

**Speech of H.E. President Fidel V. Ramos
Toym Awarding Ceremonies
July 31, 1992**

MRS. JUDY ARANETA ROXAS, MR. TITOY PARDO, MR. BENJAMIN LIM, MR. JUAN DOMINGO, MR. ROBERTO ALVAREZ, MR. ROBERTO VIRAY, THE TOYM AWARDEES LED BY SENATOR JOEY LINA, THE OTHER AWARDEES OF THE PHILIPPINE JAYCEES AND THE GERRY ROXAS FOUNDATION OF PAST YEARS LED HERE BY MANY DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS, THE OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PHILIPPINE JAYCEES, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS AND FELLOW WORKERS IN GOVERNMENT, MGA KABABAYAN, MAGANDANG GABI PO SA INYONG LAHAT.

DESPITE OF THE MANY COMMITMENTS OF THE PRESIDENT, I MADE SURE I GOT HERE TONIGHT BECAUSE AMONG ALL THE MULTITUDINOUS AWARDS THAT WE FILIPINOS LIKE TO GIVE TO EACH OTHER, I HAVE BEEN WITNESS TO THIS ALMOST EVERY NIGHT SINCE MY INAUGURAL, I REGARD THIS ANNUAL TRIBUTE WHICH THE PHILIPPINE JAYCEES AND THE GERRY ROXAS FOUNDATION TOGETHER PRESENT TO THE BRIGHTEST AND THE BEST OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE AS REALLY WORTHWHILE TO BE ATTENDED BY THE PRESIDENT.

AND ONE OBVIOUS REASON IS THAT THIS AWARD IS THE MOST APPROPRIATE FOR A YOUNG COUNTRY LIKE OURS. AFTER ALL, 53 PER CENT OF ALL FILIPINOS ARE BELOW 20 YEARS OLD; WHILE ONLY THREE PER CENT ARE ABOVE 65.

I WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT I DO NOT BELONG TO EITHER CATEGORY.

BUT WE WHO ARE OLDER AND MORE EXPERIENCED, WHO HAVE MADE OUR MISTAKES, WHO HAVE LEARNED LIFE'S LIMITATIONS PERHAPS ARE A LITTLE MORE CAREFUL, A LITTLE MORE CAUTIOUS AND LITTLE MORE CONSERVATIVE THAN THESE YOUNG PEOPLE REPRESENTED BY OUR AWARDEES TONIGHT.

CONSERVATISM IS NO MEAN QUALITY -- BUT IT IS A QUALITY OF SETTLED SOCIETIES, OF SOCIETIES PAST THEIR PRIME; AND NOT OF SOCIETIES LIKE OURS IN

THE PHILIPPINES WHOSE GOLDEN AGE LIES AHEAD OF US-NOT BEHIND US.

THAT IS WHY, IN OUR URGENT EFFORT TO LIFT UP THE FILIPINO, WE NEED TO INFUSE IN THE NATIONAL SPIRIT THE DYNAMIC QUALITIES OF YOUNG PEOPLE --THE WILLINGNESS TO CHALLENGE OLD BELIEFS AND TO EXPERIMENT WITH NEW WAYS AND NEW THINGS; THE DARING TO TALK BIG; THE RESILIENCE THAT DISDAINS FAILURE, AND THE BOUNDLESS ENERGY TO PURSUE EXCELLENCE WHEREVER IT MAY LEAD.

THESE ARE QUALITIES WE NEED DESPERATELY IN OUR TIME -- IN GOVERNMENT, IN BUSINESS, IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE OTHER PROFESSIONS, IN ART AND CULTURE . I AM PARTICULARLY PLEASED THAT AMONG THOSE YOU HAVE CHOSEN IS ONE OF OUR OWN YOUNG MEN IN THE CABINET TOGETHER WITH YOUNG SENATOR LINA .

I ALSO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CAUSING ONE TO BE ELEVATED TO THE HIGHEST OFFICE IN HER PROFESSION BECAUSE MY TAKING IN HER PREDECESSOR INTO THE CABINET CREATED THAT VACANCY FOR HER.

AND WE HAVE ALSO ONE ALUMNA FROM THE PRESIDENTIAL MANAGEMENT STAFF WHO IS AN AWARDEE TONIGHT . HINDI NINYO ALAM KUNG SINO IYON, ANO ? OUR COMMISSIONER OF THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS.

