

The Agbayanis of Pangasinan: Rereading Elite Politics

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Students of Philippine politics approach their subject matter with the recognition that Philippine political experience cannot be described adequately by using standard Western theoretical constructs such as ideology, party-system, and class. Analyses utilizing these theories often give explanations that fail to consider various indigenous practices and phenomena.

Party membership, for instance, is not a reliable means of predicting one's positions on issues. The looseness of party affiliations in the country means that changing party membership is done as easily as changing one's clothes. Furthermore, party membership is not a good gauge of how representatives vote on bills and resolutions. In the Philippines, there is no such thing as a party vote.

The use of ideology as a frame of analysis is also problematic. Existing political parties differ from each other mainly on the personalities that compose them, not because of the ideology, policies and programs they advocate. Academics explain this occurrence as due to the underdevelopment of political parties in the country. This rationale, however, begs many questions.

Examining elections as a political phenomena clearly illustrates the difference between existing theory and practice. Formal theories on elections view this political exercise as a cornerstone of democracy, assuming that people vote according to their choice and liking, and that the choice is based on a rational decision. In the Philippines, elections showcase the personalistic character of candidates and voters as these become rituals of patronage. Elections are often viewed as festivals where candidates throw parties, give free food and transportation, and bring to town movie actors and actresses. Without these activities, elections become incomplete and dull, if not meaningless.

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On the other hand, the most popular theoretical framework used in examining Philippine politics, patron-clientelism, is no longer satisfactory in explaining the persistence and continued retention in office of politicians. Patron-clientelism fails to consider the presence of the element of force, creating the myth that relationships between people is a smooth interaction unruffled by conflicts, confrontations and intimidations.¹ Some scholars criticize this framework as static as it fails to consider the increasingly transactional relationship between the people and their leaders, and the decline of cultural or value-based relationships (e.g. the use of *utang na loob*).

With the fast moving socioeconomic and political changes that are going on, many scholars of the 1990s are rethinking ways of explaining and understanding social reality. A new wave of inquiry has begun to develop, making use of old concepts but seeing them in a different light. One such example is a work edited by Alfred McCoy which describes the Philippines as "an anarchy of families," (a phrase coined by Robert Fox in the late 1950s) characterized by a weak state and the proliferation of powerful oligarchies. Another work by Paul David Hutchcroft documents how the commercial banking industry in the country is dominated by a small number of families who use the banks as extensions of family property. These two recent works highlight the extraordinary role of the family in the political and economic life of the country.

In the book *An Anarchy of Families*, McCoy argued that, in the Philippines, "the elite family has long been a leading actor in the unfolding of the national pageant, being both the object and the subject of history, shaping and being shaped by the processes of change."² Family-based oligarchies play a significant role in Philippine history. This is evidenced by the fact that relations among the elite family have a discernible influence on the course of Philippine political life.³ Thus, it is fitting to study Philippine politics by looking at political families that have continued to hold on to power for several decades. More important, it is the synergistic interaction between a weak state and strong political families that make a familial approach to Philippine national history fitting.⁴

In 1992, the Institute for Popular Democracy (IPD) published a book entitled *All in the Family: A Study of Elites and Power Relations in the Philippines*. The book focuses on the political clans and electoral politics, examining the nature and dynamics of the traditional holders of power and political influence in Philippine society. This research framework was kindled by the argument that class analysis by itself could not fully explain many aspects of

Philippine politics. The book argues further that a framework using clans as the unit of analysis provides fruitful insights in understanding Philippine power relations.

In 1994, the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, following the IPD's lead, published *The Ties That Bind: A Guide to Family, Business and Other Interests of the Ninth House of Representatives*. The book hypothesized that "the main organization of dominant power in Philippine elections and politics is the political clan, the organization that plays and wins (most of the time), on the uneven electoral playing field of the Philippines."⁵ The book suggested that many of the people's representatives are unwilling to instill change because they consider government and politics as a family enterprise. They use their positions and connections to enhance their personal interests.

Among the literature dealing with the political elites of the Philippines, the family/political clan has long been identified as the dominant player. Following the lead of earlier scholars, notably McCoy, *et al.*, this study looks at the case of the Agbayanis, a prominent political family which has played a dominant role in the politics of the province of Pangasinan. This research probes the dynamics of provincial politics in Pangasinan by using the political family as a unit of analysis. This framework arises from the observation that the family continues to be a central actor in Philippine political life, serving as the base of existing political parties, both locally and nationally.

By focusing on one of Pangasinan's most prominent political families, the Agbayanis, this study traces the rise to power of the Agbayani family by looking into the strategies that led the family to maintain and consolidate power, as well as to transfer political office to the succeeding generations.

In this study, a political family is operationalized as a kinship network made up of real and fictive kin, drawn from a group related by blood, marriage and ritual (sponsorship in baptisms, weddings, etc.), and is characterized by bilateral descent.⁶ The political family is used as an instrument or a vehicle of power acquisition to capture formal elective posts and access resources that guarantee their political survival. McCoy contends that the political family is a paradoxical pairing of the personal and the official. Thus, there is no neat dichotomy or typology that can contain the variety of politicians that can arise from this setting. The focus is therefore on the individual style and tactics employed, instead of fixed models or categories.⁷

This study explores the factors, including the tactics and strategies, that the Agbayani family employed in their ascent to and retention of power. McCoy forwards two stratagems employed by political families: the use of political violence and their rent-seeking activities. Both activities, however, are not mutually exclusive undertakings. For instance, the case studies in the *Anarchy of Families* argue that all political families have sought rents or state resources to ensure their survival in office. This accessing, nay plundering of state resources is used to finance patronage, election campaigns and at times, sustain a private army. Thus, for political longevity, the skills in translating political capital into financial or commercial opportunity is indispensable.

The Agbayani family is chosen as the subject of this study because it is one of Pangasinan's most eminent political families, having been in power in the province for almost four decades. Aguedo Agbayani, the family's patriarch, served as Congressman of the 1st District of Pangasinan from 1957 to 1969 and became governor from 1971 to 1986. With the assumption of Corazon Conjuangco Aquino to the presidency in 1986, Aguedo was replaced by an officer-in-charge. He ran in the 1988 elections to regain his post but Rafael Colet, the Aquino administration candidate, won by a slim margin. In the 1992 elections however, Agbayani was successful in capturing back his position as governor. In the 1995 elections, Aguedo chose not to run. Instead, his son Victor (who won as an Assemblyman in the 1984 parliamentary elections) ran unopposed as vice governor (with Oscar Orbos winning as governor). Another son, Luis, ran for the first time and won as the mayor of Sual, Pangasinan. With this as a background, it is not hard to present a rationale why the Agbayanis are a fitting case study.

