

# Leksyon sa eleksyon

**S**usubukin ng darating na Mayo 14 ang kapangyarihan ng mga kabataang magsulong ng adhikang ibayong pagbabago. Sa tinatayang 50 milyong rehistradong botante, mahigit 18 milyon o tatlumpung porsyento ang mga kabataan, at sa ganito kalaking puwersa ay makapagtatakda ng daang tatahakin ng bansa matapos ang halalan.

Sa napakahalagang araw na ito, inaasahang pipiliin ng mga kabataan at ng buong taong-bayan ang mga pinakakarapat-dapat magtaguyod sa kanilang kapakanan sa batasan at sa lokal na pamahalaan. Sa ganitong lagay, pag-asa sa isang higit na mabuting kinabukasan ang nakikitang bunga, at ang darating na halalan ang mahalagang kasangkapan.

Dito, lingid na nais patunayan ng tao na ang mga nanunungkulan, at hindi ang sistema ng pamahalaan,

ang masisisi sa ating mga suliranin. Susukatin nito ang pagsang-ayon o pagtanggap ng sambayanan sa mga patakarang ipinatutupad ng kasalukuyang administrasyon. Pagtitibayin nito ang pananaw ng mga mamamayan ukol sa kalagayan ng ekonomiya, pamumuhay ng mga tao, paghahatid sa kanila ng mga batayang serbisyo, at mga karapatang pantao – ang mga panukat ng paggampan sa tungkulin ng pamunuan ni Arroyo. Sa araw na ito, tila magkakatawang-tao ang pangangako ng Konstitusyon ng pangingibabaw ng kapangyarihan ng sambayanan.

Ngunit sadyang hindi lubos ang sinasabing pagkakapantay ng tig-iisang boto ng bawat tao, dahil pinagiging-huwad ang demokrasyang ito ng palagiang pag-iral ng nagbabagu-bagong anyo ng karahasan at panlilinlang, kung saan naiipit maging ang mga kabataan.

Bago man tunay na magsimula ang panahon ng halalan, naitalaga na sa mga nayon sa kalakhan ng Maynila ang mga sundalong magpapanatili umano roon ng kaayusan. Lumilitaw na tunay namang layon ng puwersang militar ang tukuyin mula sa mga sibilyan ang mga aktibong nagsusulong ng mga karapatang-pantao sa harap ng mga walang habas na pagpatay sa mga kontra-administrasyon. Sa ngalan ng “kaayusan,” inangking tungkulin din ng militar ang voter education umano, na naging maagang kampanya laban sa mga militanteng samahan.

Pagpasok ng panahon ng halalan, tila tumuwang sa extra-judicial killings ang mga pagpatay kaugnay ng mga usaping panghalalan, na aabot na sa isandaan ang natukoy na biktima. Sa bilang na ito, hindi pa nasasama ang mga nasugatan, dinukot, at ilegal na ikinulong na mga kabataang lider.

Sa hangaring maitiklop ang anumang oposisyon, tinangka ring supilin ng mga nakapangyayari ang panawagan ng mga pangkat na tunay na kumakatawan sa mga interes na hindi naririnig ng lipunan, sa pamamagitan ng pagpapakawala ng mga kakatawan umano sa mga aping sektor na pawang malalapit sa matataas na opisyal sa bansa. Upang tuluyang linlangin ang tao ukol sa party list na dapat nilang ihalal, pinigilan ng Comelec, kung hindi lamang dahil sa Korte Suprema, ang pagpapalabas ng talaan ng mga taong iuupo ng mga mahahalal na party list. Hindi nagkataong matapos ito ng pagkabunyang sa mga partidong prente ng administrasyon.

Sa harap ng ganitong mga pagtatangkang pangunahan at idikta ng iilan ang magiging takbo ng halalan, hindi maitatangi ang kakayanan ng pakikiisa ng bawat kabataan sa darating na halalan upang maituwid ang panlilinlang at kasiraang dulot ng karahasan.

Ang mga kabataan ang hinaharap, kaya nasa kanila, higit sa lahat, ang tungkuling magmatyag sa darating na halalan, hirangin ang mga pinunong makapaghahatid ng pagbabago, at tiyaking itataguyod nila ang panlipunang kagalingan at kaunlaran. Sa ating panahong lipos ng kahirapan at kawalang-katarungan, lalong higit itong kailangan, upang maging unang maliit na hakbang tungo sa pagbabago. ■



ARCHIE OCULOS

Tungkol sa pabalat. Dibuho: Ivan Reverente. Disenyo: Karl Castro.

# RIPADA, Area 11 residents slam demolition plans

KRISTOFFER C. REYES

**R**ESIDENTS OF UP COMMUNITIES Ricarte, Palaris, and Dagohoy (RIPADA) and Area 11 called on the Board of Regents (BOR) in a mobilization on May 2 at Quezon Hall to withdraw its earlier decision to demolish houses in the said areas.

In its March 29 meeting, the BOR, UP's highest policy-making body, approved the demolition of communities in RIPADA, comprising about 1,500 families, and Area 11, around 80 families. This is to give way to the construction of an alternate route connecting Katipunan and Luzon avenues, to further develop the main thoroughfare Circumferential Road 5 (C-5).

The planned road alignment, one kilometer long and 40 meters wide, would require at least three hectares of UP property.

Multi-sectoral alliance Save Ripada opposed the expansion of C-5 to affect residential areas within the University. "Ito ay maglilikha ng mga perwisyo sa unibersidad lalo na sa mga mag-aaral at residente ng komunidad at mga dormitoryo [dulot ng panganib sa kalusugan at labis na ingay, polusyon at mas mataas na insidente ng aksidente]," Save Ripada said in an open letter to the UP administration.

RIPADA communities occupy UP land southeast of Ilang-Ilang Residence Hall and Balay Kalinaw, while Area 11 is situated along Katipunan, about 50 meters away from UP Integrated School (UPIS). RIPADA served as relocation site for residents earlier displaced by the construction of the School of Economics, Romulo Hall, and UPIS.

To compensate the university for the use of its land, the Metro Manila Development Authority (MMDA) agreed to construct houses for the displaced UP employees, build noise buffers and fences for the campus, remove informal settlers fronting the National Institute of Physics, and develop existing roads to be affected, as proposed by Chancellor Sergio Cao.

## Relocation plan

Save Ripada, with the All-UP

## Pagpapatuloy ng laban



A Pook Dagohoy resident shows his disapproval against the BOR-approved demolition during the community's march to Quezon Hall last May 2.

PAOLO GONZALES

Workers Union (AUPWU) and All-UP Academic Employees Union (AUPAEU) and student groups, contend that there are no plans for the relocation of non-UP employees. According to AUPAEU President Judy Taguiwalo, even UP employees could not afford to rent the proposed housing to be put up for them.

"A committee comprised of the Student Regent, the Chancellor, other members of the BOR, and the USC will hold further negotiations with the MMDA [on the mode of

demolition and relocation of the residents]," Vice Chancellor for Community Affairs Cynthia Gregorio said.

AUPWU President Clodualdo Cabrera however said that the residents must be represented in the negotiating body formed.

Area 11 residents received notices of demolition on March 30. Exact date of demolition for all communities, however, has not been determined yet by the MMDA and the UP administration. ■

# New CRS bungles summer registration

JECCEL CENSORO

**A**TTEMPTS TO COMPLETELY computerize the enlistment process for summer registration proved torturous for UP Diliman (UPD) students, with the Computerized Registration System (CRS) crashing for hours and conflicting announcements further botching the process.

The CRS decided to test the computerized enlistment on April 12 and 13 and do away with the manual procedure, where students register by going to designated classrooms, and the re-encoding of the form 5.

"We chose summer as the best time to test [the new system] so we could find out the problems that may arise during regular semesters, where the number of students are two to three times larger [than during summer]," said Nestor Tiglao, head of the UP Computer Center.

Bandwidth and hardware limitations, primary of which is the insufficient random access memory (RAM) of the system, however, failed to accommodate the approximately 10,000 students who tried to access the CRS and validate their registration online, Tiglao disclosed.

The new system is a real-time enlistment where students pick their subjects online on a first-come, first-served basis. Students who failed to pre-enlist online were not allowed to manually register, compelling them to spend hours and money in computer-rental shops to register and print their registration forms.

The CRS was thus kept up-to-date, allowing departments to

check on the number of students, sections and demands for them to add sections to accommodate more students.

Meanwhile, students who earlier received their registration forms had to return them to their respective colleges for validation by college checkers through the CRS. Failure to have their registration validated until 12 noon of April 18 meant losing their slots.

The Office of the University Registrar (OUR) also disallowed teacher's prerogatives, change in matriculation and additional matriculation during the first two days of enrolment, which was contrary to earlier announcement by college administrations that such mechanisms were allowed.

## Problems

According to Amy Jorda, officer-in-charge for admission and registration of the OUR, the CRS team finalized the real-time enlistment only last April 4 and college checkers were briefed on the process only on April 11, just a day before registration.

"The problem ... is the lack of time to disseminate information regarding real-time [enlistment] and the absence of a contingency plan. The intention was good but the implementation was a disaster," said Shahana Abdulwahid, University Student Council chairperson.

Jorda added that another problem was the lack of computers for each college to serve as a registration area for students.

The CRS team also controlled the site by preventing access outside the Diliman Network [DILNET],

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# CSSP to refund over-assessed miscellaneous fee

FRANK LLOYD TIONGSON

**S**TUDENTS OF THE COLLEGE of Social Sciences and Philosophy (CSSP) can expect a refund on over-assessed miscellaneous fees paid for the summer term.

This is after the CSSP administration conceded to a clerical error that led to a P200-increase in CSSP students' miscellaneous fees. The CSSP administration charged the first wave of students to enroll during the summer registration period P502.50 instead of the old rate of P302.50.

The CSSP administration corrected the error during the late registration period.

According to CSSP College Secretary Odette Mendoza, the error was due partly to the confusions brought about by the new registration system implemented during the summer registration period. (*see related article*)

The miscellaneous fee covers various operational expenses such as library maintenance of respective colleges. Rate changes require the approval of the Board of Regents, UP's highest policy-making body, after undergoing necessary consultation processes.

Mendoza complained that the Office of the University Registrar (OUR) issued a memorandum on the new registration system only

two days prior to the registration period. She explained, however, that the attached schedule of fees was sent "too soon" since the new rates along with the administration-sanctioned tuition increase were meant to be implemented next semester for CSSP freshmen.

Upon noticing the abrupt increase in the miscellaneous fee, meanwhile, the CSSP Student Council immediately called the attention of Student Regent Terry Ridon and subsequently appealed to the CSSP administration for a refund. Mae Palgan, CSSP representative to the University Student Council, confirmed that the increase was not formalized for

implementation during the summer term.

Palgan noted that the CSSP-SC insists on a refund procedure "amenable to the students." The CSSP-SC proposed to the CSSP administration to release a list of over-assessed students and make the refund available at the CSSP College Secretary's Office.

Mendoza was not able to confirm the approved procedure since the OUR is yet to decide on the matter as of press time.

Palgan, meanwhile, advised CSSP students to anticipate news from the College Secretary's Office regarding the procedure to avail of the refund. ■

Despite rights probe by US gov't, IPU

# Activist, journalist killings continue

JOHN ALLIAGE MORALES

INVESTIGATIONS BY TWO FOREIGN fact-finding teams on the Arroyo government's dismal human rights record failed to deter the escalation of political killings in the country.

Three days before the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) fact-finding team presented on April 28 its findings on the country's worsening rights records in the 116<sup>th</sup> IPU assembly in Bali, Indonesia, two members of the militant group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (KMP) were killed and three others were injured in a shooting incident in New Bataan town in Compostela Valley.

The murdered victims were identified as Elias Mabundas and Auling Bugahod.

According to human rights group Karapatan, the Arroyo administration recorded the highest toll of activist killings, reaching 842 victims, since democracy was restored in 1986.

Carmelo Palacios, field reporter of the government-run Radyo ng Bayan in Nueva Ecija, was also found dead along a road in Sta. Rosa town in the said province on April 18, the same day the IPU team arrived here for the investigation.

Palacios was then doing a report on a fertilizer scam involving an ally of Arroyo. He was the 51st journalist killed under Arroyo's regime.

Meanwhile, a day before the three-member team sent by the United States House of Representatives met with Philippine National Police (PNP) officials to look into the rash of political killings, two farmer activists were gunned down in separate incidents on April 16.

Willy Jeruz, an organizer of the KMP-allied group Samahan ng Mag-sasaka sa Sorsogon, was killed by an unidentified gunman in front of his house in Sorsogon City.

Hours later, Julie Velasquez, provincial chair of KMP in Nueva Ecija, was shot dead by an unidentified armed man while attending a wake in Guimba town in the said province.

The IPU, an organization of 143 parliaments including the Philippines, sent a fact-finding team to inquire into the country's human rights record and the allegations of political harassment by the so-called "Batasan 6."

At the height of Arroyo's state of emergency proclamation in February



Pressing times



Journalists observe World Press Freedom Day (top) at the Scout Circle in Quezon City last May 3, calling on the government to expedite the prosecution of journalist killings. Family and friends of activist Jonas Burgos (bottom) light candles to call for his immediate release at the Bantayog ng mga Bayani in Quezon City. 36-year-old Burgos, son of press freedom hero Joe Burgos, was reportedly abducted by eight armed men at a restaurant in Ever Gotesco mall in Commonwealth Avenue last April 28. ALANAH TORRALBA

last year, party list representatives Satur Ocampo, Teodoro Casiño, and Joel Virador of Bayan Muna, Rafael Mariano and Crispin Beltran of Anakpawis, Liza Maza of Gabriela, were arrested for allegedly supporting Gloria Arroyo's ouster last year.

