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SPANISH ENVOY CITES ROOT CAUSES OF SECESSIONS



Speaker of the Round Table Discussion Charge d' Affaires of the Embassy of Spain Ignacio Cambre, discusses the issue on Catalonia and Basque Secessionist movements held at the Pimentel Center (July 8).

By Jay Dejaresco

“Sovereignty resides in the nation as a whole.”

This is the principle by which the Spanish nation lives by.

This was the statement of Hon. Ignacio Perez Cambre Charge d' Affaires of the Embassy of Spain in Manila.

Cambre was guest of the roundtable discussion of the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance (PILG) held last July 8.

Cambre spoke about the Basque and Catalonia secessionist movements in his country.

Catalonia and Basque Secessionist movements have been around for a long time.

Turn to Page 2

Word from the Center

HUMAN TRAFFICKING: Still a big problem

Fatima, a 13-year old girl from General Santos City, was reportedly trafficked to Saudi Arabia three months ago by a duly-licensed recruitment agency.

The recruitment agency landed her a job as a “maid” with a family in Saudi Arabia in April of this year.

Her employer turned out to be barbaric.

She was subjected to horrific physical beatings that included banging her head against the wall, pouring boiling water on her back, chaining her to a bed, and trusting pointed objects into her genitals. All because, she reportedly was not able to measure up to her employer’s standards of house keeping.

Whose fault is it that this girl was trafficked into brutal servitude in Saudi Arabia?

The “fault, dear Brutus, is,” (firstly) “in our stars’.

Policy wise, there are supposed to be rules that ban the deployment of girl house helps below the age of 23 especially to foreign lands.

Nonetheless, the recruitment agency was able to recruit the girl, ferry her to Saudi Arabia, and put her into the hands of her barbarous employer?

The people, then, who criminally participated in getting Fatima into the horrible situation in which she found herself in Saudi Arabia are

Turn to Page 2

GOD'S MIRACLES THROUGH FAITH AND HARD WORK

By Clarisse Aquino

The story of Dr. Norma David Camunay is nothing less than a testimony of God’s abounding grace to those who work hard and remain faithful to Him who is the source of all goodness.

Dr. Norma Camunay, an imposing Dean with a voice of noticeable blare, walks the halls of the University of Makati.

For those who may not know, her life is one of humble beginnings.

She was born half a century or so ago in San Jose Floridablanca, Pampanga.

Born eldest of six children, to a farmer and labandera, Dr. Normita Camunay lived much of her early life in abject poverty.

Turn to Page 3

Word from the Center

From Page 1

principally at fault at the local level.

Then, of course, whoever inflicted those horrendous acts of cruelty on her must be sanctioned by Saudi Arabian authorities.

The problem is that our norms of civilized conduct may not apply to a country like Saudi Arabia that seems hardly capable - up to this very date - of getting the norms of democratic government into place.

What about the UN? The UN has its hands full with the war on terror in many places of the globe, it is well-nigh impossible to hope that crimes against the likes of a 13-year old unknown, like Fatima, would ever get its attention.

Anyway, the authorities of our coun-

try should bring Fatima's plight to the attention of responsible UN agencies.

Essentially, however, the ball is in our hands. Poverty that consumes the energies of between 30 to 40 million of our people needs to be attended to with focus by the government.

The Center knows of no other cogent reason why Fatima ventured on her own juvenile mind or, perhaps, even on the prodding of her family to risk her inexperienced self with the unknown but to earn money to help her own kith and kin.

Hence, poverty and its terrible toll on human dignity needs priority attention by our authorities.

If we are able to reduce poverty to manageable levels, or even eliminate it outright, then, there would be no need for our Fatimas to undergo indescribable pain just

to earn a living for themselves or their families.

To this end, the people must also do their part. Electing people who know what their government jobs require, and demanding that they do their jobs to promote the common good cannot be left to the stars in the heavens.

We, the people, have to do part of the work needed to transform this nation. And the work must begin with ourselves.

