

The Burmese Fairy Tale

February 18, 1998

Categories: Myanmar/Burma

[The Burmese Fairy Tale](#) – FEER, February 18, 1998

Like many Burmese, I am tired of living in a fairy tale. For years, outsiders portrayed the troubles of my country as a morality play: good against evil, with no shade of gray in between – a simplistic picture, but one the world believes. The response of the west has been equally simplistic: It wages a moral crusade against evil, using such magic wands as sanctions and boycotts...

Instead, she chose the opposite, putting pressure on the government by telling foreign investors to stay away and asking foreign governments to withhold aid. Many of us cautioned her that this was counterproductive. Why couldn't economic development and political improvement grow side by side? People need jobs to put food on the table, which may not sound grand and noble, but it is a basic truth we face every day...

Two westerners -one a prominent academic and the other a diplomat – once suggested to me that if sanctions and boycotts undermined the economy, people have less to lose and would be willing to start a revolution.

They seemed very pleased with this idea – a revolution to watch from the safety of their own country.

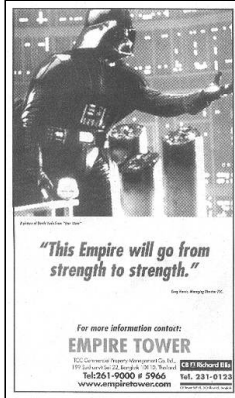
This naive romanticism angers many of us here in Myanmar. You would deliberately make us poor to force us to fight a revolution? American college students play at being freedom fighters and politicians stand up and proclaim that they are striking a blow for democracy with sanctions. But it is we Burmese who pay the price for these empty heroics. Many of us now wonder: is it for this that we went to jail? ...

Some response to this piece is [here](#) and [here](#).

Darth Vader and Empire Tower ad

November 13, 1998

Categories: Culture and Society, Film and TV



Darth Vader and Empire Tower ad – November 13, 1998

One from the 2Bangkok archive: This ad appeared in the November 13, 1998 edition of the *Bangkok Post* in the Business Post section.

The caption under the photo reads, *A picture of Darth Veda (sic) from "Star Wars" "This Empire will go from strength to strength" – "Greg Harris, Managing Director TCC."*