

DISCUSSION 2

DR. FRANCISCO NEMENZO, JR.: I would like to ask Dr. Masa what his computer outputs have shed on the dynamics of Philippine politics. In other words, what is the significance of the data he has collected, because I cannot see anything. For instance, can we define—on the basis of the data—the actual and the potential role of the higher civil service in Philippine politics? Can we say, for instance, that the higher civil service as now constituted is a countervailing force, and possibly, a deterrent to a complete military takeover? Or can it serve as a force for the restoration of democratic rights?

These are the central questions that concern Filipino citizens and Filipino political scientists. Now, what is the relevance of the data to this central concern?

Did you gather data that could somehow be relevant to the most important political problems of our country?

DR. EDWARD M. MASA: The aim of my survey was to measure development orientedness. We can see here the implication that we cannot define the actual and potential role of higher civil service in Philippine politics.

With regards to the military, it has never been the objective of this study to draw such implications.

DR. LORETTA MAKASIAR SICAT: Perhaps, there is something that one could cull from the data presented by Dr. Masa. Could you tell us more about the characteristics of the higher civil service with regards to conflict resolution?

DR. MASA: Higher civil servants have a slightly stronger propensity towards conflict resolution than conflict avoidance. It could, perhaps, be drawn that more than half of our civil servants will be willing to value removing any obstacle, or any difficulty, that they may find in the way of program implementation.

DR. NEMENZO, JR.: Alright, suppose we are above average in conflict resolution, so what? What is the significance of this? Does this tell us anything about the dynamics of Philippine society?

DR. MASA: Well, that means that half of them are willing to push through with their program and if we relate this to the military, more than half of our civil servants could be expected to stand by the development program, inspite of a military opposition. But then, there is an almost equal number of higher civil servants that would rather avoid conflict.

DR. GABRIEL U. IGLESIAS: If higher civil servants are ideologically oriented, are they political eunuchs of some kind or social activists? They can pre-serve any master, just like the British Civil Service. They are supposed to be neutrals. There is this "must" that they have to serve anyone in power.

DR. MASA: Well, there is actually one part of the study which is not included in the dissertation because it was already long, and I have not sat down to analyze the data. Going over the data, though, it appears that most of the higher civil servants are for democracy, and most of them would support the new society and its program.

DR. IGLESIAS: Any contradiction on that?

DR. MASA: Perhaps, there is. But this could be blamed on the questionnaire. For instance, it was asked what kind of political system would they like to have, and the answer is a democratic system. But, a question was also asked on whether they would tolerate the so-called authoritarianism, or authoritarian government, in order to restructure our society; almost all of them answered that, temporarily, an authoritarian government is accepted for purposes of restructuring the government. Later though, when development is achieved, they would want the authoritarian government to give way to a democratic government.

DR. MAKASIAR SICAT: Could you kindly define again the meaning of development orientedness?

DR. MASA: The operational definition of development orientedness is in terms of the following values: commitment to change, action propensity, commitment to economic development, commitment to economic equality, action resolution, selflessness, and concern for the nation.

These values were derived from a study made in four countries: India, Poland, Yugoslavia, and the United States. The people were asked what they thought should be the hallmark of

development. Thousands of responses were analyzed through the use of computer, and were finally reduced to nine values. I did not include one of them, namely, honesty, because that was rather sensitive and very difficult to measure.

DR. GONZALO JURADO: What was that you said that among several findings, this is one finding which is contrary to your usual expectation?

DR. MASA: It was in the correlation between the rural/urban source with what you call conflict resolution, I mean, innovative change. It was found out that the higher civil servants who hail from the rural areas had higher scores. Our usual expectation is that those who came from urban areas are more oriented to change than the ones from the rural areas.

My explanation to this was that this higher civil servants who come from the rural areas are actually special groups. They are the so-called dissenters—the mobile group. They are the change agents who have left their barrios because they are not satisfied with their environment. Those who are not predisposed to change, on the other hand, remain in the barrios.

In contrast, those from the urban areas are, perhaps, so exposed to change that they do not realize the need to know change anymore. Or maybe, they are quiet satisfied with changes that are taking place in their environment.

Anyway, what we are hoping for is that the higher civil servants will use their powers to develop our country; that is, by implementing the country's program of development. As the study shows, however, because of the socio-economic background and of the higher commitment to development, they may not really be prepared to carry out their programs of development. Nonetheless, they should—we hope—still exert their utmost efforts.

I would like to mention that, in my study, I am not only showing their verbal responses. I am showing their values, too. And this is normative. Whether they are actually development oriented or not, I do not know. Another study has to be made for that.

It is possible that they may be average in their value commitment, especially now that they are being aided. And, being aided—and being pressured—they may not really be committed to development, even if their actual behavior seems to convey so.