



## *Razor's Edge*

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# *Voltaire said, “Dedicate Your Life to God and Liberty.”*

**NEW YORK, NY Dec. 14***PinoyGlobal*) - heoretically speaking, the Numero Uno Tenant of the Palace is bowing out in 2010, unless Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo clings to power by dint of sheer force, which is highly unlikely. But although the law on term limits will boot her out next year, still she has not shown even a modicum of backtracking on her protection for local supporters who commit horrible crimes that could put to shame the brutal murder of actress Sharon Tate (who was pregnant at the time) and her guests in her posh residence, in California, perpetrated by the drug-crazed clan of that devil incarnate James Manson.

The infamous massacre in Maguindanao has surpassed Manson's unspeakable cruelty. It even blurs our glorious history of fighting against insufferable odds to gain our independence from Spain, and later obtained it from America through the dynamic representations of our leaders. But Mayor Andal Jr.'s crowning act of sadism on that fateful day of November 23, 2009, flung us back to the Dark Ages when barbarism was a way of life.

It is lamentable to note that Pres. Arroyo is infinitely remiss with her solemn duty to rein local warlords "loyal" to her. Unarguably, they abused her confidence by displaying naked power in their domain on the faintest excuse. This revitalizes David Hume's theory that "when reason is against a man, he will soon turn against reason." The Maguindanao massacre is a vivid example of how far naked power scaled out of control because man turned against reason. Arroyo's governance by reciprocity underscores the evil in our democracy - depicting the nadir of her sterile leadership.

GMA always kowtowed to the vagaries of that clan out of her undying gratitude for cheating to make her win in their political enclave during elections.

Abuses in that Muslim region infested with warlords (Ampatuans) can only happen because one clan alone enjoyed absolute power with her blessings. For a president whose days are numbered at the helm, Gloria should sober up and impose the rule of law particularly in provinces where family dynasties hold hostage the fortunes and political fate of constituents. She should devote her last months in office to serve the highest interest of the nation not just those of her allies.

This reminds me that when Benjamin Franklin appealed to Voltaire to bless his grandson, the decrepit 83 year old "laughing philosopher" (Voltaire's sobriquet) obliged and told the youth, "Son, dedicate your life to God and Liberty." Gloria is now crossing the Rubicon of her embattled presidency into the quite life of retirement she hopes to enjoy. Her foremost concern therefore, should be to leave a legacy that she did not forsake social justice, which her predecessors strived so hard to achieve but dismally failed. Her goal is to follow the profound message of Voltaire of serving God and Liberty not political cronies.

Her paramount concern now that she is about to make her swan song, must be pursuing the nobler cause of justice. Gloria should listen to the cries of victims and their families that the worst sadist in our history who personally carried out the massacre of 57 innocent people with gusto laughing like

a demented hyena, Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr., must be punished with the brunt of the law. The president herself should spearhead the campaign to prove that demons posing as politicians allied to her are not beyond the clutches of the law – thus the Ampatuans too will face the ax for their crimes, particularly Mayor Ampatuan. If she does this, the accusation of her “glacially slow reaction” to punish the powerful and influential perpetrators would fizzle out as mere rhetoric of the opposition, because action speaks louder than words.

Her enemies did launch a verbal barrage on her bringing up the tale about Faust bartering his soul with the devil for fame and wealth and paid the toll. It clearly alluded to Gloria’s political ties with the Ampatuans cutthroats. Even that will mean nothing if the wheels of justice proceed unimpeded and the criminals sentenced to perpetual life imprisonment. This feat will eloquently argue that she does not pay homage to injustice demolishing the insinuation of her doing a “Faustian bargain” with the devils incarnate (Ampatuans).

The alter-ego of Pres. Arroyo, Press Secretary Cerge Remonde said that “although the government is persistent on having proper justice served particularly to victims of the mass murder, the Palace won’t, in any way, try and influence the justice system in conducting its process.” Bull! Will somebody tell him Malacanang is simply evading responsibility to spearhead the cause of justice, which has been in a painful hiatus under her leadership? She cannot shriek from her pledge to uphold justice. Only an ostrich hides its head under the sand in the face of danger - not a commander-in-chief.

Explicitly, a reign of terror existed in Maguindanao since she became president; if it was not with her implicit tolerance, would “Juez de cochillo” in that region have lasted 9 years? The horrible massacre would not have happened without her turning a blind-eye to that clan’s atrocities. Dispensing justice does not mean influencing or using undue pressure to condemn them, Mr. Remonde. Quite the contrary, it is serving the ends of justice equitably.

The convenient line “Let our justice system deal with them (Ampatuans)” is not even a subtle avoidance of the issue because it is nonsense per se! Drastic actions to override the onslaught of violence committed in the name of the law, is imperative. Criminals vested with authority often invoke the rule of law yet they are the first to trample on human rights and civil liberties, with impunity. The primordial duty of government, sir, is to prosecute criminals without an eye of protecting them for favors received during elections.

Seemingly, the Palace is focused on how the murderous Ampatuan’s rights are protected not necessarily those of

their victims, which is altogether a whale of difference. No doubt, political patronage appears paramount to Malacanang. Agreed, even criminals have rights. We adhere to the same principle. What is unsettling to us is the lopsidedness justice is served, which is pretty much compartmentalized in favor of powerful political allies of the administration to the detriment of victims without politicians backing them.

Justice should never be desecrated by violently suppressing it, in the same breath that it should also be expedited in serving its full measure to all, including the rights of those at the receiving end of injustice. In fact, they should receive more of justice because they have already been deprived of their peace and safety since the ascendancy of Pres. Arroyo to power.

Meanwhile, politicians like Sen. Manny Villar Jr. who shamelessly brag of buying voters and so-called political leaders is going to be a corrupt president – perhaps worse than GMA and even the late Pres. Marcos. Let me elucidate by reminding our readers that no man in his right mind who worked so hard for years to earn his so-called billions is going to throw them for the ego-trip of running for president in five months of campaigning. This is absurd and anybody who believes he will not use the office of president to multiply his investment in the election could possibly be a mental case.

As sure as the sun rises in the East, Villar will be the most corrupt president in our history. This can be seen in his indiscriminate recruiting of supporters that include a host of comedians, movie idols and callous politicians who cannot contribute a moral touch on his administration. It may not be remote to assume that everybody will be busy amassing ill-gotten wealth the way a starved politician does once he lands in public office.

Vote for Sen. Benigno “Noynoy” Aquino III, the man who can verily be called Mr. Integrity because his tenure in both Houses of Congress was unscathed by any scandal of corruption or moral transgressions, unlike Manny Villar whose peers in the Senate investigated for blatantly inserting an illegal fund in the budget without the approval of the Senate using his arbitrary powers as Senate President.

Noynoy stoically accepted the martyrdom of his father in the hands of enemies our democratic loving people, and recently he took calmly the unexpected death of his mother who is adored by our people for having fought to restore democracy in our beleaguered Philippines in 1986 against the late dictator Marcos. Noynoy’s mother, Cory, was the first to call on Pres. Arroyo to step down because her administration is saddled with corruption.