Beltran remains detained at the Philippine Heart Center for a year now.

The PNP, meanwhile, invited on April 13 the US congressional team to discuss US-RP defense operation and to purportedly seek help to halt the spate of activist and journalist killings.

## Killings as state policy

Ocampo said in a *Collegian* inter-

view that the relentless killings are part of the government's counter-insurgency program, Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL), which targets both combatants and non-combatants.

"It looks like GMA is so deeply indebted to and dependent on the support of the Armed Forces of the Philippines that she cannot order the military to stop the political killings and abductions in pursuance of the OBL," said Ocampo.

In March, Philip Alston, a United Nations human rights expert, stated in his findings that the military was accountable for the killings. Alston also hinted that killings could be part of a State policy.

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## Stay grateful, batch '07 told 16-year old leads 3,000 UP grads

VICTOR GREGOR LIMON

"STAY GRATEFUL." THIS WAS the key message to some 3,000 UP Diliman (UPD) graduates who received their academic degrees at the 96<sup>th</sup> UPD General Commencement Exercises on April 22 at the UPD amphitheater.

In his keynote speech, former *Collegian* editor Dr. Reynaldo Vea, a UP mechanical engineering graduate and current president of Mapua Institute of Technology, said UPD graduates must remain grateful to Filipino taxpayers, the university, and their parents, who supported their education.

Eight UPD graduates received *summa cum laude* honors. Mikaela Irene Fudolig, BS Physics, topped the graduating class, with a general weighted average (GWA) of 1.099.

*Summa cum laude* honors are conferred to graduates with GWAs of 1.20 or better.

Other students who shared the top honors were: Ariel Lopez, BA History (1.07); Deneice Yusun, BS Architecture (1.13); Hannah Hazel Morales, BS Chemistry (1.181); Lorraine Joyce Yu, BS Architecture (1.183); Ma. Lourena Mangaban, BA Philosophy (1.187); Magdalene Lim, BS Business Administration (1.187); and Ivan Chester Canoy, BS Biology (1.194).

*Magna cum laude* honors were conferred to 133 others, while 683

graduated *cum laude*. Magna cum laude graduates are those whose GWAs fall between 1.20 and 1.45, while cum laude graduates are those with GWAs between 1.45 and 1.75.

Fudolig, 16, is one of only two admitted to UPD without completing her high school education and taking the UP College Admission Test.

Fudolig was 11 and a sophomore at Quezon City Science High School when she volunteered for an early college placement program under the College of Education. The Department of Education later endorsed her official admission to UPD as an undergraduate student, which was approved by the UP Board of Regents (BOR) in May 2003.

"Defy the pressure to lead a comfortable, but middling life," said Fudolig, noting in her valedictory address the challenge on UP graduates to work in the country despite pressure to seek employment overseas.

Near the end of the program, about 20 graduates staged a lightning rally, calling for appropriate local employment opportunities through which UP graduates may "serve the people."

They also condemned the implementation of the BOR-approved tuition and other fee increases on incoming freshmen. ■

## Dormers slam new dorm admission rules Freshies to be covered next year

JOHN ALLIAGE MORALES

CRITICISM AGAINST THE newly approved dormitory admission procedure from dormers and student leaders forced the UP administration to revise the guidelines and stall its implementation for incoming freshmen.

The new dorm application process was proposed a year ago by the Dorm Oversight Committee and was approved by Chancellor Sergio Cao on April 12.

Ruby Alcantara, Office of the Student Housing (OSH) officer-in-charge, said undergraduate students applying for admission to their chosen dormitories would be scored based on their Student Tuition and Financial Assistance Program (STFAP) bracket (55 percent) and their region (45 percent). Another income bracketing sched-

ule, meanwhile, will be the criterion for graduate students instead of the STFAP.

The two criteria are given corresponding score points according to each region and bracket. (*see sidebar*)

In case of a tie in the ranking, the annual family income shall be the basis for breaking the tie. In case of a further tie, the general weighted average of the students shall be used as the final recourse.

Instead of undergoing the previous process where the dorm managers decide and approve dorm applications, applicants should now submit their requirements through their respective dorm managers, who would then submit it to the OSH for processing.

The centralized Dorm Admis-

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# STAND-UP seals most of USC posts

## ALYANSA on a close second

JERRIE M. ABELLA

STUDENT ALLIANCE FOR THE Advancement of Democratic Rights in UP (STAND-UP) secured the highest number of posts in the University Student Council (USC) elections on March 6.

STAND-UP bet Shahana Abdulwahid was elected chair, with 4,365 votes. STAND-UP also clinched six councilors and seven college repre-

sentatives. (see sidebar)

Alyansa ng mga Mag-aaral para sa Panlipunang Katwiran at Kaunlaran (ALYANSA), meanwhile, came on a close second, with ALYANSA candidate Viktor Fontanilla elected as vice chair. Six councilors and six college representatives also came from the said party.

Completing the list of college representatives are three candidates from Nagkakaisang Iskolar para sa Pamantasan at Sambayanan and two independent contenders.

### Higher voter turnout

The recent USC elections also saw an increase in the voter turnout from 41.68 percent last year to 45.21 percent. Out of 21,788 enrolled

students, only 9,850 voted.

The colleges with the highest turnouts are the Asian Institute of Tourism (70.40 percent), the College of Law (70), the College of Architecture (65.47), the School of Economics (65.16), and the College of Business Administration (61.98).

The schools of Urban and Regional Planning, and Labor and Industrial Relations, meanwhile, posted the lowest turnouts at 5.43 and 10.88, respectively.

Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Elizabeth Enriquez points to the computerization of elections in the College of Engineering (CE) and the School of Statistics, which posted turnout of 50.26 and 46.20

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## USC Election Results

### Chairperson

Shahana Abdulwahid, STAND-UP

### Vice Chairperson

Viktor Samuel Fontanilla, ALYANSA

### Councilors

Hermínio Bagro III, ALYANSA  
Ma. Dalisay King, ALYANSA  
Noel Ricardo Reyes, ALYANSA  
Marcelino Veloso III, STAND-UP  
Paolo Marco Mapula, STAND-UP  
Jo-Ann Latuja, ALYANSA  
Niña Marie Angela Acasio, ALYANSA  
Patrick Joseph Daep, STAND-UP  
Vanessa Faye Bolibol, STAND-UP  
Jeffrey Crisostomo, ALYANSA  
Pastor Dimaano, STAND-UP  
Sarah Cabrera, STAND-UP

### College Representatives

#### ARCHITECTURE

Ralph Peñafiel, STAND-UP

#### ASIAN INSTITUTE OF TOURISM

Mae-Ann Mangaoang, KAISA

#### ARTS & LETTERS

Rose Angelique Dizon, STAND-UP

#### FINE ARTS

Angela Rae Sombillo, STAND-UP

#### MASS COMMUNICATION

Anne Kathleen Malolos, INDEPENDENT

#### BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Oliver Allan Co, ALYANSA

#### ENGINEERING

Francis Serina, KAISA

Jordan Ursua, ALYANSA

#### SOCIAL SCIENCES & PHILOSOPHY

Mae Emmeline Palgan, ALYANSA

#### SCIENCE

Gianina Kasandra Grey, ALYANSA

#### SOCIAL WORK & COMMUNITY DEV'T

Rafael Anton Dulce, STAND-UP

#### EDUCATION

Paula Mae Mendoza, STAND-UP

#### INSTITUTE OF LIBRARY & INFO. SCIENCE

Gerald Peña, STAND-UP

#### SCHOOL OF STATISTICS

Mary Angelica Clemente, STAND-UP

#### HOME ECONOMICS

Juan Miguel Eslava, KAISA

#### PUBLIC ADMIN. & GOVERNANCE

J Mikhail Nacino, KAISA

#### HUMAN KINETICS

Jemima Katrina Fajardo, INDEPENDENT

#### SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS

Marian Angelica Panganiban, ALYANSA

#### LAW

Maria Leonila Papa, ALYANSA ■

## Fighting the summer heat



The fountain at Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila serves as these children's play-ground during the Labor Day demonstrations last May 1. Workers and allied groups reiterated their demands for a P125 wage across the board wage hike and condemned the worsening human rights situation in the country.

CANDICE ANNE REYES

# Kabataan PL denounces harassment of members

## Coordinator illegally detained; member almost abducted

JERRIE M. ABELLA

WITH ELECTIONS drawing near, lone youth party Kabataan Partylist fell prey to two recent incidents of election-related violence, with one member arbitrarily detained and arrested, while another barely escaping an alleged abduction attempt.

Kabataan coordinator and UP Manila (UPM) student Kenn Ambay was illegally arrested and detained by members of the Manila Police District (MPD) on May 1 for his alleged involvement in a mauling incident against a police officer.

Ambay, 21, was with other UPM students in front of a fast food store in Morayta after joining Labor Day mobilizations when two men

in plain clothes apprehended and handcuffed him.

The arresting police officers, later identified as Inspector Dexter Versola and PO1 Christopher Amistoso, brought out their pistols and aimed them at Ambay's companion who came to help him, witnesses said.

"When we began to question why [the officers] handcuffed [Am-

bay] and why they were taking him, they threatened to shoot anyone who would come near and help Ken," said Mariche Hermosa, also a UPM student and one of Ambay's companions.

Ambay was brought to Police Station 4 and then transferred to the MPD headquarters. The two officers claimed Ambay was part of the group which attacked PO2 Raul Gumiran, who was not with the officers when the arrest happened.

Ambay was detained in a cell in MPD on May 1 at about 8 p.m., and was released only in the afternoon of May 3, after Kabataan members continuously held indignation rallies in front of the police station.

"This is a clear case of harassment against Kabataan Partylist. Their accusation against our coordinator Ken Ambay is baseless and fabricated, and is intended to harass members and coordinators," Kabataan Partylist President Raymond Palatino said in a statement.

"We fear that this might lead to more cases of arbitrary arrest, detention and harassment against Kabataan and other progressive partylist groups who are known critics of this administration," Palatino added.

Ambay was charged with assault to person in authority, while the robbery charge was dropped due to lack of evidence.

Kabataan is now planning to file charges against the police officers

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## News editor is next *Collegian* EIC

JECCEL CENSORO

PHILIPPINE COLLEGIAN NEWS editor and senior journalism student Jerrie Abella is selected as the next editor in chief (EIC) after topping the *Collegian* editorial examination on March 3 at the UP Diliman Computer Center.

Abella ranked first with an aggregate score of 81.66 percent. *Collegian* managing editor Frank Lloyd Tiongson and news editor Melane Manalo ranked second and third, respectively, with aggregate scores of 79.12 and 76.32 percent.

The exam was composed of editorial writing, which comprised 70 percent of the total score; news writing, 20 percent; and page design and headline writing, 10 percent.

Abella placed first in editorial writing and page design, garnering scores of 57.12 and 8.46 percent re-

spectively. Manalo topped the news writing exam with 16.36 percent, while Abella scored 16.08.

Other examinees, according to their ranking, were Victor Gregor Limon, Jeffrey Roden, Alaysa Tagumpay Escandor, Angelo Muñiz, Caezar Ryan Aquino, and Brian Dennis Tiojanco.

Examinees were asked to write an editorial on the topic "Looking forward to UP's bicentennial."

In his editorial entitled "Haraya ng Paglaya at Pagpapalaya," Abella emphasized the continuing need for UP and its students to serve the people. (See winning editorials on pp.6-7.) "Sa paparating na sentenaryo ng pamantasan, at maging sa mga susunod pa, iisa lamang ang sa atin ay inaasahan: na sa gabay ng ating mayamang kasaysayan, tayo ang maghahawan sa landas ng paglaya at pagpapalaya," Abella said.

the 2007-2008 PHILIPPINE COLLEGIAN EDITORIAL EXAMINATIONS

# Looking forward to u.p.'s Bicentennial

## 1 HARAYA NG PAGLAYA AT PAGPAPALAYA

**JERRIE A. ABELLA**  
4th year, BA Journalism

**P**INUPUSPOS ANG KASAYSAYAN NG pamantasan ng mga mitong binuo at patuloy na binubuo ng kanyang mamamayan. At sa paparating na sentenaryo ng Unibersidad ng Pilipinas, tayo ay tinatawagan upang basagin ang mga mitong sagka sa ating pagbuo ng mapagpalayang haraya.

Tinitingala ang UP bilang pangunahing pamantasan sa bansa. Kung dadalumat in ang kasaysayan nito, mapapansing lunan ang unibersidad ng kritikal at agarang pagtugon sa mahahalagang usaping pambansa. Nanguna ang UP sa sigwang nagtangkang tuldukan ang mapaniil na Batas Militar noong dekada '70. 'Di iilan sa naging pinakamahuusay na pinuno ng bayan ay mga anak din ng pamantasan. Itinuturing ang UP bilang batis ng pinakamaiinam na ideya sa pagpapalakad sa pamahalaan at pagpapabuti ng buhay ng mamamayan.

Maringal, kung gayon, ang lawas ng na-

karaan ng pamantasan, ngunit ang simpleng pagbalik sa kasaysayan ay hindi pagtugon sa tawag ng kasalukuyan.

