

My reflections on my 2nd month of Calvary
Paying the price of Truth
Jun Lozada

Life in the Hot Seat

I left Manila for Hong Kong upon the instruction of the office of the Executive Secretary with the person of Deputy Executive Secretary Gaité arranging the ante-dating of my documents with DENR Sec. Lito Atienza to legitimize my travel to avoid my appearance at the Senate last Jan. 29, 2008. It is now exactly two months from that fateful January morning to today March 29, 2008, two calendar months time but almost equivalent to an entire lifetime for me and my family, for our former tranquil family life is now like a mirage in the desert, it may appear to be there but only to disappear when you come closer to it.

Why did they want to kill me?

The GMA administration must have really feared so much what I know of the corruption under her administration that when I came back to Manila last Feb. 05, 2008, I was taken forcibly by unidentified men led by a man which I would know later as Gen. Atutubo, the Asst. Gen. Mngr. Of the NAIA for Security, the same man who made a slashing gesture on his neck when turn around to face the CCTV camera at the NAIA, I was brought by these mystery men to Cavite and Laguna with intention to kill me and silenced me for good. How I survived was a story of grit and divine grace, how my wife and my sister was able to contact & be put "on the air" by the radio stations after they were alerted by our brother who was trying to pursue me from the NAIA, how the religious reacted when I was lost and how the Senate President demanded from the PNP to produce me was something that nobody can put together , but in the end it was Media that actually saved my life as I have heard it myself "Ibalik na natin to at masyado na raw mainit ang media", Thank you Media, especially the AM radio and TV for looking for me that fateful afternoon of February 05 of 2008.

The lies begins

I was forced to write in my own handwriting an official request for security addressed to the Chief PNP Gen. Sonny Razon by the unidentified men upon instruction given over the phone by their superior, who was the same person who angrily told me to stop texting my location and turn off my phone, who introduced himself to me as George. I remembered Sec. Atienza calling up the man and asked that the phone be handed to me, to tell me that everything is ok and that I am free to go home, then Sec. Neri called me up as well to tell me to calm down my wife because its creating a media hype already. But my captors have a different idea, they brought me instead to Libis, Q.C. and there I met a lawyer hired by Deputy Executive Secretary Manny Gaité of Malacañang to draft my false affidavit and be forced to sign it under duress of Col. Paul Mascariñas of the PNP the following day, while at the same time, Gen. Razon the PNP Chief was busy changing his story of where I was and how I ended up in their custody, up until the very end when I spoke with Mike Defensor who was convincing me to have a press conference to deny that I was abducted and deny any involvement with the NBN ZTE deal, kasi nasasaktan na si Mam o kung kokontra ka eh "tatrabuhin ka lang naman naming sa media!", a threat which is in full steam and venom right now, courtesy of malacañang mercenaries disguised as journalist and their special operatives handlers. This highly paid group has successfully buried the kidnapping and attempted rub-out case under a rubble of lies that they unceasingly manufacture against me, from poison letters, komiks, media attacks to black propaganda special operatives, waiting to pounce on every opportunity they can to destroy the trust that the public may have given me.

The Reluctant witness, I do not want to be a Hero!

The first Senate hearing was really a gut wrenching experience, I was physically exhausted from lack of sleep for almost a week, I was not able to eat well for two days before the hearing, my nerves are wracked from psychological tension, I was afraid of the consequences of what I am going to say for myself, my family, my career, my reputation and my future. And I was fearful of what the GMA cabal will do to me for what I was about to do, knowing fully well their vindictiveness on their enemies which I was to become.

My hands were shaking when I was taking the oath to tell the truth to God and to the country, it was almost ten hours of agonizing discourse with the senators, with questions ranging from the profound to the ridiculous, some with empathy some with malice and spite, altogether it was an experience that I do not wish upon anyone else.

The succeeding ones were not as gruelling as the first but as demanding in terms of defending the truth from those who attacked it and wish to destroy it with their lies, I was at first polite being once a colleague of these men, but was forced to be more resolute in rebutting their lies when they shamelessly heaped upon the senators and the viewing public lies upon lies upon lies, which they themselves were contradicting in their own testimonies. I must admit that I was ambivalent between having pity on them for what they were doing against their conscience and scorn for them for blatant kapal ng mukha in telling all of these lies as if all the Filipino are stupid, at the end, I just left all to God who knows the truth even in the hearts of men and prayed that I just be left in his peace despite all the fury around me.