Pangasinan is the largest province in Luzon. It is located 170 kilometers north of Manila and 59 kilometers south-west of Baguio City. Geographically, it is defined as the northwestern part of the Central Plain of Luzon area, bounded by the Lingayen Gulf, La Union and Benguet on the north; the Caraballo mountains and Nueva Ecija on the east; Tarlac on the south and Zambales and the China Sea on the west. With 46 municipalities, two cities and 1,364 *barangays*, covering a total land area of 5,368 square kilometers, Pangasinan is divided into six congressional districts.

In 1995, Pangasinan had a total population of 2,020, 273 with a 2.13 percent annual growth rate. Manpower resource can be considered of high quality, with the province having a 96.6 percent literacy rate, the highest in the Ilocos region. The province is basically agricultural, with 85.9 percent of its land area

classified as agricultural land (including croplands, pasture and fisheries). Agriculture remains the major industry of the people with 238,045 hectares devoted to agriculture (out of 536,920 hectares of total land area), and with at least seven out of every 10 families engaged in it. With a labor force of 737,000, 43 percent are employed in agriculture, fishery and forestry while 57 percent are in non-agricultural occupations.⁸

Pangasinan politics has often been described as dominated by a few families involved in an intense conflict of taking control of the province. It is thus judged to have a long history of political division that remains true until today.

Having a large land area, the province is said to be too big to be dominated by only one family. In fact, no one politician or leader can claim mastery over the entire province. Rather, politicians and their families are always referred to in terms of the towns or districts where they hail from. Because of this, Pangasinan is graphically likened to a medieval kingdom divided into fiefs or manors, presided over by its local lords.

Pangasinan being a huge, populous province makes one wonder how a politician could slowly rise to power and emerge as one of its most influential actors. A good case to look at is that of Aguedo Agbayani and his family.

The Rise of Aguedo F. Agbayani: Early Years

Aguedo Ferrer Agbayani is considered to be Pangasinan's most durable politician,⁹ having been in office for over thirty-two years.

Born on December 16, 1919, he is the eldest son of Donato Agbayani who hails from Laoag, Ilocos Norte and Perpetua Ferrer of Lingayen, Pangasinan. Donato Agbayani was an orphan who left Ilocos to study in Manila. He landed in a carpentry course at the then Philippine School of Arts and Trades. Consequently, Donato got work as a foreman-carpenter. After having saved a small amount of money, Donato decided to go back to Ilocos. He took the train to Dagupan, only to find out that his money was just enough to take him as far as Pangasinan. Donato decided to stay in the province for a while. That was where he met Perpetua Ferrer and married into one of Lingayen's *principalia* families. Aguedo was the firstborn child of this union.

The Agbayanis cannot really be considered natives of Pangasinan, because the paternal root of the family is only a migrant to the province. Nevertheless, Perpetua Ferrer, Aguedo's mother, came from an established family in Barrio Pangapisan, Lingayen. Perpetua's familial root is traceable to Jose Padilla Ferrer. Ferrer was able to acquire lands through hard work and frugality, thus qualifying him as a member of the middle class that existed at the turn of the century, when Spain ceded the Philippines to the United States. Jose Ferrer had a large family, having four children by his first marriage and eight children with his second wife, Gregoria Castro. Aguedo's mother Perpetua, who was born in 1901, was the youngest child of Jose Ferrer and his second wife Gregoria.¹⁰

With six children, the Agbayani family is a fitting example of a family that gained social mobility out of hard work and education. Det-Det Agbayani, the daughter of Lucas, the second son after Aguedo, related that her grandparents were not really well-off.¹¹ They had to work hard to provide for the family's needs. Donato worked as a building carpenter-foreman for the Bureau of Public Works while Perpetua helped augment the family's income by taking dressmaking jobs.

Of the six Agbayani children, it was only Aguedo who got involved in politics. As a young man, his scholastic records were impressive. He graduated valedictorian of his elementary (Lingayen Elementary School) and high school (Pangasinan Academic High School), and finished his Bachelor of Laws degree, *cum laude*, and as the class salutatorian at the University of the Philippines, the premiere educational institution. He took the bar examinations in 1947 and emerged as the fourth highest examinee. During his college days, Aguedo was an active student leader, being the editor-in-chief of the *Philippinesian*, the UP Annual of 1947, and the city-editor of the official student newspaper, the *Philippine Collegian*. He also became the Vice-President of the UP Law Council, the Captain of the UP Debating Team in 1946-47, and the Lord Chancellor of the Alpha Phi Beta, a law-based fraternity, in 1946.¹²

After graduation, Aguedo taught Mercantile Law, Private Corporations, Insurance, Transportation, and Public Service Law at the Lyceum of the Philippines and the Philippine Law School, as well as Commercial Law at the University of the East (UE). His short teaching stint led him to meet Teresita Elizaga, an accounting student at the UE. The two would later marry.

In 1948, a year after passing the bar examinations, Aguedo worked as an assistant in a law office. Among the tasks assigned to him was to assist

in the election protest of then Nacionalista Party (NP) President Amang Rodriguez Sr. In 1949, Agbayani was hired as one of the legal counsels of the NP. Two years later, he was assigned to become the party's acting secretary general. He was tasked to run the national headquarters in that year's national election. Aguedo must have performed well because he was designated as the private secretary to the then Senate President Rodriguez in 1952. He was to stay in this position until 1957 when he himself ran for an elective position.

When asked how he got involved in politics, Aguedo points to his employment as secretary of Senator Rodriguez as the crucial point. Being one of the Senate President's secretaries, he was assigned administrative jobs "which involved receiving and conferring with various political leaders from all over the Philippines."¹³ This introduced the young lawyer to the personalities and the workings of politics in the country.