I TAKE NOTE OF WHAT TITOY PARDO SAID IN HIS MESSAGE A WHILE AGO AND THAT PRESIDENT RAMOS MUST SELECT TOYM OR TOYM-WS FOR HIS CABINET. BUT I WOULD LIKE YOU TO KNOW THAT IS PRECISELY WHAT I HAVE DONE EVEN WITHOUT KNOWING THAT THEY WERE TOYM AWARDEES. YOU COULD TELL FROM AFAR THE QUALITY OF THESE PEOPLE, EIGHT OF WHOM ARE NOW IN THE RAMOS CABINET BECAUSE OF THE SERVICE, THE PERFORMANCE AND THE RECORD THAT THEY ACHIEVED SINCE BEING AWARDED THE TOYMW AWARD.

AND I WOULD LIKE TO NAME THESE PEOPLE FOR YOU, IN CASE YOU FORGOT. THEY ARE EITHER CABINET RANK OR CABINET MEMBERS.

JOEY CUISIA, GOVERNOR OF CENTRAL BANK; ARMAND FABELLA, SECRETARY OF EDUCATION CULTURE AND SPORTS: JUAN FLAVIER, SECRETARY OF

HEALTH; DANIEL LACSON, PRESIDENTIAL ADVISER ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT WITH CABINET RANK; RODOLFO REYES, PRESS SECRETARY; RAMON DEL ROSARIO JR., SECRETARY OF FINANCE; AND THERE IS ONE MORE THAT I ALMOST FORGOT, JOSEPH ESTRADA, CHAIRMAN, PRESIDENTIAL ANTI-CRIME COMMISSION WHICH MAKES HIM A MEMBER OF THE CABINET IN ADDITION TO BEING THE VICE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC.

AND SO MY DEAR FRIENDS, WE SHALL CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR YOUNG TALENT. AND IN CASE YOU HAVE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THREE REMAINING CABINET SLOTS PLEASE LET ME KNOW. PERHAPS, SHOULD ASK MY CLASSMATE IN HIGH SCHOOL JUSTICE FELICIANO TO HELP US IN THIS SEARCH FOR TALENT SINCE HE DID SUCH A GOOD JOB WITH THIS SET OF TOYM AWARDEES.

MY DEAR FRIENDS, WE NEED TO LOOK AT OUR COUNTRY AND OUR PEOPLE AFRESH -- TO SEE OUR COUNTRY, NOT AS THE "TAILENDER OF SOUTHEAST ASIA" AS IT IS CONTEMPTUOUSLY CALLED TODAY AND OUR COUNTRYMEN NOT AS THE ABJECT HOUSEMAIDS AND COOLIES OF MORE FORTUNATE PEOPLES.

WE NEED TO LOOK AT OUR NATION THROUGH THE EYES OF THE YOUNG -- TO SEE IN OUR MIND'S EYE WHAT GREATNESS OUR COUNTRY CAN ATTAIN .

WE NEED TO SEE OUR NATION AS OUR REVOLUTIONARY HEROES OF A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, WHO MUST HAVE SEEN IT AT ITS BIRTH AS A NATION IN WHICH EVEN GOOD THINGS ARE POSSIBLE.

IN A WAY, OUR TIMES TODAY ARE AS REVOLUTIONARY -- AS RADICALLY DIFFERENT FROM THE IMMEDIATE PAST -- AS THE TIMES WERE DURING THE NATIONALIST AGITATION IN THE LAST YEARS OF SPANISH RULE, WHICH SAW THE RISE OF A GENERATION OF FILIPINOS AS YOUNG AS -- IF NOT YOUNGER THAN -- THE NINE YOUNG PEOPLE IN WHOSE HONOR WE ARE GATHERED HERE TONIGHT.

OF OUR GALAXY OF HEROES FROM THAT REVOLUTIONARY PERIOD -- STARTING FROM THE PROPAGANDISTS OF THE LATE 1880S AND ENDING WITH THE POLITICAL NATIONALISTS OF THE EARLY AMERICAN PERIOD -- EVERYONE WOULD HAVE EASILY MET THE AGE -- AND ACHIEVEMENT -- REQUIREMENT OF TODAY'S TOYMW AWARDS.