The Days between the hearings, invitations to speak!

The Association of the Major Religious Superiors of the Philippines, known as the AMRSP, who provided the Sanctuary to my young family and moral support to me during the entire period from Feb. 05, 08 to the present, started receiving invitations from the different schools and universities beginning initially from members of the Catholic Educators Association of the Philippines, known as CEAP, then even from non-sectarian universities such as the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP) and the Phil. Normal University (PNU), then a series of Sunday masses called the "Mass for Truth" was launched by the Watch, Pray and Act movement (WPA), The Religious of the AMRSP consulted the Blue Ribbon Committee if I would be allowed to go to these activities, which the senate agreed to allow under the condition that the Senate Security be given the overall security responsibility for my safety.

No Strategy, No Campaign

There is no strategy or a campaign, it was just a spontaneous response to an outpouring of support from the different sectors of society particularly from the youth. We don't even have a prepared speech when we go to the schools just for me to be physically present is sometimes enough for the youth to feel in solidarity with what I did and what I stood for and that is "No more to corruption and greed!".

There is no guideline either, sometimes we get to face a boisterous mob, sometimes we get to face a few people listening intently. Government propagandist are alarmed with the kind of warm reception I am having from the young people and they are immediately countering with all sorts of black propaganda that I am now on the political campaign trail for 2010, and to my surprise many people did actually buy this propaganda until they actually spoke with me and realized that they were again fooled once again by the sorcerer of the administration. As I have said many times over, all I want is to do after this is over and I'm hopefully in one piece is to put up a chicken inasal business, but on a more serious note, let me categorically state that I am not running for any electoral position on 2010.

No Politico, No Funding

One of the favourite lie by the GMA administration that is being ably spread by the National Security Council and its religious cohorts headed by Norberto Gonzales, is that I am a pakawala of certain politicians particularly Lacson & De Venicia, that I am receiving funds from these politicians handlers. I use to take it lightly until some of my close friends in the religious community who were attending theology classes being handled by the ideological twin of Gonzales in a university in katipunan, started telling me of how this Priest professor was actually using wiretapped conversations of me to deceive his students in moral theology that Jun Lozada is such a wily person who has outwitted the entire nation by staging his own kidnapping, rescue and even his senate appearance, and in the process has fooled the entire government machinery and its big wigs such as Sec. Atienza, Mike Defensor, Manny Gaita, Atty. Tony Bautista, Gen. Sonny Razon, The PSG, The PNP's Col. Mascariñas and his minions, what a tall tale this religious is telling, sobrang galing ko naman na malansi ko lahat itong mga madudunong na taong ito at sabay sabay pa. Then I was told that he is doing the same presentation when he does the retreat for some religious congregation, that is why I am now not surprised when officiating priests in our celebration of the mass will show me texts from their brother priests telling them not to be used by Lozada and his politician handlers, and much to my relief these priests who have actually heard me share my personal reflections would assure me that they will be the one to set right their misinformed brothers of their community.

In fact one of the best kept secret of my present predicament which I was not sharing with the public until I had the permission of the AMRSP is that one of the conditions of their sanctuary protection being provided for my family, is that I should not be associated with any political party or with any political figure or else they will be forced to take us out of their sanctuary program. I am 24/7 together with the religious brothers and sisters of the AMRSP who monitors who comes to visit and where I can go, I guess those who are not sure if they are being misled by these government propagandist can easily verify this information by calling the AMRSP National Office at 725-3478 and look for Sr. Estrella Castalone, FMA, Sr. Cres Lucero, SFIC or Sr. Mary John Mananzan, OSB.

All expense for our trips are to be paid for by the organization who invites us, is one of the major conditions for our acceptance of an invitation.

