

## Analysis on Senator Cipriano Primicias's Eulogy for President Ramon Magsaysay

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### ABSTRACT

This paper aims to Analysis on Senator Cipriano Primicias's Eulogy for President Ramon Magsaysay. After careful reading and analysis, the eulogy was found to have met all the requirements of an eulogy, such as the two expectations, and five functions, which are the focus of the study of this paper. Furthermore, the prowess and brilliant life story of president Ramon Magsaysay has been briefly analyzed, in order to help our understanding of the people's deep appreciation, respect for him, and their deep grief for his death, all of which have been stressed repeatedly in this Eulogy.

### THE LIFE OF PRESIDENT OF PRESIDENT RAMON MAGSAYSAY

Ramon Magsaysay(August 31, 1907 – March 17, 1957) is the 7<sup>th</sup> president of Philippines among its history. Though there have been some deficiency in his presidency, we can say he has been one of the greatest presidents ever in Philippines history. And throughout the history, people of this county have endowed him the title: "The People's President," and "Champion of the Masses." Because both his individual personality and his governness, in the eyes of the common Filipinos, he is the exemplar to be followed by all the people and politicians after him, just as in the words of Jose Veloso Abueva, President Ramon Magsaysay has been the "the yardstick by which Filipino presidents should be judged." [Agoncillo, T. 2012]

#### His Early Life: An Example for the Youth

Ramon Magsaysay was born in Iba, Zambales, where his father and mother both worked as teachers in the school. Because his father refused to pass the son of the schoolmaster in his class, he lost his position and have to move their family to Castillejas where he did his most to work as a blacksmiths to support the family. This change in the family, although a small hurdle, has taught Ramon Magsaysay to be honest, and brave. Ramon Magsaysay had his grade school in Castillejas, and his high school in Pampanga Academy

in San Narciso, Zambales. Ramon Magsaysay received his university education at first in the University of Philippines where he studied premedical course for a while, then in Jose Rizal University where he got a bachelor degree in commerce. During his hard studying in college and university, he also worked in part time as a chauffeur to support himself. And after his graduation, he chose to do an automobile mechanic work in a firm called Florida. [3] In all, his experience of the early life has trained him to be honest, brave, hard -working, frugal, and humble, which has lay a solid foundation for his later career as the leader of the guerrilla forces fighting against the evasion of the Japanese during the World War Two, and as a president of the country.

#### His Life Before, During the Presidency: A Good Example for the Politicians

When the Second World War took place, Ramon Magsaysay joined the Philippine Arm. And when the arm he belonged to was defeated by the enemy and Bataan surrendered, he escaped to the mountains, and organized Western Luzon Guerrilla Forces, fighting against the Japanese. Because his braveness, wisdom, and his great leadership, he at last became the commander of a 10,000 troop.

After the war, he was elected to the Philippine House of Representative and was appointed as the chairman of the

House National Defense Committee for two terms, because of the great achievement of his ex-guerrillas. During this period, he, as the Chairman of the Committee on Guerrilla Affairs, securing the passage of the Rogers Veterans Bill which benefited a lot to the veterans of Philippine. Another greater deed accomplished by Ramon Magsaysay was he quelled the insurgence of the Hukbalahap, a communist guerrillas when he was the Secretary of National Defense. After the World War Two, and especially in 1950s, the movement of the Hukbalahap Guerrillas was at its peak, but any strategies used by the previous and current governments was in vain to fight against the Hukbalahap Guerrillas. So under the threat from it, the incumbent president Quirino appointed Ramon Magsaysay as the Secretary of National Defense to quell the Hukbalahap Guerrillas. With his experience during the World War Two as a leader of Guerrilla, and his understanding of the true cause that led to the insurgence of the Hukbalahap Guerrillas, Ramon Magsaysay proceeded with both military reform and social reform while fighting with the Hukbalahap Guerrillas. The military reform aimed to clear up the corruption in the AFP and the enhancement of its leadership and fighting capacity; the social reform includes the legal assistance programs for the peasants and the Economical Development Corps that offered the chance for the surrendered Huks to enjoy a living of decency. All these strategies enhanced the fighting capacity of the army and also the image of both the government and the AFP in the eyes of people, resulting in the arrest of its leader Luis Taruc, and the end of the insurgence.

