



Paglbaum

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ENVOY EXPLAINS SYRIA'S CHEMICAL WEAPONS

STORY ON PAGE 3



Consul General Issam Eldebs of the Syrian Arab Republic to the Philippines discusses the situation of Syria during the round table discussion at Pimentel Center, University of Makati. The issue on chemical weapons took centerstage during the discussions. (September 11)

IT'S 'PORK' MIS-USE THAT'S BAD

By Jay Dejaresco

'Pork barrel' allocation is an inanimate object and, by itself, it is neither good nor bad.

This was the observation of Prof. Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr., on the burning issue of alleged pork barrel misuse by several members of Congress.

Pimentel, Distinguished Professor of the Pimentel Center for Local Governance presented his thoughts on the pork barrel issue before the students of Executive Program of the College of Public Policy and Administration of the University of Makati on September 7, 2013

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Word from the Center

ROCKING THE ROCK

In Catholic tradition, Peter, the first Pope, was the Rock upon which the Christ built his Church.

He was crucified upside down. The other apostles and numerous disciples of the Christ were also tortured and they died for their beliefs.

Later, the Rock became a citadel of pelf and power, pomp and pageantry.

Now comes the 112th Pope, Francis I. He has been Pope for only a couple of months. But he is certainly rocking the Rock. And he is shaking not the foundation of its mission but the focus of its vision.

He wants the Church to be socially expansive, not dog-

matically exclusive; to embrace, not condemn, other faiths. Or individuals like the gays who are burdened by quirks of fate. Or women who want to limit the number of their children.

More concretely, the Pope wants the Church to be the Church of the Poor.

But can the Church be the Church of the Poor without the hierarchy and the faithful being poor in the mold of the Christ?

The Gospel of St. Luke cites a Beatitude of the Lord that proclaims: "Blessed are the poor because they will inherit the earth." St. Matthew's version of the Gospel modi-

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PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE A MUST

By Clarisse Aquino

Professor Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr. Chair of the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance key-noted the graduation rites of the Municipal Health's Government Program of the College of Governance and Public Policy of the University of Makati and the Zuellig Foundation last September 26.

In his speech during the commencement rites under the theme "Bridging Leadership Pursuing Health Equity, Prof. Pimentel, highlighted the significance of public health as a component of development in the countryside.

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It's 'Pork' *From Page 1*

He said it is the misuse of the funds that makes it bad. If used properly, pork barrel funds will redound to the welfare and benefit of the people.

"And the proper use can be assured if regulations are faithfully implemented," he added.

"Pork barrel" is a colloquial term which refers to budgetary allocations whose distribution and disbursement are subject to the exercise of discretion by officials designated by law.

Under the General Appropriations Act legislators are allocated Priority Development assistance Funds or PDAF which is meant to alleviate the plight of their poor constituents, particularly those that may not have gotten full attention by the national government.

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"After the right to life, health is a basic human right," Pimentel explained.

He challenged municipal leaders to ensure the delivery of local health services to the people in accordance with the health goals of their respective areas of jurisdictions.

"Budget planning must respond to the needs and priorities of local governments, particularly in the delivery of basic services," Pimentel stressed.

He urged the graduates to help integrate local health service management with the development plan of their local government units.

He also cited the need to focus on sustainability of budgetary provisions for health.

"Local leaders should work towards

Pimentel said the judicious use of pork barrel can alleviate the problem of poverty and under-development in many localities out of neglect arising from partisan politics, or by plain oversight.

Pimentel recalled that during his stint in the Senate: "As a rule, I told the recipients of my pork barrel funds never to allow anyone, not from my staff, my relatives or members of my family, to ever get a centavo from the funds as commission or payback or whatever corrupt transaction."

"Moreover, I also cautioned the beneficiaries to refrain from placing my name in the adverts of the programs or projects covered by my pork barrel. The reason is that the money that was allocated – even if they come from pork barrel funds – is not my money. It is the money of the people," he stressed.

developing mechanism for improving and expanding health service capacity," Pimentel maintained.

