



# The Noble Wolf

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# Why Noynoy's Star is Dead In The Water

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- Nick Perlas and breaking news explain why Noynoy's star is Dead in the Water.

If there is any person worth his salt these days, it is Nick Perlas.

The maturity and wisdom in which he rebutted the phantasm - that is being hardsold by Franklin Drilon of the Liberal Party, the three stooges of Philippine media these days: Boy Montelibano, Billy Esposito and Conrad de Quiros, and with the full force of the oligarchic ABS-CBN - that Noynoy is the political solution to our problems in the Philippines, a reluctant hero and heir to the unfulfilled aspirations of Ninoy and Cory - is the mark that we overseas Filipinos should be looking for.

It is easy panning to sensationalism in the beginning, but this early it seems that the Noynoy option is now losing throttle before it could even reach its full thrust.

Senator Mar Roxas and Governor Ed Panlilio quickly jumped into the opportunity hoping to generate a bandwagon but instead they merely exposed the shallowness of their own presidential ambitions and their raw unpreparedness to handle strategic decisions.

I can fully understand Mar, he could not pass on a very tempting face-saving device for not landing well on the surveys for the past six months. Her mother, Judy Araneta with all her weight in gold, is not willing to single-handedly fund his campaign. After spending maybe P30 million, her son's trial balloon can no longer fly without the numbers gaining in the polls and showing up in the bank. Even the prospect of Mar marrying the Cinderella of Philippine television, Korina Sanchez, did not create the much-needed boost, with all the gimmickry of Wowowee and The Buzz

pushing the wedding of the year onto Camelot.

This has sent the masa now asking what ABS-CBN will be cooking up next - Will Korina finally marry Mar in November or her former boyfriend yes, none other than Noynoy Aquino himself? For certainly as in its teleserye, "The Wedding" must go on.

The prospect of not having a first lady haunts the pinoy psyche and I am not sure whether a "first sister" in the person of Kris, with her former dalliances with badboy Robin Padilla and playboy Philip Salvador, would be at all presidential. Petty indeed but very relevant to the political persona Noynoy may want to promote himself into.

And Among Ed - well he never even got off, anyway. Proof of this is that Ang Kapatiran Party that was his only connection to the ground and most rabid supporter did not even follow him as he shifted to support Noynoy. In fact, Ang Kapatiran is now fielding an obscure son of the late Sonny de los Reyes as its own presidential bet.

The three giants of the political opposition - the Nacionalista Party of Senator. Manuel Villar, the National People's Coalition (NPC) under business mogul Dandning Cojuangco (Noynoy's uncle) and the Partido ng Masang Pilipino of deposed president Joseph Estrada have also turned down suggestions that they will unite behind Aquino.

The announcement of Manuel Portes, national chair of the party-list FPJM (Freedom, Peace, Justice and Progress Movement) which supported the failed presidential bid of the late actor Fernando Poe Jr. in 2004, to support Noynoy was cancelled off by the announcement of Poe's daughter, Mary Grace Llamanzares who said Portes did not represent the FPJPM. She said they had yet to take a stand on whom to support in the coming election but assured the public that

“My mother and I will actively participate in the coming election.”

Earlier, evangelist Eddie Villanueva, leader of the Bangon Pilipinas party, also said he would not give way to Noynoy’s candidacy.

The Makabayan Party-list Coalition led by leftist Rep. Satur Ocampo, however, has not yet ruled out an alliance with other political parties but if I know the Makabayan people, they are least likely to be swept off their feet by the Liberal Party’s adventurism or by Noynoy’s almost empty performance first as a congressman and now as a senator.

Newspapers quote right from Noynoy’s undated website, a total of 14 measures were listed as among those he had either authored or sponsored in his third and last term as Tarlac congressman. Of the measures, six were resolutions covering matters such as an expression of condolence of the House of Representatives on the death of the husband of Akbayan party-list Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel.

The bills however included those strengthening the regulatory power of the Department of Trade and Industry, granting annual productivity incentives to private sector employees, and the codification of all criminal laws in the country - a faint enumeration with no thread of urgent national interest.

One bill called for the declaration of April 19 as “Tarlac City Day,” a special nonworking holiday. If this and his being son to Cory and Ninoy were to be presented to the electorate more than half of whom are no longer eating three square meals a day, there is perfectly nowhere even the man on the street can peg any anchor save for sheer imagination on what he will do as president.