Ramon Magsaysay, however, made his greatest achievement was just after his being elected as the president of Philippines in Nov. 10<sup>th</sup>. 1957, because he “created a government of the people, by the people, for the people.”[4] First, only two days after his inauguration, he made the president residence the Malacañang Palace accessed to all citizens through out his presidency. He usually at least listened to the problems of the masses for twice or three times a week, making him “the Champion of the Masses”, and set up the Presidential Complaints and Action Committee (PCAC) to assure that the opinions of the common people were listened to. Secondly, during his presidency, Ramon Magsaysay made great effort to improve the life of all the people in the country, especially the peasant farmers who, he considered, was the foundation of the country. And he believed that if the rural people’s lives would not be improved, and the government still didn’t take care of it, the insurgence would be here forever, as he said, “To be really secure, a country must assure for its citizens the social and economic conditions that would enable them to live in decency, free from ignorance, disease, and want.” (Greenberg, L. 1986) So he, through legislation, policy making, and any other measures, made sure that any peasant farmer in the country, whether they had lands or not in past, had their lands to farm, ether through tenancy or through distribution of public lands by the government. Third, the year of his presidency has been called “the gold years”, because Ramon Magsaysay had banned any forms of nepotism and corruption in his government. And Philippines was ranked second in Asia’s clean and well-governed countries during his presidency.[5] And for himself, he

just wanted to be treated as equally as any other people in the country. And he usually had a very simple life.

In all, with his caring for the needs of the common people, the clean and corruption-free government, and, his being strict with himself on a very simple life, especially his love for the county and his people, he has won the love and trust of the people for him and for his government. And his sudden death during a plane crash on December 30, 1957 would naturally bring great pain and sorrow to his people.

## TWO EXPECTATIONS IN THE EULOGY

One of the famous politicians, then the Senator Cipriano Primicias gave a funeral oration on the death of President Ramon Magsaysay on March 22, 1957, five days later after plan crash. And his oration adhered to the generic requirements of a eulogy.

### Senator Cipriano Primicias Expressed Appropriate Personal and Audience Grief

Him whom we know as Ramon Magsaysay is no more! With hearts heavy with grief and sobs full of anguish, we essay to recall him back to life in our tearful prayers, even offering our very own in exchange for his, if that were possible; but it is all to no avail.[6]

### Senator Cipriano Primicias Spent Significant Parts of His Oration to Deepen Appreciation and Respect for the Deceased

In this oration, Senator Cipriano Primicias praised Ramon Magsaysay as a meteor or star whose brilliant light dispelling all the darkness:

A bright, glorious meteor has just flashed its way across Philippine skies. Before its appearance in the firmament, all was dark, gloomy, and beset with forebodings. This meteor, this resplendent star, shed its light from on high and dispelled the prevailing gloom, bringing faith, hope, and charity once more into the disturbed hearts of his countrymen.[ibid]

For the light it gave, notwithstanding its all encompassing brilliance and unlike the usual planets in the heavens, was kind, gentle, and mellow; every single ray a fountainhead of gladness and encouragement to his people to achieve together in unity, with resoluteness and grim determination, their own well-being, prosperity and, happiness, under a regime of justice, liberty, and democracy.[ibid]

This star—this meteor—is whom we used to know, love, and admire as Ramon Magsaysay,—the Star of Castillejos. [ibid]

## FIVE FUNCTIONS

### Senator Cipriano Primicias Tried to Establish the Reality of Death to a Disbelieving Audience

Like a flash it came and like a flash it burned itself out and faded away, leaving in its wake an anguished nation bowed in deep sorrow, and a world aghast and stunned in bewildered disbelief at so transient a passage. [ibid]

### **Senator Cipriano Primicias Tried to Console the Audience**

In the following words, Senator Cipriano Primicias tried to console the audience by arguing that the deceased "lives on" in some capacity through various forms.