[Note: as of early this month, Fatima escaped from her employers and was brought to Bahay Kalinga in the Philippine Embassy compound in Saudi Arabia. Her ordeal was brought to light by Muffy, a Filipina Muslim, who's into voluntary humanitarian work in Saudi Arabia, and Eddie Calderon, who is a blogger par excellence].

Spanish envoy cites root causes of secessions

From Page 1



Prof. Nene Pimentel (holding the mic) delivers his closing remarks at the Round Table Discussion, with Charge de affaires Cambre listening.

Spain, a nation of 49 million inhabitants, is a constitutional democracy like the Philippines.

But unlike the Philippines, they are under a monarchy, meaning, they are ruled by royalty, with a parliamentary form of government.

He noted that most countries in the world have their secessionist movements or experience in their histories.

He noted that the bigger a country is in size, the greater are the chances of a secessionist movement to spring.

He also added that the more prosperous the country becomes, the lesser would the strength of secessionist movements.

In his discussion, the Spanish envoy said that failure of government to deliver its service to the people would create fertile grounds for people to look for alternative political systems and identities.

Born in Barcelona, Spain September 20, 1968 Cambre is married with three children.

Cambre has a Master's Degree in Economics, Finance

and Management Science from the University fo Barcelona.

He also has a post graduate degree in International Relations, Center for International Studies from the University of Barcelona.

Cambre started his diplomatic career in 1998.

He was assigned in Honduras, Sajarevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Moscow, Tehran.

He has been the Deputy Head of Missions, Embassy of Spain in Manila since 2012.



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God's Miracles through faith and hard work

From Page 1

"In terms of material things, we were very, very poor," Norma, as she is called by colleagues, recalls.

"My father farmed palay in a one hectare land that was not his in Pampanga," she said.

He had an earning that couldn't support a child, much less six children to school.

"My mother did odd jobs," Norma adds.

But despite our poor living condition our father and mother taught us the value of hardwork, she proudly says.

They only finished grade school, but we saw them persevere amidst the harshness of life.

My mother, aware that we virtually did not have anything to offer, ironically taught us the virtue of sharing blessings to others.

When there was a bounty harvest of palay, or camote in the land that my father tilled, our mother always said that the extra was meant to be shared.

Poverty was unkind to them, Norma would say.

Growing up, they never knew Christmas the way others celebrated it.

No gifts because their parents could not afford it.

There were definitely no new clothes, no new shoes, and having a pair of 'bakya' seemed to be an elusive luxury.

But as a young student in barrio San Jose public school, she felt she had the gift of intelligence because her teachers impressed it upon her.

She proved it when she graduated valedictorian in elementary school.

In telling her childhood story, Norma couldn't hold her tears recalling that graduating at the top of her class was a bitter sweet to her tatay.

While proud of her achievements, her tatay was sad because he knew he could never send her to high school.

But Norma said she had a natural faith in a God who she knew is a God of hope.

"Even if we were poor, I was never hopeless," she said.

Early in life, Norma knew that if she wanted to fulfill her dreams, it would have to entail literal toil and hardwork.

"When I was a child, I only had a simple dream," Norma said.

"I just wanted to be a professional, be able to finish college" she said.

She witnessed how life can be unfair to those who lacked education.

She learned early the correlation be-

tween lack of education and poverty.

"Education is the great equalizer," she said.

She knew that even in the deepest abyss of hopelessness, God was her light who would always lend a helping hand.

And help she got.

A teacher who was elected councilor promised to fund her schooling in a private school, so in her first two years in high school, she entered St. Augustine Academy, Floridablanca, Pampanga.

But life in private school was short-lived because her benefactor lost her position as local councilor, and her funding likewise stopped.

Norma had to spend the rest of her high school in public school.

While she was able to easily cope with academics, it was those school projects and extra curricular activities which required finances that were her drawbacks simply because she had no money.

She had to do house hold chores, cleaning their houses, washing their clothes, baby sitting, in her teachers' home just to be able to earn to sustain her schooling.

