

## EDITOR'S NOTE

In this issue we present four articles examining subject matters which form part of the spectrum of social issues that confront us daily: governance, corporate behavior, corruption, environmental degradation, the media. Each article has its own way of shedding light on its focus of interest.

In his study of decentralization, Professor Brillantes uses the experiences of some of our Southeast Asian neighbors as mirrors to reflect light on our own efforts to empower the lower base of our own power pyramid. The issue of decentralization takes on different colors and dimensions as it resonates in the region, but its fundamental lessons appear to be applicable everywhere. Presented in its various forms in the paper, decentralization is shown as a form of democratization and empowerment, a lesson which should not be lost to us. Perhaps decentralization is an option that the geographical and socio-cultural variety of our country suggest.

On the other hand, Professor Poblador uses the lens of stakeholder theory to take a fresh look at corporate ethics. Through this theoretical lens, we see corporate behavior in a new way and learn more how corporate philosophy can be molded to gain a lot more than profit, the traditional and short-term definition and measure of corporate success. We find in this work that in the final analysis the long-term viability and wealth of employers are more firmly established if the interests of workers, customers, the community and the environment are addressed.

In Professor Tadem's narrative of a village challenging big government and a big international funding agency, we find a reflection of our own *barangays*. The issues she describes are exactly those that we encounter locally: big interests versus the marginalized, progress versus the environment, corruption and selfish interests. And the solution, according to the article, is one that our people have long struggled to attain: empowerment through democracy.

Finally, Professor Rara analyzes the media by studying how it covers the subject of terrorism in the Philippines. Through her prism, she finds the different colors that make up media coverage of terrorism – and influence public opinion. News is shown to be sum of different “truths”, some arising from bias or prejudice. And so the sum is sometimes less than the absolute truth. This is definitely a jolting

revelation for many who have come to accept what is presented in the media as the “hard facts”.

Reading these contributions, I found that there are many ways of illuminating a subject. And in the same way that a physicist or chemist may learn about a specimen from the light it reflects, we learn more about an issue as it is presented in different lights. We find that something can appear so differently under different conditions. Yet, inspite of the variety of form, some universal principles still apply. I believe that this is one important message of this issue of the Journal.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. L. Salvi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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