There you go, with the absence of elementary fusion going towards the direction of Noynoy’s candidacy, I therefore conclude that his presidential star is dead in the water.

Worse the Liberal Party has placed itself as vulnerable to being taken lightly in 2010. If Noynoy accepts to run for the president, there is high probability he will lose. If he does not accept, then who will the Party field as its candidate? Mar Roxas has already declared himself lameduck by saying he

is giving way.

Franklin Drilon of course is qualified but does not look photogenic nor potenteither. And of course since “bollywood” celebrity seems to be Liberal fare, there is Kiko Pangilinan, more know today as the husband of megastar Sharon Cuneta. But no one can equal nor further the seriousness that once marked the Roxas candidacy.

Truth to tell, besides, everybody knows that the Liberal Party has no presence in most of the country. In Mindanao , where sensationalism could be expected to rise in favor of Noynoy as it did Manny Pacquiao, the LP is only in Bukidnon because of Nery Acosta.

The only other bulwark it can really swing is perhaps Tarlac and Pampanga because Mar Roxas is also having difficulty uniting Western Visayas . (The Roxas clan is not even from vote-rich Iloilo , they are from Capiz and Franklin Drilon is being neutralized locally by GMA money machine being led by justice secretary Raul Gonzales.)

Cory Aquino took most of her support from the proverbial Lucena to Dagupan vote corridor; where the Liberal Party presently is not even formidable. With this early failure to get the major opposition players, especially Chiz Escudero of the Nationalist People’s Coalition who is current darling of the youth who constitute 65% of the voters, where will Noynoy get his votes? And now they are asking every Filipino in-country to pitch in Php500 and every overseas Filipino to send \$5 to fund his campaign? I mean, hello...

The central weakness of a Noynoy candidacy lies not even in its failure to attract lateral support from all those who wish to dethrone the ruling klepto-queen and her court from power, but in its utter lack of substance to attract the thinking Silent Majority composed of the middle-class.

So after things have come and gone, where will Noynoy be after the elections? Alone with his sisters, after having botched all his potentials to be a man of consequence for the Filipino people.

My intention is writing this is basically to agree with Nick Perlas’ free advice to Noynoy not to accept the nomination,

join the cause of “New Politics”, and reserve himself to ripen to meet his true destiny, not imposed by traditional politicians who merely want to hitch a ride on his parents’ legacy, but the Noynoy enlisting himself to a first cause he, together with like minds, can champion

His father Ninoy was reared to survive all aspects of traditional politics including the adulation of media. I used to cut classes and squeeze into the gallery of the Senate that was then in front of Manila’s sunken gardens every time Senator Aquino was slated to deliver a privilege speech. And he was overpowering in person as he was compelling in the headlines following the next day.

But when the proper time came, he chose to create his own space that was “Laban” and not the trapo Liberal Party. This was a moment he got no press as no opposition could make any column inch from Marcos’ controlled media. But the sweet odor of his plea for New Politics, was ripe in time that it spread so fast it sent fear to the very sinews of the dictatorship. to

Soon he was back to the darkness of his cell. but the flicker of light it created was endeared silent yet pumping in the hearts of the people. When it was time for him however to live to champion the wisdom of that New Politics towards the restoration of democracy, he threw himself into the arms of his enemies. He chose to die.

This is how all Filipinos understood for themselves in Ninoy’s solitude and eventual supreme sacrifice, that indeed a people oppressed cannot be alone and fruitless. *Hindi tayo nagiisa!* This is why Cory did not escape nor did she shelter his fatherless family away from danger but onto the harm’s way. This is the unseen power behind Cory’s slaying of the Marcosian dragon. People of one mind, voting with their feet. This is passion that birthed the People Power Revolution. *Vox populi, vox Dei!*

In his retreat, Noynoy ought to learn this – That it is only God’s way that can triumph over men. But men must discern their proper time in his plan, otherwise the proverbial paradise becomes elusive.

Finally I say “Woe to the Liberal Party”, for tempting such beautiful potential as youthful Noynoy to the lions!

I met Nick Perlas in Washington DC while I was a new diplomat right after Edsa One. I guess I took him seriously right away for two reasons – we both shared an affinity with Rene Saguisag, one of Cory’s most trusted generals and he made a lot of sense in our discussions pertaining to the investigation of the nuclear plant that Westinghouse erected in Bataan.

