

## Presidential Communications Office

### Presidential News Desk

#### **SPEECH OF PRESIDENT RODRIGO ROA DUTERTE DURING THE COMMENCEMENT EXERCISES OF SAN BEDA UNIVERSITY**

[Delivered at the Philippine International Convention Center, Pasay City | 29 May 2018]

Kindly sit down. Thank you for your courtesy.

Executive Secretary Salvador Medialdea, he's also a Bedan; Commission on Higher Education officer-in-charge Prospero de Vera III and the other members of the Commission; Very Reverend Father Aloysius Maranan, Rector of the San Beda University-president; Benedictine monks, Board of Trustees, and the distinguished members of the academe; the proud parents and the graduates, to whom this moment rightfully belongs; other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

I have two pages actually and I could read it in about maybe a minute and a half. Nakakahiya naman. *[shows the copy of the speech to the audience]* *[laughter]* I'd like to... With the permission and of course my apologies to the holy fathers and brothers of the Benedictine community. *[laughter]*

I was here... I forgot the exact place, maybe it was on that side when I took my oath of office as a member of the Bar.

Alam mo, my mother was not here and nobody was with me. Kakamatay lang ng tatay ko. But still I remembered that I wept a little sa banyo and I thanked God for the privilege of having been a graduate of the San Beda College of Law.

I'd like to share with you the vignettes of my — 'yung kokonting ano sa buhay ko. Actually naiinggit ako sa inyo kasi hindi ako pinayagan ng mga brothers pati pari mag-graduate. *[laughter]*

I was not allowed to take part in the graduation exercises because on the last days of our... For the year, maga-graduate na, we were practicing, 'yung ensayo ng paano mag-ano ng diploma, to take a bow, and then suddenly there was this happening inside the school. Huwag na natin pag-usapan 'yun kasi magagalit 'yung pari pati... *[laughter]*

So I got expelled. So I was not allowed to join the graduation. So ako naman umuwi na lang sa Davao because at that time expelled ako. Ang nanay ko nagtanong. Sabi niya, "Rodrigo, kailan ba ako pupunta ng Maynila?" *[laughter]*

I kept assuring her that graduation was coming and you know as a mother, excited as I was, she was in a hurry. Sabi niya... Noon kasi tawagan lang sa probinsya, you call PAL and place a reservation then pagdating mo sa airport bayad ka lang. That was the time --- that was the environment.

So sabi niya, "Mukhang may graduation ata nabasa ko sa ano, newspaper." Sabi ko, "Ma, sabi kasi ng pari magulo." *[laughter]*

Magulo talaga ang Mendiola noon. We were the martial law lawyers. We took the Bar under immense pressure. You know, every 300 meters nandoon 'yung Metrocom at lahat 'yung matataas na buhok ginupitan.

Those were the times so it was not really good for anything except maybe to go home and relax.

Sabi ko, "ma, sabi ng pari, kasi magulo ang Mendiola." And may mga pillbox kung saan-saan nag-lipad. Nag-misa lang kami sa abbey, sa chapel, at binigyan kami ng diploma na wala naman laman *[laughter and cheers]* para sabihin lang na graduate. Definitely, the graduation will take place. But maybe during a more somber time. So naniwala naman ang nanay ko. *[laughter]*

So finally, on review, the faculty sa law, San Beda, decided to pardon me and allowed me to take the Bar. Kasi kung hindi nila ako i-certify, paano makakuha that I have graduated in the course of the College of Law?

So I was allowed to take the Bar. I was certified as a graduate. So nakakuha ako ng Bar. Sa awa ng Diyos, pasar naman kami. '73, I became a lawyer. Kaya diyan ako nag-oath noon.

Many years after, I don't know if they're still around. May crush kasi ako na isang--- istorya lang man ito. *[laughter]*

She was that lady na makita mo doon sa St. Anselm's Building if you go up. 'Yung babae na... I don't know if she's still around. 'Yung babae doon nakaupo na may nunal dito. *[laughter]* Kasi kung nandito pa siya, pakasalan kita ma'am 'pag na-biyuda ka na. *[laughter]* Talagang crush kita.

And every time that I --- mag-akyat ako, tinitingnan ko siya. Alam niya na may gusto ako sa kanya. Ang problema, hindi ko alam kung may gusto siya sa akin. *[laughter]* From a distance. But she knew that I was her admirer.

'Yung 'pag-akyat mo, meron doong window. Parang --- I don't know if it's the cashier, pero doon sa left side paakyat. Ma'am, if you are still around, can I just maybe shake your hand? *[laughter]* I don't know if...

So many years after, she *[laughter and cheers]* --- wala man tayong magawa. After my speech, nobody talked. O so would you just rather that we go home? Eh 'di mag-tsismis-tsismis muna tayo dito. *[laughter]* Istorya-istorya man lang itong graduation kasi. *[laughter]*

Many years after, pumunta sila sa Church of Transfiguration. You guys from San Beda, if you have time, you travel to Bukidnon. There's a church there called the Transfiguration Church. And every afternoon, 'yung mga monks natin kumakanta.