It was from Rodriguez that Agbayani learned most of his political styles and tactics. For instance, he saw that Amang was always accessible to the people and was innately concerned with their plight. Amang was known to have the "common touch" with people. This characteristic, Aguedo tried to imbibe and emulate as a politician.¹⁴

In 1955, Conrado Estrella requested Senator Rodriguez to send Agbayani to Pangasinan and help campaign for Estrella's governorship. After Senator Rodriguez consented, Agbayani was tasked to campaign for Estrella in his home town, Lingayen, and in the nearby towns. Going around Pangasinan gave him the opportunity to meet the local government leaders, especially those in the first district. During the campaign, the mayors of the first district solicited his help in obtaining appropriations for an infrastructure project. Being the secretary of the third most powerful politician at that time, Agbayani was able to procure the needed budget through the allocations of Senator Rodriguez and most of the other senators.¹⁵

This marked the start and build up of the political career of Aguedo Agbayani. When the election year of 1957 came, Agbayani was a natural choice for a leading public position. The local leaders whom he helped in obtaining the appropriation supported and backed his bid to run. Emboldened by the people's encouragement and support, Agbayani decided to join the Nacionalista Party convention and vied for its nomination to become the official NP candidate for the first district seat in Congress. Agbayani gained the party nomination not without sweat because he came face to face with established and veteran

politicians. Naively, Agbayani entered the Nacionalista Convention with only P2,000 as against the P35,000-40,000 war chest of his opponents.¹⁶ Fortunately, Agbayani won the nomination.

Running as the NP official candidate proved to be a much tougher battle because his opponents had the advantage of having more campaign funds. Aguedo's advantage lay in his extraordinary academic achievements and strategic connections within the NP and within the seats of power. The people voted for him and he was thus able to capture the first district seat in Congress. Agbayani won the 12 November 1957 elections, garnering 26,057 votes, against the official Liberal Party (LP) candidate, Adolfo Birog, who got 23,202 votes.¹⁷

Some political observers claimed that Aguedo got the nomination of the NP and won the election because he was known as the "bata" or boy of Amang Rodriguez. His reply to this was that, "if you vote for me, I will be your boy in the Congress."¹⁸

Congress Years: 1957-1971

Outstanding. This is one word which best describes Agbayani's four terms as a congressman of the first district of Pangasinan. During his 14 years in the House of Representatives, Agbayani was chosen annually as one of the top 10 Outstanding Congressmen of the country by leading media outfits, like the *Philippine Free Press*, *Weekly Nation*, the *Philippine Graphic* and various other national dailies.

Subsequently after 1957, Agbayani was reelected three times, in 1961, 1965 and 1969, becoming the only congressman in Pangasinan to set such a record and gaining an ever-increasing majority margin from a slim one of 2,500 in 1957 to about 20,000 votes in 1969.¹⁹

In his first term as a congressman (1957-1960), Agbayani was a member of the Electoral Tribunal and of the House Committee on Banks, Currency and Corporations, Codification of Laws and Statistics, Judiciary, Revision of Laws and Ways and Means.

In his second term (1961-64), Agbayani served as the Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Codification of Laws and Statistics, Chairman of the Special Committee on Import Restrictions and Alternate Member of the National

Economic Council. He was adviser to the Philippine Delegation to the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Finance Corporation. He was likewise a member of the House Committees on Banks, Currency and Corporations, Commerce and Industry, Economic Affairs, Judiciary, National Defense, National Language, Revision of Laws, and Ways and Means.

From 1965 to 1969, aside from being a ranking member of his usual committees, Agbayani was chosen to head the House Committee on Education. He became the Vice-Chairman of the Committee on Agrarian and Social Welfare.

Agbayani is known for his thorough preparation and studies on bills that he proposed. He had the reputation of being a scholarly, well-read and dedicated legislator who took the floor and delivered speeches only when he had something worthwhile to say.

Others describe him as a legislator with a courageous independence of mind.²⁰ For instance, in 1967, Agbayani voted against the Marcos Administration's P2.8B budget and specific budgetary items like the P100M rural development fund, which was judged as nothing but a vicious form of electioneering and political handouts. Being a Nacionalista did not make Agbayani blindly follow the dictates of party leaders if he saw that the party stand was not justifiable.²¹

In his fourth term in Congress, *Weekly Nation* characterized Agbayani as "steady, sober and intelligent" and was an inevitable choice as an outstanding congressman who was not, but could have been caught up with, his normal tasks.²² In those years, Agbayani performed excellently with the probe on the issue of student demonstrations, the tuition fee increase, as well as the increase in the teachers' remuneration and in the provision of more scholarships for students. Agbayani was also credited for pushing bills for the development of the country's educational system. They included, among others, the appropriation of funds for the establishment of regional science high schools and for scholarships intended for poor but deserving students; standardizing the salaries of education officials and the framing of the magna carta for private school teachers.

Phil Caracas,²³ a veteran newspaperman who served at one time as a congressional reporter and now the editor-in-chief of one of Pangasinan's provincial newspapers, described Agbayani as "a professional (and not a traditional)

politician who works hard and knows what governance is all about, not merely involved in doing hocus-pocus." Caracas narrated that even as a young man, he knew Agbayani because his father, one of the *barangay* officials in Bolinao, was one of Agbayani's leaders. Caracas relates that it was Agbayani's practice to send his father cards, letters and even gifts during birthdays and Christmases. This is proof of Agbayani's style and approach to people — very personal, creating bonds of endearment.

Caracas himself experienced such "personalized treatment" when he became a journalist covering the Philippine Congress. Agbayani always "gave gifts during Christmas to the media people covering him."

Caracas concludes that this is the reason for Agbayani's popularity with the masses, because he interacts with them personally. In addition, it also helped that Agbayani has a photographic memory. Caracas related an instance when a person approached Agbayani for some help, which the congressman kindly provided. A couple of months later, Agbayani and that person accidentally met again and the person was surprised that Agbayani still remembered his name. He even asked for updates on how he was faring. Being remembered by name by your Congressman is no insignificant experience.

Further, Caracas described Agbayani as a soft-spoken man but with a firm, and strong political will. Caracas characterized him in this succinct phrase: "*Pag kasama ka niya sa pulitika di ka niya pababayaan.*" [If you are one of his political supporters, he will never abandon you.] This is a very revealing statement. From this account, one can observe that Agbayani was able to build a network of leaders who loyally supported him because of his generosity in providing for the needs of the people; his interpersonal social skills; and the perception that he was capable and intelligent. These factors helped Aguedo maintain his political office.

The same network of supporters will later on be inherited by his sons, giving them a head start and an advantage over their contenders.

Attempt for the Provincial Seat

Concurrent with his service as Congressman of the first district, Agbayani joined the NP Convention in September 1967 for the selection of candidates for the upcoming provincial elections. President Ferdinand Marcos

was bent on getting control of the vote-rich province, in preparation for the 1968 senatorial elections and to lay the groundwork for his 1969 presidential reelection bid. The need for control and consolidation was imperative because there were only eight mayors who were Nacionalistas of the 46 towns and two cities and no major defection had occurred since Marcos became President. The governor then, Francisco Duque, and more than two-thirds of all the mayors, vice mayors, councilors and *barangay* officials were Liberals.

