price hikes were far more apparent for Burmese monks than they were for Burmese government officials because the monks were witnessing the country's grinding poverty first hand. Isolated by its rulers and excluded from the economic prosperity of its neighbors, Burma is among the poorest countries in Asia.

Pro-democracy activists led the initial demonstrations in Burma's main city, Rangoon. When about 400 people marched on 19 August, it was the largest demonstration in the military-ruled nation for several years. When troops later used force to break up a peaceful rally in the central town of Pakokku on September fifth, at least three monks were hurt.

The monks gave the government until September 17<sup>th</sup> to apologize, but no apology was forthcoming. When the deadline expired, the monks began to protest in much greater numbers. There were daily protests both in Rangoon and in several other cities following the deadline. Some of the monks reportedly carried small banners that summarized the grievances of the public: "Sufficiency in food, clothing and shelter, national reconciliation, freedom for all political prisoners." A group called *The Alliance of All Burmese Buddhist Monks* emerged to co-ordinate the protests, and on 21 September they issued a statement describing the military government as "the enemy of the people." The protests got bigger by the day. Tens of thousands of monks were involved. Footage of one protest showed people lining the route as the monks marched, forming a chain to

protect them from any retaliation from soldiers. As many as 100,000 people lined the streets of Rangoon,.



When the military and police moved to crush the demonstrators, they first went after the monks. Under cover of darkness and a ten o'clock curfew, doors of monasteries were kicked in and monks, including some nuns, were bundled onto trucks and taken away. About 4,000 monks were rounded up as the military government tried to stamp out pro-democracy protests. They were first held at a disused race course and a technical college and were later sent to prisons in the far north of the country. A former senior Burmese intelligence officer who has defected to Thailand said that "several thousand" protesters were killed during the military crackdown and that the bodies of hundreds of monks were dumped in the jungle.



For much of late September, the road to the eastern gateway of Rangoon's revered Shwedagon pagoda was a sea of maroon and saffron robes, as hundreds of Buddhist monks gathered to march in protest against Burma's military government. Two weeks after the junta brutally cracked down on the pro-democracy demonstrations, the small monasteries that lined both sides of the road were mostly locked and empty. Police and soldiers armed with automatic



weapons sat on stools outside the mostly silent monasteries. More were stationed at the entrance of the hilltop temple, the spiritual center of Burmese Buddhism. As many as a thousand monks lived and studied at the small monasteries in the shadow of Shwedagon. But troops now far outnumber the handful of monks that are still seen at Shwedagon and the downtown Sule pagoda, another focal point of the pro-democracy protests.

Most of Burma's population is Buddhist. The monks of Burma are poor, and they are unarmed, but they exert a life-and-death power over the population. There is a monastery in every village and monks act as the spiritual leaders of every community. They give religious guidance and perform important duties at weddings and funerals. In return for these duties, they are given donations by laymen. Monks normally begin the day by begging for food, and people who fill their bowls earn credits for the afterlife, known as karma. When monks reject food by overturning their bowls it puts the would-be donors in danger of a terrifying spiritual future. If they refuse handouts, they are denying the donor the potential to earn spiritual "credit" - the strongest possible penalty that can be expected from a Buddhist. When the monks protesting in Burma announced that they would refuse all donations from the ruling military - most of whom are Buddhist themselves - it could not be taken lightly.

Up until this year, the government has always tried to buy off the monks by building temples and other things. The junta's generals are heavily influenced by Buddhism. Many are terrified of the monkhood. They're endlessly filming themselves going to the pagodas, and half of Burmese television is about the military bringing gifts there. By attacking the monks they have put their afterlives in grave danger. It denies the military their credits. If they die without enough, their rebirth will be at a lower order of

existence. Most Buddhists believe that the attack on the clergy and the imprisonment of monks will come back to haunt the junta. One monk was quoted as saying, "We believe that if you do good, you receive good. If you do bad things you receive bad things. This will be the same for the military."

The military junta recently created a new first-class postal stamp featuring Burma's leaders. The stamp was not sticking to envelopes, which enraged the junta, who demanded a full investigation. After a month of testing, a special junta commission presented the following findings about why the stamps were not sticking:

- 1) The stamp is in perfect order.
- 2) There is nothing wrong with the adhesive.
- 3) People are spitting on the wrong side.

