



Razor's Edge

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It's Now Or Never

"Boy, was I wrong! Now it's out, all the time GMA and her cohorts in Congress never ceased to conspire to resuscitate Cha-cha on the guise of curbing supposed "infirmities" in the existing Constitution, when in fact it was to recharge the momentum of her presidency in its waning days."

NEWYORK, NY March 31 (PinoyGlobal) - If what we hear back home is true – that 150 congressmen already signed Rep. Luis Villafuerte's resolution calling for a constituent assembly (con-ass) to amend the Constitution - then I too have been duped by the body language of Madam Arroyo (that she was stepping down after the 2010 elections), which only proves that to err is human.

Incidentally, the target (constituent assembly) is only shy of 20 votes, supporters enthusiastically claim. It goes without saying that if this materializes the terms of incumbent officials beginning with the president will be extended outright to be congruent with the change. Given the stratospheric appropriation GMA earmarked (P1-billion) to be fanned out to those who auction their votes for con-ass, this once improbable optimism is now a vibrating, pulsating probability.

With that accomplished the president's cohorts would smoothly elect her to the highest office of the land except that this time it will be as prime minister. This is within the core of Cha-cha, which converts our government into a parliamentary form. Under this political setup the restriction imposed in the existing fundamental law will be nullified or abrogated, if you will. What's more, as prime minister, Madam Arroyo will not be bound to a six-year term but could run as many times as she likes – "hangang sawa" (neverending).

I really thought her conscience had finally arrived at the crossroads to do the right thing and for once decided to hold a free and democratic election: she would support a candidate next year, and that's it. Expectedly, the one whom

she supports will spare her the ignominy of being dragged to court for corruption. That would be the most to expect in exchange of being gung ho for her handpicked candidate.

Boy, was I wrong! Now it's out, all the time GMA and her cohorts in Congress never ceased to conspire to resuscitate Cha-cha on the guise of curbing supposed "infirmities" in the existing Constitution, when in fact it was to recharge the momentum of her presidency in its waning days. Spearheading this elaborate scheme to deceive the people is no less than Speaker Prospero Nograles. He will sponsor the resolution in the Committee on Constitutional Amendments. This springs to mind that if Shakespeare were alive today his indignant scream would be "What villainy is this against the people?!"

The figures mentioned could really resuscitate money-crazy misers because she has earmarked the fabulous P1-billion for those who will help mangle the Constitution to suit her insatiable lust for power via the innocuous charade of Charter change. Those unwilling to cooperate will be left out, not to mention that they will forfeit their fat pork barrel allocations that Pres. Arroyo will imperiously withhold. And there is no telling what else could happen to their political future for being mavericks.

This grim possibility happening to ambivalent representatives is not idle talk: time is shrinking fast to pull the magic formula that could jerk to life her obsession of dying glued to power either as president or prime minister. So Cha-cha is a must. On the obsession to perpetuate, she has no parallel among past presidents - all her predecessors bowed out of office after their respective mandates ended.

Even the late Ferdinand Marcos succumbed to Uncle Sam and evacuated to Honolulu at the height of the People Power in February 1986. His wise decision averted a bloody confrontation between the civilian population and his loyal military supporters.

It appears Gloria is of a different breed who fights “keng lion keng tigre hindi ako tatakot, keka pa?” (I hope my Pampango is not obscene). She is as hard as the Rock of Gibraltar and won’t step down despite the dreadful bloodshed bound to ensue if the people feel betrayed.

By now, our dear readers must have a firm picture of the cause I pursue in my columns and that is to help crystallize the issues for our countrymen’s guidance and benefit. But still I am not without detractors and critics. You cannot really satisfy everybody.

If I may say so myself, I am an incorrigible pragmatist, perhaps, even a rabid realist, but never an apologist, much less, for the powers that be. For me, subscribing to rotten public figures simply because they have power and money, is colonial mentality at its worst, which was tragically depicted by Filipino peons during the Spanish times. I just play my role as a citizen of empathizing with our people back home whose voices have been stymied by the muzzle of the gun and criminal libel.

False modesty aside, mine is just a small voice in the sea of humanity. Odd but true I even welcome criticisms to my opinions on the premise that no one is perfect. But of course, I answer with the vehemence of a wounded tiger when the attack is unfounded. The other day while browsing on my computer I came across a comment in a local newspaper in Davao that said, “Joe Mari Mercader’s

passion is to criticize the government.”

That could not have been a complement or if it were, it would be a left-handed or gratuitous one. It was a gross misconception of my articles. In the first place I never fight the government because it is inanimate. How can you fight something that is incapable of corruption? I believe whoever wrote that does not know government from president as being different entities altogether. Firstly, the government protects the people through the mountain of laws enacted by Congress since the birth of our democratic nation. Secondly, it is the workshop of public officials, particularly the president to stabilize the economy and engender peace and order in the country. And thirdly, to reiterate it does not commit corruption. In fact, rotten officials mangle the laws to serve their selfish personal interests.

Meanwhile the president makes decisions and, deliberately or inadvertently, commits blunders or corruption in the process. So, disabuse yourselves that I have gone berserk fighting the government: I have not! The idea is nonsensical and untruthful.

Pardon my presumptuousness, but with my humble opinions that keep the citizenry informed of what they are blinded from seeing because of the administration media hype, I fill in the gap with my exposes to stop an administration run by people whose moral decadence is inimical to the country.

Mind you dear readers that there are no tyrants where there are no slaves.