

Of Genuine and Effective Leadership - 08/28/2009

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The Right Reasons

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2007 PresidentIt's been awhile since I wrote my last piece here. This has been due to my work responsibilities as well as focusing on various tasks and duties helping in my little ways the cause of our local organization's programs. And there's also family time. Nevertheless, here I am again! A week from now, we will again celebrate and congregate as JCI members as we gather for our respective Area Conferences. From Area 1 to Area 5, brotherhood will once again be the focus of our proud organization. As we approach these momentous events, we also have to buckle down and focus on one of the more important aspects that make our organization a premier example in what should be the true practice of democracy and leadership: our National Elections. It is during this time where we will, as members of JCI Philippines, take into our hands and chart the course we want to take.

Stepping Stone? It is no hidden secret that JCI is the prime organization aspiring leaders of our country recognize as the stepping stone for even bigger responsibilities in serving our beloved country. However, we also have to recognize that one of the more relative reasons why we join JCI is because we want to build better societies by becoming better individuals. I find it sad and disturbing to see that instead of our organization or us for that matter, becoming the ideals for what a leader or politics should be, stories of the opposite happening are becoming a common thing. As a former member of the Junior Jaycees, I consider myself an astute and rabid idealist when it comes to following what the JCI Creed stands for. Perfection may not be my most glowing characteristic, but I try in as much as I am able to. Which brings me to the question: when we decide to run for office in our storied organization, are we bidding for office with what is best for JCI Philippines in our minds, or are we simply running for office because we need the position in order for us to gain ground and eventually attain greener pastures? Are we running because we believe that what we stand for is best for the organization or is it simply because it will put another star into our resumes? Gains for the organization? Or personal gain? What is Best From a personal perspective, I've seen the best and worst of it. Starting from my time with the Junior Jaycees and until now as a member of JCI Philippines, I've seen members run for office just for the heck of running and I've seen members run for office because they envision something better, not for themselves, but for the organization. Some members run for office because it is a stepping stone for bigger opportunities for themselves, while some members are willing to sacrifice life and limb just to bring the organization to BE BETTER than it was. When I ran for office last year, I saw it as my way in giving back so much that I owe to the JCI organization. Having been part of the movement ever since I was a student, I give credit to JCI my growth and development as a person and as a member of society all throughout these years. When I became President in 2007, even though I was hesitant at having been thrust into the role, I convinced myself to wing it and give it my best and show how I could give back to JCI. The awards were sweet, but the fact that I was able to champion the cause that has helped me all these years was much sweeter. It is disheartening though to see that there are still those who choose to twist our organization in ways which we as members work so hard to change. I find it discouraging to see that people, despite the programs, trainings and learning we get from JCI, still cling to practices which we as JCI members envision to abolish. What is important is what is best for the organization and what is best for the country. You can call me an idealistic bastard, but at least I have the peace of mind and am confident to say, at least I tried to make positive changes happen. If we are to hope for changes in our country and in our organization, it has to start with us. You may not like them but they sure know what needs to be done if you don't like a candidate just because of some far out reason or whatever BUT you see the passion and the drive that can move mountains for the organization, then vote for them. If you don't like a candidate just because they weren't able to return your handshake or acknowledge your presence some time ago BUT you can see that what they envision and are passionate about is what's best for the organization, then by all means, vote for them. This is not about what they did for you nor who they are but this is about what they stand for and what they have to offer for the organization. This is about JCI Philippines and not about individual personalities. It is healthy to see that our National Presidency is contested this year. I consider Van and Eds good friends in JCI Philippines. I believe that both are capable leaders who can lead our organization to soar to new heights, albeit in different methods. I know that they may have different methodologies in leading JCI Philippines, but I am sure that what they do, they do because they keep in mind what is best for the organization. I don't believe that a contested election sows division in an organization; I believe that this will be a testament at how we have progressed as leaders and more importantly, as persons. Sadly, there are still those who tend to focus more at the practices of traditional politics and seek to bring them into the JCI organization. All I can tell them is you don't deserve to be part of this organization. We become part of JCI to promote positive changes from the inside and bring this out to society, not the opposite. So as the Area Conferences draw near, I implore all voting delegates: make sure you vote for the right reasons. I implore all candidates: make sure you ran for the right reasons. And lastly, make sure that these reasons are for what is best for JCI Philippines and for Junior Chamber International. Disclaimer: I do not claim to have found the formula for GENUINE and EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP nor do I claim to be a genuine and effective leader though I

sincerely seek to be one. This column is my quest towards being a genuine and effective leader and my insights from my JCI experiences that would hopefully lead me there. Let me hear your thoughts too by leaving a comment here.