Public smiles, Private agonies

The media portrays me in a smiling and seemingly enjoying a new found fame in the public eye, but what media fails to portray is the private sufferings of myself and my family from the ceaseless harassment from death threats, character demolition, legal suits to black propaganda, the pain of seeing my children crying their hearts out upon seeing the news of my past mistake, the frustration to see my boys lost out their academic honors because they were able to go school for almost a month, to share the pain of my children who were ostracized by their barkada's parents at baka madamay pa sila sa gulo ni Lozada, the discomfort of not being able to stay in your own home, the fear for the physical security of my family, the insecurity of not being able to work out a living with a family to raise and the uncertainty of having a normal family life ever again.

To those who gets turned off when they see me on media portrayed like a politico, ako po ay humihingi ng paumanhin dahil ako ay walang training o pagsasanay, pero kayo kaya lumagay sa kalagayan ko? Pinagdudusahan ko na nga at ng aking pamilya ang pasiya kong maglingkod sa Bayan, ako pa ang sisihin ninyo dahil nakangiti ako pag nasa labas? I do not want to be self righteous, but may I ask you to reflect on these questions before you judge me?

- What have you done to correct corruption?
- What have you given up to fight corruption?
- What have you gained from corruption?
- What have you done to uplift the victims of corruption?
- Or are you one of those who will simply turn your back on corruption without trying to correct and you rationalize your inaction to fight corruption with such thoughts as “basta ako mabuti, hayaan mo na silang masasama dyan” or “Hayaan mo na sila baka madamay pa tayo sa gulo” and other similar excuses?

Sharing my Personal Reflections, Let the light into the Dark

Let me share with you now in writing my personal reflections similar to what I share with the students and parishioners when I talked to them during my visit, an act purely out of my own personal conviction as a Christian, of living up to the teaching “Love your neighbour as you love yourself”.

What is it in these reflections that the administration propagandist find so alarming I really do not know, although I suspect that they are afraid that these reflections may encourage many more people to go to the Light and uphold the truth that they know as well, and in the process shed light on the darkness that pervades the government and expose more of these corrupt transactions that has long been kept from the people.

Here is the first of the four lessons that I share with the people that they may avoid the same suffering that I am undergoing through right now because of my decision to tell the piece of truth that I know about the NBN ZTE deal.

1. If you know someone who wants to tell the truth, encourage them – Because from my own personal experience, nobody told me or encourage me to tell the truth when I was seeking the advice of my family, friends, colleagues, including the religious. What was worse is that I was even the one that was being asked to defend and justify my position why I wanted to tell the truth. I felt so alone then and sad that in our society, kung sino pa ang gusting magsabi ng totoo, siya pa ang dapat magpaliwanag bakit, hindi ba baliktad? Hindi ba ang dapat ay ang mga nagsisinungaling ang dapat pinag papaliwanag natin? Katulad ngayon, ako ang nagsabi ng totoo pero ako ang nagtatago kasama pati pamilya, samantalang yung mga nagsisinungaling ay malayang nakakauwi sa mala-palasyong bahay nila, malayang nakakapunta sa mga gusto nilang puntahan, malayang kasuhan ako ng kahit na anong kasinungalingan, pero walang humihingi sa kanila na ipaliwanag nga nila yung mga balu-baluktot na testimonia nila sa Senado. Napakalungkot na kalagayan na ito para isang bayan naturingan pang karamihan ay Kristiyano. Ipakita po natin sa ating kapwa na tayo ay handang sumuporta at umalalay sa mga gustong gumawa ng mabuti at mag sabi ng totoo.
2. Do not tolerate corruption, because by tolerating it you are actually participating in it – The second lesson I have learned is that in our Filipino society of today, we tolerate corruption and crime as long as our family is not affected. We tolerate corruption and crime in the name of peace, yung attitude na huwag ka ng makialam at baka madamay pa tayo. We tolerate corruption and crime by rationalizing that as long as we mean well to our fellowmen & in all self righteousness washed our hands with these crimes by saying “basta tayong pamilya ay mabuti hayaan mo na silang masasama gawin ang kalokohan nila!”. It is similar to turning your back when you see a victim being raped, you knew a crime is being committed but you did nothing