Sixteen local government leaders, including mayors received certificate course on public health governance.

They were Mayor Daisy A. Sayangda, Dr. Rodolfo C. Tiongson from Santol, La Union; Mayor John D. Balasya and Dr. Bernardo S. Chua of Kayapa, Nueva Vizcaya; Mayor Antero S. Lim and Dr. Diosdado G. Fuentebella of Goa, Camarines Sur; Former mayor Agnes P. Dycoco and Do. Coco Guia C. Serrano of Libon, Albay; Former Mayor Gracia M. Llamado and Dr. Catherine A. Chung; Mayor Natividad Isabel Magbalon and Dr. Irene Grace G. Calucin; Mayor Leny A. Arceñas and Dr. Jesus F. Camposano of San Jacinto, Masbate; and Mayor Melchor P. Petracorta and Dr. Jelve T. Cabanes-Lajom of Limasawa, Southern Leyte.

WORD *From Page 1*

ties the word, "poor", with the phrase, "in spirit", perhaps to clarify the meaning of that Beatitude.

The Christ, however, was not only poor in spirit. He was poor in fact.

On the day he was crucified, his only earthly possession was a piece of cloth that was essential to cover his personal modesty. His life before the crucifixion was also bereft of the trappings of affluence that characterized the lives of the privileged even of his time.

But as modern day Christians, we can probably take comfort in the fact that the evolving social teachings of Pope Francis are apparently anchored on Matthew's rendition on the Beatitude dealing with the kind of poverty that befits people who claim to be the Lord's followers.

For who among us, today, can truly say that we are poor in the image and likeness of the Lord?

The saving grace appears to be that we are all capacitated by the Holy Spirit to claim that we are – or, at the very least, we aspire to be - poor in spirit.

In real terms, that means detachment from the love of the "filthy lucre" in our daily lives; admittedly, a most difficult proposition to adhere to faithfully.

Still, it is only by freeing ourselves from the grip of things material that the challenge of Pope Francis for us to "make a mess" of the status quo will have relevance to our journey over the rough roads of our worldly existence into the joys of eternal life.



Prof. Nene Pimentel speaks at the 2nd Graduation Rites of the Certificate Course on Public Health Governance under the Academic progress of CGPP-PCLG in partnership with Zuellig Family Foundation at the University of Makati September 26, 2013.



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WHY DOES SYRIA HAVE CHEMICAL WEAPONS?

By Jay Dejaresco

Leverage.

This was the explanation by the highest ranking Syrian government official in the Philippines, the Consul General of the Arab Republic of Syria, Issam Eldebs.

Eldebs, who has been in the Philippines for more than 35 years and is married to a Filipina, gave the Philippines a 'Syrian perspective' of the trouble in his country which had been pushed to of a military attack by the West led by the United States.

Eldebs was guest of a roundtable discussion conducted by the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance at the University of Makati last September 11, 2013

In discussing the Syrian perspective, Eldebs referred to the geopolitical situation in the Middle East.

"Our neighbor, Israel has nuclear weapons," he said.

"We don't have nuclear weapons," he noted.

Israel and Syria have been long-time adversaries, with the two countries engaging in military skirmishes against each other's territories.

"How will Syria be able to match this uneven playing field?" he asked

Eldebs likened the situation to a man holding a gun in order that others will not try to hurt him.

"It's like a person having a gun. He will not use the gun to provoke violence. But he



Nene Pimentel cites the importance of peace in the region and the world as he delivers the closing remarks at the Round Table Discussion on Syria. (September 11)

wants his enemies to know he has a gun so that they will think twice about attacking him," Eldebs explained.

"Its a defense strategy," he explained.

Meanwhile, he vehemently denied the Syrian government forces were responsible for that chemical attack last August 21.

He blamed terrorists, extremists for launching the chemical attack, which the United States claim killed 1,400 people including more than 400 innocent children.

Eldebs said he hopes there will be peace in his country.

He is thankful to the Filipinos for their continuous prayers for peace in his country.

