

Written by Ado Paglinawan

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The trouble with columnists is that they always want to be first. Billy Esposito wants us to reflect on his column of February 25, 2006, when he warned everyone of civil war. Actually, I warned readers earlier of a civil war but nobody wanted to believe in 2004 that Gloria Arroyo stole the farmers' fertilizer fund in order to pay for and steal the 2004 presidential elections. She almost conked out in 2005 but how easy it was for the Filipino to forget that we were playing with fire then and now.

By the way, contrary to the ibon report that that the scam was P728-million, truth to tell it was P3-billion. In fact before the P728-million (scandal) came out, the first fertilizer scam was already exposed involving P432-million spirited out of the National Food Authority bearing Administrator Arthur Yap's signature; the case was filed by Marlene Esperat, et al, in July 2004. Yes, this is the same Yap who delivered the goodies; but he has been promoted to Agriculture Secretary despite the prima-facie evidence against him in that case. Mr. Yap was never an agriculturist; he is a lawyer and a damn-good Labrador for the First Gentleman (FG) and his former instructor at the Ateneo pre-law, Professor Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Mr. Yap is married to the erstwhile (scion of the) Uniwide Superstores (owner) that preceded Pure Gold in the smuggling of Chinese chicken into the country. That Esperat case is still pending in the Ombudsman's Office. But since Simeon Marcelo resigned and Merceditas Gutierrez, another FG protégé, took over, no progress has been reported. For the meantime, Esperat has been the victim of extra-judicial killing, with agriculture-finance officials -- who used to report to JocJoc Bolante who (in turn) directly reported to the presidential bedroom -- now being tagged as masterminds. The Cebu court has already issued the corresponding warrants of arrest.

Of course, to prevent a civil war was also in the mind of Ninoy Aquino when he came home from exile, only to be butchered by presidential wannabes who conspired with the generals. That civil war was snuffed by EDSA One.

The first thought of civil war came to me when Fidel Ramos was clueless about the massive brownouts that greeted his Administration after he was sworn to office in 1992. I remember Mon Pedrosa and I telling (former President) Cory and (President) Eddie (Ramos' nickname)

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then that we were all sitting on top of a social volcano that was due to erupt. Well, it simmered a bit when steady Eddie momentarily solved the problem, but the currency crisis of 1996 and then the Erap's incompetence and corruption took center stage and again the talk of a civil war was resurrected but EDSA Dos snuffed it one more time.

But instead of taking the country to posterity as promised by her doctorate credentials and private-school education under the nuns and the Jesuits, Gloria Arroyo brought us all to hell with social indignation that is fast escalating into a civil war. There is no repentance here, not even admission of guilt. There is only cover-up and stonewalling.

Why? Because Gloria Arroyo has already assessed her options and that -- come hell or high water -- she will remain glued to power, thus the moniker "Ate Glue" by some pundits. The only way she will leave Malacanang is horizontally. She has no choice. She has already prostituted herself and the presidency, earning the notoriety of being the most-corrupt President the Republic has ever had. She will not leave before 2010 or even after because she cannot do an Erap before the Sandiganbayan, she does not want the embarrassment of being the first graduandus (sic) from Assumption Convent to be accused of plunder. Her pride is so high, she will not listen to any reason or unreason to leave power.

Gloria Arroyo's sin of covetousness or greed can no longer be mitigated. It is now public knowledge that she has violated the seventh and tenth commandments of God. Ask anyone in the streets. Linda Olaguer-Montayre says in her book "A Nation Unborn" that she also sinned against the sixth and ninth commandments. By her lips she admitted having "plenty" of sex. And it looks like the nuns have bought Linda's story because the madres (nuns) have become the strongest biggest supporters of Rodolfo Lozada.

The only way Gloria will lose the support of the generals she has paid is when the military finally understands that the very security of the nation is already being sacrificed so that she can continue to reign. I do not think the police are with her. Kung tuta si (General) Sonny Razon e di patay na si Lozada. The good general's comment affirming to abolish EO464 says it all. I smell EDSA Tres, but there are some minor hitches.

Forget the CBCP, those guys wear skirts. They have been programmed by Catechism not to meddle in political affairs that the book says is the province of the laity. For heavens' sakes, you better believe it - Cardinal Sin is dead! Asking for his redux already borders on deus ex machina that seems to be not forthcoming this time. The Lord is sick and tired of warning us. He wants us to do it ourselves this time.

But I am neither worried about the pyrrhic show of solidarity of Lakas and Kampi purportedly to be a colossus of sorts. My foot that is where LDP was when Monching Mitra lost. That was where Lakas-NUCD was when Joe de Venecia lost. There are no legitimate political parties in our system, just butterflies attracted by the nectar in the form of money and pork. This is why I have time and (time) again asked some of our legislators to pass a bill penalizing turncoatism, but did they even take any proposal to any committee? All we see in Joker (Arroyo), Dick (Gordon) and Johnny (Enrile) is endless lawyering that suits Gloria's position to a T.

For her, she cannot make any mistakes. "Fertilizer scam, not me – its Bolante. Cheating (in) the 2004 elections, not me – it's Garci, Esperon and Mendoza. ZTE-NBN, not me - its Chairman Abalos. Spratly treason, not me – in fact it was Joe de Venecia. Half the population going hungry, not me - it's the oil crisis. High electric bills, not me - it's the Lopezes. Most

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corrupt, not me - it's the First Gentleman; I am merely a victim of marital association. Extrajudicial killings, not me - its Palparan. I believe in the rule of law, that is why I always tell Secretary Gonzales to make sure the law is enforced. I have also told my national security adviser to stop killing those dissidents. I believe in telling and upholding the truth, that is why I always tell Secretaries Ermita, Saludo and Golez to follow closely their talking points and not deviate from the prompter. But P40 to \$1, that me - it's never the OFWs."

The endless cover-up and stonewalling by Malacanang and the resounding halleluiahs of Congress is driving our country to civil war.

When what happened to Nicaragua happens to the Philippines, I hope the Romulos and those illustrious residents of Makati and Alabang's exclusive villages will no longer wonder why they have been driven away from their homes by peasants and workers. So instead of investing on further perpetuating an Arroyo regime, they should be the first ones to move her out lest the horsemen of the apocalypse pass over their palatial dwellings.

I do not want to be a balikbayan the day after, that is after the social volcano erupts. The only thing that can avert a civil war is to remove Arroyo. Not later, but sooner. And you can lump (Vice President) Noli de Castro with her, too. This way the people will have a chance to elect their successors via the only constitutional recourse available for a snap election. Edsa Tres, yo!

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