Mainam ang ipagdiwang ang dantaong kasaysayan ng UP. Inaasahang makapagbibigay ito sa kasalukuyang henerasyon ng mga mag-aaral ng mahahalagang kaalamang tila mga librong naluluma na lamang sa mga aklatan. Ipinapalagay nating sa pamamagitan ng ating pagbubunyi, binibigyang-buhay natin ang kultura ng kahusayan at pagsisilbi sa bayan na naging tatak na ng pamantasan. Naninindigan tayo na kaakibat ng pagdiriwang na ito ang pagsasabuhay ng mga prinsipyong inianak ng ating mayamang kasaysayan.

Subali't lagi't laging may panganib sa pagbabalik-tanaw; panganib na manatiling nakapako ang tingin sa alaala ng nakalipas, at hindi masipat ang tamang tunguhin sa pagbaybay ng landas patungo sa hinaharap. Panganib din ang maiwang nakalutang sa itaas, kumtento na lamang sa paniningala ng sambayanang nasa ibaba.

Ito ang mitong kinakailangang igpawan ng pamantasan, mistulang toreng garing na

kinaluluklukan, subalit nararapat nang wasakin at iwanan.

Magkabila ang mukha ng mga mito't alamat, at kung tayo'y mag-aasam ng tunay na pag-unlad, makabubuting sipatin ang salawahan nitong katangian. May mga kabalintunaang tila nananatili pa rin sa ating kamalayan. Papadausdos ang kalagayan ng UP kung ikukumpara sa ibang unibersidad sa ating mga karatig-bansa. Patuloy ang pagtaas ng bayarin sa paaralan habang papaliit ang subsidyong ating natatanggap mula sa gobyerno. Sinasalimpad tayo ng krisis ng kasalukuyan, ngunit tila babahagya lamang ang naging pagtugon ng komunidad ng UP.

Sa paparating na sentenaryo ng pamantasan, at maging sa mga susunod pa, iisa lamang ang sa atin ay inaasahan: na sa gabay ng ating mayamang kasaysayan, tayo ang maghahawan sa landas ng paglaya at pagpapalaya.

Hindi magbabago ang karakter ng UP bilang isang pampublikong institusyon ilang dantaon man ang lumipas. Mananatili ang panawagan sa atin upang pagsilbihan ang mamamayang pinagkakautangan natin ng ating edukasyon,

habang karamihan pa rin sa kanila'y nakagapos sa pang-aapi ng kahirapan at kawalang kata-rungan. Kasabay nito ang pagtugon sa mga kahingian ng panahon, sapagkat hindi man nagbabago ang mga tungkuling nakaatang sa atin, nagbabago naman ang mga kalagayang nakapaligid sa atin.

Mananatili ang tungkulin sa pagbibigay ng de-kalidad na edukasyon, habang binibigyang puwang ang pag-usbong ng mga bagong kaalaman. Patuloy na hindi hihiwalay ang pamantasan maging sa mga isyung pambansa at internasyunal. Patuloy tayong aarman ng ating kolektibong kasaysayan upang harapin ang mga hamon at laban ng kasalukuyan at maging ng hinaharap.

Ito ang inaasahan mula sa pamantasan, sa paparating na sentenaryo, o maging sa mga susunod pa: ang pagbuo ng haraya ng paglaya at pagpapalaya, na patuloy nating itatanghal sa dambana ng katuparan.

Sapagkat walang dahilan upang ipagbunyi ang ilan ng dantaong kasaysayan ng pamantasan, kung salamin lamang ito ng ating pagkabulid sa kabalintunaan. ■

## 2 BEYOND THE CONFINES OF A CENTENNIAL MEMORY

**FRANK LLOYD B. TIONGSON**  
4th year, BA Philosophy

**N**OSTALGIA DOES NOT REFER TO THE glorification of an ideal past but to the interrogation of the challenges of the present.

A commemoration is never fixed. The changing times allow us to construct one according to present dispositions. In a centennial celebration, more than anything, the need to pronounce the university's legacy to the Filipino people is imperative. It is imperative not only for those involved in the preparations for the festivities, but also for all constituents of the university.

Of course, one must first search for it in the dominion of memory. Reflections come before engagement. For this we remember how the people claimed the university from the clutches of American colonialism. Founded in 1908, UP was originally intended as a training ground for bureaucrats that would serve American colonial

interests. UP graduates became the run-o-the mill bureaucrat, concerned primarily with perpetuating the American regime and assuming their plane in the benevolent assimilation program of the United States.

After World War II and the granting of formal Philippine independence, the vestiges of its colonial origin started to dissolve and in its place, the seeds of relentless nationalism started to bud. The turbulent Martial law years saw the culmination of such fermentation. The halls of the university laid host to legions of students waging defiance against the violence of the time. From then on, UP became a household name referring to bold involvement in national politics.

UP emerged as a paladin of academic freedom and integrity. Its students embodied excellence. Threats to this pursuit was mercilessly confronted. Always, the university stood defiant to the challenges that history posed. Always, it subdued the elusive present. Always, it complied to what the present supposedly demanded.

The so-called demands of the present, however, is complicated with the confusions of the past.

While the university still exhibits the zeal to engage in prevalent national issues, such as its staunch criticism of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration of a state of national emergency, its very nature as a state university faces a crucial realignment.

Last year's approval of the 300 percent tuition rate hike drew criticism from various fronts. Along with adjusting the tuition rate, the Socialized Tuition Fee Assistance program was also revised. All these, as the administration said, were made to fulfill the demands of the present. Proponents of the policies cited more than a decade-long rise in the inflation rate and the declining quality of UP education as seen in outdated facilities.

It is here then that we must seek the lessons of history and see what paved the university's road to persistence.

The potency of the university's history is not its ability to ingeniously comply with the

demands of the present but in its very capability to defy the pressures the present demands of it. The university never complied with Marcos' "Bagong Lipunan" rhetorics, nor did it subscribe to Arroyo's state of emergency. Always, the university stood as an alternative.

So too should the university deny the logic of government neglect. It cannot give up on its insistence of delivering the best and the most accessible education to the Filipino people. For the university to persist, it must defy the government's logic and insist on its nature as a state university. For it is a disservice to the people who once claimed the university to relent our grip of our esteemed institution.

It is education as a welcome option instead of an allusive dream that is the legacy of the university.

It is in past defiances that we must define our history. For here lies the power of the university's legacy. The UP centennial celebration will not merely become a commemoration. Beyond the confines of memory is the site of present engagement. ■

## 3 UMAGA, GABI, AT DALAWANG DAANG TAON PANG HINAHARAP

**MELANE A. MANALO**  
4th year, BA Public Administration

**U**MAGA MAN ANG NAGBUBUKAS SA araw, hindi pa rin nito iginuguhit ang kalaunan ng kabuuan.

Pagkat maging ating kinagisnang kalagayan, hindi natin tinutulutang muli pa nating kagisnan. Lalo na sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas, na hindi naman masasabing tunay na naging mapalad sa kanyang pasimula.

Kinilala mang para sa mga Pilipino noong 1908, binatbat ng tatak ng kolonyalismo ang UP na tinawag noong American University of the Philippines, na makikita pa lamang sa katauhan ng mga unang naging Pangulo nito. Sa pagtatapos ng Ikalawang Digmaang Pandaigdig, at pagbangon ng Pilipinas mula sa pagkawasak, waring patuloy na minulto ang unibersidad ng paghihimagsik, sa pagkakataong ito, sa anyo ng pambansang pulitika. Malinaw itong nakita sa sapilitang pagbaba sa pwesto ni Pangulong Gonzales ng UP dahil sa

maliit, ngunit lumabas na malaki, na usapin ng magiging tagapagsalita sa pagtatapos ng mga mag-aaral. Mula rin noon hanggang sa kasalukuyan, maging ang Board of Regents, na siyang pinakamataas na lupong tagapagpasiya sa unibersidad, ay hindi nakaligtas sa banta ng papailalim sa mga hindi maaasahang magsusulong sa hangarin at ikagagalang nito, ang mga pinauupo sa BOR na hinihirang ng pangulo ng bansa. Palagian din ang naging paghingi ng maraming sektor sa unibersidad upang magkaroon ng kanilang mga kinatawan sa BOR,

o lalong mapalakas ang kanilang boses dito. Paano nga nama'y may panahong hindi maisa-saalang-alang ang kanilang kapakanan sa pagpapasya ukol sa mga palisiya sa unibersidad. Nariyan ang mga mag-aaral, mga guro, at mga kawaning gumagampan ng akademiko at diakademikong mga tungkulin, na naniniwalang sila ang mga pangunahing may masasabi ukol sa ikabubuti ng pagpapalakad sa UP.

Dumaan din ang panahong hindi kinilala sa kanyang kabuuan ang tinatawag na academic

umaga...

MULA SA P.6

freedom, at nagkaroon ng mga sagka sa malayang pagpapahayag ng UP ng kanilang mga puna, at paggamit sa mga nagaganap dito sa Unibersidad. Maging ang Philippine Collegian na kumakatawan sa malayang pagtalakay sa mga usaping panlipunan at pampamantasan, napigil ng pagdeklara ng Batas Militar, sa loob ng tatlong linggo bagaman nakalalabas pa ito noong pasimula. Dinanas din nito ang pagpapailalaim sa mga gurong tagapayo na nagpahintulot ng mga espasyong nagsabing "This editorial has been censored." Nahaharap din ang pahayagan sa usapin ng kalayaang mamahala sa kanyang sariling pondo.

Masasabing sa lahat ng ito, makapangunguna pa rin ang suliranin ng hindi umano pagiging demokratiko ng paraan ng pagpili ng unibersidad sa kanyang mga mag-aaral. Bagaman hindi ito tumitingin sa kasarian at iba pang sukatan, hindi maikakailang naging at nagiging hadlang ang kalagayang pinansyal ng mga kabataan sa tuluyan nilang pag-aaral

dito sa unibersidad.

Ngunit hindi kailangang hintayin ang katirikan ng araw upang masilat na hanggang dito na lamang ang pang-aalipin ng ganitong kalagayan. Hindi naglaon ay kinilala na rin sa pamantasan at sa lipunan ang UP bilang hulmahan ng kinabukasan ng bayan, at kasabay nito ang pagbago sa kanyang kinaumagahan.

Bagaman umaasa pa rin sa mga banyagang texto ang ilang mga kurso, nakatatak na ang UP sa pagpapatunay na ito nga ang Unibersidad ng Pilipinas sa pamamagitan ng pagpasok ng makabayang mga layunin sa mga kurso nito at pakikibahagi nito sa pagpapayaman ng ating wika at mga babasahin sa iba-ibang larangan.

Sa usapin ng pamamahala rito, patuloy man ang banta ng muling mga panghihimasok, pinatunayan ng UP na kaya nitong tumindig at magbigay ng sariling panig sa nagaganap sa higit na malawak na lipunan, gaya ng ginawa nito nang isailalim ni Arroyo ang bansa sa isang state of emergency.

Nabigyan na rin ng karapatan ang mga

mag-aaral at mga guro na magkaroon ng sabi sa pagpapasiya sa UP, bagaman nananatiling walang kinatawan ang iba pang manggagawarito. Buhay na rin ang mga institusyong pang mag-aaral gaya ng University Student Councils, na hindi rin napahintulutan noon.

Lumawig na rin ang sakop ng academic freedom sa UP. Sinasabi man sa desisyon ng Kataastaasang Hukuman na saklaw lamang nito ang karapatan ng mga guro sa ganitong kalayaan (nang may tiyak na mga hangganan), kinikilala na ng unibersidad na ang mga mag-aaral ang tunay na pinatutungkulan ng ganitong karapatan. Wala na rin ang gurong tagapayo ng Philippine Collegian, at patuloy itong kinikilala sa buong bansa sa malayang pagtukoy nito sa mga suliraning kinakaharap ng UP at lipunan, gaya ng kahirapan, katiwalian, at kawalang katarungan, at ibinibigay ang kanilang pinag-uugatan at magiging kalutasan. Sa pagpili ng mga mag-aaral, ipinasok na rin ang katayuang pinansyal bilang batayan, na kumikiling sa higit na nangangailangan.

Sa pagpasok ng unibersidad sa ika-sandaang

taon nito, at pagsulong pa sa ikalawa, nananatili ang mga hamong kakaharapin nito.

Hindi nawawala ang hamong maitatak sa mga nagsisipagtapos ang paglilingkod sa bayan matapos ang pag-aaral sa tulong ng buwis ng mga mamamayan, na kasalukuyang pinasubalian ng kanilang pangigingbang-bansa. Gayundin ang hamong mapunan ang mga kakulangan ng pondo, at bilang bunga, ng mga pasilidad; suliranin itong nagtulak sa BOR na pahintulutan ang pagtataas ng matrikula, sa kabila ng malawakang pagtutol dito. Higit sa lahat, ang pagpapakita sa nakalalaking lipunan na umiiral ito para sa kanyang kagalingan, sa tulong ng mga gawain nitong pagtuturo, pananaliksik, at mga extensyon.

Pagkat bagaman bawat araw, humahantong sa gabi, hindi naman pinapawi ng gabi ang pagsulong na nakamit sa kaliwanagan, gaya ng ginawa ng ating pamantasan sa nakaraang isandaang taon. Hindi palalamon sa dilim ang naabot na pakikiayon sa mga hamon ng panahon at kasaysayan, na dadalhin ng UP sa kalaunan. ■

## 4 timeless ideals

**VICTOR GREGOR LIMON**  
2nd year, BA Political Science

**T**O COMMEMORATE THE PAST IS NOT just to celebrate the passage of time and to wistfully recall the triumphs of history. It is also to reaffirm our commitment to the advocacies that are timeless and uncompromising to the challenges of time.

In 2008, in its celebration of its centennial anniversary, the challenge that UP faces is to remain steadfast in its pursuit of academic excellence and its liberal and egalitarian tradition, not merely because UP must be averse

to change, but also because these ideals will simply remain true even after, say, another hundred years of history.

