

Written by Bobby M. Reyes

Thursday, 24 February 2011 18:17 - Last Updated Tuesday, 06 August 2013 06:03

By Lolo Bobby Mercado-Reyes of Sorsogon City

Sorsogon's Visionary "Bobby Boomer" (sic) Explains Lack of Conflict Between Economic Development and Ecological Protection

Part VI of the Series on "The ReVOTElution of Hope for Sorsogon"

{xtypo_quote} You speak about building 'resorts, golf courses', etc., that could deplete our

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natural resources. I did hear you, however, mention that there would be lots of tree planting, but with buildings and lots of 'economic development' could pose environmental problems in the long run. Your 'Silent Springs' article (and its Rachel Carson-esque) does not necessarily speak to how most investor groups may want to see their ROI play out. Most investors just want to see their funds make more money rather than hear about environmental concerns. I didn't see this addressed in your writing. – a Sorsoganon-American Ph.D. candidate from New Mexico {/xtypo _quote}

Thus, says a well-meaning Sorsoganon-American lady, a would-be supporter of the "ReVOTElation of Hope" that is planned to be implemented in Sorsogon as a pilot province in 2013.

There is ACTUALLY no conflict between economic development and the target of making Sorsogon and eventually the BLeSSED (Bicol, Leyte-Samar and Sorsogon Economic Development) areas into some of the greenest territories in the world while protecting the environment as one of the primary objectives. All of these plans are pursuant to the "Vision RP 2021," as may be read in this article,

[The OFW-led Political Party's "Vision RP 2021" Master Plan](#)

Here is the link to the "Silent Springs" article, which was mentioned in the lead paragraph:

[The Filipino "Silent Springs" \(With Apologies to Rachel Carson\)](#)

ROI AND Emotional Returns

I have always argued that the foreign and Overseas-Filipino investors to whom I presented the economic-development projects as components of the "ReVOTElation of Hope" will not only seek decent returns on investment (ROI) but also the emotional satisfaction (read, returns) on being able to help Mother Earth. Yes, everybody likes to make money and help the ecology at the same time because projects have to comply with environmental-impact studies as requirements for government approval and/or financing by multilateral agencies.

There are also ideas that I have floated to investors and supporters that will further protect not only the environment but also the economic welfare of the public, especially the stakeholders of the pilot province. Here are amplifications of the ideas (reasons for a happy blending of ROI and environmental protection):

· The first reason is that many of the projects and infrastructures – even in the so-called “Las Vegas-Caribbean Resorts of the Orient – are on a “Build, Operate and Transfer” (BOT) scheme. This means that after operating between 20 years to 25 years or even shorter, the infrastructures will be completely owned by the Province of Sorsogon. Many of the casino-resorts in Las Vegas, Nevada, are torn down by the owners after only 17 years to 19 years of operation. They are torn down so as to construct new more-modern hotels and other related buildings – after the owners have more-than recovered their initial investments and more. The buildings in the pilot province will be built of more-permanent materials, as the region is visited every five years or so by a strong typhoon. So instead of mere false-marble facades as done in Las Vegas, the Sorsogon-situated edifices will use real Bicol marble. But the construction costs will be lower than a similar-sized building in Nevada.

· The second reason is simultaneous with the construction of resorts such as golf courses, tennis courts, baseball fields is the building of sewage-treatment plants, which do not exist at all in many provinces and cities in the Philippines, including Sorsogon. We need to treat and recycle even waste water, so that it does not foul up the rivers, their tributaries and distributaries, Sorsogon Bay and the coasts off the China Sea and the Pacific Ocean.

· The third reason is that there will be more individual families owning parts of the infrastructures than the business consortium spearheading the development. The idea is – for instance – to build a 5,000-room hotel with all the rooms consisting of studio units being sold to

Overseas-Filipino families as "condotels" (condominium-hotel units). The condotel-unit owners and the main consortium will form a cooperative type of business relations. Individual families will protect more the environment than the corporate world, especially when the ROI is more-than modest and bigger than mere interest accruing from money-market accounts.

· The fourth reason is many supporters of the ReVOTElution's prime mover are also Baby Boomers. Many of my supporters and I consider ourselves as nearing (or having reached) the five o'clock p.m.