FOR INSTANCE, GRACIANO LOPEZ JAENA WAS ONLY 32 YEARS OLD WHEN

HE FOUNDED LA SOLIDARIDAD IN MADRID.

OF ALL THE HEROES OF THE REVOLUTION, MARCELO DEL PILAR WAS THE LATE BLOOMER. HE WAS 39 WHEN HE TOOK OVER THE EDITORSHIP OF THE SOL. BUT THEN HE WAS ALREADY A VETERAN OF THE PROPAGANDA MOVEMENT, HAVE STARTED ATTACKING THE RELIGIOUS HIERARCHY IN HIS NATIVE BULACAN AS A LAWYER AT AGE 30. AND HIS SATIRE WAS SO BITING THAT HE HAD TO FLEE TO SPAIN TO ESCAPE PERSECUTION BY THE MONASTIC SOVEREIGNTY.

AT 26 YEARS OF AGE, JOSE RIZAL HAD FINISHED THE NOLI; AND AT 35, HE WAS DEAD, THE FIRST AND GREATEST MARTYR OF THE FILIPINO NATION THEN BEING BORN .

ANDRES BONIFACIO FOUNDED THE KATIPUNAN WHEN HE WAS ALL OF 29 YEARS OLD. AND WHEN THE REVOLUTION BEGAN, BONIFACIO'S FAITHFUL DEPUTY, EMILIO JACINTO, WAS STILL FOUR MONTHS SHORT OF BEING 21 .

WHILE EMILIO AGUINALDO WAS THE VICTORIOUS GENERAL OF THE REVOLUTION AT AGE 27; HE WENT ON TO FOUND ASIA'S FIRST FREE REPUBLIC AT AGE 29.

GENERAL GREGORIO DEL PILAR WAS ONLY 25 WHEN HE FOUGHT HIS LAST BATTLE, AS AGUINALDO'S REAR GUARD AT TIRAD PASS .

APOLINARIO MABINI WAS 34 WHEN HE TOOK UP THE INTELLECTUAL AND POLITICAL LEADERSHIP OF THE MALOLOS REPUBLIC.

SERGIO OSMEÑA AND MANUEL L. QUEZON WERE BOTH 29 WHEN OSMEÑA BECAME SPEAKER AND QUEZON THE MAJORITY FLOOR LEADER OF THE FIRST PHILIPPINE ASSEMBLY UNDER AMERICAN RULE IN 1907.

TODAY, MY FRIENDS AS A HUNDRED YEARS AGO -- THERE IS NO LACK OF PUBLIC TASKS THROUGH WHICH OUR YOUNG PEOPLE CAN ATTAIN THEIR OWN KIND OF CIVIC HEROISM. AND THE MOST URGENT IS THE RESHAPING AND MODERNIZATION OF NATIONAL POLITICS.

IN 1992, WE SAW THE BEGINNING OF THE END FOR THE TRADITIONAL PATRONAGE POLITICS WHICH HAVE LONG ENCUMBERED PHILIPPINES PROGRESS. THANKS TO THE CITY AND TOWN MIDDLE CLASS, WE MAY EXPECT THE RISE OF A

MORE OPEN, MORE PROGRESSIVE, MORE IDEALISTIC, MORE PURPOSEFUL KIND OF POLITICS IN THE FUTURE WHICH IS THE POLITICS OF THE YOUNG.

UNDER THIS NEW POLITICS, FUTURE PRESIDENTS, SENATORS, CONGRESSMEN AND HIGH LOCAL OFFICIALS SHOULD BE ABLE TO APPEAL ABOVE THE HEADS OF THE PROFESSIONAL POLITICIANS DIRECTLY TO THE ELECTORATE.

AS YOU ALL KNOW, I HAVE MADE EFFORTS THROUGH A PROPOSED AMNESTY PROCLAMATION TO CONCILIATE WITH OUR RADICAL INSURGENTS. MANY OF THEM, YOUNG STUDENTS, YOUNG FARMERS BUT JUST LIKE SOME OF THE TOYM AWARDEES, MANY ALSO HAVE REACHED MIDDLE AGE IN OUR HILLS AND FORESTS.