Eldebs, who has long ties with the Philippines, having been in the country dating back to the Marcos years, said

he has helped look out for the welfare and safety of Filipinos in Syria.

He also said much is not known about Syria.

Syria is a bedrock of Christianity, with so many Christian historical sites.

Damascus, the capital of Syria was the place where the Paul, was headed for his conversion.

Muslims and Christians live peacefully together in Syria, Eldebs said.

People are free in Syria, just like the way it is in the Philippines.

"Women can even wear shorts in Syria," he said.

In Syria, education is free. Books are free from kindergarten until college.

He admits Syria has created enemies because it does not bow to any foreign power.

Once Eldebs recounted, their Syrian leader told the leader of Saudi Arabia their country is like a dog tied on a leash, held by the hand of America.

This angered Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia had backed the U.S. initiative to strike Syria.

Syria has one of the biggest oil deposits in the Middle East.

Syria has struck economic deals with Russia, rather than the U.S.

Russia is known to be backing the government of Basher Al Assad.

Eldebs, due to his many years in this country, has become more of a local.

He speaks Tagalog fluently. He is an officer of a local Rotary club.



PILG President Gwen Gana and Prof. Pimentel hands a token to Consul General Issam Eldebs of the Syrian Arab Republic, Former President of Rotary Club of Makati Uptown Mache Torres looks on.



Participants gesture the Peace sign to articulate the general sentiment that should reign in troubled Syria.

DISCUSSION ON THE SITUATION IN SYRIA

Welcome Remarks by EVP EDITA CHAN
11 September 2013 at the Pimentel Center

- Our Prof. Emeritus, former Senator Nene Pimentel;
- Our distinguished guest, the Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Syria to the Philippines, His Excellency, Mr. Mohammed Issam Eldebs;
- UMak officials, faculty members, students, guests, and friends;
- Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good afternoon!

We have asked you to lay aside your work for a few moments to attend this meeting today under very disturbing circumstances with the current world scene.

While working on my speech for today's event a couple of days ago, I recalled one Snoopy cartoon strip from a newspaper—you know I'm fond of cartoon strips not necessarily for laughs but for some poignant insights on the human condition—to express exactly how I feel and how I know some of you feel today.

The strip shows Snoopy talking to himself about a school homework assignment. He says,

"This is my report.... I sat up all night working on it.... Well, actually, I didn't sit up all night working on it.... What I did was I sat up all night worrying about it.... There is a big difference!"

Like Snoopy, we know the difference between worrying and working. We are worrying about the imminent military strike of America to Syria... but there is little we can do about the would-be damage at this point.

Personally, politics is not my cup of tea. My lawyer-husband, Atty. Pio Chan, constantly reminds me that, although I am a public servant and holding a key position in the University, I should stay away from politics. I always keep that in mind. But as a conscientious citizen, I feel that I also have the right to express my personal opinion. I am not anti-America—obviously, you can sense that from my American English accent—but I have to disagree with President Obama's plan of a limited military strike on



Syria for the following reasons:

First, the Houston Chronicle was right in saying that the public has yet to see a single piece of concrete evidence produced by U.S. intelligence—no satellite imagery, no transcripts of Syrian military communications—connecting the government of President Bashar Assad to the alleged chemical weapons attack last August 21 that killed hundreds of people as U.S. government insists. In a rare interview with a US network, Assad insisted he was not behind the gas attack on a Damascus suburb.

Second, I agree with one Philippine congressman who commented that the planned US action does not seek approval by the United Nations Security Council. It is intended as a unilateral act that its author knows deliberately violates international law, which states, at Article 51, that:

"Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations..."

Third, the military intervention matters have become more complicated by the fact that reportedly up to 2,920 Filipinos are yet to be repatriated, with 142 of them currently in the custody of Philippine representation in Damascus. The security as well as the safe repatriation of our OFWs will require not only a stable Syrian regime, but also its cooperation and goodwill. The aftermath of the US attack would be devastating

to the more than 3 million OFWs around Middle Eastern countries.