(1700H) time of our lives – if life were to be compared to a 24-hour clock. Many of the main proponents of the projects have barely seven hours left in the 24-hour clock of life. We are motivated more with leaving a lasting legacy that our descendants and the public will treasure for the rest of humanity's existence. How then can we seek more the Almighty Dollar than in achieving complete protection of Mother Nature?

· The fifth to seventh reasons are the theme songs of the ReVOTElution of Hope. We do not know which is the more-important of three songs that will motivate us the most. But listening to them will reinforce the beliefs of our supporters that we mean business and will do everything to achieve more for the ecology and the economy in just 10 years than what collectively the previous leaders of the province have done for the past 100 years.

ReVOTElutionary Songs

Sorsogon Is Lolo Bobby's and his Friends' "Five O'Clock's Somewhere" - MabuhayRadio

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Actually my friends and I have adopted unofficially some of the songs by Garth Brooks, Jimmy Buffett and Alan Jackson as the "theme songs" of our ReVOTElation in Sorsogon and the BLeSSED Regions.

If you are not familiar with the "Five O'Clock Somewhere" idea, please view this music video by Alan Jackson and Jimmy Buffett performing "It's Five O' Clock Somewhere." (©) 2003 BMG Music

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BPCjC543IUU>

"Molluscanville" Will Rival Jimmy Buffett's Margaritaville

One of my pet projects is to build small resorts along the Pacific Coast and the China Sea (that surround Sorsogon Province) and also the BLeSSED Regions. I call them unofficially as the "Molluscanvilles." It is a village constructed of simple infrastructures similar to those found in the

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Caribbean

. This is why we call our eco-tourism sites the "Las Vegas-Caribbean Resorts of the Orient." After declaring Sorsogon as the first "organic province" in the country, the various "Molluscanvilles" will serve to foreign tourists and domestic visitors varieties of locally-grown clams, oysters, sea snails and other mollusk harvests from the sea. Tourists can also eat freshly-harvested tiger prawns, crabs and other aquaculture products – right off the adjacent fish ponds or fish pens in the bay or blue waters. But first and foremost is to build a marine laboratory that will produce baby oysters and other "seedlings" of mollusks that will be provided to fishermen's co-ops for raising in the Molluscanvilles' sanctuaries.

In my possession is an old copy of the *National Geographic* magazine's March 1969 (yes, 1-9-6-9) issue that features "The Magic Lure of Sea Shells." It describes also the sea shells and other mollusks found in the Philippines

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Whenever I need to refresh my adrenaline and commitment to the "ReVOTEolution of Hope" in Sorsogon and the BLeSSED Regions, I read again the said article and listen to one of our ReVOTEvolutionary songs.

Just imagine resting in Sorsogon under the shade of a tree near a pristine beach while you eat the delicacies served by the farmers' cooperative-owned eateries in a "Molluscanville," drink cold beers, margaritas or piña coladas and listen to Jimmy Buffett or Garth Brooks – while watching for the sunset to come. Here are the links to our two other ReVOTEvolutionary songs:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ue2-ZVxpVjc>

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Ergo, how can we go wrong with songs like "Margaritaville" and "Two Piña Coladas" (of course made with rum bottled, coconut and pineapples grown organically, in Sorsogon)?

And please click the following link to hear Garth Brooks sing his tribute to his favorite drink:

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-8348956343819186062#>

Let's drink to that and Mabuhay! # # #

Editor's Note: To read the other articles of this series, please go to:

[How the ReVOTElation Will "Reinvent" Education and Life in Sorsogon](#)

[A Sorsoganon OFW Appears to Be a Bigger Hero than Manny Pacquiao: How the ReVOTElation Will Protect OFWs and their History \(Part II\)](#)

[A Bigger Danger than an Eruption Lurks in Bulusan Volcano](#)

(Part III)

[How to Make a Biblical-based Real-estate Redevelopment the Answer to Global Warming, Starting in Sorsogon \(Part IV\)](#)

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[How Sorsogon Can Be the Botanical \(and Natural-product Medicine\) Capital of the Philippines, If Not of Southeast Asia \(Part V\)](#)

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