

JGL Eye

By JOSEPH G. LARIOSA

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U.S.-based Filipinos Volunteer for Good Governance in the Philippines

{xtypo_quote} When you give and don't expect anything back that's love. But if you give and expect a return it's an investment. —Sam Khan {/xtypo_quote}

C HICAGO (*JGLi*) – Sen. Francis “Chiz” Escudero, the campaign architect par excellence for crafting the winning combination of Sen. Noynoy Aquino and Mayor Jejomar Binay, has some reminders for campaign contributors.

In an e-mail to this columnist, my *kababayan* from the province of Sorsogon in the Philippines told me: “Am not objecting to the appointment of anyone. What I said was – those who helped (in Noynoy campaign) should not expect to be paid back by way of a (appointive) position. P-NOY should be given a free hand.”

It seems to me the young and promising legislator is steeped in Christian charity as spelled out in Acts 20:35: “It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

While I cannot agree more to the Christian belief of the unassuming politician, whose stock rose after pulling out of the presidential race as anybody has a right to pick his own battle, I also believe there are also some human acts, like donating to a campaign, that deserve accountability.

A campaign donor deserves some form of a receipt or acknowledgement that assures him that his donation went to the proper party. Otherwise, we will just join the tea partiers' battle cry against taxation without representation!

When the U.S. Pinoys for Noynoy-Mar raised \$110,000 (5-million pesos), it wanted to make sure the campaign contribution went to the Liberal Party, which has a free hand to spend it in the campaign. Atty. Loida Nicolas Lewis sent thru telegraphic transfer the \$100,000 to Mr. Jaime Lopa, the treasurer of Senator Aquino, and handed the \$10,000 personally to one of Aquino's sisters.

BEST AND BRIGHTEST

As a contributor to the U.S. Pinoys, I would like the Liberal Party not only to acknowledge the donation but I also like them to nail Noynoy to his anti-corruption pledge by appointing only the best and brightest in his cabinet.

In the early part of the campaign, Noynoy was singing the right tune when he said that he would be appointing only those, who helped in his campaign because they are the ones, who know the missions and visions of his campaign.

It was exactly what President Barack Obama pledged before the campaign and did after the campaign.

In fact, Mr. Obama did more – he appointed his rival, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton – to the premiere Cabinet post, the U.S. Secretary of State, the fourth in line to succession after the Vice President, the Speaker of the House and President pro tempore of the Senate.

Mr. Obama must have been a big fan of President Lincoln, who brought his greatest adversaries into his government, described by a historian, Doris Kearns Goodwin, in the *New York Times*, as "that rare combination of humility and confidence required to perform wisely at the highest level."

That's why, I was saddened by the decision of President-elect Noynoy not to offer the premiere Cabinet position of the Department of Interior and Local Government to Vice President Binay after all Binay is no longer a threat to his presidency because Noynoy is no longer eligible to run for re-election.

A Secretary Binay cannot afford to fail in running the DILG if he wants to succeed Noynoy in 2016.

NO TO ROMULO; YES TO DEL ROSARIO

The “U.S. Pinoys for Noynoy Mar” members are also saddened by reports that Noynoy is planning to keep Alberto Romulo as his Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Romulo, a long-time Gloria Macapagal Arroyo ally, has never been effective in connecting with Overseas Filipinos.

Decisions by Romulo staff on complaints against consuls by Overseas Filipinos are never given the light of day.

Since it is hard to teach old dogs new tricks, how can President Noynoy carry out his reform foreign policy agenda when Mr. Romulo, a *superbalimbing* (super turncoat), is 77 years old – and way past the 65-year-old retirement age?

Why not give former Philippine Ambassador to the United States Alberto del Rosario a chance to replace Mr. Romulo, who deserves to enjoy his retirement?

Like the “Hyatt 10,” who left the Arroyo government following the “Hello Garci” scandal, Ambassador Del Rosario, who has the support of Filipinos in the U.S. and the members of the

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Philippine Diplomatic Corps, was five years into his US post when he was “recalled” by GMA in 2006 after he opposed the hiring of the controversial Venable LLP firm as a lobbyist for the Philippine government.

According to *Business World* columnist Greg Macabenta, GMA wanted to hire Venable LLP to “secure grants and US congressional earmarks for Arroyo’s initiative to reshape the form of government into a parliamentary federal system.”

Ambassador Del Rosario earned his spurs from Filipinos in America when he successfully mobilized the community to convince the California Public Employees’ Retirement System (CalPERS), the biggest public-pension fund in the US

, to retain its investments in the Philippines

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GIVING BACK TO THE LAND OF OUR BIRTH

As Loida Nicolas-Lewis said: “We are particularly grateful for his leadership in opening up opportunities for us to give back especially to the land of our birth: he encouraged and assisted us in our initiative to lobby for the amendment to the money laundering laws in the Philippines, facilitating our remittances to help our loved ones back home; and making sure that investment returns meet the expectation of CalPERS.”

When the 150 members of the US Pinoys for Noynoy-Mar attend the inauguration of President-elect Noynoy Aquino on June 30, they will privately ask Noynoy to appoint Ambassador Del Rosario as his Secretary of Foreign Affairs.

After all, the U.S. Pinoys for Noynoy-Mar will transform the group into a volunteer organization to be tentatively called U.S. Pinoys for Good Governance (USPGG), according to Atty. Rodel Rodis.

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It is akin to the Volunteers for Obama or Volunteers for Israel (VFI) that will partner with civilian organizations to help Noynoy realize his campaign to bring about change and reforms in the Philippine government. The USPGG can promote solidarity and goodwill among Filipinos.

VFI is a U.S.-based non-profit organization responsible for recruiting Americans volunteering their services in Israel. # # #

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