



Razor's Edge

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Joe Mari Mercader . . . **Master Stroke**

NEW YORK, NY Feb. 24 (PinoyGlobal) - With his rating perennially strapped to a 5% low in the latest survey that saw Noynoy's rating shoot up to 53% and Villar's plummet to 44%, administration presidential candidate Gilbert "Gibo" Teodoro Jr. staged a master stroke in a feeble attempt to boost his groveling ambition to out distance his upbeat rivals' candidacies.

He proposed that the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos Sr. (FM) is given a hero's burial, of all places, at the Libingan Ng Manga Bayani (cemetery of Philippine heroes). Albeit, it is a slanderous blasphemy, which makes him appear to be flirting with political disaster, it is nevertheless a subtle coup to attract attention to his gasping presidential run. And it did for now he is spoken about where before he was ignored a presidential pigmy.

In a nation that still reels under the 20-iron-fisted years of Marcos regime - burying FM at the Libingan for heroes literally mocks at the innocent victims of martial law whose blood still bubble in their unmarked graves crying for justice. Gibo's idea therefore revives painful memories of human rights abuses that were as flagrant and rampant as they were vicious. The campaign period is seething to a boiling point - a suggestion like this though noble in purpose is highly volatile and could wreak havoc to the already chaotic political climate in the country. The idea should be a caveat.

Since Edsa One extirpated the one-man rule initiated by FM in 1972 solely to glue himself in power, so many things already passed under the bridge. His family is on track to regain its place under the sun. Of course, this is possible with overflowing ill-gotten wealth. Many cronies of the late tyrant

are flying high in the business sector and politics. Thanks to the public's short memory and never ending need for money.

Gibo's political fate is not really at risk by championing this taboo. In fact the proposal is calculated to stir mayhem within the contending Liberal and Nacionalista parties. Both could crumble from the clashing principles of their followers, on the issue. Members of both parties have manifested preferences with some favoring to bury the president/soldier Marcos in the cemetery of heroes. Others have vigorously registered their defiance to such a contemptuous intention. Quite frankly, there are still adherents of Marcos around the country as there are legions hating him as well.

Nacionalista Party senatorial candidates Satur Ocampo and Liza Maza who are confirmed communists - declared their irrepressible hostility to the proposal. The reason is that it does not resonate with their fight for justice for the victims of martial law.

On the other hand, Bongbong Marcos Jr., who is Villar's handpicked senatorial candidate, is gang ho for Gilbert's proposal, and the reason is quite evident, the hero to be buried at the Libingan Ng Manga Bayani is his own father.

Conversely, Sen. Noynoy Aquino, whose mother Cory yanked out Marcos' despotic regime through people power, and whose father was brutally sent to eternity by the forces of evil at the time, would never condone the idea of deifying the late dictator. Noynoy's reasons are valid and deep-rooted.

Unabashedly, Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. (son of

the late dictator), was beside himself with elation upon hearing the news that his late father will be given a hero's recognition in the shrine (Libingan Ng Manga Banyani) of fallen great patriots.

Speaking for his mother and sisters Imee and Irene Marcos Araneta, he said the family appreciates the gesture of Gibo. And who is the son who will not lavish gratitude to anyone, be he a political foe, if the latter endeavors to honor his father despite the abomination of the nation that exiled him in his dying years to Honolulu?

Marcos and his family were only spared the lynching party because of the timely intervention of the United States government that whisked them to the summer paradise of Hawaii.

Bongbong said that at long last his "great" father is recognized as a war hero and president. He further exclaimed that "justice delayed is justice denied but nevertheless the wheels of justice turned slowly but they turned well."

It's easy for him to say that, after all he had the best of two worlds: living in a well of money and unchallenged power. And if fate capriciously chooses to further aggravate our sensibilities he might yet fulfill his creepy wish of becoming his father's heir one day. That of course, is not the sanguine passion of decent citizens. Hope to God such nightmare is only a figment of his fantasy or hallucinating mind, not the reality we most dread of another Marcos in power.

Bongbong of course, cannot empathize with the human rights victims who fell in the dark of night, tortured, maimed and killed by the murderous dogs of his late father. Until now the victims' cry for justice, has not been answered by the government that has remained lackadaisical or even luke-warm to their plight. To this day, it failed to mitigate the searing pain that the barbarians who brutalized them are still unpunished. Judges and prosecutors are conveniently inept to pursue the cases for reasons only their dark conscience would know.

Former First Lady, Imelda Marcos herself, who ruled jointly with her late husband in what is disparagingly referred to as "Conjugal Dictatorship," was elected to Congress after their exile. She only desisted to seek reelection because she was not poured the usual praises as people did to her during martial law when praising Meldific (Imelda's sobriquet) was worthwhile in contrast to disappointing her, which invariably jeopardized one's own existence.

The sinner behind the melodrama that the Marcos's euphorically enjoy now is Fidel V. Ramos, who else? Is not blood thicker than water? As president Fidel brought them back from Honolulu in 1993: I know not for how many million reasons. Since then they are enjoying life with their fabulous wealth. Bongbong has since been the undefeated governor and later congressman in his father's bailiwick of Ilocos Norte. Now, he is vying for the senate and might make it too.

I did not know that you can install air-condition in hell because Marcos is now resting in an air-conditioned family mausoleum in Batac, Ilocos Norte. Fidel take a bow.

This unconscionable display of wealth is a poignant reminder of how heartless the Marcoses are for it cost so much to maintain a crypt and an air-conditioned mausoleum when the nation is supine on its back in poverty and plagued with all kinds of diseases with no money to buy medicines.

The effrontery adds insult to injury because our poor people are unable to afford to have electricity in their emblematic bahay kubo or crypt-like shanties much less afford even humble amenities like clean toilets and electric stoves. Meanwhile, the late dictator is resting in a coolly insulate-hole just to make sure that the luxury he was used to in life is his even in death.

In any case, this ingenious but obscene proposal bolstered Gibo's reputation as the brilliant and most qualified presidential aspirant among those galloping in the presidential derby. His proposal, though out of tune for it robs the nation's fresh wounds that still holds rancor against the Marcoses, is likely to alter the course if not the results of the elections.

In the welter of this confusion Gibo has everything to gain. The gesture could make or unmake him. Momentarily, it has perked up his lethargic candidacy to such an extent that he is now being spoken about.

His liability is that people say he is a GMA anointed presidential aspirant. This detraction caused his ambition to convulse visibly with its demise tailgating close behind. But after brainstorming on the slanderous blasphemy of honoring Marcos at the Libingan Ng Manga Bayani, he literally energized his own ambition to life. Now he is already very visible, nay towering, in the radar screen as a potential president timber.