Nevertheless, the NP convention held for the purpose of choosing the official candidates for the gubernatorial position was marked by bitter in-fighting between the Agbayani-Millan-Sindico and the Estrella-Primicias-Sison faction for control of the province. Primicias won the convention by a plurality of 19 votes over Agbayani (who garnered 377 votes). That, however, was short of the required 50 percent plus 1 rule agreed upon before the start of the convention. Ex-Congressman Luciano Millan charged that the other party used terror tactics during the canvassing and clamored for a second balloting. The Pangasinan Council of Elders decided that a second balloting would be costly and declared Tito Primicias Jr., the son of the late senator Cipriano Primicias and Antonio Villar, a new turncoat from the Liberal Party, as the official NP standard bearers.²⁴

Undaunted by the unfair treatment he received from the NP oldies in the gubernatorial convention, Agbayani entered his name in the official NP slate for the senatorial elections a year later. A 24 June 1968 article that appeared on the *Weekly Nation* predicted that Agbayani was a natural choice to be included in the NP senatorial slate.²⁵

In that senatorial convention, Agbayani emerged as one of top eight names chosen by the delegates to become the Nacionalista standard bearers. The outcome did not surprise observers. Sadly however, Nacionalista delegates from Pangasinan, particularly the group headed by Conrado Estrella, did not extend support to Agbayani even if leaders from other provinces rooted for him. Reportedly, the bitter rivalry between Estrella and Agbayani intensified with their identical desire to get the NP senatorial nomination. Since only one of them would be chosen, their rivalry deepened. Among the two, it was Estrella who had closer ties to Malacañang, having served as Marcos's Land Authority Governor. Thus, even if Agbayani supposedly made it to the list, he was not declared an official candidate. When the final party decision was made, his name was dropped from the list to accommodate a woman candidate in the slate. Helena Benitez, a good friend of Imelda Marcos, got Aguedo's slot.

Losing in both attempts to get the NP blessing to run as governor and senator, Agbayani ran for his fourth consecutive term as a congressman, backed as always by his loyal supporters. In that election, Agbayani faced Emiliano Sison, Nancy Q. Sison, Ernesto Gonzales, Manuel Reyes Castro, Ernesto Tobias and Eulalio Garcia. Agbayani emerged victorious with 47,299 votes while his nearest contender, Emiliano Sison, a rich engineer-businessman and the official LP candidate, got 27,500 votes.

Agbayani was on his fourth term as congressman when he decided to run as governor. The official story behind his decision to run, as contained in magazine and newspaper articles, was that then President Marcos asked him to run as governor of the province. And so, without finishing his term, Aguedo ran and easily won.

Aguedo Agbayani has a different version of the incident. In 1971, provincial leaders, both from the Nacionalista and Liberal Party, expressed discontentment with the administration of Tito Primicias. No one however, was strong enough to challenge him.

On the night of the deadline of filing for candidacy for the local elections, Luciano Millan, Antonio Villar, Jose de Venecia and Paping Sison tried to persuade Aguedo Agbayani to run as governor.²⁶

Fabian Sison, a Liberal and a member of the Sison clan whose patriarch was Teofilo Sison, former President Manuel Quezon's Secretary of Interior, had reasons not to be in good terms with the Primicias family. Tito Primicias beat him in the 1965 congressional elections. In 1969, Fabian again failed to capture the third district congressional seat because of Cora Primicias, Tito's wife.

Luciano Millan, a NP member, was a two-term congressman of the 5th district of Pangasinan, serving from 1957 to 1965. In 1969, Millan was ignored by the NP which proclaimed Robert Estrella, Conrado Estrella's eldest son, as the official party congressional candidate.

Jose de Venecia, a veteran journalist who worked with the Philippine embassy in Saigon during the Vietnam War, was the lone LP who won the second district seat in the 1969 elections.

Over bottles of beer in Agbayani's house in New Manila, Quezon City, the Pangasinan leaders who came from two opposing political parties arrived at a consensus to field Agbayani as a gubernatorial candidate. It was decided

that he would run as a guest candidate of the Liberal Party. Based on their calculations, Agbayani was a sure winner, with the support of the first (Agbayani's congressional domain), second (Jose de Venecia's district), third (Paping Sison's district), and fifth (Luciano Millan's) districts. Strengthened by their support, Agbayani was convinced to run. Hence, before the 12 o'clock deadline, Agbayani called long distance to Pangasinan and instructed one of his assistants to pay the bond money required for his candidacy.²⁷

Evident in this situation is that the leaders of the province are not hindered by party differences in their development of "friendships." In reality, provincial leaders cross party lines to support a candidate with whom they have established alliances and "friendships." Thus, Agbayani agreed to run under the Liberal Party as its guest candidate. When the Marcoses heard about it, Agbayani was promptly summoned to Malacañang and was offered the presidential endorsement to run as governor under the Nacionalista Party. This was exactly the same thing that Agbayani sought in 1967. President Marcos convinced him to discontinue the deal with the Liberals, and was asked to stay within the Nacionalista fold. Agbayani assented.

To explain his change of heart, he called a meeting with the LP leaders and asked for their help. Agbayani said to them: "Support me in your personal capacity and I will reciprocate your help in whatever way I can."²⁸

In that 1971 elections, the Liberal Party fielded Vicente Millora, a lawyer and a former board member, against Agbayani. Agbayani won by a margin of over 75,000 votes, which was a record-setter at the time.

Winning the governorship, Agbayani resigned from Congress and took on the job of a provincial executive. Little did he know that a few months later, Congress would be abolished indefinitely. Thus, the decision to run as governor saved him from losing his power base and falling into oblivion. In fact, it artificially extended his term in office.

The Governorship of Agbayani: 1971-1986

As soon as Aguedo Agbayani assumed office, he announced his administration's centerpiece, "The Possible Dream: Planned Prosperity and Abolition of Poverty."

In its aim to increase the rice harvests of the farmers, a provincial rice program, Operation 15 Million which was later on revised into Operation 20 Million, was designed. This program was complemented and supported by the Marcos administration's Masagana 99 program which was launched in 1973. Rice production was increased from seven million cavanes in 1972 to about 18 million in 1984. Such increase in production was achieved by the massive construction of appropriate support infrastructure like flood control dams and irrigation facilities and giving farmers training courses on the adoption of more sophisticated ways of rice culture and the proper utilization of fertilizers. Agricultural development was a major priority of the Agbayani administration, as was the case of every provincial government before him, because majority of the province's population was engaged in agriculture or related activities.