For UP's endurance is too great for a mere century. It is then the anticipation of the bicentennial mark—and, indeed, of the future—that should also guide us when offered by often tempting but perilous options presented by change.

It is in this sense that the ongoing debate on the tuition fee increase (TFI) is afforded a significant viewpoint. This policy not only throws history out of the window. It also makes the prospects of the future more dismal.

While President Roman has not been shy of

admitting that the revenues from this scheme, amounting to almost Php 80 million, will make UP less dependent on the meager budget that the government allocates to UP every year, she maintains that her administration will continue to lobby for greater state subsidy.

But it is easy to see that these intentions, however apparently noble, run contrary to each other. UP's call for greater state subsidy is grounded on the assertion that the government must carry the burden of financing UP education. The TFI scheme allows UP to share this burden, unnecessarily since public education, however tight national fiscal policy might be, must never be compromised.

More importantly, the scheme demolishes our hope for greater state subsidy in the future; the TFI has taken care of giving proof that UP can survive without sufficient budget allocation by relying on alternative source of funds, such as tuition revenues.

The present fiscal woes in UP clearly call for appropriate action, but this action must not compromise the future for the sake of changing the harsh realities of the present. Timeless ideals must not bow down to the pragmatics of survival. We must bear this in mind as we celebrate the centennial of UP next year, and as we look forward to another century and more of history. ■

## 5 a revolution of the heart

**JEFFREY RODEN**  
4th year, B Laws

**W**E NEED A REVOLUTION OF the heart.

At a time of immense political tension, of continuing economic unevenness, and of widening social inequality, one thing has become clear: the country direly needs a new plan to move the Filipino people towards the uncharted waters of the future. And on the event of the University of the Philippines' bicentennial beginning, the country's premier state university is called upon to draft this plan.

This need is accentuated by the bankruptcy of the status quo strategy, and the obsolescence of the alternative strategy presented by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Both are failures. The *status quo*, represented by the Macapagal-Arroyo administration has merely perpetuated the permeating social cancer exposed by Dr. Jose Rizal in *Noli Me Tange-re*. On the other hand, the people's protracted war strategy of the CPP-NPA has merely protracted the suffering of Andres Bonifacio's descendant classes: the peasants and workers. Yes, Mr. Sison, what was revolutionary in 1968 has descended to destructive dogmatism in the present time – an oxymoronic conservatism of the Left. Let us thus reexamine.

From the theoretical standpoint, the coun-

try's contemporary situation can be explained as a taxing function of the violent contest for power between the ruling political elites, on one hand, and on the other, the revolting leftist elites. Both schools utilize violence as the paramount, if not solitary, methodology to win the power discourse. The theoretical debate is therefore between the Establishment's *Theory of Bureaucratic Militarization* and the Left's *Theory of Revolution through armed struggle*. Not incidentally, however, both discourses are formulations of UP students.

The empirical evidence is damning. Ever since Mrs. Macapagal-Arroyo assumed power in 2001, the President's record of human rights violations (never mind the Marcos dictatorship) – more than 800 political killings – leads us to the inevitable conclusion that she is hell-bent on one thing: use violence to stay in power. As for the Reds, from their revival in 1968, they have been hell-bent on another thing: use violence to capture power. This is why, notwithstanding the 1986 People Power revolution, they are both trapped in their theoretical past. And we in our empirical present.

Yet both are founded on the same fundamentally erroneous assumption; that is, that power, and through power alone, will we attain progress and move the Filipino people to march towards their collective future. This error must be corrected now.

It is to be borne in mind always that no nation was built in one day. Every nation is the

offspring of a long and often painful process of evolution. But the most powerful societies today are those whose founders had the vision to sacrifice in their present to secure the welfare of future generations. For the greatness of a society, of any nation, can only be secured when old men are willing to plant seeds whose shade they know they will not be able to sit under.

The answer to the question of nation-building, therefore, is neither the elections salivated by the ruling political elites, nor the armed revolution espoused by the Reds. The answer is generation. For even if we elect the most intelligent leaders, if the hearts of the people are fixated with dreams of going to distant lands we will still not attain progress. And even if the armed revolution is won today, if the minds of the Filipino masses are not equipped with education we will not be in heaven tomorrow.

The lasting and effective solution to our present ills is really the emergence of an entire new generation of Filipinos whose hearts bleed for their country's future. We require a clear break from our old values – a revolution. And as the premier state university, we are called upon to produce a generation of lawyers who will not perpetrate lies but will instead advocate for the oppressed and the helpless, of doctors who will not take up nursing but will stay to cure the country's sickness, of engineers who will build roads not potholes, of business-

men who will spawn development enterprises and not pursue profit for profit's sake, and of teachers who will educate the young not make customers of them. We need a new set of leaders who are willing to be first followers; who are not drunk with the orgasm of power but will instead drink the passion for serving.

It will take many painful years, indeed many generations, to build a prosperous nation and a progressive civilization. Yet this is precisely how diamonds of nations are made – thru the punishing furnace of time and pressure. There are no shortcuts. We must learn the principle of dying for the country everyday. We must indeed die of our old values so that his country, regenerated by the sacrifices of the young, may one day rise up on its feet.

We must learn to die for the country no longer through armed revolution or bureaucratic militarization. Instead, we must learn to embrace sacrifice by dedicating our hearts to the pursuit of national excellence and perseverance in the discharge of our individual roles and responsibilities, as our part in the larger task of nation-building. This we must do on a daily basis.

As we see the dawn of our second century, we, the community of scholars that is the University of the Philippines, must plant our hearts in our native land, so that by the grace of the Lord Almighty, the soil may yield fruit once more.

Yes, we need a revolution of the heart. ■

## Cumming soon

LUIS MATULIS

SA DILIM NAGAGANAP ANG LAHAT NG pagpanasa ng tao.

Sa isang karaniwang lugar sa Maynila, isang dating sikat na teatro ang ngayo'y sinehang third-rate. Ngunit hindi ito pinupuntahan para sa mga pelikulang pinapalabas dito. Walang pakialam ang mga pumapasok dito kahit double program ang ipinalalabas. Murang-mura ang lugar para sa pagpaparaos na P30 lang na tiket. Kahit sino'y puwede rito. Pinapayagan ang mga nakatsinelas at mga nakasapatos, mga nakasando at nakapolo't bestida.

Mula sa isang sulok ng balcony, nagsasayaw ang mga aninong nagkatawang-tao. Pumasok ang babae at ang lalaki kaninang alas-sais. X-Men 2 ang unang palabas, Sa Kama Sutra 3 naman ang ikalawa. Ang una'y pampainit lang, ang huli ang main attraction.

Nagsimula nang maglaban sa pelikula sina Professor X at Magneto. Inangat niya si Professor X at tinapon sa malayo. Kumilos na rin ang babae at ang lalaki. Naglaban na ang kanilang mga labi. Nag-eeskrimahan ang mga dila. Nagpaparaya sila sa isa't isa. Kinakalmot siya sa likod ng babae. Mariin.

Walang sasaway sa mga tulad nila. Walang flashlight na panakanakang nagmamatayag. Isang batas na dapat sundin sa ganitong sineha'y kailangang magdala ng diyaryo at isapin sa upuan. Marami sa mga upua'y wasak na ang upholstery. Malagkit din ang sahig.

Iilan pa lang ang nasa balcony. Pero mamayang alas siyete'y dadami na rin sila. Kadalasa'y magkakapares: babae at lalaki, lalaki at lalaki, babae at babae. Pero ang bawat pares ay walang pakialam sa kalapit nila. May nakatungo ang mga ulo sa kanilang katabi. May mga nakasandal at nakatitig lang sa palabas. Sari-sariling pagod, sari-sariling trabaho.

Kumalas ang dalawa sa isa't isa. Binuksan ng babae ang polo ng lalaki. Hinagkan siya't kinagat-kagat ng babae sa matipunong dibdib nito. Hinahagod ng kamay ng lalaki ang buhok ng babae.

Kama sutra na ang nasa screen. Dumarami na rin sila sa loob ng sinehan. Kanya-kanyang hanap ng maupuan. Nagsimula na'ng aksyon ng main attraction. Lumapit na si King Raj kay Maya. Nagpaubaya na siya sa gusto ni Maya. Nagpaubaya rin ang lalaki sa babae. Pareho na silang pinagpapawisan. Magkadikit na ang kanilang mga katawan. Nakakapit ang babae sa kanilang kinaupuan. Impit ang kanilang ungol. Napapapikit sila sa bilis ng pangyayari.

Lumabas na sa screen ang credits. Lumitan na sa loob. Nagmamadaling nagbihis at umalis ang mga naging kalahok sa sinehang ito. At silang dalawa, nangako sa isa't isang hindi rito natatapos ang kanilang kuwento. ■

## FutureSex/ LoveSounds

JUSTIN TINKERLAKE

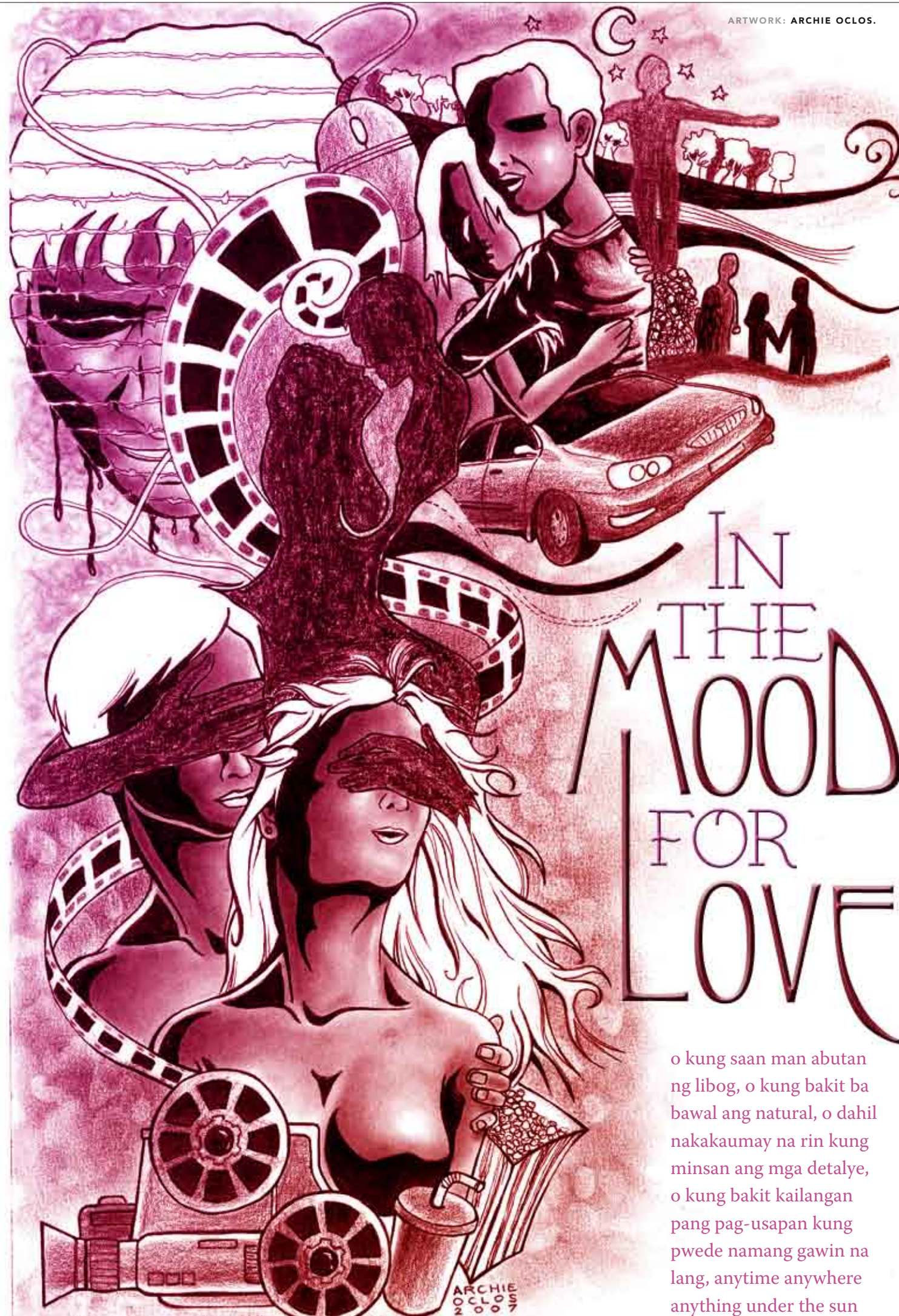
THAT IT WASN'T REALLY THAT INTERESTING, it was just something to do. The Array was a big thing, and people were making a lot of credits selling all sorts of stuff in their Casts. My own Receiver had all sorts of control settings in it, parents you know, but Malcolm managed to disarm them by introducing some sort of a probe into the system that made it believe I was just browsing through the Bulletins when what I really did was exploring the Underside accounts, where all sorts of nasty stuff can be found – and bought. Jane said that in the border colonies, security was much leaner and you can do almost anything in the Array and not get caught. I've lived here all my life so I wouldn't know if it was true. She was the one who introduced me to the more exotic places in the Array – and the pleasures of holo technology.

Holo was one of the most significant innovations of the last century. Carefully programmed photons can become anything corporeal depending on the configuration of its matrices. It wasn't long after it was first marketed all sorts of nasty businesses sprouted up – most remarkably the prostitution dens. For the right amount of credits, you can fuck anybody you want, as long as you have their bioscans. Celebrities and politicians were the primary target, but soon, it became a free for all industry.