dahil baka madamay ka pa sa gulo, at nagsawalang kibo ka ulit nung nakita mong ninanakawan at pinapatay yung ibang tao sa ibang parte ng bansa, tapos nagsawalang kibo ka ulit nung ninakawan at napatay yung kapitbahay mo, ng dumating ang araw na ikaw at ang pamilya mo naman ang nabiktima ng mga magnanakaw at mamatay tao, nakita mo na wala ring kumibo para tulungan ka at iyong pamilya. Ganito na ang kalagayan n gating lipunan, wala ng Samaritanong gusting tumulong sa mga nabibiktima ng mga magnanakaw at mamamatay tao. What is worse with tolerating corruption is that those who tolerate it later on becomes part of the corruption, after a little more while then they become the purveyor of corruption themselves, kasi yan na lang ang paraan para umasenso. Ipakita natin na tayong mga Pilipino ay kayang kumilos laban sa mga masasama at pwedeng mamuhay ng marangal at Malaya laban sa korupsiyon.

3. Teach the children to listen to their conscience and model to them acts of integrity – This is one of the lessons I learned from my interaction with the young people during my initial school visits and this question was commonly asked by the youth in different schools, “Sir Jun, among all the people we saw and heard on TV regarding the NBN-ZTE deal, you are the one naman that we believe who is telling us the truth, but what we can not understand is why are you doing it? You have put your life in danger, you have put your family in harms way, you have lost your job, even your future is uncertain, why are you doing it? What will you get something in return? This question which is often asked with curious innocence and with no evident malice, which often will lead me to answer them that in life, there are certain things you must do because it is the right thing to do, because it is what your conscience dictates to be the right thing to do and often lead you to act in an honourable way, into an act of integrity and you do it without any consideration of money or material things in exchange. In fact, when I asked them if they still talk about honour & integrity with their parents, most of them will say “no!”, that is why it is important that parents should provide the children with a good role model. Although it may true that I did not receive money, material things or power in exchange for what I did, I told them that I have receive something that is more valuable in return and that is the genuine affection of strangers, including the trust and respect of many people particularly the youth, I told them that no amount of money can ever buy the affection, trust & respect of the people.
4. You must accept your own truths as you go to the light of truth – More than the fear for my life, more than the fear for the safety of my family, more than the fear for my career and my livelihood, was the fear that if I decide to hold the light of truth, I cannot avoid being the first one to be shone upon by its light, I cannot avoid that my own blemishes in life, my secrets be exposed to the public. It was this fear of laying the truth of your entire life to the public, of accepting with humility the confession of your own truth to the entire nation, it was the greatest fear I have to overcome in wanting to tell the piece of truth that I possess in the NBN-ZTE deal. Sino ba namang tao ang tumanda na walang nagawang kasalanan? But go on ahead with the truth, no matter how painful and difficult it may be, because based on my experience I have found that people and God are willing to forgive as long as you decide to go to the light, as long as you decide to tell the truth.

These are my reflections of my ordeal and the lessons I have learned over the last two months as a result of my decision to tell the truth of what I know about the NBN-ZTE deal, with the aim of encouraging other people as well to come to the Light and allow the Light into their hearts that have been darkened by lies, evil and deceit, which has contributed to the poverty and suffering of our people.

Seeking the truth & Demanding for accountability & justice

I want to end this reflection paper with the same thought that I started with Seeking out the Truth, the people should exercise their sovereign right, the highest right of a Nation for this administration to put out the remaining pieces of the picture of truth of the NBN-ZTE deal, I have paid and I'm still paying a very high price for the piece of truth that I have put out for the people to see. The failure of this administration to let out the other pieces of truth being held by the government, should lead to a demand for accountability by those who will be found betraying the trust of the people, for without truth and accountability there will be no justice in the land.

I have now come to realize, this is not about Jun Lozada, it is about every Filipino fighting for what is right against an unjust order, it is about every Filipino demanding from its government the truth amidst the lies & deceit, its about every Filipino rallying to battle against the evil that has long imprisoned the Filipino people.

And I have now finally understood what is the meaning of my sufferings for, I have paid the price of telling the Filipino something they have known all along and yet do not want to be told.