Other programs that his administration undertook concerned the development and encouragement of cottage industry, reforestation and provision of potable water source. Lastly, one of the top priorities was to build more concrete roads and bridges to address the lack of a proper road system that linked the urban and rural centers.

One *barangay* captain²⁹ whose term coincided with Agbayani's ascent to the governorship remembers that when Agbayani was already a governor, he consistently sent him annual reports of the provincial government's activities and achievements. This made the *barangay* official feel that he was important and that the governor wanted him to be kept informed.

The Batasang Pambansa Elections

May 14, 1984 was scheduled to be the Batasang Pambansa elections. Six representatives were to be chosen at large to represent Pangasinan. To better understand the electoral results, it is important to first look into the national political context.

Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr. was assassinated on 21 August 1983. This incident ignited the growing protest movement against Marcos, particularly in the Metropolitan Manila area. In Pangasinan, protests were muted. This can be attributed largely to the fact that the provincial government was "loyally" committed to Marcos. More important, Marcos was Ilocano and so were more than half of the population. However, a small group of oppositionists, composed of disgruntled young members of the Nacionalista and Liberal parties led by Demetrio Demetria and Fabian Sison, banded together under Senator Salvador "Doy" Laurel's United Nationalist Democratic Opposition (UNIDO).³⁰

The mass mobilizations against Marcos that were beginning to escalate after Ninoy's death did not occur in the province until a year later. The results of the 1984 parliamentary elections indicated that the Pangasinenses were also disenchanted with the Marcos government.

The *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* (KBL), in its choice of candidates, refused to take into its official slate Victor Agbayani, the son of Governor Agbayani. The official reason behind this move is that Marcos was opposed to the building of "political dynasties." In reality, local leaders like Estrella and Millora were pulling strings to prevent another Agbayani from getting a political office.

In defiance of a party decision, Governor Agbayani proclaimed his son as an independent candidate, along with two other candidates, Agerico Rosario and Oscar Orbos. Marcos stripped Agbayani of the KBL provincial chairmanship and gave it to Estrella. This incident exposed in the open the long-standing rivalry between Agbayani and Estrella. Though disappointed, Agbayani was not astonished that Marcos sided with Estrella.

In response to his replacement as KBL provincial chairman, Agbayani was quoted as saying that "the principal source of his political strength is the people, and not the chairmanship of the KBL."³¹

Victor, the second eldest son of Aguedo, was a Civil Engineering graduate of UP Diliman. After graduating in 1982, he took the board examinations and got his professional license as an engineer on that same year. Unfortunately, Victor was not able to practice his profession.

Fresh from college, Victor served his father as one of the governor's assistant secretaries. This spurred Victor's entry to politics. Being the assistant of the governor, and most importantly, his son, Victor was assigned to do jobs that brought him all over the province, inspecting projects, meeting people, visiting the leaders and the people working for the governor. Being the governor's son, Victor started to attend functions in place of the governor, a practice that provided him strategic political exposure.

The 1984 Batasang Pambansa elections proved timely for Victor. When the time to choose candidates came, the leaders of Agbayani "urged him to field an heir."³² Victor was the obvious choice.

Running as a "KBL-Independent" and without the President's blessings, Victor topped the elections with more than 125,000 votes over the next winner, Gregorio Cendaña (who served as Marcos's Minister of Public Information). Agrarian Reform Minister Conrado Estrella emerged only as a poor third placer in the contest. Another KBL candidate, Felipe De Vera won one of the seats. Surprisingly, Demetrio Demetria and Fabian Sison who ran under the banner of UNIDO emerged victorious. In effect, KBL only won three of the six seats. Such an outcome can be interpreted as a confirmation of the brewing resentment and discontentment with KBL rule.³³

Pangasinan in 1986

When the EDSA Revolution was taking place in Metro Manila, no parallel occurrence happened in the province. Pangasinan, being thickly populated by Ilocanos, still felt a certain amount of loyalty toward their President whom they considered as their *kababayan*.

At any rate, the toppling of Marcos left the KBL in a confused state, like sheep without a shepherd. In Pangasinan, Governor Agbayani was not exactly sorry that Marcos had left the country. In fact, he immediately issued a pronouncement declaring his willingness to cooperate with the new administration. This move from Agbayani cannot be judged as something out of character because he was not really a devout and loyal KBL party man. Notwithstanding, he was replaced by Demetrio Demetria as officer-in-charge (OIC) of the province on 1 April 1986. Rafael Colet, a lawyer from Asingan and a nephew of Luciano Millan, was appointed the OIC vice-governor. Late in 1986, Colet was designated as acting governor to replace Demetria who was appointed as deputy minister of Local Government.

The 1988 Elections

When local elections took place in 1988, Aguedo Agbayani ran to regain his lost position. In that election, he faced Rafael Colet, the incumbent governor and the administration's man. Colet won over Agbayani by a slim margin of 356 votes.³⁴ Because of the paper-thin difference, Agbayani filed a protest to prevent the proclamation of Colet. He alleged that Colet manufactured the votes in nine precincts during the January 1988 elections. The Commission on Elections (COMELEC), however, set aside Agbayani's pre-proclamation protest and allowed Colet to assume office.

The case filed at the COMELEC moved at snail's pace. A few months later, it was thrown out on grounds of technicality. This prompted Agbayani to elevate the matter to the Supreme Court. On 13 June 1990, the Supreme Court decided that the case be brought back to the COMELEC and chided the Commission officials "for their high handedness in disposing the case, noting in particular the unethical behavior of the COMELEC's First Division Commissioner, as well as the COMELEC's ruling to throw out the case en banc, which was a serious breach in procedure."³⁵

Agbayani and his family have always believed that they were "defrauded of victory" when he lost to Colet. Persistent words went around to the effect that due to the Colet's close relations with Cory Aquino, he was able to manipulate the election results. It was also rumored that because of the "Cory connection," Colet was able to block Agbayani's protests.

The 1992 Elections

When the 1992 elections came, Agbayani came back to power as governor, defeating Colet. Some observers claim that he was able to regain foothold after cutting a deal with the Ramoses, running with Ranjit Shahani, Fidel Ramos's nephew, as his Vice-governor. According to local observers, Agbayani won in 1992 because he was with Ramos, the native son of the province, while Colet ran with the blessings of Ramon Mitra. Thus, even if majority of the incumbent local officials were Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP, the ruling party) members, overwhelming provincial support was given to Fidel Ramos, with the battle cry "*Natan labat!*" (Now is the time!).