And everytime that I pass by the --- in the years that I was mayor of Davao, dumadaan talaga ako doon. Makinig lang ako sa kanta nila and how they can sing.

So pumunta doon ang mga teachers, nag --- they call it immersion. But the late father Lacson was with them. Tapos nag-usap sila. O, 'yung sa --- Davao was just a few more kilometers, Davao ka na. So sabi nila, "punta tayo ng Davao kasi 'yang si Mayor, Bedan." But at that time, I was in Taiwan.

Ang problema pagdating doon, there's a small community of Bedans. Walang ano. Most of them are graduates of inferior schools. One in Diliman, the other one is in Padre Faura. *[laughter]*

Kokonti lang kami taga-San Beda but one of them was the Aquino family. Quite rich until now. So siya ang nag-blow out. So lahat ng Bedan, niyaya. Nagsiputan doon lahat, sabi nila "Wala man si mayor. We will invite the mother."

'Di ang mama ko pumunta doon. Nung nakausap, pinakila --- "Oh, father..." Father Lacson. "...ito 'yung nanay ni mayor Duterte."

Sabi ng nanay ko, "Father, 'yung graduation nila Rodrigo?" *[laughter]* P\*\*\*. "Saan 'yung graduation nila ni -- natuloy ba'yun?" *[laughter]*

Sabi ni Father Lacson --- sabi ng mga nandoon, "Oo, natuloy. Bakit?" "Kasi hindi man ako nagpunta. Walang --- there was no proper notice or anything."

Sabi niya "Why, did your son tell you the truth?" Sabi ng nanay ko, "Anong --- ano pala ang totoo?"

Sabi niya "Na-expelled siya kasi may binaril na tao doon sa loob sa San Beda." *[laughter]*

'Di nung pagdating ko, I was confronted by my mother. Alam ko kasi ang style ng nanay ko. Pag sinabi "Sabihin mo kay Rodrigo dito siya kumain kasi magpaluto siya ng inun-unan (paksiw)."

Unsa'y inun-unan sa Tagalog? (What's *inun-unan* in Tagalog?) Paksiw. Paksiw. Inun-unan. Mga sundalo, Bisaya. Ah, paksiw.

Pagka ganun, okay 'yan. Pero pag ang message is "Papuntahin ka ng nanay mo ngayon," delikado na 'yan. *[laughter]*

So pagdating ko, sabi niya "Bakit hindi mo sinabi sa akin ang totoo?"

So lumuhod ako. Talagang luhod. Literally, I melt down in front of her and said "Ma, pasaylu-a ko (Ma, please forgive me). Pasaylo. Patawin mo ako. Ayaw ko lang kasi kayong ipahamak. You wouldn't have to worry..."

But at that time, when I went home early, I was expelled. Though I was reconsidered. So eventually, naging --- '73 kami, release ng Bar.

Maya-maya, the first offer of award --- achiever's award? So ako, si Pitoy Moreno, and I think --- marami. Lima kami noon. Nung sinabi sa akin, sabi ko "Eh, 'di ako magpunta diyan. Expelled expelled kayo, ngayon award award. Anong klase kayo?" *[laughter, cheers, and applause]*

So hindi ako pumunta. Tapos second time, kita-kita kami nila Fred Lim, sabi "Bakit hindi ka sumipot doon? Pinatawad ka na nga, ikaw pa 'yung suplado." *[laughter]*

So the next time I was given this award, sumipot ako. Tapos this is the first time with you actually. But 'yung previous alumni, kita kita kami. I was awarded --- karami kong... You know what, 'di ko kayo niloloko ha.

Ni sa pag-aral ko, ni tansan, walang nagbigay sa akin. Ngayon, ang San Beda, may trophy, tapos ngayon "Now introducing the hall of fame --- Rodrigo Duterte." Unsa man ning medalya (What is this medal)? Kalaki pati plaque.

Sabi ko "Sino pa ang nasa hall of fame?" Sabi niya "Wala, ikaw lang mag-isa." *[laughter]*

Well anyway, I would like to thank the Benedictine community for such a wonderful show of mercy. *[laughter]*

Kaya nga... Ano 'yung sabi ni Shakespeare? "The act of mercy is never strained," something strained, 'yang hinahasa. And I got back being an awardee, pero sa scholastic, wala. Patay. *[laughter]*

Kung hindi niyo sirain 'yang Mendiola Bridge 'yung sa kanto? Saan ang College of Law? Ah sus maryosep. Walang ginawa 'yan kung galing sa library. Diyan 'yung Mendiola --- 'yang bridge, pagbaba mo, Legarda.

'Yung kanto, nandiyan pa? Oo. "Chilled beer". *[laughter]* 'Yang ilaw na 'yan? Naging judge? Ah sus. Puro... Clavecilla is the --- he used to be the judge of Naga. Doon pa 'yan sa ano kaya... Sayang ito sila. 'Di dumaan kay Solidum.

