

**Speech of H. E. President Fidel V. Ramos  
Alay sa Kawal Foundation 6th Anniversary  
September 11, 1992**

**INTRODUCTION**

MR. CHAIRMAN ED ESPIRITU, PRESIDENT MON PEDROZA, SECRETARY RENE DE VILLA, GENERAL BUDDY ABADIA, THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF ALAY SA KAWAL FOUNDATION, THE AWARDEES, OUR SOLDIERS, FELLOW DONORS, MGA MINAMAHAL KONG KABABAYAN.

I HAVE ALWAYS THOUGHT IN MIND WHAT ALAY SA KAWAL STANDS FOR, HAVING BEEN AMONG THOSE THAT HAD WANTED VERY MUCH TO HAVE A PROGRAM LIKE THIS, ESTABLISHED FOR OUR PUBLIC SERVANTS IN UNIFORM. AND I AGREED VERY, VERY ENTHUSIASTICALLY IN THE CHOICE OF THE NAME OF THE FOUNDATION, ALAY SA KAWAL, ASK. KAYA MGA KASAMA, SA ARAW NA ITO, BECAUSE THIS IS THE PERIOD NOT ONLY OF ASKING BUT ALSO OF GIVING, I WOULD LIKE TO SUGGEST THAT THE DONORS ALSO BE LABELLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH AN APPROPRIATE ACRONYMN BECAUSE THEY MUST GIVE, GIVE. MAYBE, THAT CAN STAND FOR GENEROUS INDIVIDUALS WHO VOLUNTEER ESSENTIALS.

KAYA, NAKIKITA KO LAHAT ANG MGA KASAMA NATIN DITO, THEY ARE NOW MEMBERS OF THAT GIVE ORGANIZATION. AND SO, LET ME EXPRESS TO ALL OF YOU, MY GRATITUDE FOR JOINING US AT HEROES HALL IN THIS AUSPICIOUS 6TH ANNIVERSARY OF ALAY SA KAWAL FOUNDATION. AND LET ME CONGRATULATE THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD, THE OFFICERS AND THE SUPPORTERS OF ALAY SA KAWAL IN THIS 6TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF ITS FOUNDING.

IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT SOON AFTER OUR PEOPLE POWER REVOLUTION ON FEBRUARY 1986 AT EDSA, YOU ALREADY BEGAN WORKING FOR THE WELFARE OF OUR PUBLIC SERVANTS IN UNIFORM BY FOCUSING YOUR EFFORTS ON THE EMPOWERMENT OF THE FILIPINO SOLDIER AND HIS FAMILY. I SHOULD ALSO STRESS HERE THAT YOU AIMED AT REWARDING OUR HEROES OF THE BATTLEFIELD A FULL YEAR BEFORE THE FAILED COUP ATTEMPT ON AUGUST 1987. WHAT YOUR GROUP OF CIVILIAN PROFESSIONALS DID SO VOLUNTARILY SHOULD BE VIEWED BY EVERY COUNTRYMAN AND FOR THEIR FELLOW FILIPINOS.

YOU IN ALAY SA KAWAL WERE AMONG THE FIRST TO DEMONSTRATE WHAT A GENUINE NGO SHOULD BE ALL ABOUT AND THAT IT IS BY NO ACCIDENT THAT YOUR FOUNDATION IS NOW THE LEADING NGO, DEDICATED ENTIRELY TO THE WELL-BEING OF THE SOLDIER. WHILE OTHERS EVEN VOICED SUPPORT FOR THOSE THAT WOULD DEFY THE CONSTITUTION AND UNDERMINE THE SUPREMACY OF CIVILIAN RULE, YOU IN ALAY SA KAWAL CHOSE TO REWARD THOSE WHO GALLANTLY DEFENDED IT. WHILE WIDOWS AND ORPHANS WEPT IN THEIR GRIEF, YOU OFFERED YOUR HAND AND GAVE YOUR SUCCOR AND GENUINE CONCERN FOR YOUR FELLOW FILIPINOS.

OUR HEROES OF THE BATTLEFIELD NEED MORE OF YOU IN TIME OF PEACE. I KNOW YOU HAVE ALSO SENT OUR COUNTRY'S TOP ENTERTAINERS TO HELP SOOTHE OUR FRONTLINE SOLDIERS' TIRED SPIRITS AND TO QUIET THEIR RUFFLED NERVES. I HAVE MYSELF ENJOYED MANY OF THE CORNY JOKES. NASAAN BA IYONG TATLONG BALOT DITO NA NAKASAMA KO SA EROPLANO? MABUHAY KAYO DIYAN, HA, AND THE OUTRAGEOUS PRESENTATIONS OF OUR SHOWBUSINESS PEOPLE. BUT LEVITY ASIDE, THEIR PERFORMANCES REALLY WERE ALL

OUTSTANDING. WE ALL ENJOYED THEM AND OUR MORALE WAS HEIGHTENED INSPITE OF THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE BATTLEFIELD, BY YOUR PRESENCE AND BY YOUR PERFORMANCE.