Fourth, recent CNN Poll reported that 59% of the Americans oppose the military action.

These compelling reasons I believe, if not widely accepted by the majority among my countrymen, are enough to substantiate our stand to stay neutral in the midst of this brouhaha.

Being neutral, of course, does not mean to overrule the responsibility of prosecuting the culprit from that recent massacre in Damascus. As a grandmother, I feel the pain of those whose children and grandchildren in Syria helplessly afflicted by the chemical Weapons of Mass Destruction. Whether it was the Assad regime that used the weapons or the rebels, this reprehensible act violates international law and human rights and must absolutely be condemned in the strongest terms! Chemical poisoning as a weapon should be completely annihilated.

What Syria needs today is not military intervention but multilateral arrangements such as the United Nations.

I am just a simple academician whose knowledge about Syria is very limited. But what I do know is that Syria is a country with beautiful and wonderful people who love life.

Islam means peace. So, I pray to God, to Allah, let there be peace in Syria.

PUBLIC HEALTH GOVERNANCE GRADUATION RITES

Welcome Remarks by EVP EDITA CHAN

26 September 2013 at the Health and Science Building, University of Makati

- Our University President, Prof. Tomas B. Lopez, Jr.;
- Our Commencement Speaker, Prof. Emeritus, former Senator Nene Pimentel;
- Our Dean of the College of Governance and Public Policy, Prof. Ederson DT. Tapia;
- The President of Zuellig Family Foundation, Prof. Ernesto D. Garilao;
- Officials of Zuellig Family Foundation;
- UMak officials, faculty members, students, guests, and friends;
- Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good morning!

It is a pleasure and great privilege for me, as Executive Vice President of the University to be here with you today in this wonderful occasion. I am deeply honoured to speak to you all.

Let me express my congratulations to all of you who are graduating today! Although the program is quite young, the number of students taking their degrees here is impressive considering it targets municipal mayors and health officers.

Kudos to all the professors, and all other staff members, for making such a huge effort to educate, train and qualify all these distinguished people.

I congratulate the University Management thru the College of Governance and Public Policy, the School for Continuing Professional Education and the Zuellig Family Foundation for your inspired leadership. I congratulate the graduates' families and friends. I know the feeling you share in the sense of pride that accomplishment brings.

Today I have just one thing to say to all of you graduates: follow your passion. Do what you believe in. If you follow your own path, it is amazing where it will take you.

I know this from my own life. When I was young, I always hear people from the medical fields the principle in the Hippocratic Oath: **"to abstain from harm."**

Given my experience with so many challenges and trials personally and secularly, those words continue to hold special meaning. As a public servant and as a human being the principle of **"Do No Harm"** applies just as much to the responsibility of political leader-



ship as it does to the discipline of public health and medicine.

At my age and stage, I have seen so much public health concerns. A medical doctor could improve a child's cold, pneumonia or diarrhea, but that child would go back to a house without water or sanitation. He could put one, two, three – however many patients he had – pieces of the puzzle together, but the whole picture never came together as a whole. We all wanted to take steps forward to improve the health of the public.

We feel for those sick children and mothers, to be able to heal when they were ill, and see their smile and energy when they are healthy and fine.

In Germany, I remember the words written across a banner at the University of Berlin. It said: **Medicine is a social science, and politics is nothing more than medicine on a large scale.** The quote is by the German doctor and politician Rudolf Virchow, who established this relation between medicine and politics.

After all, the human body is much like the body politic. In public health, you look at how the body works and how the society works. You ask: What are the changes that we have to produce to improve the body's condition, and what are those to improve the condition of society?

You know that these issues are interconnected. Just as a healthy society is underpinned by the principles of equality and justice, good leadership is based on the pursuit of human rights and human dignity for all, with government deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed.

Today as we mark this passage in your lives, the world is changing, new forces are gathering. We are living in a new world and we need a new kind of leadership. Leadership that is just and inclusive. Leadership that respects the human being. Leadership that is ethical and derives its legitimacy by protecting the well-being of current and future generations.

