



Razor's Edge

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Electing Someone for His Money Is Treason

NEW YORK, NY Feb. 05 (PinoyGlobal) - Life ends when we do nothing over things that matter. And evil they say, triumphs because good men do nothing. But I will do my level best to ring the cat's bells to wake up our apathetic and lethargic compatriots if it's the last thing I will do in this life.

It appears Noynoy Aquino's lead is dropping fast and Villar's is on the upward swing, according to a survey paid from the war chest of the latter. That is if a survey of a thousand people constitutes an infallible factor, vis a vis the 90 million that comprises our entire population. The paid survey, like his ads in the media, was made to tickle the ego of the perennial tailgater (Manny) to Senator Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III.

However, if by a macabre twist of fate the candidate with money wins, then our people deserve to suffer the government they get. It will only prove people are not worth dying for nor pitied because they are confirmed masochists: lovers of pain, misery and hardship. It would just be a déjà vu if money will prevail over integrity in the elections. Once our people fought Dictator Ferdinand Marcos but soon after overthrowing him his cronies were restored to power by the sheer force of their ill-gotten wealth. This happened because corruption money washed away the masses' sorrows suffered under martial law. The wherewithal warped their memories and benumbed their sensibilities.

Bongbong Marcos himself (the late dictator's son) is now a staunch political ally of Villar apart from being one of the senatorial candidates under his party. This should give us an inkling that the pervasive influence of Marcos' cult still lingers on with venom and grudge, even as it gives as a sneak

preview of the embattled senator's political orientation as seen by the company he keeps.

Yet if we go to the nitty-gritty of things, what they got was palliative relief for soon after they were again hungry and angry against the corrupt "trapos" of Marcos. So tell me something new. Frankly, I am tired of our people's touch-me-not hypocrisy. If they want to dig their own graves then they are free to do so. I'll just do my thing for the country.

And now back to the present. To avoid the tsunami effect of the long awaited guilty verdict on his presidential run, Senator Manny Villar Jr. took to the floor of the Senate the other day. People thought he would finally put to rest the controversial C-5 issue after clarifying his role in the mess. He did nothing of the sort. His defense in the name of "honor" was a dud as expected of a culprit who has no defense except to mislead the public with a tissue of lies and hot air rhetoric haranguing his colleagues in the Senate.

Evidently, his truncated privilege speech tried hard to sound indignant to impress the gallery more than it meant to bring out the truth regarding the illegal of insertion of new funds in the budget, failed to put across his message because the decent elements of the country are not buying.

Throughout his monologue there was nothing that proved his apathy to participate in committing the felony except tasking the public's mind with lame and vain excuses. If any, blowing his horn magnified the validity of the charges against him. The fed up electorate and not the recipients of his indiscriminate dole outs that mute the truth and misled the gullible, will judge him in the polls. Flooding the country with paid advertise-

ments on radio and televisions, as well as the massive billboards portraying him as a do-gooder (Johnny come lately saint), is futile for if people stay put on their desire to have an honest president for a change, his presidential aspiration is bound for the dustbin.

Lincoln's laconic remark way back is applicable to the insertion artist senator: "You can fool some of the people all of the time, and all of the people some of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all of the time." It was bad enough that during the hearings of the Committee of the Whole, which he disdainfully referred to as a Senate "zarzuela", appealed to him to appear or at least send his affidavit giving his side so that the committee could decide judiciously, but he stoically refused to attend the hearings.

He must be a believer of the adage that the safety of man is in the guarding of the tongue. He forgets that conversely, nobody won an argument in silence. In fact, in his case, silence meant yes because the evidence and testimonies were incontrovertible...they vividly showed his guilt beyond doubt.

In his sophomoric repertoire he said "that he was condemned without the benefit of a fair trial so he decided to steer clear of the 'zarzuela' disguised as investigation." For a while I thought he mimicked liars who are wont to use this over-abused line to gain mercy from the courts, but his adamant attitude achieved nothing because the people are back to square one of doubting his integrity.

Despite being palpably clear that he cowered during the investigation, he still had the gall to say "My silence is not cowardice." According to Rep. Satur Ocampo who reversed gears one day after urging him to face the music and confront his accusers if he has not violated the law for the sake of his honor, said Villar refused to dignify the investigation because he feared he will be disrespected. Doesn't fear, metaphorically speaking, mean one and the same - cowardice?

The beleaguered lawmaker also said referring to his silence, "It is non recognition of this court." This is a convenient excuse of one who cannot give the right answers for the corruption he committed.

Villar just went into a lot martyr posturing but never addressed the issue. An innocent man would instantly raise Cain in defense of his maligned honor and rattle off against the unpalatable innuendoes tainting his reputation.

With tongue in cheek he said he did not pocket the P200 million appropriated for the C-5 road extension project when his political enemies knew that the Department of Budget and Management had not even released the amount, and even if it is released it will not go to my pocket but to the Department of Public Works and Highways, and I do not even know the project contractor."

Hey, hey, wait a minute, your litany proves nothing. In the first place if you pocketed the money that would be stealing and you know the consequence for stealing. But it does not mean you did not know the potential worth the road extension would be to your real estate properties when it zigzags on them. Their prices will skyrocket overnight as in fact they did.

Mr. Senator, being recipient of the road extension project does not mean that you have to know the contractor. So long as your properties are directly benefited you have nothing to worry. You may even feign ignorance still it does not alter your game plan so long as the Public Works proceeds with the road extension project in accordance with the specifications. That has been well established during the investigation that buttressed the guilty verdict on you.

Regarding the P200 million inserted funds not going to your pocket, again it does not have to do that acrobatic somersault; suffice it to say that it would benefit your properties. Ask your own former senior vice president and general manager of Adelfa Properties Inc. Anastacio Adriano Jr. who testified to that effect in the Senate hearing. Categorically, he pointed to that probability before the Committee of the Whole.

Why were you conspicuously absent during his testimonies when you could have interpolated or grilled Adriano to your heart's content in the hearing? Who knows you could have elicited the truth from him that you had no participation in the illegal insertion if you are really innocent. Why did you absent yourself Mr. Villar?

The guilty verdict was based on 900 pieces of evidence, according to Senate President Enrile. Villar only made the drama of taking to the floor to portray himself as the martyr when it was he who mangled his own "reputation" by refusing to answer investigators. Does not silence means yes? Or were you just afraid to perjure because that will expose you to criminal prosecution.

Just when the sessions were a day away from adjournment,

and the guilty finding by the committee was going to be taken up the next morning, which could have been a coup d' grace to this sordid affair (C-5 anomaly) starring then Senate President Manny Villar Jr., he decided to deliver his privilege speech. Still it was of no significance because his speech was a grotesque dud. . . a pack of prevarications, sound and fury, emoting indignation over his violated "honor" (when there is none to speak of) and the monotone charade went on until he dashed for the door to avoid being interpolated by his peers.

In hindsight, it is on this issue that he fell as Senate President. His vice presidential candidate Sen. Loren Legarda herself voted with the majority to oust him precisely because it was very clear that he deliberately inserted new funds into the already approved budget, which at the risk of being repetitious was illegal per se. When he finally decided to speak it was only to condemn his peers.

His weird answer was going into an orgy of survey buying that made the results too vulgar to the citizenry who has caught up with the symphony orchestrated by him. The trend of the results is almost too uniform to be realistic. Impartial and independent surveys are never that uniformed in results.

As a consequence, this so-called survey results have gained the notoriety politicians are regarded by citizens these days.

You see Mr. Villar playing martyr does not become you with the brand of GUILTY plastered in your forehead!