



# *Razor's Edge*

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## *Leadership Not Determined By Age*

**NEW YORK, NY Sept. 2 (PinoyGlobal)** - It is reassuring to hear that Sen. Mar Roxas, president of the Liberal Party, made the supreme sacrifice: he gave in to the people's loud clamor for Sen. Noynoy Aquino to be the party's standard-bearer against the "trapos" that are clawing each other to be in the presidential race next year. Without fresh untainted blood jumping into the arena, these stigmatized politicians will be left alone fighting to be president, leaving the electorate with no option but to select one of them. That would be a calamity in no uncertain terms. The nation will surely fall from the frying pan to the fire, culminating in the doom of our motherland.

Indeed, given the recent death of his famous mother, Cory Aquino, the mounting public sympathy for her, can really toss Noynoy to the heights in his political career. Be that as it may, credit still goes to Mar Roxas for yielding to his bosom friend out of respect for the people's wishes. It also shows astute pragmatism.

Earlier, Roxas was hell bent on running for president under the banner of the Liberal Party he heads, until he developed political savvy and exited out of respect for the electorate's sentiment. Also, honor prevailed on the scion of an illustrious grandfather - the late Pres. Manuel Roxas and father Sen. Gerry Roxas.

For Mar to bow out in favor of Noynoy is nobility of the highest order, nay, yielding his passion to the greater interest of the nation. That is more than I can say of those aspiring to be their parties' presidential candidates despite a lack of qualification to lead the nation, much less solve its multifarious and complex problems.

True to our ambivalence and suspicious nature, after clamoring for Noynoy to run for president the usual demagogues came out of the shadows just to douse Noynoy's chances of being elected president next year, claiming that he lacks experience and is too young for the highest office. Since when is age a debit for the presidency when history is replete with instances of great national leaders who scintillated as saviors of their nations after pulling their countries out of great depressions and crises?

Youth has never been a negative factor for leadership. Alexander the Great was just in his twenties when he was considered a military genius with his spectacular war exploits that nearly conquered the whole world. His legend is not confined to him alone. World leaders throughout centuries became great early in life. The late Pres. John Fitzgerald Kennedy was elected president of the most powerful nation in the world, America, at age 42. Martin Luther King Jr. was killed at the age of 39 while at the height of his leadership abilities. And U.S. President Barack Obama himself is virtually the same age as Noynoy. The list goes on ad infinitum.

When I saw Noynoy with his mother, the late Cory, he was very young, slim and with pimples, too. Sometimes he was seated beside me at the table. But you do not judge a man as incapable of leading because of his youth. I already mentioned that his father died young for his leadership and convictions.

Noynoy has proven his intellectual prowess debating and matching wits with senior senators in Congress. During the death of his father and later his mother, both of whom are national heroes in our country, he kept his siblings strong in

the midst of great emotional crisis for the family. Why should they hold his youth against him now when people have even elected clowns to make laws for us?

I don't have to hammer on the old complaint that we have elected all sorts of characters in the government on the whimsical basis of their glamour. The popular personalities in public office today cannot even show the electorate a high school diploma, let alone a college degree as Noynoy has. So, who are these critics of the young Aquino kidding, anyway?

Once they overwhelmingly elected Joseph "Erap" Estrada president, with all his academic limitations and who knows, they may elect him again if his dream materializes in the polls of 2010. Noli de Castro is vice president, isn't he? Pacquiao is our boxing idol, but next year he will surely transgress the barrier of being uneducated and become a member of Congress where laws are theoretically made. That alone should tell us how important fancy plays in choosing who winds up elected to office.

The people apparently want their Congress or for that matter the entire government to be a Mardi Gras of colorful weirdoes. Now then, why should anyone care about age at a point when so many have been elected to office who because of incompetence are wasting people's money doing nothing? Sincerity is paramount in leadership, which is the hallmark of Noynoy's persona, not a clown's charisma or the fame of a super athlete.

How will Paquiao defend his bills against the onslaught of the logic of adversaries adroit in the art of debate and interpellation, when even in just advertising for GMA TV he cannot pronounce program – he says "pograma." I am a Visayan too like him, but I will be damned if I call program,

"pograma.9D Ilocanos themselves, with their heavy accent would not be guilty of saying, "pograma." Pacquiao's faux pa can only be explained if GMA TV's scriptwriters want him to be funny. But that doesn't make sense. Why should they convert him into a clown when he is already a super star in his own right?

Noynoy's adversaries disparage his potential of winning in the elections by pointing to his youth as a liability. This plot can ricochet on his political enemies. If you ask me, youth is an asset because it stands for dynamism and idealism. But what is important is that he enjoys the enviable reputation of having unquestioned integrity. To this day, not one stigma has blemished his public life, unlike most of those aspiring for the highest office within the people's gift who are knee-deep in scandals, both in their private and public life. Noynoy is virtually in a class of his own as Mr. Clean.

I know he is the most logical and formidable presidential timber in the coming elections because he is the only one who can claim to have both of his parents hailed as national heroes. This means the nation is indebted to them. The recent death of his well-loved mother (Cory Aquino), is one of the strongest factors that will unequivocally catapult him to the presidency if victory is the concern of his party.

An Aquino-Roxas tandem is definitely invulnerably awesome, i.e. assuming the people want good government and not a corruption-ridden administration vintage of the old trapos' wheeler-dealing performance in public office.

Go for it kiddos! Vote for the winning team - Noynoy Aquino-Mar Roxas. It's the super strong tandem, and their victory is a melodramatic "pograma" to watch in next year's polls as they emerge victorious despite their youth. Long live the Philippines!