## Burmese Monks Inspire Our Abbot

Monks in Burma put their lives on the line by protesting a rise in oil prices. This week, on September 18, our American congress passed a new energy bill. The bill requires new cars to be able to travel further on a gallon of gasoline. The network news outlets declared that the new law was a giant step forward in our national goal of reducing our dependency on foreign oil. What they barely mentioned was that the bill could not get past a presidential veto unless an important provision was first removed. That provision would have eliminated huge tax breaks which are currently granted to the five major oil companies. Exxon is currently enjoying larger profits than any other corporation in history.

Also passed this week by the Federal Communications Commission was a rule that allows major newspapers to own television channels in the same cities where they own their newspapers. This will give corporate America even more power to control the news flow. The rule passed in spite of the fact that more than 98% of Americans polled were against it. If it were not for the Internet, news would already be nearly as tightly controlled in America as it is in Burma. Many will dismiss this as nonsense. Freedom of the press is one of our most fundamental liberties. Why then, has the most important



news story of this decade still not been reported by the mainstream media? The only explanations that were given to the American people for the collapse of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center were the one that was offered by the PBS TV program NOVA and the one given by the 911 Commission. Both explanations have been proven to be riddled with lies.

To learn the truth of the matter, we can visit a web site called 911truth.org. There, we can find several books written on the subject. We can also buy DVDs of television programs telling the same story. Censorship is the only explanation of why none of this fascinating tale has ever been told by any major American media outlet. Those of us who have already heard the story have a patriotic duty to tell it to those who have not yet heard the story. Since the story has not been published or broadcast by any outlet of the mainstream media, the task falls to tiny little publications like the *Abbot's Report*.

We hoped that the 911 Commission might give us the truth. President Bush tried to block the formation of the Commission. When the American people demanded an investigation of the events surrounding September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001, our president responded by forming a commission headed by a member of his own administration, Phillip Zelikow. He then placed several roadblocks in the commission's path including a severe lack of funding. The commission's report was not completed by its deadline. It was delayed for months and it was heavily censored before the American people ever got to see it. Here are a few of the things that the 911 commission never told us:

A steel framed structure has never collapsed due to fire at any time before or after September 11<sup>th</sup>. The three buildings that collapsed on September 11, 2001 are the only ones that have ever (allegedly) done so.

The twin towers were marvels of modern engineering. They were specifically designed to withstand collisions from multiple jet airliners. Helicopters routinely landed atop the south tower. Neither the 911 Commission report nor the NOVA documentary told us that each of the twin towers at the World Trade Center was supported by 47 interior columns. These columns were made of steel and steel reinforced concrete and they were massive. They contained elevator shafts, utility shafts and stairways. In addition to these huge interior support columns, there were also 236 steel columns distributed around the outside edge of each tower. All 283 of these columns were tied together by welded steel beams and braces. Try to imagine this structure. 283 massive steel and steel reinforced concrete columns all connected by welded steel beams and braces. For the time being, let's ignore the floors and walls. Try to imagine what might happen if you dropped the Rock of Gibraltar on top of such a structure. In all probability, such a structure would withstand the impact. The Rock of Gibraltar would either bounce off of the top or remain sitting on the roof. But let's assume that the tower could not withstand such a huge impact. How would the tower break? It seems like some of the columns might break and the whole thing might tip over sideways. Maybe it would break into five or ten huge sections which would fall over and crush everything within the immediate surrounding area. Maybe it would even break into a hundred or even a thousand huge pieces.

None of those things happened when the upper floors dropped down on top of the rest of the towers. As we watch video of the collapse, we see the roof of the north tower, distinguished by a huge television antenna, fall straight down to the ground at almost precisely free fall speed. There were no huge pieces left in tact. Nearly all of the steel reinforced concrete was instantaneously pulverized into a fine powder which covered all of lower Manhattan in a layer three inches deep. Most of the steel was melted. Although the fire was confined to only a few of the upper floors, nearly all of the steel that supported the towers was found in huge pools of molten steel in the sub basement.

When rescue workers started sifting through the rubble of these two 110 story office buildings, they did not find a single file cabinet. Not a single steel desk was found. There were no telephones, no computers, no chairs, no coffee makers.

