

{xtypo\_quote} Facts are the enemy of truth.

Miguel de Cervantes {/xtypo\_quote}

There are renewed efforts by the Arroyo Dispensation to push (again) the amendment of the Constitution through a two-stage People's Initiative. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (PGMA) and her allies are planning as a first step the abolition of the Senate and make the legislature a one-body assembly. The second stage after they accomplish this is to shift to the parliamentary form of government.

The truth is that PGMA wants Filipinos to believe that she has the guts, the brain and the resources to continue on with her leadership as the country's ruler beyond June 30, 2010. There is also Plan B, which is the declaration of martial law, just as then President Ferdinand E. Marcos did in September 1972.

But pursuant to Miguel de Cervantes' dictum, facts are against prolonging the Arroyo Dispensation beyond its constitutional term or letting her declare martial law.

The first fact is that unlike in September 1972, Overseas Filipinos and contract workers (OFCWs) are far more numerous now than 36 years ago. Also the Internet now affords millions of Filipinos in the homeland and overseas to communicate with each other, send documents and photographs with a touch of a computer button, which was not also available in 1972.

The second fact is that OFCWs and majority of the Filipinos oppose the plan of PGMA to extend her rule and/or declare martial law. The OFCWs can mount effective lobbies in the United States, Canada and elsewhere. Without the "unofficial" blessings of the American military-industrial complex and the American decision makers, there is no viable way to declare martial law in the Philippines because the Filipino Americans have now the clout (both financial

Written by Bobby Reyes

Friday, 25 January 2008 02:43 - Last Updated Friday, 25 January 2008 03:00

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and in the ballot box) to make the American leaders listen to them. Besides, in reality, the Philippine government is financially and intellectually bankrupt. Without the remittances of the OFCWs and American military/economic aid, the Arroyo Dispensation would not be able to survive at all in a matter of six months or less.

PGMA is a political midget (pun not intended) if compared to Ferdinand Marcos, Ramon Magsaysay or Ninoy Aquino.

Then there is the fact that for all the brave pronouncements of her ability and prowess, PGMA cannot compare herself to Ferdinand E. Marcos at the height of his power. In 1972, then President Marcos had more political support than PGMA today. On an individual basis, PGMA is a political midget (pun not intended) if compared to Apo Ferdie and from these aspects: intellect, oratory, looks and persuasion. The other politicians who could be compared closest to Mr. Marcos were President Ramon Magsaysay and then Sen. Benigno S. Aquino, Jr. This writer has seen Mr. Marcos, Mrs. Arroyo, President Magsaysay and Ninoy Aquino enter a room full of leaders. People, like this writer, could feel the aura and magnetism of Mr. Marcos' presence or the company of President Magsaysay or Senator Aquino. But this writer and for that matter many individuals find lacking the same impression in Mrs. Arroyo or even in her predecessors, Presidents Cory Aquino, Fidel V. Ramos and Joseph Estrada – while they were still in power.

In short, the reality is that among the present national leaders in the Philippines—Mrs. Arroyo, the living former Presidents and the crop of 2010 presidential timbers included—nobody can come up close to a Ferdinand E. Marcos or a Ninoy Aquino or a Ramon Magsaysay.

Mrs. Arroyo cannot maintain the Military's Loyalty if she declares martial law.

With due respect to PGMA, only a leader with the caliber of a Ferdinand Marcos (or a Ninoy Aquino, if he became the President, or a Ramon Magsaysay) could declare martial law and be supported by the professional military leadership. If PGMA declares martial law today, within 30 days or so, the military will depose her because the reality is that the Filipino generals are actually keeping her in power.

The absence of a Filipino national leader who can come close to a Ferdinand Marcos or a Ninoy Aquino or a Ramon Magsaysay is what makes the leaders of a budding OFCW-led political

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party think that they can win the 2010 elections. The Philippine political scene is on a level playing field when one looks at the intellect, oratorical prowess and track records of the present presidential timbers. The OFCWs think also that they can outwit, outmaneuver, out-organize and outspend the Filipino traditional politicians and their political parties in the 2010 elections and, therefore, win the presidency, a working majority in Congress and a decent number of provincial and municipal positions.

Yes, the “facts are the enemy of the truth.” Yes, the truth that PGMA and her allies want the Filipino people to accept and believe that there is no other leader who can be President except her for the time being and even past June 30, 2010, is actually a pack of lies. # # #

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