

### The 3Ks of PNoy's Administration

The administration of President Noynoy Aquino is reaping criticism for practicing the so-called KKK —“kakampi, kaklase, kabarilan.” This is nothing new. During her term, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was also accused of giving undue protection to supposed collaborators behind various anomalies. One of the severe critics of GMA was the camp of former President Erap, who himself was convicted of providing custody to *kumpares* and *kabarkadas*. Even the administration of former President Corazon Aquino was not spared from the alleged influence of *Kamag-anak, Inc.*

This phenomenon is not unique to the Philippines. It happens even in the most democratic countries, albeit in different degrees. Aside from the public sphere, it is also prevalent in corporations, private organizations and even the church. It seems it is natural for anyone to rely on his closest acquaintances or “inner circle”. Why work with a stranger, or someone who has yet to prove his competence? Working with a friend gives one the confidence that he will not be abandoned in times of crisis.

And yet... as a public servant, one is beholden to the majority of people, before one's own immediate circle. A public servant represents not just one group of acquaintances but an entire nation; one's entire tenure is an offering to the public. This is the principle of democracy. Consequently, it is important that a public official keeps in mind the other three "Ks" of “Kababayan, Katapatan” and “Kakayahan.”

*Kababayan* means that one must treat all people as fellow men regardless of race, religion, or even political convictions. All must be seen as equals and treated fairly.

Public servants must also have *Katapatan* — that is, loyalty — not to his relatives or schoolmates, but to the Constitution, rules and regulations, and other guiding principles by which he or she has sworn allegiance. Every public official must be loyal first to principles of democracy and honest governance, beyond personal relationships.

Finally, every official must be competent, that is, possessing *Kakayahan*. Public appointments or designations should not depend on one's privileged place as a relative, acquaintance or peer. All must be assessed on the basis of the skills or qualifications required to get the job done.

Scripture, as always, gives us a clear illustration of the hierarchy of principles by which we must treat one another. Concerning discipleship, Jesus taught, “If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple (Luke 14:26).”

James wrote that in the Church, Christians are to regard each other as fellow heirs of Christ, and are not to discriminate on the irrelevant basis of social standing (James 2:1). Let us employ the hierarchy of principles appropriate to the sphere of public service — the people and their good before one's comfort and oneself.

*This editorial is written by Atty. Ome Candazo. Ome is ISACC's Fellow on Media and Law.*