

JGL Eye

By JOSEPH G. LARIOSIA

C HICAGO (*jGLi*) -- Some media handlers of local politicians are not doing their clients a favor.

They are not ready for change.

They are still hanging on the old school of thought that the traditional mainstream media are still the gatekeeper in this age of the Internet.

They think the print media and the on-air television networks are still the wave of the future.

Perhaps, this was so ten or so years ago.

But not anymore.

Even Larry Wert, the boss man of NBC Universal in Chicago, when he spoke several years ago before our ethnic press group – the NPC Phil.-USA – admitted that his network could no longer stake the claim to be one of the three kings of the airwaves, accounting for ABC and CBS as the two thirds of the triumvirate.

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Mr. Wert said that with 500 cable channels from which viewers will have to choose from, his Peacock Network has now been marginalized into virtual anonymity.

But some media handlers of some politicians, like former White House Chief Staff Rahm Emanuel, have other ideas. They would still pour millions of dollars on TV commercials with the Big 3 Networks and of course with the major daily newspapers such as *Chicago Tribune* and *Chicago Sun Times*

They believe that alternative media, like the ethnic media, are still decades away into whipping up the appetite of the voters.

Much worse, one press assistant of Mr. Emanuel believes that ethnic media from Chicago like the *Journal Group Link International* distributing news stories inside and outside Chicago can in no way can add votes for Mr. Emanuel when she excluded it among the community media that could meet "one-on-one" with Mr. Emanuel.

The assistant took the exclusionary move a day after she invited this *jGLi* representative to witness former President Bill Clinton endorse publicly Mr. Emanuel as Chicago mayor. The assistant never realized that she is pinning her hope on Mr. Clinton, a total Chicago outsider, to bring big votes for Mr. Emanuel.

ALIENATING MEDIA OUTSIDERS

It may be true that media outlets outside Chicago may not be of help to project the Emanuel's campaign among the bulk of Chicago voters. But the media handler has forgotten it that a lot of

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out of town voters, who cast absentee ballots or early votes could be influenced by unflattering information leaked by media outlets outside Chicago.

Perhaps, she did not know about the *Bradley or Wilder effect*, which projected Tom Bradley, the front-running long-time Democrat mayor of Los Angeles, California, to beat white Republican candidate George Deukmejian in the 1982 gubernatorial race in California, only to narrowly lose to Deukmejian “once absentee ballots were included.”

But the “disinvitation” was a blessing in disguise for me. It saved me the trouble to brave the near-zero temperature. It also let me write this “offbeat” column.

The handler has forgotten it that outsiders – out-of-state phone bank callers, elected Sen. Barack Obama president.

But what really trumps the Big 3 TV Networks are not just the telephone brigade but the Internet – the mass emails, text messages and such social networks as Facebook, Twitters, YouTube’s, etc., -- which is also cast as an effective tool for massive fund-raising.

True, Mr. Emanuel does not need the publicity beyond Chicago for now but what happens if Mr. Emanuel wins? Why start projecting Mayor Emanuel’s wholesome image outside Chicago only during post-elections, when it can be done during the election?

Whether he likes it or not, Mr. Emanuel would have to sell Chicago overseas as a mega city to stimulate economy and lower the unemployment rate at home.

If Chicago had a good reputation overseas, do you think Mayor Daley needed President Obama, whose popularity was at its peak at the time, to lure the 2016 Olympics?

If Mayor Emanuel would like to one-up his predecessor to land the 2020 or 2024 Olympics to Chicago, it will not hurt if he starts projecting himself now to the outside world and not later. By

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then, he has no more Mr. Obama to pitch for him.

If Chicago has an unsavory reputation overseas, do you think other countries will welcome to their shores Mayor Emanuel and transact business with him? Of course, those forward thinking foreigners will even declare Mr. Emanuel *persona non grata* that could turn him into a pariah.

Just look at what happened to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, whose rise and fall was the undoing of the “outsider” media.

LEAVING NOTHING FOR ETHNIC MEDIA

Why are BBC, Xinhua News agency and other public broadcast media spending tons of money establishing a presence in the U.S.? Government and business leaders of those countries would like to project a wholesome image here so they can transact business with Americans.

The media handler of Mr. Emanuel should realize that politics is always addition and is always “local.” Mr. Emanuel is not going to win votes by excluding ethnic media.

Right now, very few politicians would place advertisement on ethnic media nor invite them to a press conference. They would rather pour all their resources on mainstream media and leave nothing for the ethnic media. Not even crumbs.

Mayor Richard M. Daley was right when he said, “mayors are closest to the people.” But I say ethnic media are the links of the ethnic voters to the mayors.

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I just hope Mr. Emanuel will tweak the parochial thinking of his media handler and become inclusionary and should start thinking outside the box if he wants to occupy City Hall. (lariosa_jos@sbcglobal.net)

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