

## WILLIAM W. BISHOP, JR.: *MY SAYA*

*Myint Zan\**

To all of his students, colleagues, and those who had the privilege of knowing him, Bill Bishop was a brilliant scholar, an inspiring teacher, an exemplary role model, a beloved mentor, and, yes, a good friend. To me — and I am sure to all his colleagues and students, too — in addition to all these, his warm and endearing humanity was such that it enhances all the qualities that made him the great and good human being that he was. It is not for me to recount the achievements of his long and distinguished career: all his friends know about them, they are legion, and there are persons eminently better qualified than I to dwell upon it.

I just want to record here my deep and sincere appreciation of his kindness and affection, his indulgent sympathy and encouragement, his charming spontaneity, his unassumingness, and his love of fellow humans — all of which I have been fortunate enough to have experienced. I am honored and very grateful to have been one among the thousands who have benefited from — indeed been touched and inspired by — his “constant accessibility, unfailing sympathy, and warm encouragement”<sup>1</sup> that was so generously provided to us students.

Bill Bishop to me was a *Saya* in the fullest sense of this Burmese word. *Saya* means a teacher who is at the same time a scholar, role model, guide, comforter, and friend. As a scholar and teacher he has imparted not only legal knowledge, but also intellectual honesty: a capacity to see and a sympathy to understand other points of view. What better role model can one give than to be a noted international legal scholar, a caring, conscientious, and affectionate person that he was? But it is in his role as a guide, comforter, and friend that he means so much to me: his attributes in this regard surpass the merely intellectual and moral level and reach spiritual heights. No doubt I have been greatly enriched by the intellectual and moral dimensions of his personality, but it is the spiritual ones that make him stand out among all the *Sayas* I know.

What more can be said of him? One’s sadness at his demise almost makes one lose one’s words. But one’s sadness at his passing is amply

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1. LAW QUADRANGLE NOTES, Summer 1988.

countervailed and surpassed by an over-arching sense of joy — a joy to see such a well-lived life; a joy to have had the opportunity to know a person of such sterling attainments and virtues; a joy to know that he has left behind a rich and enduring legacy that inspires one to strengthen one's faith in humanity and one's determination to emulate Bill Bishop's qualities, no matter how tough and arduous that might prove to be.

May my *Saya* rest in peace.