



Razor's Edge

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Reactions Are a Good Gauge for Readership

NEWYORK, NY Feb. 17 (PinoyGlobal) - Let me begin by reminding our readers that this column and my commentaries are read and seen live in our filipinotimesonline.com. I am just as ecstatic going live at FT's online forum, just as I was full of euphoria that I literally jumped with alacrity to join Pinoy Global Online through the invite of its publisher Nonoy Mendoza. I knew then that I would have built-in readers around the world, hence, my columns at filamimage.com.

Although we have just started filipinotimesonline.com two months ago, I am beside myself with elation after getting riveting reactions from viewers. Predictably, some e-mails are sweet; others are a bit hostile and are anonymous. But I am not perturbed because reactions are a good gauge for readership. Thanks to FT's novel modality – filipinotimesonline.com.

I admit being unabashedly delighted to see the marching tide of viewers of our online forum each time they click to watch us. This means they would be reading our analysis of the hot issues raging in our beloved motherland and form their own conclusions properly informed. Perhaps after reading us or hearing our discussions online they will not be unwittingly hoodwinked or mesmerized anymore by the demagoguery and theatrics of candidates who drawn the electorate with nauseating propaganda, tissues of lies and hypocrisies about their undying love for the poor masses, which by and large, is nothing but empty and selfish protestations!

One of my viewers online e-mailed Filipino Times expressing his disgust over my live commentaries. He was vehemently agitated because I consistently attack Sen. Manny

Villar Jr. for his lack of integrity and gall of trying to buy the highest office of the land with his money. It does not sit well to my taste that on the first salvo alone Manny has already proven he cannot be trusted, a misfit to head our beleaguered government.

More than ever, now is the time that the presidency demands for ample integrity from the president; anybody who is tainted with anomalies or misadventure in public office, is unacceptable. The nation cannot take chances anymore: our people have suffered so much already. To begin with Villar was found guilty by the Senate Committee of the Whole regarding his sinister role in the infamous road extension project notoriously known as the C-5 insertion scandal.

Our faceless online pen-pal went berserk merely because I echoed Lito Banayo of Malaya in the Philippines, who said that the NP presidential bet is in reality GMA's secret candidate for president. I detailed the tryst he had with the Arroyos last year when Gloria went to go to Egypt and Syria while the Villars flew to Spain until contact was made for their rendezvous somewhere in the Mediterranean.

My irate listener hastily accused me of being Sen. Noynoy Aquino III's propagandist just because I attack Villar more often than I sneeze on his chances of winning despite his vulgar splurging to win the presidency. He rightly observed that I often talked highly of Noynoy's unmatched integrity, but not in the regularity he implies. And I say it only to emphasize that the issue in this electoral process is honesty and integrity not how callous or how much of a trapo you have become as a politician, least of all how much you pay for a vote.

But alter all said and done, I welcome his testy disposition with the understanding that politics is highly volatile. People are polarized to whomever they are enamored with in the political arena and woe unto anyone who demeans his or her choice for president. Well, I am not one who will rue the day because I firmly believe such and such a candidate is a nemesis to the people's interest.

I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to say that we invite this kind of reaction so long as it does not deteriorate to personal insults and mudslinging. Objective discussions with facts and figures are healthy calisthenics for our fledgling democracy.

On the other hand I would be the last person to encourage a critic to persist with his distorted idea that I am a propagandist of Noynoy or anybody. His acid rebuke against my "Another Conjugal Dictatorship?" which I discussed online is off-tangent. I want it clearly understood that I am not like someone who allegedly organized a Noynoy Aquino for President Movement in the narrow confines of her swank apartment in Manhattan, demanding fees from would be members for I know not what she and her cronies would do with it. I do not claim being in contact with neither Noynoy nor am I his propagandist or that this newspaper is one of young Aquino's propaganda machineries in continental America. No siree!

While my critic has the right to lampoon me in the spirit of fair play, nevertheless it does not follow that he can entertain misconceptions about me or Filipino Times. Does he have proof that I am hired to hype the senator in my column and live commentaries or that this paper has a direct pipeline with Noynoy or a contract to support his presidential bid? I am sure my e-mail pen-pal does not for truly there is none. Anyone with integrity is my candidate, he could even be Cachopoy or Punga I will endorse him if he is honest. But I doubt if Villar can pass the grade. End of story.

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Supporters of President Arroyo are optimistic of her becoming Speaker of the House of Representatives after the elections. Some solons of the ruling party are like mocking-birds singing that GMA will be the next Speaker. According to them 100 Lakas-Kampi-CMD incumbents seeking re-election are sure winners, not to mention cabinet members running for Congress in their districts who will also emerge victorious in the next polls. By implication they mean that this cabal of solons will form the solid phalanx of GMA's

speakership bid.

Candidly though, hyping this probability is overkill. Could it be their insecurity makes them whistle in the dark to dispel that bogey causing trepidation in their hearts? They should be confident that Madam Arroyo will steamroller her adversaries for the premier position in the House. With money nothing is impossible. Without money ambitions are meaningless. For their peace of mind however, the required numbers for her to snatch the speakership will not be a problem: GMA brings with her a load of wherewithal to pay off skeptics and mercenaries who brazenly auction their support for the right amount.

Nothing will stonewall La Madam from grabbing the premier post in Congress once she is in. Gloria prepared for this eventuality 10 years ago: she piled up incredible amounts of logistics while she was president via massive corruption, which is public knowledge.

We had a sample of her bravado to subvert people's principles. In a breakfast conference few years back she lavished congressmen and governors with fat envelopes containing P200, 000 and above to the over one hundred congressmen and governors who were invited. It was to make sure they would mute the impending impeachment against her in Congress by inaction. And like a docile lamb her erstwhile blind ally then Speaker Joe de Venecia doused the uproar to oust her into sepulchral silence. The rest is history; the impeachment died a natural death.

On the speakership bout she literally holds the aces: money and power. I would not be exaggerating if I say she is underwriting the candidacies of many who pledged to support her in the showdown at the House. And winning a congressional seat in Pampanga is not a problem because that province is confirmed Arroyolandia. Just bear in mind that poverty stalks the country. The majority of our people are hungry. Money is the antidote or panacea to all their miseries and Gloria has these assets at her beck and call. In fact, she is awash with them. Need I say more?

Corruption is rampant in the government because politicians who are in power see to it that our people are perennially strapped in abject poverty. With the meager crumbs coming from their stolen fortunes which they throw to our hungry masses, these scalawags can virtually dance their way to victory in the elections. Lamentably though, our poor masses are not only gullible and willing suckers to auction their votes to them but at the end of the day, they get nothing but pittance for their precious ballots until six years later the charade of buying votes is repeated.

It is no wonder the Philippines will never improve in the true sense of the world because everything is under control by heartless politicians who shamelessly amass ill-gotten wealth when they hold public offices and sprinkle a measly portion of it during the campaign but recover their expenses with compounded interests once they are elected leaving the government bone dry, financially. This is not to mention of them taking advantage of our natural resources the rights over them which they sell without qualms to greedy aliens who unconscionably exploit our forests and mineral resources like gold, manganese, copper, carbon, oil, name it and they abscond everything that Mother Nature has graciously provided our beloved country.

Only the naïve do not believe GMA will grab the speakership hands down. She will not run for Congress if the cards are not stacked in her favor. What is important is how her leadership in the House will affect the nation, especially if that dreaded unholy alliance with a president who might succeed in buying the presidency, culminates into the “New Version of Conjugal Dictatorship,” this column foresees as early as now. Don’t say I didn’t warn you guys!