

***JGL Eye***

By JOSEPH G. LARIOS

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**Japan's focus of damage control now would have been rebuilding the country and not tackling the nuclear disaster, which now causes its version of the Exodus**

C HICAGO (*jGLi*) – The Disaster in Japan is by no means a devastating event that would be the last thing anybody would ever want to have.

As misfortunes go, this will probably be one of those moments that will melt everybody's heart and would prompt us to extend whatever help we can give.

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Even if a country is as rich as Japan, a neighbor is bound to help or empathize with it. The nuclear meltdown in Japan is worse than a house on fire.

Like Japan, the Philippines is situated in the so-called Pacific Ring of Fire, where a large number of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur. It is a massive area continuously buffeted by series of oceanic trenches, volcanic arcs, and volcanic belts and/or plate movements.

Aside from earthquakes and volcanic eruptions, the Philippines is most often visited by typhoons that I am sure is having a big impact on Philippine economy. I remember when he was vice president, Joseph Estrada used to say, “kung maaari lang i-export sana natin ang bagyo baka maka-ahon tayo sa masamang ekonomiya.” (If I have my way, I would export those typhoons to other lands so we can recover from our bad economy).

But what makes Japan worthy of being helped by its neighboring countries is that Japan is one of those countries, like the United States, which extends help to any country engulfed by calamities. It is about time the international community returns the favor.

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## NO NUCLEAR PLANTS IN DISASTER-PRONE, CROWDED AREAS

Because this appears to be the first time that an earthquake triggered nuclear-plants crises, the disaster in Japan should prod nuclear-plant builders to reconsider building nuclear facilities in crowded places and in areas often visited by earthquakes, typhoons and volcanic eruptions.

The Philippines is no stranger to earthquakes either but it has not experienced the 9.0-magnitude under the Richter scale that devastated Japan.

One of the biggest earthquakes that struck the Philippines was the Luzon earthquake that occurred on Monday, July 16, 1990, at 4:26 PM local time in the Philippines. The densely populated island of Luzon was struck by an earthquake with a 7.8 M (surface-wave magnitude). The earthquake produced a 125 km-long ground rupture that stretched from Dingalan, Aurora, to Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija, as a result of strike-slip movements along the Philippine Fault and the Digdig Fault within the Philippine Fault System.

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An estimated 1,621 people were killed in the earthquake, most of the fatalities located in Central Luzon and the Cordillera region.

I'm sure Japan was among the first to extend humanitarian assistance to the Philippines when the Philippines was struck by this great earthquake comparable to the 1906 San Francisco's "7.7 to 8.25" magnitude-scale earthquake, whose death toll rose to 3,000 following the resulting fire, making it the greatest loss of life from a natural disaster in California's history and the 2008 Sichuan earthquake in China measuring 7.9 to 8.0 in magnitude scale that killed at least 68,000 people.

As always the challenge is to come up with engineering structures that could withstand these kinds of natural catastrophes. There is no other way out.

### **EVIL TRIUMPHS WHEN GOOD MEN DO NOTHING**

Just imagine if Japan did not have vulnerable nuclear plants, the focus of damage control now would have been rebuilding the country. Not evading the unfolding nuclear disaster that is now even causing other nationals to leave Japan.

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This tragedy should have been relegated to the back pages so world attention can be focused to resolve the Libyan crisis.

As a result of the crisis in Japan, Col. Muammar el-Qaddafi appears to be retaking the rebel-held towns.

The United States and Europe have led the lobby to impose a no-flight zone over Libya with the support of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Gulf Cooperation Council. The United Nations Security Council decided yesterday to put it in place.

But something else that never happened before has taken shape. The Arab League, a known anti-American bloc, asked also the UN Security Council to impose a no-flight zone in Libya. This is an opportunity for President Barack Obama to rehabilitate the United States' tattered image before the Muslim World by urging the UN Security Council to consider the approval of the no-flight zone in Libya

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If the international community will band together against el-Qaddafi by crippling his aerial firepower, there is a good chance that he will leave office like Prime Minister Hosni Mubarak of Egypt

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By seizing the moment, the United States will send a message that supporting the no-flight zone is consistent with its policy of supporting democracy and human rights around the world.

Otherwise, President Obama will fall into the trap that Irish political philosopher, Edmund Burke described: "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." # # #

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