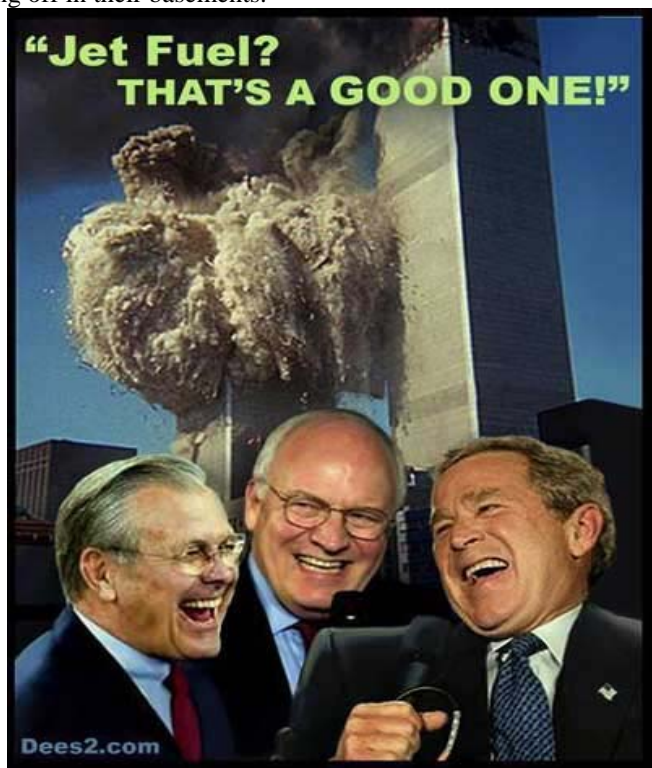
When the airplanes crashed into the towers, most of the jet fuel



was burned off immediately in huge fireballs. What remained started fires on a few of the upper floors. Some of the fuel may have spilled down one or two of the 47 interior columns but it would have been burnt up long before it reached the lower floors. Remember, people were going up and down the stairways. There was a command center in the ground floor lobby. The largest parts of the structures were stone cold. *Underwriters' Laboratories* estimated that even in the hottest parts of the fires, the structural steel never would have reached a temperature of much over 500 degrees. The melting point of steel is 3,000 degrees. How could that entire steel structure have melted instantly? How could have all of that steel reinforced concrete been turned instantly into dust? The fires were irrelevant. They were a big smoky flashy distraction.

Any magician will tell you that the most important part of any magical illusion is misdirection. Misdirection is defined as "getting the audience to look in the wrong place at the right time." On September 11<sup>th</sup>, everyone was so transfixed by the spectacle of the huge airplanes crashing into the tops of the

skyscrapers that almost no one noticed the huge explosions that were going off in their basements.



The World Trade Towers dropped into their own footprints as the result of a carefully planned controlled demolition. In fact, the name of the company that quickly removed the few remaining steel beams and had them shipped overseas to be melted down and recycled before they could be examined for evidence of explosives was called *Controlled Demolition*. The steel was melted and the concrete was pulverized by massive explosive charges. The airplanes that collided with the towers had nothing to do with the towers' collapses.

We know that it would have taken weeks, if not months to set the hundreds if not thousands of explosive charges that would have been necessary to make the towers drop straight down into their own footprints. There were hundreds of security cameras placed throughout the towers. We have to assume that some of the security guards would have noticed a group of skilled explosives experts placing charges. The company in charge of security at the World Trade Center was called *Secure Com*. Up until September 10, one of the principals of that corporation was Marvin Bush and another was Wirt Walker III. Marvin Bush is the brother of the President of the United States. Wirt Walker III is their cousin.

On the morning of September 11<sup>th</sup>, The Carlyle Group was holding its annual meeting in Washington, D.C. Some of the people attending that meeting were George Bush Senior, James Baker and two of Osama Bin Laden's brothers. Incidentally, On September 10, 2001, Donald Rumsfeld announced a "war on waste" after an internal audit found that the Pentagon was "missing" 2.3 trillion

dollars in unaccounted assets. On September 11<sup>th</sup>, this was as good as forgotten.

This little tale, retold by our Abbot, is only the teeny tiny tip of a massive iceberg of a story. As interesting as it might seem, the story has never been told by any major newspaper or television network. This is the problem that comes when too few people own too many major media outlets.

If you want to learn more of the story, you can read any of several books that have been written on the subject. Since so few Americans actually read books, this has not been much of a problem for the Bush administration. If you can't be bothered to buy and read a book, you could also watch a television program. Since these programs are only available on DVDs and have never been broadcast on any television network, they haven't made much of a stir either. If the present media censorship continues, the only way these programs will be widely viewed is if everyone who buys the DVDs will make copies of them and give them to all of their friends. Fortunately, the producers of these programs have reproduced them without copy write protections.

