

What are you doing in the Senate, Migz? - MabuhayRadio

Written by John Nery

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What are you doing in the Senate, Migz? By John Nery Philippine Daily Inquirer First Posted 05:05:00 07/20/2010 The 2010 elections, by and large, were a success, a victory that vindicated the Filipino's bottomless belief in the power of elections to effect change. It is only right, however, to recognize that the reform constituency that laid claim to the elections, especially as reflected in the presidential vote, first re-emerged in the 2007 polls. The overwhelming opposition tide even lifted Antonio Trillanes' boat—and Koko Pimentel's too. Early last month, the Senate Electoral Tribunal issued a shameful resolution, numbered 07-105, that even in its intellectual dishonesty and Arroyo-like going-through-the-motions character could not hide the fact that, as it admits, "the results of the initial revision and appreciation proceedings showed that the 14 May 2007 election in certain pilot areas designated by Pimentel was characterized by proven irregularities." The records show that, as early as June 2008, the SET had already proven massive fraud in four provinces, which cheated Pimentel out of over 250,000 votes net, more than enough for him to overtake Migz Zubiri's manufactured lead. Before Zubiri and his spokesmen argue ad hominem again, saying my longstanding friendship with Koko has clouded my judgment, let me quote the strongly worded, rigorously argued dissenting opinion of Supreme Court Justice Antonio Carpio, who reminded the SET of which he was chair of the meaning of its previous decision: "In Resolution No. 07-27, the Tribunal found that in six (6) of the nine (9) pilot municipalities in Maguindanao and Lanao del Norte, 98.15 percent of the ballots cast were spurious." So, as it turns out, Zubiri is not the fake senator from Maguindanao. My mistake. He is the fake senator from Maguindanao and Lanao del Norte. Against this clear previous finding, what did the majority—consisting of Sen. Edgardo Angara, in my reading the true author of the reasoning behind the decision; Senators Loren Legarda, Richard Gordon and Lito Lapid; and Supreme Court Justices Presbitero Velasco and Teresita Leonardo-de Castro—end up doing? They gave Zubiri more time, to proceed with his counter-protest. The ordinary citizen, who hasn't paid this crucial test case of democratic maturity any real attention, may respond: Well, what's wrong with that? Doesn't Zubiri deserve his "day in court"? In fact, Zubiri has had his day in court. That's what Resolution 07-105 is all about. To Pimentel's original protest contesting the results of 2,658 precincts in 44 municipalities in seven provinces, Zubiri filed a counter-protest, alleging he was cheated in 73,265 precincts—almost throughout the country! Under SET rules, 25 percent of each party's estimate of fraud-marred precincts are targeted for initial revision. Pimentel's initial set proved there were irregularities, and the total count recovered over a quarter of a million votes. The SET resolution in question rules on Zubiri's initial set, and directs the SET canvassers to begin full revision. The key passage in the majority decision reads: "The Tribunal's own examination and appreciation of the ballots resulted in a finding that more than 50 percent of the ballots specifically cited in the revision reports were indeed spurious. Accordingly, the presence of said bogus ballots must be considered as strong indicator that the election in said areas was marred by irregularities." But in fact, the Angara-led majority, peopled by members of Zubiri's swing bloc in the Senate, the so-called Magnificent 7, lied. Doing the math that the majority did not even attempt, Carpio pointed out that, "contrary to the majority's bare assertion," the appreciation reports for Quezon City, Manila, Batangas, and Bulacan (Zubiri's pilot areas) show that the number of fake or spurious ballots in these areas does not constitute "more than 50 percent of the ballots" contested in the particular city or province. "IN FACT, THE SPURIOUS BALLOTS CONSTITUTE A MERE 2.2 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL CONTESTED BALLOTS IN QUEZON CITY, MANILA, BATANGAS, AND BULACAN." [Emphasis in the original.] Also: "Pimentel's evidence, consisting of the

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testimonies of Board of Election Inspectors Chairpersons and Members, disprove the allegation of massive electoral fraud in Quezon City and Manila. Specifically, the BEI's testimonies established that THE FAKE BALLOTS [in Zubiri's pilot areas] WERE INTRODUCED AFTER THE 14 MAY 2007 ELECTIONS." [Emphasis mine.] Something is rotting in the Senate. [Joomla SEO powered by JoomSEF](#)