



Razor's Edge

By
Joe Mari Mercader
Executive Editor
FILIPINO TIMES
New York-New Jersey

Joe Mari Mercader more on Barack Obama

American Sportsmanship Is Exemplary

NEW YORK, Nov. 7 (PinoyGlobal) - The historic election of president-elect Barack Obama in the U.S. posits the question - what is impossible yet? His momentous success electrified the world especially among democratic nations. This landmark event wherein someone of black parentage could comfortably hurdle the seeming brick wall to the U.S. presidency proved in no uncertain terms that fear of the impossible is fiction in juxtaposition to reality in a democratic society.

Obama's scintillating triumph over great odds in a society ravaged by a diversity of colors and creeds fires the hope of people whose relatives are American born that they too could one day concretize the magnificent obsession of becoming president of the most powerful nation in the world – the United States of America. Rising to heights beyond one's expectations in this country is not improbable if you have the audacity of perseverance, brains and integrity.

As a melting pot the barriers of color, creed and walks of life are literally wiped out in this land of the free so much so that anyone of foreign descent, and that includes Filipino-Americans too, could be elected to the

White House. Obama's luminous achievement of winning the presidency of the greatest super power in the world is a case in point.

God permitting that a Filipino-American is elected to the White House. Our revelry will be unbridled and that would be understandable because his/her success would certifiably be our crowning glory as admirers of anything that symbolizes America: we have always looked up to her as our model nation. The Philippines has been steadfast as her loyal friend and ally especially in time of crisis and even war. You cannot imagine the euphoria of our people if an American president will be of Filipino descent as Kenyans are overly ecstatic over Obama's victory in the recent US polls. Out of justified pride the Kenyan government made the day of his victory a holiday because Obama's father was a Kenyan. Our nation's excitement will be no less.

Personally, I will be one of the proudest immigrants in my adopted country if that happens. But my pride will be minus the affectation of small minds getting intoxicated with the mere semblance of success and using it

as an excuse to be obnoxiously repulsive with their unvarnished arrogance. In fact, many Pinoys and Pinays here are nauseatingly disgusting acting high and mighty just because they are now earning some money in America, instead of humbling themselves in gratitude to the Almighty for sparing them the cruel life of abject poverty they had in our country.

They have become so arrogant that greeting them is a risk worse than fighting Kurds and Sunnis in war-torn Iraq unless you are bedecked in gold chains and rings on all ten fingers, looking like a Filipino grave digger from Saudi or a Japayuki Pinay belly dancer from Japan, without getting daggering eyes from them that could melt a solid steel bar. These symbols of wealth are the only things they recognize. And of course, their fondness for vintage cars and vans excels description. Even though they look like uncivilized pigmies in G-strings driving them, still they buy them.

I don't know if they think they are beautiful or handsome. The boys for instance proudly sport baggy pants that make them look like Japanese penguins with the zipper hanging two inches from the knee, and they look horrible. The women are in dresses that look like the economized towels of the Incas centuries ago. It defies reason why we can't be modest all the time to spare ourselves being the object of ridicule. I don't know if they are trying hard to impress one another because everybody here has a car and even owns a house.

More importantly is the lesson to be learned from this week's election result in America, which should be a mirror to politicians back home who do not respect the will of the electorate. I don't have to look far back to see how losers in our elections refuse to accept defeat even if clearly they were ignominiously defeated. In fact they

go as far as spending so much money and time, let alone the government's financial resources, contesting the results of the elections in court, ignoring that it could take years and that the outcome would still be the same simply because they really lost.

Cheating to win is routine to our politicians. Not only do they overspend, which is a palpable violation of the law, but they openly defraud their adversaries by tampering with the votes, and even actually steal ballot boxes in public view to the consternation of voters. That's how desperate they are to win, which spurs doubt on their motive.

Sportsmanship is virtually unheard of with them. Their mudslinging goes beyond the period of the election and so it becomes a bitter family feud to the death among rival candidates. The results can be ugly and messy with blood spilling everywhere, reminiscent of the roaring 20s gang wars of mobsters in Chicago.

President Arroyo is not exactly the best example of ethical behavior in defeat. She is said to have blatantly cheated to win over the late charismatic movie king Fernando Poe Jr., whom pundits say won the elections of 2006 despite massive vote buying and rigging of the poll results. The infamous "Hello, Garci" incident is just a figment of the serious abuses perpetrated by her to win the election. It can be said that by sheer force of power she glued herself in the Palace of the people, proving that possession is nine points of the law. Truly, sitting in the seat of power is foolproof of one's right to be in the place, in this case the presidency.

In contrast, Sen. John McCain wasted no time congratulating Sen. Barack Obama the same night the poll precincts closed when the trend of the latter's lead was too impressive to outdistance anymore, so he did not

wait another minute to do the decent thing of congratulating his worthy opponent. McCain did what a decent loser does and not only has he congratulated Barack, but he actually extended his unwavering support to make the latter's administration a success, a noble gesture characteristic of Americans.

The nobility of the Senator from Arizona exceeded everyone's expectation when in thanking his supporters he claimed the fault was his - referring to his defeat. It was evidently to relieve his loyal followers and supporters of the pangs of guilt of not having done their utmost to make him win. That to me was a sterling demonstration of consideration, gratitude and love for his people.

We do not see this quality in our politicians back home whose venom in defeat defies the norms of decency and sportsmanship. On the day they will respect

election results either way it goes, and embrace their adversaries in defeat offering to serve the government of the victor, only then will I sigh relief that at last our nation is in good hands. But not until then will I breathe the fresh air of sportsmanship being displayed by them before our people. #

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