BALANCING TWO REALITIES

THE State of the Nation Address had been prepared understandably with the eyes on the accomplishments of the administration. Image-building was done before the event, and the final touches were given at the SONA. In success and failures, the President does not stand alone: there are hundreds of allies who stand with her either as co-achievers for the successes or co-accused for the failure to dismantle structures of corruption. But we believe in “command responsibility.”

The state of the nation should also be looked at from the experiences and eyes of the remaining millions who are still suffering from hunger, illiteracy, unemployment, homelessness and sickness. This would balance the picture. They were outside the SONA site.

The circumstances surrounding the SONA were not very comfortable and encouraging. There were the threats of boycotting the SONA, which some have done! The caravans of protests against Charter Change! The Red Alert signal! The thousands of PNP and military at the SONA site, covering the security of the President and (daw!) the protesters against infiltrators. These sent the message of fear and insecurity.

Whether as projected the SONA reflected the truth or not, the better thing to do is to compare the SONA with the current situation, perceptions and perspectives of the people from below. From the people also, we can discover the other side of the State of the Nation!

The SONA was about the macro-level of government filled with statistics which most do not understand. But the macro is not always reflective of the micro. Therefore, the State of the Nation must consider also the millions who make up the micro-level and are missed in the statistics.

This hopefully is the last SONA of the present administration. We are looking forward to the 2010 Election of people with new minds, new hearts, new spirit for the Filipino People, for a better Philippines.

(Sgd.) Archbishop Angel N. Lagdameo
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