



Razor's Edge

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Noynoy Declares Presidential Candidacy

NEW YORK, NY Sept. 11 (PinoyGlobal) - If things shape up the way they look, then for once our people will enjoy a respite from the ordeal of choosing the lesser evil from among old fogies jockeying to be president of the country. The dawn of a new era of dynamism and idealism in a reformed government after 2010 is at hand. Sen. Noynoy Aquino has finally announced his candidacy for president with Sen. Mar Roxas as his running mate.

This is inspiring because being who he is, an Aquino, he has only his parents' good name to protect, not friends' diversified business and political interests. Noynoy is committed to run the government with a firm hand. With honesty as indelible hallmark of his character the future of mother Philippines looks bright. His administration would be stoic against the usual shenanigans of Jurassic politicians notorious for having evolved the culture of influence peddling, corruption and use of naked power as public servants.

The Aquino-Roxas tandem can be a magnet for unification. It would not surprise this column if former Pres. Joseph Erap Estrada will eventually join them along with other aspirants for president. With only a few months to go before the elections, a united opposition is crucial at this moment because the political climate is ripe for a change. In the perception of the people anybody is an improvement over Madam Arroyo's governance. Therefore, whomever she endorses receives a kiss of death.

But first is the agenda of unification. It will be futile to fight the lone candidate of the ruling party with the edge he enjoys having the president behind him while the minority is critically divided with various aspirants running for president. Pres-

ently, there are three opposition candidates: Villar, Erap and Aquino. More will soon surface.

Even now we cannot discount the possible entry of senators Loren Legarda and Chiz Escudero who like the three others would just be paper tigers with all of them mixing up. Divided, the opposition candidates will critically marginalize their own chances of winning. Gloria's brand of politics is massive cheating and vote buying when sweet wooing fails.

Consequently, the cleavage or disunity in the opposition can thwart their objective to change the government to one responsive to Juan de la Cruz's needs. The Aquino-Roxas presidential team is what the majority of Filipinos have enthusiastically awaited. If the military does not interfere and the Commission on Elections is impartial in the polls, then next year's election results will be D-Day for our people – the birth of a corruption-free dispensation.

Days ago, Senator Roxas appealed to the nation “to share the same outrage over the mess we are all in, the same way we share the solution: clean, honest, selfless public service.” Optimism propelled Mar to believe he can make the Liberal Party “a bridge for the forces of change.”

Meanwhile Noynoy has been taken to task by the demolition team of Malacanang for being “unreliable.” They accused him of dilly-dallying to announce his intention to run for president.

This was odd. Of what concern was it to them that Noynoy took his “sweet” time to reveal his intention to run for president, which is now moot after he declared his candidacy

yesterday? Their annoyance was weird because the young senator's earlier indecision even bolsters the chances of the ruling party's candidate. It seems Malacanang is the one whistling in the dark because Noynoy is unstoppable in the elections. The best GMA's barkers could do is resort to the psy-war that he is "unreliable."

They could not put it on their thick skulls that Cory's son was just studying on which symbolic date to declare his eagerly awaited candidacy: September 11 – natal day of the late dictator under whose reign of terror Noynoy's father, Benigno Aquino Jr., was mercilessly shot in the footsteps of the airplane that brought him home; or September 21, that flashes back bitter memories of loved ones killed in the dark of night or jailed with no hope of getting out alive with the imposition of martial law. Even that has been changed by his announcement to run.

But over and above that, like his religious mother, the young Aquino truly wanted divine guidance before deciding to seek for the presidency, lest he desecrates it with incompetence and inadequate integrity. For that his political detractors ridiculed his retreat at the Carmelite convent in Davao.

If other candidates like to rush the people it's their business, but Noynoy did what he had to and that showed determination and leadership. The fact that even the League of Provinces of the Philippines called for an urgent summit to devise strategies to deflate the tsunami or magic of the Aquino name with the people, betrays the ruling party's insecurity.

Malacanang said that Pres. Arroyo is beside herself with joy that 49 governors out of the 80 provincial heads signified solid support for Defense Secretary Gilbert Teodoro, a man Gloria expects to protect her if he becomes president. She is entitled to that hope but it does not license her minions to deride the chances of the young Aquino by slinging mud at the senator. It's not yet time to take off the gloves for a mano-a-mano, boys: the last day of filing candidacies is November 30.

In this fight, the issues of youth and inexperience are irrelevant. We are in the threshold of enlightened freedom to elect the right candidates for public office. As I said many times over - youth stands for idealism and energetic leadership. Gilbert Teodoro himself is qualified to be regarded viable presidential aspirant despite his advantage of being young. I have nothing against that. But the focal point for change in the government is leadership and integrity of which this administration is completely bankrupt.

If both Noynoy and Teodoro end up protagonists in the presidential contest the issues have to drastically be revised to something more relevant and that would be leadership. But even that is not valid to ask just yet, suffice it that they have the knowledge. Their intelligence should buoy them from the slings and arrows the office of president is battered with daily.

As president all he has to do is choose cabinet members and bureaucrats wisely. The appointees must help to prevent the ship of state from sitting still on troubled waters. Appointing top officials in the government should be done objectively avoiding the usual pitfalls of cronyism. More importantly, they should be men with dazzling integrity, which combined with their expertise should bring about good government, the kind that President Arroyo has failed to provide.

Compare the president to a Toscanini, the famed maestro, conducting an awesome orchestra of great musicians, so is the president who sets the ship of state on course to placid shores. Noynoy and Mar can make that wish come true. With the exception of Noynoy's mother, we have longed for good governance since dictator Marcos was deposed. Now is that time!

The two favorites enjoy unparalleled charisma and unblemished integrity plus experience. Noynoy was 12 years in the Lower House of Congress and several years a senator. Mar Roxas was Trade Secretary, with an=20 outstanding job performance. He was elected senator with flying colors where he has demonstrated total dedication for the cause of the people as Noynoy has.

I can almost predict them elbowing out candidates with the brazen audacity to plague Juan de la Cruz with their malignant brand of leadership that has bedeviled our people for so long so much so that anomalies and scandalous deals do not sound as offensive anymore to the masses. The present crop of politicians has undermined the sanctity of public office, no ifs and or buts about it.

Aquino and Roxas have the vital elements of idealism and dynamism that their adversaries are bankrupt of. Equipped with this, they will surely spark the needed reforms in the government. Therefore, any presidential tandem pitted against them would just be saber rattling in the polls, they are politically doomed!