When Fidel Ramos did not win the LDP nomination for the presidency, he bolted from the party and created his own. Ramos had the boldness to do so because he enjoyed the solid backing of Cory Aquino. Cory's endorsement, aside from giving him a sort of moral ascendancy over the other candidates, (because he was perceived as "the anointed one,") was translated, in material terms, to accessing state resources and patronage.

In his home province, Ramos was confronted with the problem of finding the right candidate who would carry him and unite his *kababayans* under him. Although Colet was an Aquino man who owed his political birth and longevity to the President, he stood solidly behind Ramon Mitra. Ramos's nephew, Ranjit, though he had potential, cannot match and face the experienced Colet. Ramos found the perfect answer in Aguedo Agbayani. The latter still had a solid backing

from his leaders, an impeccable track record and a long line of experience behind him.

Thus, as much as the team-up looked discordant, Agbayani and Shahani tried to project a capacity to span the generation gap and come up with a cooperative stance that integrated years of experience with a youthful, forward looking perspective. The unity between the two however did not stretch beyond the elections. Right at the start of their term, serious differences emerged, mostly arising from their age gap and leadership styles. These led to conflicts that were widely publicized both in the local and national media.

The 1995 Elections

In the 1995 elections, Pangasinan was a site to watch. Various contenders eyeing the post of governor openly declared their desire to run. All vied for the President's much coveted support to tip the balance. In the end, the President himself had to settle the dispute to arrive at a "united" administration ticket — that of Oscar Orbos as governor and Victor Aguedo Agbayani as the vice-governor.

Just before the President announced his anointed one, the three contenders signed a Unity, Solidarity and Teamwork Covenant. It gave the President blanket power to choose who will run. The compromise arrived at was that Agbayani will not run anymore as governor and will gracefully retire. In exchange, his sons, Victor and Luis will run as vice-governor and as mayor, respectively. With this kind of a bargain, some argue that Agbayani had made a good deal. That is, he gained from the settled compromise, being able to save his name, exiting from political office gracefully as well as ensuring that he will have heirs to political office.

Family Alliances, Networks and Resources

A look into how some people perceived Agbayani as a leader will help explain his untarnished electoral record. Interviews with some former mayors, *barangay* officials and common people establish the former governor as someone who delivers. Hence, it is definite that a factor in his staying influence is based on his merit or capacity to perform.

One *barangay* captain³⁶ said that people vote and continued to vote for Agbayani because he is good or "*magaling*." The people vote for his sons

as well because they think that his sons may have inherited Aguedo Agbayani's intelligence and capabilities.

From this, it appears that people are not bothered if their leaders are fielding "heirs" to political office. In fact, it is seen as something natural. They do not question the Agbayani children's entry to politics because they are perceived as capable and intelligent like their father. Another former mayor pointed out that "the Agbayanis are not bothered by the political dynasty issue. They win because they are the people's choice. They're in office because they were elected and not because they forced their way into it."

For his part, Agbayani attributes his political success to three principal factors: "sincerity, industry or hard work and accessibility."³⁷ According to Agbayani:

... for instance, I never promised to do what I was not certain of being able to do or fulfill. I could say that I accomplished more than I promised. I never promised to more than one person for one vacant position. When I had recommended somebody else, I always said that I could not recommend a second or third or fourth applicant but I say that when there should be a second opportunity, the second applicant would be next. The other factor was hard work. I practically worked everyday of the week. During weekends when there were no sessions I would go back to my district to talk with leaders and the people, especially as to what they needed. The third factor is accessibility. I made myself accessible to the people... I never avoided seeing them personally.

Agbayani is best described as a man who never forgets his debts of gratitude to loyal supporters. He provides them jobs and recommendations. From the above statement, one can surmise that another base of Agbayani's political strength is through his functioning as a patron to the populace: someone who can provide jobs or recommend you to one; someone who can hand out spoils of office; and somebody whom one can approach whenever in need.

Agbayani further contends that the success in politics of his two sons Victor and Luis is based on his political strength while he was in office. Add to this their capability of dealing with people, something they must have learned

and observed from their father. Most important, the sons were also educationally prepared and qualified for the positions they sought.

Aguedo Agbayani does not consider his family a political clan, having only two sons in elective positions. He reasoned out that most of his other children are in nonpolitical pursuits and he has no uncles or cousins involved in politics. Commenting on the dynasty issue, it is Agbayani's opinion that the effects of the dynasty system is not bad if the people involved are "sincere" in service. However, "if the persons involved are interested only in acquiring power for its own sake to promote their selfish interest, then the political dynasty system is bad."

Victor Agbayani further elucidated his father's view on the matter. Victor opines that:

clan politics and the term political dynasty is something coined by people who do not really know politics in our culture because such is inevitable or unavoidable. The relationship between an official and his constituents becomes very personal such that the family of the leader is automatically looked upon to continue, to carry over, to pick up where the leader left off. That is how one can characterize our political culture. So you can't really talk against dynasties.³⁸

Victor argued that the concept of a political family should be viewed from a more positive perspective because there have been many political families that have contributed a great deal to the development in their areas. It is a matter of Filipino culture that the constituents, when they look up to the leader, include their family and for some reason, they believe that a family member who succeeds the leader is the one best to carry on the traditions of the predecessor. The relationships with the elder will be carried on by the son or daughter.

Why should the people experiment with somebody else if they already know a certain family and has proven that the family delivers and performs? People will not want to transfer their trust because this family has been delivering and they have developed a kind of personal relationship with them already.

What is really being said in so many words is that programs of action are of secondary importance as a factor of why and for whom people vote.

What is more important is that the people have formed a personalistic bond with the leader's family. In that case, values like *utang na loob*, which is conveniently argued to be the core of being Filipino, play more pivotal roles.

It is contended that if a public official improves the lives of his constituents, the people develop *utang na loob*, toward their leader. Such *utang na loob* is regarded as natural.

Forgotten in this line of reasoning is the fact that whatever services a public official renders is merely part of his job. What is emphasized is the seeming naturalness of the people developing debt of gratitude to their public officials.

From the above argumentation, the victory of Victor and Luis Agbayani in the last elections was credited to two factors. First, it was because the people felt a sense of debt of gratitude toward Aguedo that they thought of paying it back by voting for his sons. Add to this the personal relationships created between the Agbayani family and the people due to the long years of Aguedo's holding elective posts.

The first factor, adjoined with the good service record of his father who has "delivered so much development in the province,"³⁹ created a precedence or a perception that if the father can be trusted to deliver, the son will carry over this tradition.

