



Razor's Edge

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Philippine Senate: The Millionaires' Club

NEW YORK, NY June 20 (PinoyGlobal) - There is nothing wrong in being a millionaire or even a billionaire. It is the constituency that elect public officials on the basis of their behind (money) that bothers us. Reforms can be achieved not merely by deodorizing but by fumigating the whole spectrum of government. This is possible only if the electorate choose men with high moral standards, competent and dedicated.

The question is, did our people vote wisely in the May 10 elections? That remains to be seen. From this distance we can already see some numskulls and wallflowers were swept to victory in the recently concluded polls, not to mention local executives with the stigma of corruption tattooed on their faces.

Being super rich does not necessarily mean one is the embodiment of honesty, intelligence, compassion and understanding: qualities that would adequately meet the kind of leadership we hope for.

Elected officials should not just mouth having the interest of Juan de la Cruz at heart. They should live up to their claim by improving the economic condition of the country so that the masses can live with dignity; and more importantly, to be focused in helping re-float the ship of state setting it on course.

But how can elected officials empathize with the poor when as millionaires they live in mansions, eat gourmet food and enjoy everything money can buy, which the poor can only dream about? The rich, entrenched in power, are detached from reality. Between them and those they work for (the people) is an abysmal schism. That nonsense of everyone

being equal in a "democracy" is only good in books not in real life. Demagogues are skillful in that insidious art.

On the other hand, the public is not blameless either. They are easily mesmerized by the glitter of money and are awed by power. Receiving money from candidates without considering their moral values has impaired the voters' choice of good leaders. And that dear readers, is the crux of our chronic problems.

If we look at the assets of our elected senators we will be cross-eyed by the millions they have. In fact, one is a billionaire despite overspending in the campaigns. The rest have hundreds of millions while the others have tens of millions, nevertheless they are millionaires.

That should tell us how they mock at the laws they make. The man who blatantly squandered billions should be prosecuted for violating the election code along with others who brazenly desecrated the prohibition on overspending. To let them get away with it is to perpetuate abuses during elections with impunity.

This brings to mind the aphorism that laws and sausages should not be seen in the making. Their demeaning regard for our laws is evidence of disrespect for their own work.

If they represent our poverty stricken country they surely look weird in palatial mansions and high living, which are anathema to our people's plight. Both, lavish lifestyle and poverty are incongruous to each other

Verily the Philippine Senate can be dubbed: The Millionaires' Club. As such it is not easy for a hoi poloi in the streets

to just barge into the offices of senators asking for help.

My point is for the people in whose hands rests the future and destiny of the nation to be more careful in electing aspirants for public office. Voters should ascertain if those begging for their votes carry the badge of true love of God, country and people; that they do not represent vested interests or selfish motives soiling our professed democracy.

Mang Juan, think before you leap: elect those who will serve the needy, not the greedy. In subsequent polls select the man deserving the job. Do not gloat over his money. It's your life and future you are crafting. Words and promises of politicians dwarf the truth and do not cook rice.

As for the incoming president it would be wise for him to listen to his own heart and not those proven to be unfit as public officials. I notice in the proclamation of president and vice president, there were many trapos offering to help the president-elect, as if Noynoy is a babe in the woods. But their hypocrisy was written all over their faces.

Former Speaker Joe de Venecia who was accosted by the media said that he is willing to serve or help president-elect Noynoy Aquino. With his checkered background and Noynoy's immutable hate for corrupt officials, JDV should be a sore thumb in the Aquino government. He should have known better than to make a fool of himself. He was deposed as speaker precisely because of the stigma of corruption that branded his 13 years as head of Congress.

Another ridiculous has-been who would grandstand at the drop of a hat before the media is ex-Pres. Fidel V. Ramos. This ancient history, who used to be trigger happy in scolding President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in the press, is back to his antics. He wants to do the same to president-elect Aquino.

No question about it, Fidel notoriously lives in the past and thinks of himself as some kind of icon when he is nothing but the gnawing memory of having sold historic Fort Bonifacio without qualms or consideration for the feelings of the rank and file that revere those hallowed grounds.

This early he is already trying to browbeat Noynoy by telling him what to do and what not to do. The young Aquino has not sat as president yet and already Fidel wants to mold him as a marionette. How does he know Aquino will not be equal to the horrific challenges facing a president?

To begin with Noy has the edge over agurang Fidel, integrity

wise. Fidel's integrity, if he has even a modicum of it, has been marred by the unaccounted presidential funds he squandered during his incumbency.

If Pres. Reagan was around he would have said: "Here we go again." The temerity of Fidel to tell the popular incoming president "We should not over-celebrate. There is much to be done." Adding: "start healing the wounds."

The monotone there is so much to be done is an over abused mantra. It is easy to chant corny lines, but if to do were as easy as to know, life would be a paradise; there will be no wars and problems of social justice and discrimination.

Fidel Ramos should be the last person to talk of unity when as president he removed then Vice President Estrada as anti-crime czar when the latter zoomed to heights in popularity for his successful exploits in the campaign against criminal elements.

In hindsight, he could not stand watching the lady chief executive receiving accolades from world leaders and our grateful people who until now admit that Ms Arroyo made more roads (over four hundred thousand kilometers) than the combined administrations of Cory, Estrada and Ramos, that's why he castigated her verbally every time he had a change.

How long will he continue to pester Noynoy with unsolicited advises only he can answer that. What is important is when will he be hostile to the young Aquino? For one thing the two can never bond together because Noynoy is totally against corruption. He will never listen to a former president who has not yet accounted for the billions for the Centennial Celebration which were the proceeds from the sale of Camp Bonifacio.

If it was his cousin the late Dictator Ferdinand Marcos who sold it, we would have openly asked how much was the under-the-table kickback? Sometimes I wonder why the people treat FVR gingerly while they were rough with others like Pres. Arroyo and Erap who was pulled down in Edsa Dos.

Mang Juan, call a spade a spade and prove that no man is above the law. Tell agurang Fidel to stay out of the range of the coming Aquino administration. He has caused enough damage to our history and people. Tama na, sobra na! Get lost old man. Stick to your beso beso!