The convergence of holo technology and the Array provided even more opportunities for nastiness. Back then, people talked dirty and looked at pornography on the internet. Now, people took bioscans of others, programmed them in the holo, and offered them for rent on the Array. Quite lucrative, actually. Malcolm boasts of having fucked thirty-one celebrities already. Jane and I settled on downloading sceneries and situations where we could screw our brains out.

The Alliance started a crackdown almost immediately, but by then, the holo and Array technologies have become so important to trade and communications that they couldn't restrict access. Encryption programs were broken mere hours after they were enforced.

Last night, Jane talked me into joining Malcolm in one of his fucking sprees. I said yes, and now I'm with seven other girls, naked and bent over a boudoir. Out of the corner of my eye, I spied one behind me who was more aggressive than the others. I couldn't see her face, but I felt her hands reach out from under me. I tilted my head slightly and noticed that she had the same haircut I had a few months ago. As she grasped my shoulders to turn me around, I began to see more of her face – the familiar curve of the ears, the cheekbones, the eyelashes. I gasped in horror as she smiled and started to press her lips, *my lips* – ■



o kung saan man abutan ng libog, o kung bakit ba bawal ang natural, o dahil nakakaumay na rin kung minsan ang mga detalye, o kung bakit kailangan pang pag-usapan kung pwede namang gawin na lang, anytime anywhere anything under the sun

## Ambidextrous

MONKEY BOY

Dear Husler,

WHACKING OFF HAS BCOME d high point of my days. I have few friends, I'm not nvolved wid anybody, and I don't go out much. D word intersting 4 me is defined as either (a) acquiring rare items in online games; (b) Stargate · SG1 season finales; (c) going 2 d comic bookstor; or (d) gawking at trafic disputes.

Dis is my daily routine: I wake up @ 6, make coffe, beat off n the shower, get dressed and go to work. After punching out, I head directly for homr, pop in a microwaveable dinner, feed my dog Brutus and turn on the telly. At around 9pm, I retreat to my room, strip to my underwear, fire up the compute, search for porn and go to town. I have becom quite adept at using d computer with only one hand.

I was twelve when I stated to beat my meat on a regular basis. It was also around that time that I dscovered my fathers porn stash, hidden under the attic floorbord. I sneaked around for awhile until I got my own VCR when I was fourteen. Id stay up late at nihtg, climb up the attic, pick a videtape, lock up my room and jerk off like crazy. I'd do it four, five times a day and not get tired of it. I keep a lot of tissues and flush the evidence down the toilet. As far as I know, Ive never been caught.

I've had my share of sexua relationships in colege, but even then, I never got tired of my favorite hobby. I'd still spank the monkey even after a weekend sex binge. I spent a ridiculou amount of mpney on porn, and I still do. I have a drawer full of it. From deep throat to the da vinci load, I've seen it all. Of corse, my favorite is the barely legal series

This is it 4 me an I hope you publishes my letter. I also hope to meet frenchie and regina someday. Theiry my favorites.

Monkey Boy

PS Im sory bout the typos, my other hand s busy doing somthing else ■

## The more, the merrier

PAUL CHRISTIAN DIAZ

AS I FINISH CHECKING THE LAST OF the exams, I peek at the clock on my desk. It's almost nine. I gather my things and prepare to head home. The Katipunan station is packed. As usual. As the train doors hiss open, bodies find their way inside the coaches.

In Anonas a guy in a spotless white nursing uniform gets on, and, for some reason, I am transfixed. No, it is not love at first sight. There is something giddily familiar about him. I know with certainty that I have seen that face somewhere, its contour, the way his nose juts from his face. Where, I can't remember. When the train reaches Cubao, I am still wrestling with memory. The uniform tells me he couldn't be a former student. And I don't have a lot of friends outside my *advanced* age group. Then it hits me. His watch, that scandalous neon green plaything.

I'd know that watch anywhere. It was one of those countless, routinary affairs. As a veteran of Manila's orgy circuit, I can't be expected to remember where or when or which one. One fuck's like the next, more or less.

It was a drizzly morning, I think. The hotel room's lights were on for less than five minutes, leaving no room for introductions. This is no party or gentle get-together with conversations and coffee. That's what I saw him. He was wearing the same uniform, laughing nervously. It was, I was to learn later, his first time.

Someone flicked a switch and darkness flooded the room and it was utterly, utterly silent. Most bodies headed for the bed or couch, some descended to the carpeted floor, while others made use of the wall like no painter would. Bored, I let a pair of hands guide me toward the bed. Another fumbled for my belt, another lifted my shirt and fondled my chest. A tongue grazed my right eye as if it were lips. In the dark, my eyes spotted a little neon green shape moving rhythmically a few feet away. It was him. He never took off his watch.

When the train reaches my stop in Pureza and grinds my reminiscences to a halt, he is gone. Very uneventful. There is a reason, perhaps, why these things are done in the dark. Or why bodies have to be faceless. Or why we have to exit the hotel one by one. Or why we have to pretend to not know the others when we see them *outside* in the future. In the dark inhibitions are left at the door. There is no sneering. There is no scorn. ■

## Diliman after dark

PEPE D. KALAKIHAN

SIKAT DATI ANG UP BILANG ISANG SEX spot. Sa dami ng masukal na lugar dito, kahit di ka taga-UP ay maengganyo kang dito magparaos. Dinarayo ito ng mga magkasintahan—ang mga walang pang-motel, ang mga di puwedeng mag-uwi ng karelasyon sa bahay, o ang mga may gusto ng extra thrill. Kami ng kasintahan ko, pumupuwesto sa paborito naming puno sa lagoon. Kahit na malamok, ang pagkasukal ng mga halaman dito ang naghihiwalay sa amin ng kasama ko sa marami parang nagkakalusugang pares sa paligid.

Nabulabog nga lang ang katahimikan sa lagoon nang biglang magkaroon ng mga tanod. Minsang tinamaan ng ilaw ng flashlight ang mukha ko. Isa-isang naitaboy ang mga pares mula sa kani-kanilang mga sulok. Ayokong mang nakikipaglampungan sa lugar na hindi masyadong tago, napilitan kaming lumipat ng kasama ko sa Sunken Garden nang mga sumunod na gabi.

Noong madalas tumambay dito ang barkada ko sa highscool, may mga nadadaan akong mga malilikot na mga anino na napapatigil kapag napapalapit ako sa kanila. Kapag maliwanag ang buwan, binibilang ko kung ilang pares ang narito. Kapag maular naman, dumaragdag kami ng kasintahan ko sa bilang. Ngunit kapag pumapatak na ang alas-diyes, isa-isa rin itong nababawasan. Nilalapitan kami ng SSB at pinapalis habang nagkakandaranta sa pag-aayos ng aming mga sarili.

Mula nang magka-curfew noong 2005, ipinaparada ko na lang ang kotse ko sa AS parking lot. Umaasang doon, walang mangan-gahas na umistorbo. Nakahanay ang van ko sa mga nakapark na kotse ng mga night joggers sa UP. Pero minalas na naman yata kami nang minsang kumatok ang mga rumorondang pulis sa van. Bistado. Muntik na kaming hulihin, pero sabi ng pulis, multa na lang daw. Wala kaming nagawa kundi magbigay.

Sinubukan naming magpakalayu-layo. Doon naman kami pumunta sa mala-parang na tereyn sa University Avenue. Marami-rami rin pala ang umaantabay doon sa gilid-gilid ng Quezon Hall. Bali-balita noon na dinaragsa raw ng mga callboy ang UP. Marahil, di na nagkakasya sa Quezon City Circuit ang mga pumapasok sa prostitusyon. Lagi akong may napapansing mga nakatayo mula sa malayo at tinatanaw-tanaw kami ng kasintahan ko sa gitna ng tinatawag na 'golf course'. Minsan nga, may lumalapit na parang gustong sumali. Buti na lang dumating ang guard ng kalapit na gusali. Pinaalis niya kami dahil sakop daw iyon ng binabantayan niya.

Ngayon, hindi na kami nakagagala sa UP kapag gabi. Wala na yatang madilim na sulok sa UP ang kahit papano'y hindi tinatamaan ng pailaw ng Acad Oval. Lubhang naapektuhan ng mga safety measures ng UP ang sex life ko. Dahil sa curfew at mga SSB, pahirapan na makapaghanap ng lugar kaya tuloy di na rin ako basta basta makapagparaos sa mga gabing nangangati. ■



**\*  
BOLITAN**

*Sa harap ng mabilis na kumpas ng modernisasyon, mainam na napananatili ng mga Ifugao sa komunidad ng Mompolia, Ifugao ang kanilang kultura. Ipinapasa nila sa bagong henerasyon ang tradisyunal at payak na paraan ng pamumuhay habang mariing ipinamumulat ang pagtutol sa pagpasok ng komersyal na establisyamento sa kanilang pamayanan. Sa kabila ng kakulangan ng pagpapahalaga ng gobyerno sa kultura ng mga katutubo, tulad ng mga Ifugao, patuloy nilang ipinaglalaman ang integridad at yaman ng kanilang kultura.*

\* "Pamana" sa wika ng mga Ifugao



MGA KUHA NINA  
PIYA CONSTANTINO  
AT ALANAH TORRALBA  
DISENYO NG PAHINA: KARL CASTRO



**"INTANAP"**

Si Intan ang apat na taong gulang na anak ni Zenaida Hangdaan. Rinehart Hangdaan ang Kristiyanong pangalan ni Intanap ngunit siya ay mas tinatawag na Intan, ang kanyang Ifugao na pangalan. Si Intan ay nag-aaral sa Poblacion West Daycare sa Lagaue, Banaue na mahigit isang oras nilang nilalabay mula sa Mompolia. Matarik at maputik ang daan patungo rito kung kaya mula Lunes hanggang Biyernes tumitira ang mag-ina sa isang boarding house na malapit sa paaralan.



**TATLONG HENERASYON**

Sa tradisyunal na pamilyang Ifugao, nananatili sa komunidad ang panganay na anak. Siya rin ang karaniwang nangangalaga sa kanyang mga magulang sa kanilang pagtanda. Sa paraang ito, kasama na ring naipamamana ang kanilang kultura at paraan ng pamumuhay. Sa pamilyang Hangdaan, bagamat si Manang Zeny ay bunsong anak ni Lola Antonia, siya ang nagpatuloy ng tradisyon ng pagkalinga sa mga nakatatanda.

**SARILING ANI**

Matapos magtahip, pinipilian ni Manang Zeny ang bigas na mula sa sarili niyang bakuran. Sa tradisyunal na sistema ng pamana ng mga Ifugao, ang panganay ang siyang nakapipili ng ari-arian na mamanahin. Susundan ito ng mga nakababata niyang kapatid. Si Manang Zeny ang bunso sa apat na magkakapatid, kaya ang napamana sa kaniya ay kapisang lupain lamang kung saan siya nakapagtanim ng palay na sapat lamang sa pangkain ng kaniyang mag-anak.



**HAPUNAN**

Ang mga Ifugao ay may payak lamang na paraan ng pagluluto tulad ng pagpapakulo at pag-ihaw. Inihahanda ng isang binatang Ifugao ang pato na ihahain sa hapunan.



**SALU-SALO**

Tinutulungan ni Intan si Manang Apolonia na ihanda ang mga lutuuing gulay para sa hapunan. Sa kanilang maliit na komunidad, kapag nagluto ang isang pamilya, kadalasang nagsasalo na rito ang lahat.



**APO**

Alinsunod sa kulturang Ifugao, si Intan, bilang panganay na anak ni Manang Zeny, ang magmamana hindi lamang ng kanilang bahay kundi pati na rin ng kinasanayang pamumuhay ng kanyang ina, lola, at ng iba pang naunang henerasyon sa kanilang angkan. Bagamat malakas ang ugong ng nakaambang modernisasyon, si Intan ay nananatiling napalilibutan ng mga taong patuloy na nagpapahalaga sa kanilang kultura.

**P**ABUGSO-BUGSO ANG ULAN SA probinsiya ng Sorsogon. Bagaman umiinit minsan, walang puknat ang pagsampal ng hangin sa niyugan. Dulo na ng Pebrero, pero alanganin pa rin kung mananatili ang taglamig, o kung sasapit na ang tag-araw. Gayunman, sa lugar na ito, tulad marahil sa bawat lugar ng Pilipinas ngayon, ang tunay na lagay ng panahon ay di makikita sa lakas ng hangin, sinag ng araw o temperatura. Nakapaskil ito sa mga dingding. Nakasabit sa poste't puno. Nakabuyang-yang sa kalsada.

### *Panahon na ng eleksiyon.*

**S**AMANTALA, SA KABUNDUKAN NG probinsiya, malayo sa makukulay na karatula't bandera na nakaladlad sa haywey, abala rin ang rebolusyonyong kilusan. "Paligsahan" man ng tinaguriang mga "naghaharing uri" ang eleksiyon sa lipunang Pilipino, batid ng naturang kilusan ang pangangailangang ipamalas ang "pampulitikang kapangyarihan" nito sa panahong ito. "Bulok" man ang sistema at walang makabuluhang pagbabago ang mapapala ng bayan sa halalan, desidido ang mga rebolusyonyo na gamitin ang pagkakataong ito para lalong makapagpalawak ng hanay, makapagpasulpot ng rekurso para sa rebolusyon.

