



THE CHOICE BEFORE THE PEOPLE

THE political season is here. The presidential contenders are veteran politicians. Their teammates are heirs to prestigious names in public service.

Marcos and Osmeña aspire for the presidency with badges of their own, although in different shades.

Lopez and Magsaysay aspire for the vice-presidency, the former on the strength of his performance in the office, the other on that of promises and a magical name.

Marcos has a wartime and peacetime record that speaks well of the Filipino spirit to overcome difficulties and obstacles in pursuit of the noblest motive, let alone the fact that he has already shown an august capacity to make things happen in the presidency.

Osmeña couples his political savvy with a past and present that, as these are now being raked by his opponents, are disturbing and annoying the sensibilities of right-thinking Filipinos.

Lopez, as city mayor, senator and vice president, had rendered the public service great dedication and honesty, and among his achievements is the increase of the country's rice production to self-sufficiency level.

Magsaysay, as a congressman and senator, has gone around the country in pursuit of followers to his social justice cult and, alas, has still to fulfill the sterling promise of leadership that attaches to his name.

Marcos, and the Nacionalista Party which he represents, stands for na-

tionalism. Like Quezon, he feels the Filipinos must run their own affairs, live and progress within their own means.

Osmeña, and the Liberal Party which he represents, stands for foreign capital. He feels the Filipinos could be put to their feet with the help of others, to the extent of giving up part of the country's pride and patrimony.

No doubt the elections will turn out winners in the end. Whether the winners are the kind of leaders the Filipinos want, leaders the people can depend on in times of peace and unpeace, is the question to resolve.

Fortunately, both presidential contenders are standing not only on their personal popularity in the forthcoming polls. Aside from personal acclaim, they each stand on a principle of government that gives the people a choice. The other related issues, like graft, peace and prices, can be laid aside for the larger consideration of who of the two leaders, using their past and present pronouncements and performances, love his country and people more.

The campaign has, of course, two months more to go. Many things could still come up to suggest a clear choice for the people. But as the old saying goes, the sound you hear will be as strong as the knock you make. In politics, your past determines your present.

S. P. BIGAY

THE BETTER MAN

May I say that your exposition of the crucial issues in the coming elections and your portraits of the presidential contenders have been very illuminating? For one in my position, a public school teacher in a far outpost in the rural areas who relies mainly on magazines and newspapers for a perspective view of the nation, your articles on the presidential contest have contributed greatly to the task of choosing the better man.

CELSO ABARCA

Barugo, Leyte

CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

Your feature on the coming constitutional convention and its import had shed some light on the real questions and issues involved. I do not believe that the public at large up to now really understands the real stakes inherent in the coming convention, how much of their lives in the future will depend or be determined by its decisions, and how far it will go in determining the national destiny.

I hope that you will continue to run articles on the matter, with the same incisiveness, the same sense of historical import.

ANTONIO CUESTA

Valenzuela, Bulacan

KICKING THE HABIT

Was it Marx who said that "religion is the opium of the people?"

From what I have read in the papers and in your magazine ("Crisis in the Church,") some Catholics are trying to kick the habit. Rufino Cardinal Santos is apparently not a very good dope pusher.

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