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1) A few weeks ago a small group of academics and Burmese produced a report under the auspices of the National Bureau of Asian Research, in which they made the outlandish claim that there is a new consensus that sanctions on Burma must be lifted. In the introduction to the report, the editor made the erroneous claim that there had been a groundswell of critical support for this position.

Among the reports more preposterous claims: that Aung San Suu Kyi and Burma's democracy movement are "rigid" and too stubborn in their pursuit of democracy. The authors also claim that the situation inside Burma is so "complex" that we should not be taking action--rather, by implication, we should listen to so-called "experts" like themselves.

Not suprisingly, the report does NOT mention that one of the leaders of the group served as a consultant to Premier Oil company, which formerly had major interests inside Burma, nor does it mention that Unocal energy company, which built a mega-pipeline in Burma that witnesses claim resulted in serious human rights abuses, serves on the board of NBR, according to the Irrawaddy magazine.

A hearing in the US Congress two weeks ago (See link on home page) and today's OP-ED in the Washington Post (see link on home page) addresses some of the overexaggerations, embellishments, and falsehoods in the report, and calls for more a thoughtful and deliberate policy of international pressure on Burma's regime.