HOWEVER, A LOT MORE NEEDS TO BE DONE BECAUSE OF THE FACT THAT GOVERNMENT LACKS THE RESOURCES WITH WHICH TO TOTALLY ALLEVIATE BY ITSELF, THE PLIGHT OF OUR ORDINARY SOLDIERS. TO EMPOWER THE SOLDIER AND HIS FAMILY IS NO DIFFERENT FROM EMPOWERING THE MASSES OF OUR PEOPLE. THE TASK REQUIRES SCALING THE WALLS OF TIRED POLICIES AND STRIVING INTO THE WORLD OF TRUE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRACY. IF YOU TRULY WANT TO EMPOWER, THEN, WE MUST MOVE TO PUT APPROPRIATE ECONOMIC POWER IN THE HANDS OF THOSE WHO WANT FOR BREAD. AND THIS IS THE VERY ESSENCE OF WHAT THIS ADMINISTRATION MEANS BY CARING AND SHARING. THE MAJORITY OF OUR SOLDIERS AND THEIR FAMILIES LANGUISH IN MEAGER SALARIES AND A STANDARD OF LIVING THAT NEEDS MUCH TO BE DESIRED. LIKE OUR MASSES, OUR SOLDIERS ARE VICTIMS OF A SYSTEM OF ECONOMIC INEQUALITY AND WHILE MY ADMINISTRATION IS COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THEIR LOT AS BEST AS WE CAN, COMPETING FINANCIAL DEMANDS OF OTHER SECTORS, SOME WITH EVEN MORE URGENT NEEDS TIE UP OUR HANDS.

FINALLY, I CANNOT ALLOW THIS OCCASION TO PASS WITHOUT TELLING YOU OF EDDIE RAMOS' VISION. WHENEVER WE SPEAK OF HEROISM ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD, IT IS A TRUISM THAT THE IMAGES READILY CONJURED ARE THOSE OF THE BATTLEFIELD, OF RUINS, OF MEN AND WOMEN AND CHILDREN SUFFERING AND DYING. IT IS AS IF OUR CONCEPT FROM HEROISM IS THAT OF DESTRUCTION AND DEATH ALONE AND NOTHING ELSE. IF WE ARE TO BE TRUE TO THE ALAY WE REPOSE TODAY AND THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ALAY SA KAWAL, THEN, WE MUST BEGIN TO DEFINE THE HEROIC AND THE HERO IN TERMS THAT WHO CAN END THE BLOOD AND THE SWEAT AND THE TEARS OF WAR. WE MUST BEGIN TO LOOK AT DEEDS THAT CELEBRATE THE SPIRIT, HONEST LABOR AND THE JOYS OF PEACE.

I LIKE TO THINK THIS THOUGHT ACQUIRES SPECIAL SIGNIFICANCE IN THE LIGHT OF MY ADMINISTRATION'S RECENT EFFORTS TO TAKE THOSE EXTRA STEPS TOWARD ENDING THE PROTRACTED ARMED STRUGGLE IN OUR COUNTRYSIDE AND TO COAX IN THE PROCESS ALL THOSE BROTHERS AND SISTERS OF OURS WHO HAVE TAKEN ARMS AGAINST THE STATE, TO RESPOND TO OUR CHALLENGE OF PEACE. WE NEED A NATION OF LIVING HEROES, A NATION IN WHICH EVERY FILIPINO WHATEVER HIS CIRCUMSTANCES, SIMPLY DOES WHAT HAS TO BE DONE FOR THE SAKE OF GOD, COUNTRY AND FELLOW FILIPINO.

THERE HAVE BEEN SO MANY EXAMPLES OF SUCH HEROISM TO BE SURE, BUT THERE HAVE NOT BEEN ENOUGH. I DREAM OF A NATION IN WHICH THOSE WHO PLOW THE FIELDS, WHO RUN THE ENGINES, WHO SERVE THE PEOPLE, WHO HEAL THE SICK, AND MOLD THE MINDS, PERFORM THEIR TASKS WITHOUT SORT OF SELF-AGGRANDIZEMENT AND SELF-GRATIFICATION BUT ONLY THE WISH TO WORK FOR THE WELFARE OF A FRIEND, A NEIGHBOR, A COMRADE AND A STRANGER IN NEED. I CAN ENVISION BUILDING THAT KIND OF A NATION. I AM CONFIDENT THAT IT CAN BE DONE IN OUR TIME. THAT NATION SHALL BE BUILT IN THE FOUNDATION OF THE REBIRTH OF THE FILIPINO SPIRIT. THAT NATION SHALL BE ONE IN WHICH EVERY FILIPINO IS A LIVING HERO. THIS IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ALAY SA KAWAL FOUNDATION.

AGAIN, CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR 6TH ANNIVERSARY. MABUHAY ANG ALAY SA KAWAL FOUNDATION. MABUHAY ANG PANGKAT NG MGA GENEROUS INDIVIDUALS WHO VOLUNTEER ESSENTIALS.

SALAMAT PO SA INYONG LAHAT.

