



# *Razor's Edge*

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## *4<sup>th</sup> Impeachment Gaveled To Death*

*NEW YORK, N.Y., Dec. 06* - Did we really expect the 4<sup>th</sup> impeachment against Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo would pass the Lower House of Congress, or be elevated to the Senate, which is hostile to her, if we are to believe Gloria's goblins? This claim is highly unlikely, not with Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, an administration senator, is the kingpin in that chamber.

Just as the general public anticipated 183 Congressmen steamrolled the 21 negative votes in a plenary session in the Lower House this week. It was very much shy of the 80 votes required to impeach the president. This fiasco is significant in that it was Joe De Venecia's baby. He spearheaded it openly only to get that ridiculous, miniscule number of supporters (21) when he lorded Congress for 12 consecutive years. This debacle to outs GMA signaled his own political demise as a political "leader." He is passé, kaput! What a shame!

Seemingly, it was never expected to replicate the fate of Erap's impeachment. The complaint against him was readily elevated to the Senate without the usual debates in the House of Representatives. Joe de Venecia, a blind tuta of Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, at the time, overruled any and all debates on her impeachment.

Similarly, after a brief skirmish on the core issue to oust the president for the 4<sup>th</sup> time, Speaker Prospero Nograles banged the gavel indicating the death of the complaint filed by Joey de Venecia III et al. The



*Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo*

opposition could only sigh that its untimely demise was akin to "a funeral done with indecent haste."

Without reining in his power to kill the impeachment, Nograles' action is reminiscent of what former Speaker Joe De Venecia used to brazenly do of quelling debates on the issues of impeachments targeting Pres. Arroyo. As I said in a previous

column, this is poetic justice to J DV. Now it is he who wants to depose GMA badly from the pedestal of power. Isn't he getting the same brand of unfairness and arrogance he used on the opposition whose impeachment complaints he would superciliously toss to the file of dead documents, when he was the speaker?

No doubt the late Dictator Ferdinand Marcos blazed the trail on abusing power. There was nothing repugnant that was not imposed on the people during the halcyon days of his ironclad rule (martial law) via a tissue of oppressive presidential decrees. As a minion to FM, Joe de Venecia learned a lot in the art of crafting fraudulent moves to the detriment of the people if not the good government.

Isn't it curious that only 21 voted against relegating the impeachment complaint to the archives? Could it be that a majority of the congressmen, from both sides of the political fence, wanted to expedite the job of removing the incubus hanging over Gloria's head after receiving liberal dole outs from her? It would not be amiss to say that many congressmen wanted to wing to Las Vegas to be on time for the over-hyped bout of the decade between boxing icons Manny "Pacman" Pacquiao and Oscar de la Hoya, hence, the sudden death of the 4<sup>th</sup> impeachment against Gloria.

Erap's case was unique in the sense that he did not go into a binge of bribing congressmen to quash the impeachment complaint against him that made him the first president ever to be impeached. I guess it was his machismo or plain foolhardiness that he did not share a cent of his loot with them, refusing to be blackmailed. Erap's stubbornness reaped him the whirlwind, he was convicted for plunder and served five years in prison until his full pardon by GMA.

If we believed that Pres. Arroyo was going to be axed, (impeached) we would have been delving on hallucinations: Gloria's puppets (tutas) in Congress move in the direction she pulls the strings given the liberal dole outs she lavished on them. But is money sufficient to pay for delicadeza (moral qualms)? At least they should have gone into the motions of debating the merits of her impeachment out respect for the people who wanted her ousted for billions of reasons.

Meanwhile, there is a highly visible smuggler who is dubbed as "Madam X" who brazenly defies paying

duty for her imported resins. She brazenly brings into the country raw resin from China every week in 150 40-foot containers, purportedly to raise bribe money to kill the impeachment against the president. Her name-dropping is as shameless as her smuggling. Bureau of Customs officials helplessly fold their arms. As raw material the importation is duty free. Only when it is re-exported would it have to pay a duty of 200 percent. Through this scheme she makes tremendous profit that she could afford to bribe everybody including the Customs people who conveniently close their eyes when she re-exports the finished resins without hiding the illegal modus operadi.

Now that the kink (impeachment threat) has been bulldozed out of the way nothing can stop Pres. Arroyo from making a mockery of the Constitution by literally buying her perpetuation in power. The next step is to energize the Charter change. As we fully know this agenda has been buzzing for longer than we can remember since she replaced Pres. Estrada in 2001.

For a change her passion to remain in power will not be blocked by recycled impeachment complaints filed by the opposition every year. And that is despite knowing them to be a waste of time and people's money, whose interest they represent, ostensibly, for nothing. You might say they do this puny ritual in the belief that he who stands for nothing falls for nothing. Well, at least they try despite the odds against succeeding.

All systems are surely grinding in full speed percolating the momentum to convert Congress into a Constituent Assembly (Con-Ass) as she has only 17 months left in office. You can just imagine the nightmares that keep her pacing the palace grounds like a somnambulist on a self-imposed nocturnal marathon.

Compounding matters for her is the threat of a massive protest rally scheduled for the 12th, right in front of Malacanang. This explains the brisk piling of vans barricading the palace. Ironically, it insulates her from the people she professes to love. The rally could be bloody if we are to take Sister Fely Cabila of St. Scolastica seriously when she said that she is "tired of praying. Action is also needed." I don't know if she had in mind the solution of Thomas Jefferson that, "Rebellion to tyranny is obedience to God"? I hope this extreme solution is not the only option left to solve the chaotic situation prevailing in the country.

Caloocan Bishop Diogracias Ineguez observed that Pres. Arroyo “offered to write a manifesto that she would step down in 2010” but pointed out that “her credibility is in question.” Consequently, the huge protest on the 12<sup>th</sup> is a must. Truth to tell she (GMA) has reneged on her commitments so many times her credibility is zero below. Take her promise not to run in 2004, yet she did. She even cheated to win over the late FPJ who was the very popular movie king at the time. What about her consistent denials that she never bribed politicians to save her from being impeached? This assertion fell flat on its face when the scandal exploded in the media that after a breakfast in Malacanang, 190 congressmen were handed fat envelopes full of money (P2000, - P500,000) to douse cold water on the pending impeachment against her in Congress. I can go on citing instances of canards she is guilty of but it won't do much good because she will just ignore the charges.

Suffice it to say Bishop Ineguez is right - Gloria has no credibility at all to make a “manifesto” that she will not be a candidate in 2010 because she will.

Her spokespersons claim the rally will not be molested so long as it would be a civil protest. They certainly speak with tongue in cheek because the Palace is already festooned with heavy artillery in front of

Malacanang, which in effect insulates the president from the public.

Furthermore they say Pres. Arroyo “remains strong from local government executives and congressmen who merely echo the sentiments of their constituents.” This sounds conditioning the minds of our people that if the Con-Ass materializes and she is allowed to run for president or prime minister as the case maybe under a new form of government, it would be not her doing. But that neither would she refuse the challenge offered by the electorate.

Do they really believe we will be awed by that spectacle when we know those so-called local government executives and lawmakers are in truth and in fact paid minions who will not hesitate to mouth any lie she wants them to tell the people? How poorly does Malacanang regard Juan de la Cruz to presume him to be an idiot who takes toxic lies from the president hook, line and sinker. #