Next thing I learned, his love for the environment led him to set up a huge organic farm near the University of the Philippines, one man drawing national attention to environmental protection, agricultural viability and good healthy foods. And he succeeded! Soon he was reaping awards left and right for the soundness of his reform proposals communicated by action and example.

Slowly thereafter, he took steps into the electoral mainstream by using various platforms to promote his political advocacy that spells why Philippine politics of the future cannot be without Nick Perlas.

Well don't take my word for it, read up!

Noynoy – Enabler or suppressor

of the New Philippine Politics

By Nicanor Perlas

05 September 2009

In the past few days, I have been bombarded with text messages from friends as well as interviews with the media on what I think of the Mar-Noynoy announcements. Will I, like Senator Mar Roxas, also renounce my intention to run as a presidential candidate in the 2010 national elections and support the presidential candidacy of Senator Noynoy Aquino?

The short answer is “No”. I will not renounce my intention to run as a presidential candidate. And “Yes”, I will encourage Noynoy to resign from the Liberal Party, run as an independent presidential candidate, and join the on-going conversation and unification efforts among non-traditional political parties and movements.

Noynoy can stifle the growth of new politics. Or he can enable the new politics that is emerging all throughout the country. Allow me to elaborate.

Introductory Remarks

My comments to follow will only make sense if people understand that 2010 is not an ordinary election. It will be the venue for an epochal battle between traditional politics and the new politics. What is branded often as “opposition” is not really opposition in the true sense. The current opposition is also part of traditional politics, albeit a different version of traditional politics. What I mean by traditional and new politics will become clear in the paragraphs to follow.

Noynoy Can Weaken New Politics

There are eight reasons why Noynoy can weaken new politics if he misunderstands the meaning of the “signs of the time”, succumbs to the “destiny” that others want to impose on him, and makes a wrong decision.

## 1) Reinforce short-lived, non-strategic unification

We successfully united against and toppled the Marcos dictatorship in 1986. But in a few years, the luster and the euphoria of People Power I dissipated. In 2001, we again united against and ousted the corrupt administration of Joseph Estrada. But this time, the unity of People Power II disappeared in only a few months and inaugurated the worst political regime in the past 50 years .

Why? We united against something (an “enemy”) instead of for something. With the “enemy” gone, our unity shattered. And we went our separate ways. Yes, we restored democracy. That is important. But we had no common vision of what we wanted to do with that democracy after Marcos or after Estrada. We just wanted to get Marcos and Estrada out of the way. That was the point of unity. And, by its very nature, unity against something cannot last after the common objective of rejecting something is achieved. The very specter of an Estrada presidency in 2010 is a powerful reminder of what uniting against something can ultimately lead to: more of the same, and the resurgence of the old, of traditional politics.

From this perspective, asking all non-traditional and even opposition forces from traditional politics to unite behind Noynoy is repeating the same historical mistake. We are again being asked to unite against the abuses of the Arroyo administration and remove it in 2010. But it is not clear what we will be installing after the Arroyo regime is gone. We are being rushed to unify without a clear idea of what vision and strategic agenda we will pursue together and what process we will undertake to arrive at that common vision and agenda.

We are driven by our hunger to “win” in 2010. But we must have a different notion of winnability. (See below.) For we may “win” the battle but lose the war, as has already happened twice. Instead of a new lease on life, we will plunge deeper into political oppression and chaos, led by our naïve notion of unity against something instead of for something.

## 2) Suppress the emergence of a peoples agenda and selection process

A powerful antidote against this one-sided form of unification is to engage the country in a participatory process of setting up a people’s vision and strategic agenda. We hear this longing is from all over the country, not only as an answer to the corruption and decadence of the Arroyo administration. It is the peoples attempt to correct the historical shortcomings of People Power I and II.

Before the recent call for Senator Noynoy Aquino to take up the challenge to run for president in 2010, many concerned citizens were saying: “Bago sino, ano”? Before we decide on “who”, we must first answer “what” is our vision and agenda? Only after we determine our vision and strategic agenda do we then look for the leaders who will best embody our vision and agenda for a better Philippines .

This is a step in the right direction. But now the rush to have a bandwagon with Noynoy in front weakens this process. Instead of “ano” or “what”, “sino” takes prominence.