THIS INITIATIVE THAT I HAVE UNDERTAKEN IS A KEYSTONE OF OUR GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM TO RESTORE STABILITY TO OUR COUNTRY. AND ONE REASON I AM DOING THIS IS TO PROVE TO SOME OF OUR RADICAL BUT IDEALISTIC YOUNG PEOPLE WHO MAKE UP THE CADRES OF THE INSURGENCY THAT PHILIPPINE NATIONAL SOCIETY IS NOT CLOSED TO THE POSSIBILITIES OF PEACEFUL CHANGE, ESPECIALLY FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE.

ANOTHER URGENT TASK IS THAT OF SOCIAL JUSTICE -- OF THE MORE EQUITABLE SHARING OF ECONOMIC GROWTH. I NOTE THAT THERE IS A YOUNG AND HAPPY ENTREPRENEUR AMONG OUR HONOREES, HE IS ALWAYS SMILING. I TRUST THAT OUR YOUNG RISK-TAKER WILL MAKE PUBLIC USE AS HE ALREADY IS DOING OF THE PRIVATE WEALTH HIS TALENT WILL AMASS FOR HIM.

AT MY INAUGURAL -- AND AGAIN DURING MY STATE OF THE NATION ADDRESS -- I DECLARED MY RESOLVE TO OBTAIN FOR OUR PEOPLE WHO ARE AMONG THE POOREST, THE HUMANITIES OF LIFE.

AND SO I ASK YOU -- OUR NINE YOUNG HONOREES AND THE YOUNG BUSINESSMEN AND PROFESSIONALS WHO ARE YOUR HOSTS, THE PHILIPPINE JAYCEES AND THE GERRY ROXAS FOUNDATION TO JOIN ME IN A CRUSADE TO LAY DOWN THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE ON WHICH THE FILIPINO POOR CAN BUILD NEW LIVES.

PART OF OUR TASK MUST BE TO COMPEL THOSE FILIPINOS WHO ARE NOT POOR TO FULFILL THEIR CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES.

YOU AND I MUST WORK TOGETHER -- TO RAISE COUNTERVAILING PRESSURE AGAINST THOSE INTEREST GROUPS DETERMINED TO KEEP THINGS AS THEY ARE IN OUR COUNTRY. GROUPS LIKE YOURS MUST SPEAK AND ACT FOR THE FILIPINOS POOR -- ESPECIALLY FOR THE YOUNG FILIPINO POOR UNTIL THE POOR ARE STRONG ENOUGH TO SPEAK AND ACT ON THEIR OWN.

YOU AND I MUST GENERATE A NATIONAL CONSENSUS FOR ERADICATING NATIONAL POVERTY AND ATTAINING AN ADEQUATE MEASURE OF SOCIAL EQUITY -- BECAUSE AT LEAST IN THE SHORT TERM, PRO-POOR PROGRAMS WILL WORK AGAINST THE INTERESTS OF THE NON-POOR .

IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, HUMAN SOCIETIES SEEK ECONOMIC GROWTH NOT JUST BECAUSE IT ENABLES HUMAN BEINGS TO ACCUMULATE MATERIAL GOODS. ECONOMIC GROWTH IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE IT ALLOWS INDIVIDUAL HUMAN BEINGS TO REALIZE THE FULL POSSIBILITIES OF THEIR LIVES.

ECONOMIC GROWTH WILL REALLY MEAN NOTHING UNLESS IT LEADS ALL OF US TO A HUMANE SOCIETY.

WHAT WE MUST SEEK TO BUILD IS A NATIONAL COMMUNITY FOUNDED ON THE ROCK OF SHARING AND CARING, OF ACCEPTING JOYFULLY OUR RESPONSIBILITY FOR ONE ANOTHER .

AND, IN THIS WORK, YOU, THE YOUNG FILIPINOS REPRESENTED BY THE OUTSTANDING YOUNG MEN AND WOMEN, MUST INSIST ON BECOMING THE FULL PARTNERS OF THEIR ELDERS. THIS IS THE MESSAGE WE HOPE ALL THE AWARDEES

WILL CARRY ON TO THEIR FELLOW YOUNG FILIPINOS.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH AND AGAIN MY CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THIS YEAR'S OUTSTANDING AWARDEES.

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