

Table Talk

BY Mike S Apostol

For the first time after many years of existence as an exclusive jolly group of professionals, successful businessmen, former and active politicians, employers, retired land owners, government and private officials, converging at least three times a week for social drinking and table discussion and made Hanazono Japanese Restaurant its regular rendezvous, choice for local candidates was obviously noticed to be divided, with their own personal reasons.

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Without need of a “mock balloting”, the spontaneous opinion and choice of candidates in a casual discussion last Monday evening for the President and Vice-President, Davao City Mayor Rod Duterte is favored as a Mindanaoan. VP Jejomar Binay also have some sympathizers but lesser, while LP standard bearer Mar Roxas was never mentioned as a choice. For Vice-President, Senator Ferdinand “Bong-Bong” Marcos was praised for his direct and sincere answers after the recent CNN-Philippines, television debate. By the praises Sen. Bong- Bong Marcos got from the Hanazono group, obviously it can be converted into a favorable choice, even with some negligible negative comments about the Martial Law era. The rest of the VP candidates were mentioned in passing but not a choice to reckon with.

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The most interesting part of the discussion was their choices for the City Mayor and District 1 congressman. Many believe that incumbent Mayor Beng Climaco-Salazar will still make it for re-election, for reasons of amor propio. But his opponent retired PNP General Mario Biong Yanga is fast catching up and if sustained until election time, Gen.Yanga might be the next City Mayor of Zamboanga City. General Yanga’s popularity is growing fast especially on his peace and order platform that many believe is what Zamboanga City, needs at this crucial time of instability. But a veteran political supporter of the Hanazono group said the last few days before election will decide who will win for City Mayor should the magic name of slain former City

Mayor Cesar C. Climaco will lose its magnetic effect to Zamboangueno voters. These are opinions coming from an apolitical group with their own voting strength and does not necessarily decide the future of the city.

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The greatest surprise was the topic for District 1 congressman between incumbent Celso L. Lobregat and contender Crisanto dela Cruz, popularly called “Monsi” for being a former catholic priest, and Monsignor of the Holy See. Surprisingly, Monsi and Congressman Lobregat have almost the same number of choice from the group and some believe the odds might be in favor of Monsi, if Congressman Lobregat continues to be adversarial in his campaign tactics and interferes with the city council affairs and other matters using his political influence, to decide matters. This is indeed a dangerous and perilous road that Congressman Lobregat is undertaking in defense of his people to exact complete loyalty. Although many still praise Congressman Lobregat for his firm defense of Zamboanga City in Congress, to be out of the sphere of influence to the some belligerent Moro tribe and struggle for a territory in Mindanao. This negative factor against Congressman Lobregat can still be changed, if he does not change the rules of a traditional political campaign in Zamboanga City. And will not antagonize other loyal supporters of the Lobregats, who are now vying for elective positions in the city in utter disgust to his attitude of giving more importance to advices of sycophants.

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‘Scoop: How true is the information that some Barangay Chairmen in the city have double political loyalties for “insurance reason” after the election? That some businessmen who were for the Climacos ever since are now with the Lobregat Camp, because the new KCC Mall is killing their businesses? KCC Mall is now becoming a political issue, you may agree or disagree but better still confirm the veracity of this raw information. “put up or shut up” is the best position to adopt, this election.