As you pursue public health, you will serve yourself and others well by consulting widely and listening well before you take action. Throughout the years, I have learned that listening is a very powerful form of communication and absolutely essential to problem solving and good decision-making.

I appeal to you now. I urge you to look out upon the world, understand all that still needs to be done and to consider a life in the service of others.

As I said earlier, I urge you to follow your passion. Seek challenges and adventure. Be generous with your spirit and your time. Be generous with your listening and understanding. Be generous with your curiosity and your compassion.

Be generous in your service to others. As the great Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, said:

"Life offers you a thousand chances... all you have to do is take one."

So take the chance to make your world, your own municipalities, a better one – today and every day in every moment and with every person you encounter. Be generous and, believe me... what you receive in return will exceed your expectations – and also the expectations of those around you!

Good luck! I wish you all the best!

RECENT PICTORIAL EVENTS



Prof. Nene Pimentel discusses with the Professors and Students of Divine Word College of Calapan, the birth of local governance during their visit to the Pimentel Center (September 2).



Visitors from Tanauan, Batangas headed by Pastor Roy Carandang (September 3) engaged in insights to local governance.



UMak-PILG-LMP Memorandum of Agreement signing at Manila Hotel, with former Sen. Jose Lina, VP Editha Chan, Mayor Marcos League President, and Prof. Nene Pimentel. (September 10)



Prof. Alex Brillantes admiring the Durian, one of the fruits of labor at the Pestano Farm in Antipolo. (September 12)



Local Officials from the Municipality of Sta. Praxedes, Province of Cagayan led by Mayor Esterlina Ramos share their experience on local governance. (September 13)



Pastor King Flores, PILG Fellow, marks another milestone and gives a birthday blow-out at Emerald Restaurant. (September 25)



CGPP-Zuellig 2nd Graduation students with Pro. Nene Pimentel, VP Editha Chan and former Secretary Ernesto Garilao. (September 26)



Prof. Nene Pimentel keynotes the 1st POAP Human Resource Forum. (September 26)



UNIVERSITY OF MAKATI ACTIVITIES



CESELE-LUV FACULTY VOLUNTEERS HOLD LIVELIHOOD SEMINAR AND DISTRIBUTE GIFTS FOR UMAK'S ADOPTED SCHOOL, BUCK ESTATE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL



The Center for Extension Service, Entrepreneurial and Livelihood Education (CESELE)-League of UMak Volunteers (LUV)-Faculty was warmly welcomed by Buck Estate National High School, UMak's adopted school in

Barangay Buck Estate, Alfonso, Cavite, as they conducted a livelihood seminar and turned-over 22 packs of Pangkabuhayan Starter Kit (dishwashing liquid soap and fabric conditioner), sports and school supplies last July 27. Mrs.

Verna Hermoso, Buck Estate's Officer-in-Charge, together with the teachers, parents and officers of the General Parents-Teachers Association (GPTA) participated in the livelihood workshop.





UMak's Executive Vice President, Dr. Edita Chan, delivered the inspirational message and gave a talk on the K to 12 Program of UMak, while CESELE Director, Prof. Lhiza Ferrer, and President of

the LUV-Faculty, Prof. Toby Vargas, enlightened the participants with stories about the livelihood project, how they came up with the concept up to its actual implementation. Prof. Vargas disclosed

that LUV officers and members also conducted fund raising activities to make the project possible. This livelihood program is one of the lead projects included in the action plan of the LUV-Faculty.



Shown in the photos are: (from Buck Estate National High School) Officer-In-Charge Verna Hermoso, GPTA President Ronaldo Liwanag, Natural Science students, teachers and parents; (from UMak) Dr. Edita Chan, Dir. Lhiza Ferrer, Prof. Toby Vargas, Prof. Cecilia Tadeo, Prof. Margarita Paulmitan, Prof. Ma. Theresa Datu, and Prof. Eden Rafallo. (Write-up by Dir. Lhiza Ferrer; Photos by CESELE).