We all know, however, it cannot be so. Let then his mortal remains return to mother Earth and be no more, but from every village and hamlet, from every hearth in the nation, mansion or humble hut, from the forests and the woodlands, from all the hills and mountains of our land, our valleys, lakes, rivers and streams, and from every Filipino heart let there swell in unison and in one huge plaintive refrain, in the beautiful language of our fathers and in the sentimental strain of our kundiman, the saga of our endless love and respect for his memory which we shall enshrine for always in our hearts. Let the perfume of his great soul blend with the aura of our land, and let every melody, sweet aroma, beautiful color, the chirping of birds, the murmur of brooks, and every mother's lullaby and plaintive kundiman ever carry with it for always a sweet memory of him who in life loved and serve his people so well and above himself.[*ibid*]

In this eulogy, Senator Cipriano Primicias also tried to console Ramon Magsaysay's family by saying that "the deceased" will live on in the heart of everybody:

In the case of your beloved husband and father, his affection that you have lost with his passing has been regained and sown into the hearts of his countrymen, there to grow into beautiful bouquets of fragment sampaguitas—tender and soft, yet stronger than steel,—that shall ever bind them together as a proud, strong, virile, industrious, and prosperous nation worthy to be inherited by future generations of our race.[*ibid*]

### **Senator Cipriano Primicias Helped the Audience Deal With Their Own Sense of Mortality**

For the implacable law of life and death admits of no exception. But if ever the love, devotion, and prayers of a whole nation could make a man live on, then indeed Ramon Magsaysay should rise from the dead. We all know, however, it cannot be so. Let then his mortal remains return to mother Earth and be no more.,[*ibid*]

### **Senator Cipriano Primicias Reaffirmed a Sense of Identity for the Community**

To his beloved family, we say with the poet: "Talk not of wasted affection, affection never was wasted." In the case of your beloved husband and father, his affection that you have lost with his passing has been regained and sown into the hearts of his countrymen, there to grow into beautiful bouquets of fragment sampaguitas—tender and soft, yet stronger than steel,—that shall ever bind them together as a proud, strong, virile, industrious, and prosperous nation worthy to be inherited by future generations of our race.[*ibid*]

You are not alone in your deep sorrow for his passing. Filipinos everywhere, within and without our national terri-

tory, and friendly nationals of other lands share with you the heaviness of your grief.[*ibid*]

Here the author used the whole nation's affection for Ramon Magsaysay and his family to symbolize and enhance a sense of identity for the whole country.

### **Senator Cipriano Primicias Sought to Change the Relationship Between the Living and the Dead from Present to Past Tense**

A brilliant, glorious meteor has just flashed its way across Philippine skies. Before its appearance in the firmament, all was dark, gloomy, and beset with forebodings. This meteor, this resplendent star, shed its light from on high and dispelled the prevailing gloom, bringing faith, hope, and charity once more into the disturbed hearts of his countrymen. [*ibid*]

Here the author changed the tense from the present perfect tense into past tense, resulting into the change of the relationship between the living and the dead, engendering a situation where it seemed that the dead and the living could see each other by taking the people who are still living into the past Imaginatively.

### **CONCLUSION**

Ramon Magsaysay has been the one of the greatest politicians and presidents in the history of Philippine. His prowess and tenacity in fighting against any evils and injustice, his plainness and integrity in personal life, his honesty, effectiveness and hard struggle in office, and the most importantly, his love for the country's people and his devotion to whole country have been an exemplar for all the people in the country to follow. In all, his great deeds and brilliant life has moved anyone, and his sudden death has anguished anybody deeply in this country, among whom, of course, is not without one of his colleague, Senator Cipriano Primicias who is also very excellent and great politician. So in his eulogy, which comprises all the parts required by an eulogy for a great person, he expressed his personal and the audience grief for the loss of Ramon Magsaysay, but he also tried to console the audience and himself by saying "his memory which we shall enshrine for always in our hearts," and "his passing has been regained and sown into the hearts of his countrymen." [3] In the end, after further deepening the appreciation and respect for the ever greatest deeds and wonderful life of the deceased, and after showing the people's, including the deceased's family member's reluctant acceptance of a great loss, the orator still remembered to consolidated the unification of the county as a whole, by saying that Ramon Magsaysay's affection, which will grow into beautiful bouquets of fragment sampaguitas in people's heart, will bind them together as a proud, strong, virile, industrious, and prosperous nation. [*ibid*]

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