Even some proponents of peoples' primaries (to flesh out a peoples agenda and a more participatory selection process) are blinded by the glare of a Noynoy presidency. Some have rallied behind Noynoy, betraying their own principles and aspirations.

### 3) Strengthen personality-based politics

The old traditional politics is a politics of personality. And the politics of personality is a part of the larger traditional politics of "winnability". The old politics believes that one of the key ingredients of winnability, is to have a personality with name recall and national exposure. That is why traditional politics is filled with candidates who have lots of money to spend on advertising in TV, radio, and newspapers. That is why, until recently, traditional politics was littered with show biz and media personalities.

In contrast, the new politics selects qualified and proven leadership willing to advance the vision and strategic agenda co-created together with the people. In this consideration, winnability is not the primary consideration in the beginning. Instead, once the proper platform is crafted and qualified leadership found that would advance that visionary platform, then proponents of the new politics organize to make sure that their candidates win. If the candidate does not have a strong national name recall, the new politics will find ways and means to ensure that their candidate gets the necessary national exposure, among others, to win in the national elections.

Asking people to rush behind Noynoy is asking Filipinos to enshrine the old politics of personality at the expense of the new politics of participation, vision and strategic agenda and a qualified proven leadership willing to advance that common vision. With Noynoy, are we asking the personality cult of traditional politics to rear its ugly head again?

### 4. Send mixed signals regarding political dynasties

We rail against political dynasties. We celebrate victories of candidates who triumph against political dynasties. What are we doing now with our clamor for Noynoy Aquino? Are we not advancing traditional politics of dynasties?

True, Noynoy does not come from a corrupt political dynasty. Nor is there any technical, legal violation of the anti-dynasty provisions of the Constitution. But are we not close to violating the spirit of that constitutional provision when we get excited about Noynoy simply because he carries the name of martial law hero, Ninoy Aquino, and the late former president of the Philippines, Corazon Aquino? Does Noynoy have the necessary track record, leadership qualities, vision, strategic agenda to renew this nation?

### 5. Break the Link Between Inner and Societal Change

The new politics requires inner change as the foundation for political and societal change. New politics rests on the hard work of enabling new mindsets and habits to emerge. Only with inner change will it be possible to co-create with others new ways of viewing and doing politics, governance, policies, platforms, processes, winnability, volunteerism, and other important matters.

Traditional politics does not expect inner change. In fact, it wants old mindsets and habits to prevail. Otherwise traditional politics will not be able to function. The appearance of a political leader who can win enough votes is all that is necessary for success as far as traditional politics is concerned.

The unthinking acceptance of a Noynoy “bandwagon” destroys the important link between inner change and political/societal change. We can all remain who we are. There is no need for us to change to create a new country. Noynoy will do it all for us. We will be spared from all the hard inner and outer work necessary to renew the country. This is an illusion, one destined to break into pieces in the hard rock of political reality.

## 6. Remove the Necessity of a Cultural Revolution

Change of hearts, will, and minds are the foundations of authentic democracy and the new politics. People run institutions. If people are corrupt, institutions will be corrupt. If citizens remain the same, they will continue to vote and empower corrupt traditional politicians and, in the process, victimize themselves.

To change the inner disposition of the voting public, a cultural revolution is essential. Widespread consultations and education are necessary. Citizens need access to information of all kinds, especially detailed background information on the track record, capabilities, integrity, and agenda of candidates for political office. They need to be able to have the chance to work through difficult questions of distinguishing between old and new approaches to winnability, assessing proposed platforms, and other areas of discernment and reflection.

A Noynoy bandwagon marginalizes the importance of an educated citizenry and a cultural revolution in the mainstreaming of the new politics. A Noynoy bandwagon, in effect, sends the message that Noynoy is good enough because he is the son of two well-known and well-respected parents. There is no need to examine his background and his qualifications for the Office of the President.

The unquestioning wholesale acceptance of Noynoy on the basis on nothing else except his biological relationship with Ninoy and Cory Aquino is tantamount to strengthening traditional politics. It cheapens the notion that new politics can only arise because a new and very different generation of citizens are prepared for it and demand it. The old politics views the national education of the citizenry as unnecessary for winning the 2010 elections. A Noynoy bandwagon that is not based on a simultaneous cultural revolution will prevent the inauguration of a new, principled, honest and service-oriented politics. It will be a recipe for disillusionment in and after 2010.