



Razor's Edge

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If To Do Were As Easy As To Know

"Reality has not hit its mark with numb skulls aspiring for public office, because a bulging host of movie superstars, TV personalities, comedians and stage performers are joining the marathon in next year's election. They refuse to accept that more than skin-deep beauty, brains and integrity are the paramount qualifications for a public trust, if good government is our objective."

NEW YORK, N.Y., March 12 (PinoyGlobal) - The Bard of Avon, William Shakespeare, rhetorically stated centuries ago, "If to do were as easy as to know. . .". Indeed, his classic words would make a well of difference if aspiring politicians knew that their incongruity to the government position they seek excels their capricious desire. For sure, things would definitely be much brighter. People would be relieved to elect only the crème de la crème academes, not any of the certifiable wallflowers raring to join the marathon in the election next year.

Juan de la Cruz would spare himself the burden of a huge budget for salaries and emoluments, let alone fat pork barrels wasted on elected misfits to Congress. And, of course, the gargantuan discretionary funds earmarked for the president's office.

Unfortunately this is wishful thinking. Reality has not hit its mark with numb skulls aspiring for public office, because a bulging host of movie superstars, TV personalities, comedians and stage performers are joining the marathon in next year's election. They refuse to accept that more than skin-deep beauty, brains and integrity are the paramount qualifications for a public trust, if good government is our objective. These elements transcend the superficial asset of glamour. I stress on integrity because it is common knowledge that politicians who are elected almost immediately become super millionaires for reasons too obvious to belabor here. This syndrome has culminated into an epidemic because newly elected officials readily divorce

their idealism.

Evidently, Shakespeare's wise quip runs afoul with the vagaries of our politics because any fool can run for public office in our crestfallen motherland. His deep insight has not registered with silver screen idols married to the idea of running next year.

To reiterate, movie icons are pandering to be elected, indicating that they are not anemic of the ambition to join the ranks of public functionaries. If we hear right, even TV host Kris Aquino wants to be vice president. Dolphy, the famous comedian-actor, who is virtually wilted with old age, has also caught the virus and is dead set on running for I don't know what position.

This plague seizing people in the movie world should be inspiring if they only had the brains on top of the ability to parrot what the director briefs them before filming. Just picture a scene where Noli de Castro is president and Kris Aquino vice president. Where will the country be bound for with them steering the ship of state? With his English, how will Noli communicate with the heads of state abroad - by crying, or dancing the Tinikling? Or mumbling, "Well, ummm" - the way Pacquiao answers ring commentators after a fight?

Will Kris Aquino use the emblematic Filipino terno? Or the backless dresses she uses on television, which will surely scandalize foreign visitors to the vice president's office, not to mention our born-again Pharisees.

What about Dolphy, the Pork Chops,

Katchopoy, my good friend Pat Salem and the horde of funny guys who by a twist of fate might join Lito Lapid and Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. in the Senate? What kind of laws will they propose, assuming that they will ever sponsor one or two in their six-year term? Based on Lito and Bong's performances we cannot expect much from comedian senators, unless they will provide the light vein and joke their way to a full term.

I am just trying to point out that things can go from the sublime to the ridiculous if the penchant of our people is not reined in before a community of dumb dodos - movie, TV and stage personalities - invade the government via the revolving door of the electoral process. The prospect of becoming rich in office could be the real motivation behind the sudden obsession seizing glamour world icons today. The sad part is that we cannot even blame them because the electorate supports them to the hilt out of fancy.

Vilma Santos is the best example. The diminutive movie superstar scaled political heights at the city and provincial levels based on sheer glamour. Now she is governor of Batangas after several terms as mayor of Lipa. What she did as mayor to deserve the promotion, I am not privy to. Ask her constituents. It seems she too is obsessed to shoot to the national level, as she is also ogling the vice presidency.

Which reminds me. Last week I wrote that it is one thing to aspire to "serve" the country, and another to be equal to the challenge. The question is - are those with inordinate ambition to be in the political limelight endowed with the skill to lead our beleaguered people or formulate laws that will cure the country's sick economy that has bedeviled the nation for so long already?

Can the likes of Noli de Castro, Kris Aquino, Vilma Santos and their ilk immobilizeriffraff like the ruthless Abu Sayyaf bandits who ruined our tourism industry with their spate of kidnappings that mainly target tourists? Can they deal with terrorists who have mercilessly beheaded hostages to intimidate the nation and make the government yield to their onerous demands of ransom, which include colossal money demands?

These vicious criminals have staked on our shores the macabre announcement that the Philippines is a dangerous tourist destination, thereby biting off a chunk of our dollar revenues. Is it really consistent with reality to believe that a glamorous actress could tame the communists, who boast of eventually "liberating" the country from corrupt demagogues at the helm of government? Or can a glamour girl who by accident becomes president annihilate the permanent crime wave that has demonized Juan de la Cruz's life

since the dawn of Filipino self-government some 60 years ago?

The idiot Abu Sayyaf's presumptuously assume that the barbaric butcheries they commit will cover the government. And judging from GMA's weak leadership, as evinced in the full pardon she gave Erap and the soldiers who murdered Ninoy Aquino, there may be some justification to that claim. That she also offered the olive branch of reconciliation with former presidents Cory Aquino and Joseph Estrada - for I know not what reasons, because nobody knew she was feuding with the two - adds to the fear that her leadership is timid.

Her magnanimous gesture of giving Estrada full pardon could have eradicated whatever animosity there was between them, thus easing whatever secret apprehensions she had of him retaliating for usurping his office via Edsa Dos nine years ago. Against this backdrop, by and large, the olive branch was a superfluity and uncalled for.

I do not doubt that a bulging group of the actors and actresses want to be in the lucrative profession of politics. They might even be good people with the best intention of saving the nation from venal bureaucrats. The nagging 20 issue, however, is whether they are equal to the task. Being a public official is a quantum leap for someone who merely parrots script lines. Hosting a TV show that caters to the common man is not as stressful as being vice president of the Philippines.

Do Kris, or Vilma for that matter, really have what it takes to be vice president? Remember that beauty and fame are not the criteria for as high a public office as the presidency or vice presidency. The anomaly of electing nincompoops or dumb dodos before does not mean our people should institutionalize this madness. Aristotle said, "Even the gods cannot change history." But now we can reverse that antiquated concept under our democratic form of government. We could, for instance, vote for the most qualified men and women of integrity and wisdom, especially those with high moral values unblemished by scandals.

Levi ty aside, this mania afflicting beautiful people from the silver screen is bound to usher in a new era of moronic officials crowding government offices including the Senate and Lower House. If this trend persists of electing mediocre people the nation is doomed. Kaput! I just cannot help thinking that ugly but intelligent guys who could iron the tumultuous existence of our country will have to commit suicide, because they have no chance to win against movie stars turned politicians.

Indeed, a clairvoyant Shakespeare must have had the Philippines in mind, and lamented for our people's plight!#