Our abbot will support any presidential candidate who pledges to have their Attorney General arrest Marvin Bush and Wirt Walker III on charges of conspiracy to commit treason and mass murder. We would also like to see the arrests of people who have obviously been involved with the massive cover up starting with every member of the 911 Commission and with the producers of the NOVA whitewash program. We also advocate the arrest of everyone who dumped huge blocks of Airline stocks during the weeks immediately preceding the attacks. As these people are arrested, jailed and interrogated (perhaps at Gitmo?) the little fish will surely implicate bigger and bigger fish. We will probably never get to the top of the steaming heap but we can certainly learn more than we already know.

## Brother Pompadour Adopts a Bouncing Baby Boy!!!

Brother Pompadour (Dennis Cooper) recently adopted a son. Here are some excerpts from an Email that he sent to our Abbot:

Well, now I've done it. we picked up Jazzbo at his paternal grandparents home, 2 hours north of my place. The first thing he did (I am not bullshitting) is smile and piss all over my shirt. If he wasn't so preternaturally cute, the deal would have been off right then. We took him to the monks to get (kind of christened, with the water and all, but Buddhist, and without preaching - why preach to kid 3 months old?), and then home to let the village put some hoodoo on him. They used candles,

whiskey, and betel-nuts. There was hollering, and they tied money to his wrists to welcome him to the neighborhood. Now I'm at three days of dad-hood, and I'm mostly amazed the way it goes just like they say, sleep deprivation, shitty pants, and toothless smiles. I guess I'm thrilled to get this experience, and it sure doesn't take long to become a doting father...

## Brother Francis Tends Brother Oh Brother's Dragon!!

Our Abbot admires Brother Francis (David Doyle) as much, if not more, than anyone we know. Brother Francis lives a truly monastic existence. He lives comfortably and contentedly with less money and with fewer possessions than a church mouse. He is a very clever fellow and has many marketable skills so his life of poverty is a choice rather than an inevitability. He is one of our Abbot's most trusted advisors and since we wanted to include this terrific picture of him, we'll also include these excerpts from a recent Email:



The year 2007 began in Arizona where I worked in the sanitation department of the renaissance festival. At Scarborough I manned the souvenir cart for Brother Oh Brother's (David Ballard's) puppet show

"The Dragon's Lair". A patron took a photo of me and sent to me his artistic rendition. Having fallen victim to the respiratory crud there, I spent a couple of weeks, after my June visit to the Abbot's hermitage, recuperating in the vicinity of the Kansas City renfest site. I was able to get to the Colorado Renfest in July and worked the last three weekends with Brother Prehensile's crew. August and September were passed at KCRF, although I had work on only the first two weekends. I determined to do something different that would hopefully produce better income, and went to the Carolina Renfest for my first time ever. I took the first job that was offered, that being on the parking crew. The weather there was summer-like until the third weekend. Then it got cold (at night at least) and stayed that way. CRF runs at the same time as TRF; but, it is five degrees of latitude farther north - the same as Amarillo Texas. I was able to celebrate 11/11 at Brother Clevenstein's after work that day. As the parking crew is the last to get off work, the phone call to the Abbot had already transpired and the weenies had been eaten. I did, however, have a couple of celebratory beers; and, the grill was fueled for some time, providing heat for the monks and friends to continue socializing. At Thanksgiving, all three of my brothers and I were able to get together for the first time since our mother's passing, ten years ago. Although I am in Tucson at this writing, I intend to be in the desert near the renfest for the solstice and until the festival campground opens.

Br. Francis

## Brother Doctor Strikes a Mighty Blow for Peace!!!

Although Brother Doctor (Danny Lord) sometimes seems ready to go war at the drop of a hat, he is, in fact, a serious proponent



of peace. With the help of Brother Bothered (Clark Orwick,) Danny compiled a CD of anti war songs, mostly from the sixties. He was kind enough to allow our Abbot to make a copy of his work. Our Abbot deleted some of Danny's choices and after learning how to download music from the interweb, he added some more of his own favorites. The result is an illegal bootleg compilation of Peace Songs and Anti War

Tunes. Our Abbot was quoted as saying, "If I'm going to get thrown into jail, it might as well be for something I believe in."