Isa si Ka Sergio sa mga itinalaga ng naturang kilusan sa mga gawaing may kaugnayan sa "burgis" na halalan. At bagaman sa gitna siya ng gubat nakadestino, kaliwa't kanan ang appointment niya. "Ang ibang pulitiko, matagal nang nakipag-usap sa akin, noong nakaraang taon pa," pagtatapat niya nang kapanayamin ng PINOY WEEKLY. "Pero marami pang dapat kausapin."

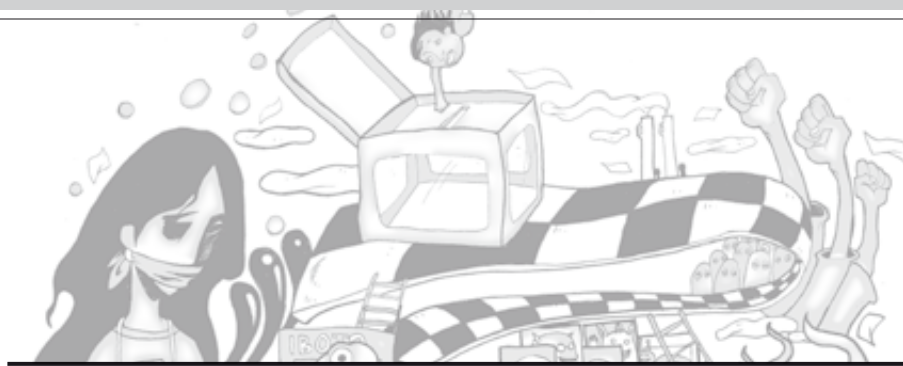
Halos 390 ang kandidato sa Sorsogon tuwing halalan. Mula gobernador hanggang sa mga opisyal sa munisipalidad. Halos lahat sila, ayon kay Sergio, ay nagkukumahog na makipag-usap sa kilusan.

### *'Hindi simpleng permiso'*

**"D**ALAWA ANG TAKTIKA NAMIN SA paglahok sa eleksiyon," paliwanag ni Sergio. "Una, ang paglalantad sa kabulukan ng eleksiyon. Nagagawa ito sa pakikipag-usap sa masa. Pagpapaliwanag sa tunay na katangian ng eleksiyon bilang 'paligsahan' ng mga naghaharing uri. Pangalawa, ang paggamit sa eleksiyon bilang pagkakataon para makinabang ang rebolusyon."

Sa madla sa lungsod, mas kilala ang patakaran ng NPA (New People's Army) bilang permit to campaign o PTC. Para sa AFP (Armed Forces of the Philippines), isang paraan ito ng "pangingikil" diumano sa mga pulitiko at negosyante na panustos ng isang kilusang naglalayong pabagsakin ang gobyerno. Nitong nakaraang halalang 2004, ikinampanya na rin ng grupong Akbayan ang paglaban sa PTC. Inireklamo nila ang naturang gawain, laluna't hindi sila makapangampanya sa mga lugar ng NPA dahil ayaw nilang humingi ng "permiso" at binabansagan silang persona non grata (hindi katanggap-tanggap) sa naturang mga lugar.

Ngunit kung tutuusin, ayon kay Sergio, ang PTC ay isang paraan lamang ng pagpapakita ng pampulitikang kapangyarihan ng kilusan. "Tuwing eleksiyon, ang nais lamang ng mga pulitiko ay gamitin ang boto ng organisado



# Ang PTC AT ANG

## 'NAGBABAGONG KULTURA'

NG

## HALALAN

## sa bansa

KENNETH ROLAND A. GUDA



nating masa. Kaya nga, isang paraan ang PTC ng pagprotekta sa ating kinikilusang mga mamamayan mula sa pagsasamantala ng mga pulitiko."

Tumampok sa publiko ang PTC bilang paraan ng "pagbubuwis" sa mga kandidato ng NPA. Pero para kay Sergio, mas higit pa rito ang PTC. Sa pakikipag-usap sa mga pulitiko, patakaran ng NPA na alamin muna ang bakgawnd nila: Ano ang paninindigan nila sa mga isyu (mula mga usaping pambansa, tulad ng Charter Change, hanggang sa mga usaping lokal, tulad ng pagmimina sa Matnog, Sorsogon). "Binabalikan din namin ang mga nagdaang pahayag nila: Nagsabi ba sila ng masama at hindi totoo hinggil sa kilusan at rebolusyon? Pumabor ba sila sa militarisasyon? Mahalaga ito sa aming panimulang pagsusuri sa paninindigan ng mga pulitiko," ani Sergio.

"May mga pagkakataong sa panimulang pagsusuri pa lamang, batid na namin ang pagiging sagad-sagaring reaksiyunaryo at militarista ng isang pulitiko. Kapag nangyayari ito, idinedeklara agad namin siya bilang persona non-grata."

Paliwanag pa ni Sergio, walang katotohanan ang balitang ikinakalat ng AFP na nangongolekta ang NPA ng bayad para sa permit to win, bukod sa PTC. Aniya, hindi-hindi ginagawa ng NPA na mangampanya sa kanilang "baseng masa" para sa isang kandidato. Hindi sila lalahok sa ehersisyo ng halalan sa ganoong paraan. Ang PTC ay para lamang sa pagpasok ng mga kandidato sa teritoryo ng NPA, hindi garantiya na iendorso o ikakampanya ng mga rebelde ang mga kandidato.

### *Maayos na pakikipag-usap'*

**G**INAGAWA ANG PAGKAUSAP SA pulitiko sa mismong sonang gerilya ng NPA. Mismong mga kandidato ang kumakausap sa mga emisaryong tulad ni Sergio. "Malaking bahagi ng pag-uusap ang hinggil sa mga paninindigan niya," ani Sergio. Pagdating sa usapin ng bayad upang makapangampanya, bukas ang NPA sa negosasyon.

"May general rates tayo sa bawat posisyon, pero bukas na bukas ito sa negosasyon," paliwanag ng rebelde. "Kung wala talagang

pambayad, hindi natin pinipilit. Ang nangungunang layunin natin ay makabig sila sa pulitika." Tatal, madali lang naman umanong malaman ng NPA kung may kakayahan nga ang sinumang pulitiko na magbayad: pampublikong kaalaman ang kabuhayan niya, mga pag-aari, mga koneksiyon.

"Minsan, kapag walang pera, tinuturuan pa naming dumiskarte. Halimbawa, kung wala siyang personal na pondo, pinapayuhan naming kumuha ng pondo sa kanyang partido. Tatal, di naman niya pera iyon. Madalas na perang kinurakot iyon," sabi pa ni Sergio. Kalimitang payo ito ng NPA sa mga kandidatong sinusuportahan ng malalaking partidong tulad ng Lakas ng Lakas, Nationalist People's Coalition, LDP, atbp.

"Sa negosasyon, pagkakataon din para hikayatin natin sila na tumindig nang progresibo at maka-mamamayan sa mga isyu," dagdag pa ni Sergio.

Ikinuwento pa niya ang tungkol sa isang kandidato sa Sorsogon na dating opisyal ng militar. Dahil sa pagiging sagad-sagaring pasista noong aktibo siya sa militar, STK (shoot to kill) ang istatus niya sa NPA. Pero nang maging pulitiko na siya at nakiusap sa mga rebelde, iminungkahi ng NPA na humingi siya ng tawad sa publiko sa mga krimen niya noong militar pa siya. Dahil sumunod naman siya, iniatras ng NPA ang sentensiya sa kanya. Ngayon, ang retiradong opisyal-militar na naging pulitiko ay nakikipagnegosasyon para sa permisong makangampanya sa mga teritoryo ng mga dati niyang kalabang mortal.

May ilang tagubilin ang mga rebelde sa pagpasok ng mga kandidato sa teritoryo nila: Bawal manira sa kilusan; bawal mag-espiya; huwag na huwag manakot ng masa; at mahigpit na ipinagbabawal ang pagpasok ng armadong mga goon. Puwede lang umanong magpasok ng bodyguard para sa sariling proteksiyon, pero di para manakot ng botante. Pati ang baril ng mga bodyguard ay kailangang irehistro sa NPA.

Sa mga nabibigyan ng permiso, ani Sergio, patuloy ang pagmonitor ng NPA sa kanilang kampanya. Matapos ang halalan, tuloy pa rin ang pagsubaybay ng mga rebelde sa mga pulitiko: Tinupad ba nila ang mga ipinangako noong negosasyon? Naging mas progresibo ba sila sa mga isyu? Itinigil ba nila ang mga gawaing nakakasama sa mga mamamayan?

"Nagbabago ang istatus ng mga pulitiko sa mata ng NPA, depende sa kung paano nila tinutupad ang kanilang mga pangako. Kung sa panahon ng eleksiyon ay nakakuha sila ng permiso para mangampanya sa teritoryo ng kilusan, pero naging militarista pagkatapos, makakaapekto iyon sa pagkuha nila ng permiso sa susunod na halalan," paliwanag pa ni Sergio.

Para kay Sergio, malaki ang naitutulong ng PTC sa pagbabago sa kultura ng pulitika sa Sorsogon magmula nang unang ipatupad ang patakaran noong 1995. "Sa karanasan namin, bumuti ang ilang pulitiko matapos makipag-usap sa NPA.

Naniyutralisa ang ilang sagad-sagaring kontra-rebolusyon. Marami rin ang nahatak sa mas progresibong mga paninindigan... Ngunit sa kabuuan, hindi natin iniaasa sa eleksiyon ang pagbabago ng lipunan. Ang importante ay patuloy tayong nagpapalawak. Kahit sa mga miyembro ng naghaharing uri, nagsisikap tayong manghikayat."

## 'Walang aamin'

**H**INIHAKAYAT NG AFP (ARMED FORCES of the Philippines) ang mga kandidato na huwag magbayad ng PTC sa NPA. Noong Enero, bago magsimula ang kampanya sa pambansang halalan, sinabi ni AFP Chief of Staff Hermogenes Esperon, mistulang pagsuporta sa pagpapabagsak ng gobyerno ang PTC, kung kaya binabalaan niya ang mga pulitiko na mananagot sila sa batas kung patuloy na magbabayad sa mga rebelde.

"Hindi tayo tapat nagbabayad ng buwis sa isang armadong grupo na nais mangikil ng pera sa taumbayan, sa mga kandidato. Nananawagan ako sa mga kandidato na huwag magbayad ng campaign fees sa NPA," pahayag ni Esperon.

Noong nakaraang buwan, ibinunyag ni Capt. Lowen Gil Marquez, kumander ng Civil Relations Unit ng AFP sa Kabikulan, na nakakuha diumano sila ng mga dokumento ng CPP na naglalaman ng lista ng mga pulitiko na nagbayad diumano ng PTC. Nakuha diumano ang mga dokumento sa mga engkuwentro sa NPA sa Camarines Sur at Sorsogon.

Ayon kay Marquez, nilalaman rin diumano ng isang dokumento, na pinamagatang "Election 2007, CPP-NPA-NDF Perspective" ang mga sinusupportahang kandidato at grupong party-list ng NDFP (National Democratic Front of the Philippines) at ng konsultant nito na si Prop. Jose Maria Sison.

Tumanggi si Marquez na ibunyag ang pangalan ng mga pulitikong nagbabayad sa PTC. Gayunman, sinabi niyang nakasaad din diumano sa dokumento na tinatayang P7.73-Milyon ang kikitain ng NDFP sa bawat probinsiya sa Bikol dahil sa PTC. Sinabi pa ni Marquez na aabot sa P92.8-Milyon ang target na mokokolekta ng NPA sa Bikol ngayong halalan.

Maaring maikumbert ang naturang halaga sa humigit-kumulang 57 milyong ripleng M-16, ayon pa kay Marqez.

Naiintindihan ni Sergio ang hindi pag-amin sa publiko ng mga kandidato ukol sa pagsailalim nila sa PTC. Illegal sa batas ng gobyerno ang armadong rebolusyon ng NPA, at anumang suportang ibinibigay nila sa NPA ay ilegal din. "Ayaw rin nating mapag-initan sila ng militar," sabi ni Sergio.

Sa panayam ng PINOY WEEKLY sa dating alkalde ng Lung-sod Sorsogon na si Fernando Duran, inamin niya na kailangan ng mga kandidato na magpasailalim sa PTC kung talagang nais nilang manalo sa halalan. "(Ngunit) sa tingin ko, walang kandidato ang aamin. Maaaring aminin nilang hinihingan sila, pero 'yung amining nagbibigay sila sa NPA, mahirap siguro. Maiimbestigahan ka ng militar o gobyerno sa pagsuporta sa pagpapabagsak sa gobyerno," ani Duran.

Sinabi ni Duran, na naging punongbayan mula 1988 hanggang 1998, na hindi niya naabutan ang patakarang ito ng NPA nang aktibo pa siya sa pulitika. Gayunman, "Hindi mo masisisi ang mga kandidato kung magpapasailalim sila diyan (sa PTC)... Kung wala kang akses sa mga lugar (ng NPA), siguradong dehado ka."

Kung sakaling tatakbo siya at pailalim sa PTC, ani Duran, maaaring humingi siya ng konsiderasyon sa NPA. Tanggap niyang may mataas na panuntunan ang NPA sa pagkilatis sa mga pulitiko. "Kung tatakbo man ako, tingin ko, di nila ako tatanggihan base sa dating performance ko... Patunay nito ang track record ko. Hindi ko sinamantala ang posisyon ko," aniya.

"Senyales ito ng pagbabago ng panahon," pagtatapos ni Duran.

Sa patuloy na paglakas ng impluwensiya ng NPA sa Sorsogon, mistulang esensiyal na bahagi na ng pagwawagi sa halalan ang pagpayag ng NPA na makapangampanya ang mga kandidato sa kanilang mga teritoryo.

