
Pearls of wisdom

Posted by zia - 2007/10/04 23:51

After having found something positive to write about last week, after a very long time, I had hoped to follow up this week with more. Even after the Proteas' run fest and Pakistan's timid response positives still abound. But that will have to wait. Unfortunately, the terrible and tragic events of the past week, specifically the Gestapo tactics used to mercilessly thrash lawyers and journalists, the cream of literate society, leave me with no option but to direct my pen to this cause.

The noisome bouquets handed out by a regime which ought to have celebrated its miniscule technical success with graciousness and largesse is indeed horrific. Everything stinks. At the risk of annoying 'them' pardon my indulgence in total sarcasm, but this is what this putrid mindset deserves. No deodorant in the world can hide the odour this government exudes. The Armanis, Chavets, Sulkas it dresses in (let us not forget uniforms) or the Cohibas it smokes cannot hide its fascist tendencies. With the passage of time it has become worse.

Even now I think I had a terrible nightmare. The sights, sounds and the turmoil that one witnessed on the 29th have never before been seen in this country at least. Barbaric is a mild word. Find me something with the substance required to convey the depth of my dismay and I shall gladly use it, consequences be damned. It is all about days; 9th, 12th, 20th, 29th. How many more are to come, how much more will be done?

The great courage exhibited by the law enforcement agencies, crisply turned out in gleaming white mufti for the event shall become an icon for growing youngsters and would-be law enforcers. To attack unarmed civilians, educated lawyers and journalists of every cadre simply doing their job is akin to taking candy from a baby. Sadly the lawyers are the only ones agitating the loss of principles and wholesale abuse of the norms which govern society. The press has been coerced into battle, fighting guns, batons and teargas with cameras as their only weapons.

The poor and destitute, perhaps more adept at destruction, are in such dire distress that the last thing on their mind is to land up in jails and hospitals with no one to care for them. This is encouragement for the fascists 'fighting' to bring democracy to the people. Let us not for a moment forget that Hitler and Mussolini were both 'adored' by the people. Were genuine representatives. The SS and the Gestapo were fighting for the State and only 'errant' traitors were being brought to book. Their modern-day clones are fighting the same 'traitors', also known in civilised parlance as conscientious objectors to the flagrant abuse of the rule of law and the constitution.

Even with the nostrils plugged, the stink permeates. It runs into every nook and corner of the country. An endless volley of malodorous bouquets. A friend's call makes it important that I record one fact. I was reminded that I had supported Musharraf for over four years. Yes I did and even today have no personal grouse against him. I stopped supporting him when he fell off the rails. Whether he fell off or willingly succumbed to those wily sycophants who urged him off with promises of a better tomorrow will be debated long after the embers have died. Had he continued to work hard rather than choose this murky way out everyone whose support he has lost would have turned out for him. As the same friend said, "Find me a better".

I will put it in another form. What stopped him in the early days from imposing a lifelong ban on those shameful politicians who had been in league with those destroying the country since 1985? What we would have had is eight years of young, clean, ideological, principled and educated scions of Pakistan, perhaps handpicked by an enlightened idealist (Musharraf), who would have worked their hearts out for the country.

In turn acquiring knowledge, political savvy and experience. Then perhaps had he wanted to continue he could have worked out a deal with them. Better still he should have found a successor from amongst them and become his mentor, at a distance. Didn't Mandela do that? Selflessness makes legends. Musharraf squandered that chance.

Today principles are a distant memory. Nawaz' lie about the deal is bandied from every official mouth as if it were blasphemy. How conveniently the president's broken oaths and promises are forgotten. How expediently loot and plunder of this poor nation's hard earned resources are dismissed. Biased ordinances are said to be drafted rehabilitating these very politicians; years and millions spent on pursuing them dumped in the gutter. How opportunely laws are amended. It stinks, yes and it's a crying shame.

Even friends who propagate the theory "Two wrongs don't make a right" today say morality has no place in Pakistan; never had. This is how we intend to bring new generations of Pakistanis into the global world. No wonder they have to congregate in clusters overseas considered pariahs by their host nations. The fault is ours we permit this outrage. That doctrine of necessity, declared "dead forever" recently, appears and reappears in brilliant disguise, although to use that word 'brilliant' in context with anything or anyone linked with this regime is an abuse.

For the chosen in Musharraf's regime there are no restrictions or bars. The law bends for them as putty. Their atrocities are celebrated and encouraged publicly with dhoom dham. And what of the principled, fighting for a cause? They are thrashed regardless of age or stature. Perhaps in all of this somewhere deep within us, all of us, the spirit of humanity will be evoked and in this fraud being perpetrated upon this country we may still find a silver lining. Hopefully that shall lead to national unity, its massive energy propelling the juggernaut of peace, prosperity and democracy, cleansing the atmosphere once and for all. And without this moral courage, this unity we are doomed forever.

"A people may prefer a free government, but if, from indolence, or carelessness, or cowardice, or want of public spirit, they are unequal to the exertions necessary preserving it; if they will not fight for it when it is directly attacked; if they can be deluded by the artifices used to cheat them out of it; if by momentary discouragement, or temporary panic, or a fit of enthusiasm for an individual, they can be induced to lay their liberties at the feet even of a great man, or trust him with powers which enable him to subvert their institutions; in all these cases they are more or less unfit for liberty: and though it may be for their good to have had it even for a short time, they are unlikely long to enjoy it," John Stuart Mill, Representative Government, 1861.

With this image in mind, Justice (Retd) Wajihuddin's "We will win" assumes greater significance. Yes, win we must! If the

usurpers, marauding public servants and thieving politicians that dominate our will and destroy our lives are to be confined, chained and stamped upon that is our only chance. Principles and ideals must prevail. If not today, then as Wajih says in the near future. Pakistan must prevail. It is our principle.

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