If Aguedo Agbayani's network of wards and leaders was an indispensable source of electoral support, the main reason however, that propelled him to go beyond his district and win the gubernatorial seat was the strategic alliance he formed with local elite leaders of other districts. This elite alliance formed during the 1971 elections was made up of people like Jose de Venecia, Luciano Millan, Paping Sison and Antonio Villar.

It is important to note that the alliance consisted of people coming from two opposing parties. The political alliance proved to have a durable character rather than a tentative, election-based relationship. For instance, it is widely believed that Jose de Venecia played a crucial role in the decision to choose Aguedo as the Lakas standard bearer for governorship in the 1992 elections.

During his term as governor, Agbayani had access to central resources (those that Marcos as President provided) to fund his activities, but he did not

really have a monopoly of the resources assigned for use in Pangasinan. For this, he had to compete with other leaders, notably Conrado Estrella of Rosales, who saw to it that Agbayani would never become the number one man in the province.

From this situation, it is evident that Agbayani's resilience is not based alone on his control over the patronage that the central government provided. Agbayani's role as the local disbursing officer of state patronage that Marcos controlled cannot explain his political tenacity. More accurately, Aguedo's political endurance is a function of many factors: a good congressional performance record, the creation of a strategic alliance with disgruntled but influential local elites, the maintenance of a network of loyal local government leaders, and a skillful cultivation of his relationship with Marcos, the central patron.

An illustrative example of Agbayani's relative independence from the central (Marcos's) government support is demonstrated by how Victor Agbayani ran in the 1984 Batasang Pambansa elections, in defiance of presidential wishes. Stripped of the KBL's machinery and the state resources that comes with it, Victor was still able to emerge as the top assemblyman in the province.

Family Resources and Business Interests

What were the initial resources that catapulted the Agbayanis to power? How were they able to access, maintain and further intensify their hold on resources which can be used for political ends?

Aguedo F. Agbayani has been in the government for many years. It is in government where Agbayani grew rich, though no illegal involvements and transactions have been proven against him.

Documents from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) reveal that the Agbayanis own three family-based corporations: the AFA Development Corporation, the AFA Publications Inc., and the Rural Bank of Sual.

The articles of incorporation of the Rural Bank of Sual in 1968 reveals that majority of the bank's stocks is registered under Teresita Agbayani's name. Teresita is the wife of Aguedo. After three decades of operations, the Rural Bank of Sual is set for expansion to other towns in the province. SEC records showed that in 1994, the bank's declared total assets amounted to P17 million, with an annual gross income of P3.6 million and a net income of P271,202.61.

The AFA Development Corporation, formed on 30 March 1979 for the purposes of real estate development, agricultural business ventures and commercial merchandise trading, had current assets of P9.8 million, retained earnings of P32,755.34 at the end of the fiscal year and paid government the amount of P4,247 in corporate taxes in 1994. No data however was available as to what kind of contracts the corporation enters into. Aguedo Agbayani disclosed that the AFA Development Corporation has never entered into public contracts but is only engaged in private ventures such as the building of low cost housing projects.

The AFA Publications, Inc. was legally setup on 5 May 1981. Both the AFA Publications Inc. and the AFA Development Corporation are solely owned by the Agbayani family, with Aguedo, his wife Teresita, and their three eldest children (Marla, Luis and Victor) forming the original incorporators and the corporation's board of directors. The company's most recent (1993) financial statement filed in the Securities and Exchange Commission stated that it had total assets worth P1,645,534.70, and P117,025.80 retained income at the end of the year, and paid the amount of P17, 322. 65 in income tax.

A visit to the SEC reveals that the three Agbayani corporations diligently file the required annual financial statements and statement of condition. But as can be seen from the most recent declared financial statements of the three companies (which may not be totally reliable but nonetheless demonstrates the condition of the Agbayani family businesses), the three business ventures are surprisingly earning small amounts, with earnings even below P100,000. These corporate financial reports came as a surprise to the researcher, as they contradict Victor Agbayani's claims. In an interview with Victor, the Vice-Governor disclosed that the base of their family's wealth is real estate and the businesses managed by their mother. The real estate business is the main source of the family's resources which has been built up though the years.

Victor jokingly stated that they sell real estate prior to elections to fund their campaigns. Meanwhile, according to Aguedo, AFA Development Corporation is engaged in real estate development in the Metro Manila area, and has not been dealing with government or public contracts.

Clearly, these pronouncements of Victor, that their real estate business is the base of their family resources, does not seem to coincide with the declared income of their companies.

Conclusion

Aguedo F. Agbayani came from a lower middle class family. He is not part of the old landed gentry that diversified into industry and commerce by using political office or connections. When he started in politics, his primary resources were nonmonetary assets: his being a young, bar topnotcher, persevering and hardworking. Aguedo Agbayani in the 1960s fits Kit Machado's description of a "new man in politics" who, through hard work, capability and proper connections (and through that connection accessed state resources), and was able to capture an elective office.

Being able to get hold of an elective office, having an impeccable performance record in Congress during his four consecutive terms, and a disarming approachability, Agbayani was successful in developing a network of personalized relationships with local leaders like mayors, vice mayors, *barangay* officials and people in general. This network of supporters, initially formed in his district, was fortified and expanded during his long rule as governor from 1971 to 1986. At the start, patronage resources was accessed through his timely and strategic connections with Amang Rodriguez and later on, his pork barrel in Congress.

Aguedo Agbayani's story is therefore a success story of someone who was able to establish himself as a patron to the people, through the creation of a network of people who indebted themselves to him with the provision of employment, financial help, recommendations to jobs, etc. It was also interesting to note how Agbayani managed to play it well with Marcos, the supreme patron during the martial law period, despite the onslaughts of his political opponents, like the Estrellas of Rosales.

While in office, Aguedo Agbayani had accumulated wealth, which in turn was useful and indispensable in perpetuating himself in power and in his family's political reproduction. The logic of politics necessitated the need to access resources. It also ensured that one will accumulate more and more wealth through the opening up of more opportunities and venues for wealth creation. Based on official records, the base of the Agbayani resources is its ownership of a rural bank and a number of family-owned corporations. However, no decisive data can be accessed as to the real market value of these properties or how well these business activities are doing. Combining these factors with a good sense of networking and alliance-building with his co-elites in the province, Aguedo Agbayani was able to rise above his bailiwick and emerge as the governor.