When she was in her senior year in high school she learned of an entrance exams for the country's greatest public school, the University of the Philippines.

However, Norma recalled that her high school adviser deliberately did not furnish her the application forms for the UP College Admissions Test.

Norma said that her teacher thought she was too poor she could never make it to UP.

Norma said she felt devastated. Yet she continued to hope.

After finishing high school she went to Manila, and became a househelp in a relative's house.

At the same time she took up vocational schooling because she couldn't afford to enter college.

Norma said she relied on the assurance of her relative that they would help send her to college.

But this didn't come.

"Will her dream to become a professional ever come true?" Norma would ask herself.

One day a friend suggested to her to write the Dean of UP and seek a scholarship.

She thought, "why should I write the dean when the dean would have to rely on the decision of the University President?"

So she decided to write an earnest request to the UP President, Dr. Onofre D.



Dr. Norma Camunay

Corpuz.

She got the name of the UP President from a friend who lent her a handbook of UP.

She placed her letter in an envelope and gestured the sign of the cross over it as a steadfast manifestation of faith that it would lead to something the realization of dreams.

She requested a mailman who dropped mail in her relative's house to mail it for her.

Little did she know that her letter would be the start of turning around her life of hardships, and difficulties.

Just a few days after she mailed her letter, she got a response from the UP President.

A motorcycle-riding officer of the University personally went to where she was staying to hand over the letter.

The UP President acknowledged her letter and invited her to come to UP.

So Norma went to UP, saw the oblation for the first time, and went straight to the 2nd floor of the administration building.

The UP President was expecting her.

UP President Corpuz told her that the university jumpstarted a project that would provide full scholarship to the poorest of the poor, but who deserved to enter UP.

President Corpuz allowed her to take the UPCAT even if school was already about to start.

By God's grace she passed UPCAT, and that changed her life forever.

Accepted in UP on a full scholarship,

Turn to Page 4

RECENT PICTORIAL EVENTS



PILG gives recognition to Pastor Hugh Nguyen, (holding the plaque) for his selfless and steadfast devotion to the cause of national transformation to our people and country, held at the Pancake House, Mandaluyong City (July 1).



Charge d' Affaires Ignacio Cambre at the open forum of the Roundtable Discussion on the issue of Catalonia and Basque Secessionist movements held at the Pimentel Center (July 8).



Students of the PCL Program pose with Prof. Nene Pimentel, after his talk on Local Governance. (July 17).



Meeting with the different employees associations on the the issue of the BIR Issuance, Revenue Memorandum Order 23-1014. (June 17).

God's Miracles through faith and hard work

From Page 3

Norma was finally on her way to fulfilling her dreams of becoming a professional.

And the good Lord did not enroll Norma in just any ordinary school.

It was the University of the Philippines.

What kind of professional would she want to be?

Norma said she had no difficulty in deciding to become a teacher.

She immediately knew her calling, and that is to help educate the poorest of the poor in this country.

"I was an *'escolar ng bayan'* and I knew I had to give back to my country," Norma said.

She would go full circle.

She has been teaching ever since.

She now is Dean of the city funded University of Makati which caters to students who have less financial means.



Dr. Norma Camunay moderates the discussion of Barangay Justice at the at the Barangay Seminar.

She did not use her earnings for herself.

Norma first funded the schooling of all her siblings.

She took custody of her younger brother sent him to school and brought him to Manila.

He is now a lawyer and Chairman of

Police Regional Appellate Board (PRAB) of the National Police Commission.

Her two sisters have gone on to become teachers, courtesy of Norma's help.

A younger brother finished college and is now an international seaman.

Norma never stopped helping.

She has been helping poor students from the provinces enroll at the University of Makati.

It gives them hope. It gives them a chance.

Education is the equalizer, Norma always says.

With hard work, plus a lot of hard work, and unflinching faith in the Lord, dreams do come true, Norma said.

"My story is a testimony of God's faith," Norma says.

It is a life filled with nothing short of miracles.