Masasabi ngang nababago ng PTC ang kultura ng halalan sa bansa sa pamamagitan ng pag-uudyok sa mga pulitiko na gumawa ng mga paninindigang itinuturing ng NPA na makabubuti sa mga mamamayan.

Kaya habang umiinit ang panahon ng eleksiyon, lalong nag-ing abalang-abala si Ka Sergio sa probinsiya ng Sorsogon. ■

Si Kenneth ay dating features at associate editor ng Philippine Collegian. Ang artikulong ito ay nauna nang inilathala sa Pinoy Weekly.

## Dormers...

FROM P.4

sion Committee (DAC), a five faculty-member body headed by Asian Institute of Tourism Dean Corazon Rodriguez, will approve the applications based on the new point-based system.

Once approved by the DAC, the student dormer would enjoy one year admission including the summer term. The DAC, meanwhile, has released the first list of approved applicants on May 9.

### Discrepancy between old and new STFAP scoring

USC dorm committee head Patrick Joseph Pajo, however, questioned the "discrepancy" in the point system for the old and the new STFAP, which was approved in December last year along with the 300-percent tuition increase.

Under the approved procedure, the highest bracket in old STFAP (bracket 9 for an annual family income of P250,000 and above) corresponds to a score of only 15 points. In the new five-bracket STFAP, however, the highest bracket (bracket A for an annual family income of P1M and above) is given 35 points.

Admitting that the STFAP criterion was "overlooked" Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs Elizabeth Enriquez ordered the DOC, OSH and DAC to revise the STFAP point system a day after a dialogue with the USC on May 2.

The corresponding scores for the nine brackets of the old STFAP have now been grouped into four to approximate the counterpart scores in the new STFAP.

### 'Mistake'

Enriquez also admitted that the UPD administration "made a mistake" of assuming that information on the new procedure was properly disseminated.

In a formal dialogue with Enriquez and Alcantara on May 5, the heads of the 10 dorm councils along with the USC asked to postpone the implementation of the new procedure for the first semester to allow for further information dissemination, particularly to continuing residents who were in the provinces for the summer vacation and thus were uninformed of the said procedure.

Castor Tagyamon, vice president of the Yakal House Council, said that the administration should have talked to the dorm councils before the planned implementation. Most dorm councils received information on the new procedure only during the last days of the previous semester or during the first few days of summer.

Enriquez, however, said the procedure would be implemented as scheduled and extended the deadline for applications of continuing residents

## Point system for the new dormitory admission procedure

CRITERIA	POINTS SCALE	WEIGHT	
Place of Origin	Visayas and Mindanao Regions	= 45 pts	45 %
	Regions 1, 2, 3, 4 & 5	= 40	
	Metro Manila, Rizal and Bulacan	= 0	
Old STFAP brackets (for undergraduate students with student number 2006 and below)	Bracket 1 (P45,000 & below)	= 55 pts	55 %
	2 (P45,000-P55,000)	= 55	
	3 (P55,001-P65,000)	= 55	
	4 (P65,001-P80,000)	= 55	
	5 (P80,001-P130,000)	= 50	
	6 (P130,001-P170,000)	= 45	
	7 (P170,001-P210,000)	= 45	
	8 (P210,001-P250,000)	= 45	
	9 (P250,001 and above)	= 40	
New STFAP brackets (for undergraduate students with student number 2007 and above)	Bracket A (More than P1M)	= 35 pts	55 %
	B (P500,000-P1M)	= 40	
	C (P135,001-P500,000)	= 45	
	D (P80,001-P135,000)	= 50	
	E (below P80,000)	= 55	
PhP	P0-100,000	= 55 pts	100 %
	P100,001-200,000	= 50	
	P200,001-300,000	= 45	
	P300,001-400,000	= 40	
	P400,001-500,000	= 35	
	P500,001-600,000	= 30	
Income bracket (for graduate students)	P600,001-1M	= 25	
	Over P1M	= 25	
Total			100 %

until the last day of May.

Enriquez added, "These are just procedures that were fleshed out" in the 1990 Revised Residence Hall Rules and Regulations, which is currently undergoing review.

### Freshies exempted, for now

Enriquez also ordered to suspend the implementation of the new dorm guidelines for entering freshmen until next year. "What is important are the freshmen. We will not turn away freshmen. So the new STFAP [criterion] is irrelevant [for freshmen applicants]," Enriquez said.

According to Alcantara, undergraduate dormitories in UPD will now accept about 50 percent of incoming freshmen who were rejected in the Kalayaan Residence Hall (KRH), an all-freshmen dorm with a total capacity of 542 students. Dormitories like Sanggunay, Kamagong, Ipil and International Center will remain exclusively for graduate students, she added.

Enriquez revealed that about 440 freshmen applying for admission to KRH are rejected every year since 2002. These students will be distributed among the upper class dorms by the DAC to replace the students who graduated this year, she said.

The ten undergraduate and graduate dormitories in UPD have the total capacity of 2,630, which means only 13 percent of the total 21,788 UPD student population are accommodated. ■

## Kabataan...

FROM P.5

for violations of standard procedures, and for the physical threat and verbal assault against Ambay and his companions.

Meanwhile, another Kabataan member and UP Diliman (UPD) student, who requested anonymity for security reasons, foiled an abduction attempt while on her way home to Quezon City on April 18.

The victim said she noticed a car suspiciously following her after getting off a tricycle at around 12:30 am.

When she got into a dark street, the car carrying four men advanced towards her and two of the suspects

tried to push her into the car. Nearby tricycle drivers noticed the commotion and approached her, prompting the men to immediately leave, taking with them the victim's cellphone.

Johanna Urbiztondo, Kabataan Partylist-UPD spokesperson, said that contrary to police reports, the incident cannot be a simple robbery case since the suspects were in a car and it seemed illogical for four men to follow the victim just to rob her of her cellphone. "It is a clear case of political harassment. The incident is very similar to recent abduction cases against progressive party-list member," Urbiztondo said in a report.

She disclosed that in Cebu, Kabataan

coordinator Beethoven Avila, together with Preciosa Daño, a Bayan Muna Partylist coordinator, were abducted and subjected to psychological torture after they were forced inside a gray Delica van, while military men reportedly parked their vehicles in front of a Kabataan headquarters in La Union and took pictures of the group's members.

"What the Arroyo government is doing is only making us stronger and firmer in our resolve to win in this election to give voice to the needs of the youth and the people," Urbiztondo added. ■ (with reports from Candice Anne Reyes)

# Points of (dis)order

## Steering through the STFAP mess

MELANE MANALO

*(First of two parts)*

THE FOLLOWING SECTION attempts to shed light on the confusion that has become of the new Socialized Tuition and Financial Assistance Program (STFAP), with emphasis on the exchange between UP President Emerlinda Roman and STFAP critic Faculty Regent Roland Simbulan. This section also includes the proposed STFAP structure by former UP administrators and college deans led by former Vice President for Academic Affairs Maria Serena Diokno. Into the fray, therefore.

In December 2006, the Board of Regents approved, along with the tuition increase, the STFAP, which determines the tuition rate a student pays as well as the assignment of brackets corresponding to discounts and stipends the student will receive.

In the new STFAP, the number of income brackets is reduced from nine to five. The Atanacio committee, which drafted the new STFAP, also introduced an additional measure to predict family incomes.

With the tuition increase, the base tuition or the tuition rate one pays if s/he does not apply for subsidy will be P1,000 per unit from the current base tuition of P300 per unit.

Unlike in the old STFAP where the base tuition is also the highest rate, a student whose self-declared income is more than P1 million will pay P1,500 per unit. According to the Atanacio report, making P1,500 the default per-unit rate would invite too many applications for tuition subsidy.

### Predicting family income: the income function

The assignment of brackets to students applying for tuition subsidy would now be based on an income function formulated to predict the student's family income, aside from the other measures used in the old STFAP.

Claiming that the current process of assigning students into brackets is not based on an "empirically verifiable procedure," the Atanacio committee provided an

income function, whose factors attempt to link different socio-economic variables in the family level with annual family income.

Using data from 2004 STFAP applicants and the 2003 Labor Force Survey and Family Income and Expenditure Survey (FIES), among the indicators of income determined as inputs into the income function are ownership of assets such as air conditioners, phones (landline and mobile), cars, refrigerators, and television sets, and family attributes such as the number of household help and family members working overseas, studying, or engaged in different occupations.

According to Simbulan, this is not an acceptable prediction of a student's family income, as it considers the quantity rather than the value of the assets owned. He said that the depreciation in the value

relationships between family income and specific variables of interest that hold in the national also hold for any subset of it."

Roman added that a student's family income is not determined solely on the basis of ownership of assets, but by considering all other variables associated with family income as shown in the measures used in assigning STFAP brackets to students.

### Measures for bracket assignment

The highest bracket assignment a student applicant gets from the following measures will determine the tuition rate s/he has to pay:

1. bracket the applicant requests;
2. bracket based on reported income (*see table 2*), which is the sum of the incomes of family members, other contributions received, and other income sources;
3. bracket based on specific indicators, such as previous school fees paid if the applicant did not enjoy a scholarship (*see table 3*), and having security guards, swimming pools, international credit cards and family-financed foreign travel, all of which automatically assigns an applicant to Bracket A; and
4. bracket as determined by the income function.

in his/her previous school (Bracket D); and (4) has a predicted income under Bracket C, will be assigned to Bracket C, the highest among the four brackets determined using the four basic measures.

### Bone of contention: from free tuition to P300/unit

Simbulan pointed out that Bracket D in the new STFAP scheme corresponds to Bracket 5 in the old one, which prescribes free tuition and a semestral allowance of P6,000 for students with an annual family income of P80,001 to P130,000 (*see table 1*). Under the new scheme, however, such students will now be made to pay P300 per unit.

Simbulan maintained that latest data from the National Statistics Office show that an annual income of P80,001 to P130,000 is still not enough to cover the daily cost of living for a family of six, which amounts to P201,626 per year as of June 2006. As such, students under this family income should still be exempt from paying tuition, he said.

In her reply, Roman stated that in the current setup, students under Bracket 5 are paying the base tuition of P300 per unit as shown by the proportion of STFAP applicants to the total enrolment. She added that families with P80,001 to P135,000 annual income belong to the upper 50 to 70 percent of the national income distribution, which

puts them above the poorest 30 to 40 percent and above the poverty threshold.

Roman, however, diverted in the same letter to saying that chancellors have already been asked to strengthen the student loan program, increase the number of student assistantships, and solicit more scholarship grants to help "affected" students.

The new STFAP did not address the compensation for student assistantships.

Part of the 1989 STFAP, student assistantships give students opportunity to work for the university for P25 per hour.

*To be continued next issue*

Activist... FROM P.4

Ocampo added that instead of acknowledging that the killings are happening, the military claimed the murders are results of "internal purges" within the Communist Party of the Philippines. He also clarified that under international standards, political killings are perpetrated by agents of the state such as its security forces against dissenters.

The Melo Commission, a creation of Arroyo herself, also affirmed that extra-judicial killings were indeed happening and that such is linked to the military's counter-insurgency campaign since 2001.

### HSA may intensify rights abuse

Ron Villegas, League of Filipino Students-UP Diliman president, added that the passage of the anti-terrorism law or the Human Security Act (HSA) of 2007 legalizes "state-sponsored" killings.

HSA defines terrorism as such acts as piracy, mutiny, rebellion, coup d'état, kidnapping, murder, arson, hijacking, illegal possession of firearms, explosives and ammunitions, highway robbery, and illegal disposal of toxic substances or nuclear wastes made to coerce the government to submit to an unlawful demand.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Puno recently made a strongly-worded comment on the US war on terrorism that "scarred the face of human rights in the country." While not directly referring to HSA, Puno added that "lawmakers enact laws using the security of the state [to] shrink further the zone of individual rights."

Karapatan Secretary-General Jigs Clamor also warned that HSA could be used to silence dissenters as the law provides for warrantless arrest and three-day detention, among others, which are in violation of the Constitution. "Because of the broadness and vagueness of the definition [of terrorism], HSA can be subject to abuse of military power," Clamor said.

HSA also compels anyone to fully disclose information and turn over to court any recorded and written communication made with suspected terrorists, raising concerns from media groups and practitioners over the independence of media coverage.

Rowena Paraan, secretary-general of the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines, said that journalists interviewing suspected terrorists can be cited for committing conspiracy. She said the HSA sends a "chilling effect" on media as journalists would

**Table 1: Old STFAP bracket scheme**

BRACKET	INCOME RANGE	TUITION PER UNIT
1	P0 – P45,000	P0
2	P45,001 – P55,000	P0
3	P55,001 – P65,000	P0
4	P65,001 – P80,000	P0
5	P80,001 – P130,000	P0
6	P130,001 – P170,000	P75
7	P170,001 – P210,000	P150
8	P210,001 – P250,000	P225
9	P250,001 and above	P300

**Table 2: Approved STFAP bracket scheme**

BRACKET	INCOME RANGE	FEES / BENEFITS
A	More than P1,000,000	P1,500/unit
B	P500,001 – P1,000,000	P1,000/unit
C	P135,001 – P500,000	P600/unit
D	P80,001 – P135,000	P300/unit
E	0 – P80,000	Free tuition and P12,000 stipend

**Table 3: Previous school fees paid**

BRACKET	GROUP I CAMPUS*	GROUP II CAMPUS**
A	over P60,000	over P40,000
B	P44,001 – P60,000	P27,001 – P40,000
C	P29,001 – P44,000	P20,001 – P27,000
D	P18,001 – P29,000	P12,001 – P20,000

\*Diliman, Manila, and Los Baños \*\*Visayas, Mindanao, and Baguio

of the assets is not accounted for, so that having a greater number of assets, regardless of the real value of the assets owned, would automatically mean a higher family income.