The triumph of Victor and Luis Agbayani in the 1995 polls is the best evidence to prove that Aguedo Agbayani was successful in establishing himself to become one of the key players in the politics of the province. In fact, the main reason why Victor and Luis Agbayani won in the last elections is primarily the headstart that they enjoyed by virtue of their family name. This is a clear example of the use of the political family as an effective vehicle for the acquisition of political power.

Victor, who at an early age was exposed by his father to the intricacies of Pangasinan politics through his work as the executive secretary was favorably viewed by the people as Aguedo's heir. On the other hand, Luis Agbayani, the hesitant son who was encouraged to run in a town where he does not really reside in, easily won the election. Looking into the case of Agbayani's sons' rise to power, the empirical data support the conclusion that the political family, with its established name, its networks of leaders and supporters, its relatively stable alliance with other politicians (some of whom have emerged to become national actors) and its financial resources that have grown over the years, have been effectively utilized as a means to gain political power, thereby ensuring the family's political reproduction.

The case study proves that patron-clientelism remains useful in understanding the rise of the Agbayani family and their capacity to stay in power.

Such conclusions however are being challenged by emerging changes and trends that are slowly reshaping both the national and local playing field. Changes that have "altered the political terrain" are also reshaping the province of Pangasinan. Slowly, urbanization, population mobility, commercialization of agriculture, declining importance of land and agriculture, technological innovations and influences of the media are occurring in the province. These occurrences are slowly causing traditional politics to go on a decline.

More and more, patronage is diminishing with the rise of a more transactional kind of politics which involves the buying of votes during elections, without the obligations expected of the leader in between elections.

Another source of change is the implementation of Republic Act 7160, otherwise known as the Local Government Code of 1991, that seeks to decentralize and devolve greater powers to local government units. The Local Government Code, for instance, empowers local executives to internally generate resources for its constituencies, rather than wholly rely on state resources and patronage

whose flow to the provinces is slowly diminishing. With this kind of set-up, a new type of leadership that is more entrepreneurial and innovative is emerging that is able to respond to the perennial problems in a new way, for example of generating productivity (and therefore jobs) within the local government unit.

Research data point to the present Agbayanis as following the traditional mold of a patron. The study however recognizes the emergence of economic and social changes that pose a challenge to this old kind of leadership. How the Agbayanis in particular, and the other political families in general, will respond to these changes remains to be seen.

At a more theoretical level, even if the empirical data gathered support the continued validity and adequacy of using the political family as a unit of analysis, the emerging trends seem to indicate another direction: to the family's declining importance as economic and structural changes impinge on and transform the lives of people. The persistence and the pervasiveness of these ongoing changes will determine whether the political family will alter its character, tactics and strategies. And if the changes that are slowly altering the whole terrain prove to be enduring, the decline of patronage and clientelism becomes a foregone conclusion unless the political family learns to adapt and respond to the new challenges it is faced with.

With the rise of varying changes, developments and trends, will the political family be able to come up with creative ways to respond to these challenges? Will the political family continue to be the most effective and pervasive vehicle for the acquisition and maintenance of political power? Will the political family continue to remain as a valid and adequate unit of analysis or will it decline in importance in the face of changing political, economic and social scenario? If yes, what will be the alternative mechanism that can be used in acquiring and maintaining power? Will it be the political party system, the law firm that exhibits kin-like relationships that is not based on blood ties but on fraternity "brotherhood,"⁴⁰ or something else? These questions, however interesting and provocative, are unfortunately not answerable by the case under study and point to the need for continued research to fully address them.

Notes

¹ John Thayer Sidel, "Beyond Patron-Client relations and Local Politics in the Philippines," *Kasarinlan*, 1st quarter 1989.

² McCoy, p. 1.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵ Eric Gutierrez, *The Ties That Bind: A Guide to Family, Business and Other Interests in the Ninth House of Representatives* (Manila: Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, 1994), p.i.

⁶ McCoy, p. 10.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁸ *Moving Ahead*. Governor Oscar Orbos's Report, 1995.

⁹ "Aguedo F. Agbayani: Pangasinan's Most Durable Politician," *Kahirup*, March 1995, p. 10.

¹⁰ Gil, Generoso F. *The Ferrer Clan of Pangasinan, 1824-1985* (Manila: Riveliza Publishing House, 1985), pp. vi-vii, pp. 1-2.

¹¹ Interview with Bernadette Agbayani, 23 August 1996.

¹² *Narrative Biodata of Governor Aguedo F. Agbayani of Pangasinan*, unpublished material.

¹³ Interview with Aguedo F. Agbayani, February 1996.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ "Its Getting Excitingly Hot," *Weekly Nation*, 1 July 1968, p. 14. This same statistics were recounted by Agbayani in the February 1996 interview.

¹⁷ Consolidated List of Candidates for President, Vice-President, Senators and Members of the House, Provincial/City Officials With Their Respective Votes and Party Affiliation, 1946-1965 elections. Metro Manila: Commission on Elections.

¹⁸ Narrative Biodata, pp. 1-2.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

²⁰ "10 Outstanding Congressmen," *Philippine Free Press*, 23 August 1969, pp. 2-3, 65-69.

²¹ *Philippine Free Press*, 13 July 1968.

²² *Weekly Nation*, 13 July 1970, pp. 2-3.

²³ Interview with Phil Caracas, 16 May 1996.

²⁴ "Fight Among Pangasinan Nacionalistas," *Examiner*, 3 September 1967, pp. 8, 24.

²⁵ "Education is a Must," *Weekly Nation*, 16 June 1969, p. 20.

²⁶ Interview with Aguedo F. Agbayani, 30 August 1996.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Interview with former Barangay Captain Heradio T. Chan, Villasis, Pangasinan, 2 January 1996.

³⁰ Rosario Mendoza-Cortez, *Pangasinan, 1900 - 1986: A Political Socioeconomic and Cultural History* (Quezon City: New Day Press, 1990). p. 236.

p. 1. ³¹ "Agbayani welcome to join UNIDO," *Bulletin Today*, 26 April 1984,

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Cortez, 1990, pp. 236-237.

p. 2. ³⁴ "Political Realignment in Pangasinan Seen," *Malaya*, 11 August 1990,

³⁵ "Mess in Pangasinan," *Malaya*, 2 July 1990, p. 2.

³⁶ Interview with former Barangay Captain Heradio T. Chan, Villasis, Pangasinan, 2 January 1996.

³⁷ Interview with Aguedo F. Agbayani, February 1996.

³⁸ Interview with Victor E. Agbayani, 13 December 1995.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ This is a phenomenon which, according to Prof. Alex Magno, is increasingly becoming more defined, with the law firm acting as the vehicle used to gain political power.

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