



Razor's Edge

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JoeMari Mercader on -

More on the Presidentiables -

The Road To Malacanang

NEW YORK, NY, Oct. 12 (Special to PinoyGlobal)- Last Friday's column was pretty much devoted to the gridlock created by eager beavers in the presidential race of 2010. Inadvertently, I failed to mention other candidates also hot in the road to Malacanang. This inadvertence stirred resentment from ardent sympathizers of other presidential wannabes who were left out. The calls came from different parts of the US, particularly the tri-state area. Some actually came from the Philippines from readers of *Pinoy Global* in the Internet, where *Razor's Edge* is also published. One caller was quite agitated. He practically rebuked me for mentioning in my column probable presidential candidates like **Erap, Sen. Pres. Manny Villar, Senators Loren Legarda, Dick Gordon, Ping Lacson, Tony Trillanes** and religious leader **Mike Velarde** but failed to include **Sen. Mar Roxas**, his favorite presidential hopeful. He also accused me of being unfair to **Pampanga Gov. Panlillo, Makati Mayor Binay**, and **Senators. Gringo Honasan and Johnny Enrile**, whom he said are equally desirous to succeed Pres. Arroyo: "What you did was mummify them, that unwittingly magnified the chances of the presidentiables in the honorable mention you made," he fumed.

On impulse I wanted to choke him with a necklace of fingers, if only he was within my reach, or oblige him to a war of words but desisted for fear of alienating the avid readers of *Filipino Times* and www.filamimage.com (*Pinoy Global*). For greater rapport with our readers, I promised the man to rectify

this gross negligence next time I write about aspirants for the highest office of the land.

Indeed, Senators Mar Roxas, Enrile, Honasan, Mayor Binay and Governor Panlillo have credible chances of becoming standard-bearers of the parties they represent. But why bother with these tidbits when in the final analysis it is still Juan de la Cruz who does the voting? Columnists analyze the issues and provide voters with the background and qualification of candidates, not ram down the throats of people our preferred politician in the presidential derby. That decision is solely that of the electorate.

Ambition is just a passion that may or may not come true because there are imponderables that could foil one's expectation. This is a factor that cannot be ignored considering the vagaries of politics. I hope I am not misconstrued as insinuating to candidates to forgo ambition because anyone without ambition is like the sky without stars.

Announcing candidacies ahead of time is infinitely an error in judgment for it can backfire to the overheating aspirants. People are liable to get tired hearing and reading about them. And that can have a backlash of magnitude on presidential hopefuls. In fact, it will only give the electorate the opportunity to closely scrutinize their respective agendas and that may not be good for a candidate. In most cases politicians have ulterior motives that run counter to the wishes of the hungry masses, which could even cause their downfall. Note that it is hard to be poor without complaining, as it is to be rich

without becoming arrogant. Furthermore, voters can perceive infirmities in a candidate's qualification by simply probing his desire to be president if truly it is anchored on the nobility of serving not enriching in office. More importantly, what assurance can they offer to extricate the country from the chronic economic malaise plaguing our people, as well as get rid of corrupt politicians in the government?

In short, how different are they from GMA to be worthy of the people's trust? Would they avoid committing the same crimes and blunders she did? And how will they stop the diaspora of our countrymen abroad that has ruined families; wives going astray because the husband is away for long periods of time, and vice versa, and children becoming drug addicts because of missing parents? Will the peace and order situation change under their leadership? What will they do regarding the chaotic situation in Mindanao that has been exacerbated by the failed Memorandum Of Agreement on Ancestral Lands and the military's failure to subdue the Muslim rebels in the South? Or would voting for them merely continue the pervasive syndrome of graft and corruption the present administration is fraught with?

Truly the Arroyo governance leaves a lot to be desired. Its magnitude of corruption is only matched by the venalities and abuses of the martial law regime of the late dictator Marcos. You cannot coerce voters to accept anybody you want for president. And this truism was proven when Dictator Marcos went down. Handlers of candidates should woo people as politicians lavish the electorate with all sorts of things in the campaign season. Even that velvet touch is not an assurance that one can be elected. The Filipino voter is peculiar in the sense that it wants to be pampered with big lies and oodles of money, before he parts with his ballot.

These negative factors cascading on our moribund economy is bound to make our government self-destruct. The ballgame has abruptly changed into a worrisome dimension. The country can no longer afford

wanton corruption in the government. The meltdown in world economy has affected everybody. Our government is no exception. The billions of dollars in remittances from overseas Filipino workers may not be as big anymore or as regular as it used to be. This time our country is going to experience horrendous economic turbulence beyond our competence to endure, which may alter the course of our destiny as a nation.

The economic meltdown demonizing the financial giants of Wall Street and Main Street inevitably affected the Philippines because as its shock waves steamrolled the economy of capitalist countries in Europe, the same shock waves hurt our own economy. This economic disaster is spreading to China and Asia as a whole. Unless the bailout of \$700 billion perks up the US economy the halcyon days of Madam Arroyo and her cronies in and out of the government are nearing the finish line.

If because of greed and obsession for power GMA will exhaust all kinds of justifications to amend the Constitution to allow her to be a candidate under the same presidential or parliamentary system, as the case maybe, that would indeed be tragic. I hope the citizenry will not allow her. Not for all the tea in China! But if this happens we will be witnessing the death of our groveling republic in the foreseeable future.

In case our readers cannot get a copy of *Filipino Times* hours after we farm them out to our outlets, they can just go to *Pinoy Global* website – www.filamimage.com and they can read this column there. WWW.FILAMIMAGE.COM carries *Razor's Edge* all over the United States and the Philippines. Be abreast with the burning issues in our country at the *Filipino Times* and *Pinoy Global Online News* anytime of the day or night. *Pinoy Global* has earned its prestige and reliability through years of devotion to unvarnished truth, for which reason it is the favorite of readers around the world.

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