Simbulan also said that assigning relative weights to each asset and family attribute by matching data from nationwide surveys with those from incoming UP students in the past is "statistically flawed." He explained that the families of UP students in the past or in the future cannot be assumed to be representative of the national population.

Roman, however, countered that UP students are a subset of the national population, and that "re-

To illustrate, a student who (1) requests to be assigned to Bracket D; (2) reports an annual family income of P130,000 (Bracket D); (3) paid tuition amounting to P20,000

SIPAT

Ahon  
Baywalk, Manila  
ROUELLE UMALI



LOUISE VINCENT B. AMANTE

## Kung nagkataong hindi ako nag-Kulê

**"B**AKIT KA PA BA NAG-ku-Kulê?" tanong sa akin ng isang kamanunulat habang ginagawa namin ang aming mga artikulo para sa inyong mga mambabasa at pabliser namin.

"Gusto kong tumulong," simpleng sagot ko. "Ang *noble*," komento niya. Tumahimik na lang ako. Ayaw ko nang humaba pa ang usapan tungkol dito dahil, sa palagay ko nang mga oras na iyon, hindi dapat pag-aksayahan ng panahon.

Pero paanong pagtulong, at sino naman ang tutulongan ko sa pamamagitan ng pagsusulat sa Kulê?

Kung tutuusin, nasa mga daliri sa isang kamay na ang tagal ko sa Kulê. Simple lang ang dahilan kung bakit gusto kong mapasama sa pinakaprestihiyosong pahayagang pang-estudyante sa ating bayan, ang maipakita na magaling akong magsulat. Pangarap ko talagang magsulat at makita ang byline ko sa mga pahina ng Kulê. Bilib na bilib kasi ako sa mga nababasa ko sa mga manunulat nito. Matapang at walang sinisino, maging ang Pangulo ng UP.

Sumubok ako't nag-eksam. Napakahirap ng eksam, lalo na 'yung mga salitang semiotics, film noir, commodity fetishism, at postmodernism; hindi ko talaga alam ang mga 'yun. Kaya inis na inis ako sa sarili ko noon. Nag-aral talaga ako ng mga iyon matapos ang eksam. Sa ikalawang beses, hindi pa

rin ako natanggap.

Sa wakas, nakuha rin ako sa ikatlong pagsubok ko. Nakakasalamuha ko na ang mga pangalang nababasa ko lang dati. Nag-iinom kami't kumakain sa labas, maging sa rooftop nito. Natutulog kami sa gitna ng Sunken Garden at mag-uusap lang hanggang sa sumilay ang liwanag

*Sa Kulê ko natutuhang mag-aral nang higit pa sa itinuturo sa aming kurso sa pagsulat... Na hindi lang matataas na marka ang sagot sa matagal nang paghihirap ng marami. At kailangang may manguna, kailangang may makikinig, kailangang may gagawa ng mga ito.*

ng bagong umaga. Dito ko nakilala si D, ang una kong lugod. At ang pakiramdam ko'y Vinzons Rm. 401 na ang pinakatuktok ng mundo.

Pero, hindi lang puro saya ang naging buhay ko sa Kulê. Mas madugo ang proseso ng pagsulat dito kaysa sa mga worksyap namin sa klase. Dito, kapag kumakapal at namumutikik sa pulang tinta ang borador mo, pangit ka nang tao. Pangit kang mag-isip. Pangit kang magsulat. Kaya, minsan, nagkalamigan ang editors at writers dahil sa pagkatay sa mga artikulo. Na para bang ayaw mapipintasan ng kahit sino ang mga sinulat nilang anak.

May mga pagkakataong nais ko nang sumuko't iwan ang pagsusulat, lalo na nang matapos na ang misyon ko sa UP. Nagtatrabaho na

ako noon. Pero, nagpatuloy pa rin ako sa Kulê.

Napakahirap iwanan ang institusyong naging saksi't kasama ko sa lahat ng ginawa ko sa UP. Sa Kulê ko natutuhang mag-aral nang higit pa sa itinuturo sa aming kurso sa pagsulat. Na saliksikin ang mga larangang sa palagay nami'y hindi namin kakawawi't pakikialaman. Na marami pang dapat na gisinging mag-aaral para maramdaman nilang hindi lang pag-aaral sa akademya ang tamang gawin. Na mayroong pang mga bagay ang dapat ding isabay sa pag-aaral. Na

hindi lang matataas na marka ang sagot sa matagal nang paghihirap ng marami. At kailangang may manguna, kailangang may gagawa ng mga ito.

Kung nagkataong hindi ako nag-Kulê, wala na akong iba pang gagawin kundi tumunganga't magpatianod sa daloy ng pinapayagan ngayong buhay. ■

Vote wisely!

-PHILIPPINE COLLEGIAN

## THESIS



JTK  
2007

### STAND-UP...

FROM P.5

percent respectively, as a possible reason behind the increase. A total of 1,853 students from CE voted.

Enriquez said she will propose a gradual computerization of the USC elections starting from the college level next year.

#### Opposing groups

Abdulwahid's and Fontanilla's political parties hold opposing views with regard to the recently approved 300 percent tuition and other fee increases (TFI) in UP.

STAND-UP, one of the staunchest critics of the TFI, believes that the tuition hike is a form of commercialization of education and calls for the withdrawal of the TFI.

On the other hand, ALYANSA, is in favor of the TFI while pushing for the review of the Socialized Tuition and Financial Assistance Program brackets.

Abdulwahid said her immediate plan is to meet with UP President Emerlinda Roman and UP Diliman Chancellor Sergio Cao, where UP's plans for its centennial next year and student issues like TFI will be discussed.

Fontanilla, meanwhile, said he will lead the League of College Councils in drafting a "unified stand" on the TFI.

Election winners will be proclaimed during the freshmen orientation program in June. ■ (With reports from Cheska Montes)

### New CRS...

FROM P.3

a UPD-wide network system, on April 12-13, and between 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on April 16-18. Outside access to the site was allowed only on April 14 to 18, from 6 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Teacher's prerogatives, change in matriculation and additional matriculation were not allowed only on the first two days of registration, as class lists were not yet printed and the said mechanisms work against the idea of a real-time enlistment, Jorda further said.

#### Solutions

The USC, CRS and OUR will be having a dialogue on a yet unsettled date to assess the issues in

and problems with the summer registration.

In an interview, Tiglaog, however, assured students that the real-time enlistment will not be implemented until resources like computers, network resources, and the server, which will cost about P500,000, are upgraded and supplied by the administration.

Jorda added that registration centers in large buildings such as the Palma and Melchor halls will also be set up. Another proposal is to add a system for self-advising in the CRS, which will allow students to enlist only in subjects under their respective course curricula. ■

# Uninvited

## Gatecrashers in the Party-list System

GLENN L. DIAZ

The party-list system used to be a little-known mechanism in Philippine politics which paved the way for marginalized sectors to partake in legislation. Today, more than 90 groups are vying for seats in the 14<sup>th</sup> Congress. The sudden and unprecedented mushrooming of new party-list groups raised questions on whether they genuinely represent marginalized sectors of society as what the system originally aimed to achieve.

The most recent development in the issue came when the Supreme Court ordered the Commission on Elections (Comelec) to reveal the names of the nominees participating in the upcoming polls. Previous to this, militant groups have identified at least 11 contenders in the race as alleged “Malacañang fronts” formed to create a Congress favorable to the president.

### Party planning

Passed in 1995, Republic Act 7941 or the Party-List System Act is the enabling law of a provision in the 1987 Constitution allotting 20 percent of Congressional seats to “marginalized and underrepresented sectors” of society. Its proponents envisioned it as a “counter-current to the dominance of pro-foreign and elite interests in Philippine traditional politics. In other words, it seeks to provide a level playing field in Congress to allow such marginalized sectors to formulate legislation that will benefit their immediate constituencies and the nation as a whole.

Section 5 of RA 7941 specifically identified such sectors to include the following: labor, peasant, fisherfolk, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, elderly, handicapped, women, youth, veterans, overseas workers, and professionals.

Candidate groups have to get at least two percent of all the votes to gain one seat in Congress. Each party-list, however, can only occupy a maximum of three seats. During its first enactment in 1998, 13 out of 123 accredited groups passed this required benchmark. In 2001, the number rose to 20. In 2004, there were 24 party-list representatives in the 13<sup>th</sup> Congress. Despite the upward trend, however, such numbers are still considerably lower than the maximum 53 seats allotted for party-list groups.

### Party invite

Allegations of Palace involvement in the sudden mushrooming of party-list groups surfaced when several militant organizations leaked an October 2006 memorandum from the Office of External Affairs (OEA) assistant head Marcelo Fariñas addressed to the president. The OEA is the same agency that sponsored the 2006 signature campaign to amend the 1987 constitution.

The memo “informs” the president of the creation of a “special concerns group” tasked to provide support to the campaign of “pro-administration” groups to “ensure the winning of 9 to 12 seats” in the 14<sup>th</sup> Congress. Such groups, the memo adds, will form a “party-list bloc that will support the plans of administration and “substantially lower the number of leftist and left-leaning party-list organizations” in Congress. To fund its operations, moreover, it asked for a P5.5 million budget from the president’s intelligence funds. Fariñas has denied issuing the memo.

Attached to the memorandum is a list of the four main party-list groups identified with the Arroyo administration. One of them, Agbiag!, is headed by Fariñas himself. Meanwhile, in a television interview last March, two of such party-lists, Agbiag! and Babae Ka admitted receiving assistance from the OEA in setting up their organizations.

This allegation, if proven true, spells serious legal repercussions for the Arroyo administration. In its landmark ruling in *Ang Bagong Bayani vs. Comelec* in 2001, the Supreme Court explicitly emphasized that party-list groups must not be in any way associated with or funded by the government. “If Malacañang disbursed funds in support of those party-list groups, that violates the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act,” said Judge Cleto Villanueva of the Center for People Empowerment in Governance. “That

is an impeachable offense.” (see sidebar)

### Party people

Upon revelation of the party-list nominees, Arroyo critics quickly identified “dubious” personalities associated with the newly formed groups. For instance, Ang Kasangga’s top nominee is Marilou Arroyo-Lesaca, the president’s sister-in-law. Aksyon Sambayanan’s top official is Norberto Gonzalez, Arroyo’s security adviser. Bantay’s founder is retired Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, staunch Arroyo supporter and tagged “the butcher” by activists for being allegedly responsible for hundreds of killings and disappearances of their ranks in Central Luzon.

The list goes on. Ahon Pinoy’s top nominee is Klink Ang, son of Commission on Filipino Overseas and known Arroyo ally, Dante Ang. Lakas lawyer and Sigaw ng Bayan convenor Raul Lambino is the second nominee of the Barangay Association for National Advancement and Transparency (BANAT).

A more notable case, though, is Byaheng Langit’s nominee, Dr. Arsenio Abalos, brother of Comelec chairman and presidential appointee Benjamin Abalos. The Supreme Court also ruled that the party-list nominee should come from the same marginalized group it aims to represent. Byaheng Langit is a party-list for tricycle drivers while Dr. Abalos is a physician.

Some party-list groups, meanwhile, have turned the system into a family affair. The Alliance of Volunteer Educators’ (AVE) first nominee is incumbent Rep. Eulogio Magsaysay; its third, his mother, Adelaide. Ang Laban ng Indigenong Filipino (ALIF) takes this a step further with all its nominees belonging to the family of incumbent Rep. Acmad Maruhom Tomawis, yet another congressman. Both Magsaysay and Tomawis voted to junk the two impeachment bids against Arroyo.

### Party pooper

It is easy to figure out why Arroyo and her cohorts seem hell-bent on taking advantage of the loopholes presented by the current party-list system. She realizes that the House of Representatives is a crucial arena. In the two foiled impeachment bids against her during the 13<sup>th</sup> Congress, 12 of the 24, or half, of the party-list representatives, voted to impeach her.

It is highly possible that the upbeat trend of party-list groups gaining more and more seats in Congress may have alarmed Arroyo. In

### Party Guidelines

#### Republic Act No. 7941: The Party-List System Act (1995)

Sec. 5. Registration – Any organized group of persons may register as a party, organization or coalition for purposes of the party-list system ... provided, that the sectors shall include labor, peasant, fisherfolk, urban poor, indigenous cultural communities, handicapped, women, youth, veterans, overseas workers, and professionals.

#### Ang Bagong Bayani vs. Comelec, Supreme Court ruling (2001)

- The party or organization must not be an adjunct of, or a project organized or an entity funded or assisted by, the government.
- Not only the candidate party or organization must represent marginalized and underrepresented sectors; so must also its nominees.

theory, such groups can comprise up to 53 seats in Congress. Assuming that all party-list representatives form a singular block, they can be a force to reckon with and, along with other anti-Arroyo solons, there would be no problem amassing the one-third votes needed to impeach a president. Clearly, Arroyo is a step ahead. She has foreseen such a scenario and now, she is exhausting all efforts to thwart another impeachment complaint. In the process, she risks compromising the whole party-list system, a once progressive and well-meaning mechanism.

It will not be surprising, therefore, if the Comelec will continue to ignore petitions from well-meaning groups to disqualify parties which a simple reading of the 2001 Supreme Court ruling will reveal illegal. Someone has crashed into the party-list system and the Comelec is giving her full access. ■

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