May ano ako diyan. Ito si Rene, ang may-ari nito, Bedan 'yan. *[Where are you, Rene? The president of---]*

Pwede pa ba ako magsalita? Wala? *[laughter]* Wala man akong yabang. Walang medalya, wala lahat. So ito na lang 'yung ano... Kasi late din ako eh. This Veronica...

You know, by the way, Sebastian, 'yung youngest son ko, Bedan 'yan. Walang ginawa kung hindi mag-habol ng babae hanggang ngayon. *[laughter]* Kagaya ng trabaho ng tatay niya noon.

Well, this one is worse. Palagi kaming may dynamics niyan kasi may mga anak eh.

Well, anyway, itong sa --- well, I was forgiven. I... 'Yun ang platform ko. I was proud to be called a Bedan.

'Tong anak ko, gusto na rin mag-aral dito. Gusto niya mag-tira diyan. Sabi ko, "No, you're better off with your mother sa Davao lang."

Sabi niya, "Pa, 'yan bang matanda na 'yan nandiyan sa ano, Cabinet mo."

Sabi ko, "sino, 'nak?"

"'Yan, 'yang matanda na Bisaya."

"Si Leonor Briones?"

"Oo, 'yan. 'Di ba Bisaya 'yan?"

Sabi ko, "oo."

"Sabihin mo ano man nakain niya? Bakit hinabaan niya itong kurso naming K-12?" *[laughter and applause]*

Sabi ko, "'nak, wala man tayong problema diyan. If it's just a matter of suggesting I can. But sabi ko, "I would have to go into a incongruity."

Sabi niya, "bakit?"

"Alam mo, 'nak, ang original K-12 talaga tatay mo." *[laughter]* It took me seven years to finish high school. *[laughter and applause]*

Kaya matanda na ako sa kanila. I'm 73. Itong sila Rene mga 70 lang 'yan eh, kasi na... Well, including the scholarship of suroy and --- suroy is lakwatsa. It took me seven years actually to...

Meron man akong isang vignettes sabi ko sa kanila --- may professor kami. Kilala na. Professor ni Abby 'yan. He's the youngest who took the Bar, passed it at the age of 20.

He could not take his oath of office because wala pa siya sa edad. He had to wait for one year to --- record holder 'yan. He's the youngest to top the Bar.

Pero dumaan ka ba sir kay ano --- kay Solidum? Ha? Oo.

Itong Solidum na ito galing ito Capiz. Justice. Ang boses nito. 'Yung mga taga-law school, ang boses nito 'yung --- boses ano, shrill. There's a word na shrill. And he could only pronounce the last syllable.

"Te!" [laughter] "Di tindig rin ako... Laurente pati ako tumindig. [laughter] Grouchy na ano. Pero lahat kay, dumaan kay Solidum ang Remedial Law. Una kaming natapos. "Te? [laughter] Tapos, tumindig kami. Sabi niya, "oh, g\*\*\*\*\* Duterte! I did not call you!" [laughter] "Sit down." "Di sit down ako.

"Oh you stand up." "Sir, I did not --- I did not hear my name sir called." "Ah because you are always looking at the back. G\*\*\*\*\* come here in front." Ganun kasi kami sa college. Ewan, siguro ngayon mga bata. Pagdating ko sa --- pinaupo ako diyan sa front. Naka... Sabi niya, "Rody, sit down. You recite." "Di tindig ako, sabi ko... Sabi niya, "What?" [laughter] Sabi ko, "sir, there is no question yet sir." P\*\*\*\*\* j\*\* nagalit. [laughter]

Sabi pa ng matanda, naka-ganun ako eh. "G\*\*\*\*\* it, Duterte. Do not scratch your head and scatter your dandruff in this room!" [laughter] "Keep it on your head, that is the only one you have." [laughter]

Kay Puno, Solidum. Jack Jacinto. He's still around, sir? Jack? Jack Jacinto? Patay na? [laughter] Tayo na ang sunod, Bong.

That was Class '72. But tatlo sa amin ang pumasok sa ano ha. That's a record. 'Yung San Beda naman one or two but every year meron talaga 'yan, dalawa, tatlo, dalawa, tatlo. Sa amin, tatlo ang pumasok ng sa top 10. Star-studded 'yung klase namin.

So may I know read the [laughter] piece that was prepared by --- diyan lang 'yan, the PMS, 'yung Presidential Management Staff. Kasi 'pag hindi ang sasabihin, "g\*\*\* 'tong p\*. Hindi man lang rin pagbasa, papagawa pa ng..." [laughter]

So in fairness...

I congratulate our graduates for reaching this remarkable milestone in their academic journey. Today, we do not [just] celebrate their hard work, determination and triumph, but also wish them all the best as they begin their journey towards the realization of their dreams.

I also laud San Beda for the successful culmination of its first batch of graduates as a university. This accomplishment serves not only as a testament to the school's commitment to academic excellence and innovation, but also as an inspiration to contribute further [to] the long-term progress of higher education in the country.

Let this milestone remind us of the indispensable role of education in charting the course of our youth's future [and] in harnessing their potential to become outstanding individuals. Indeed, the graduates have done a great job in channeling their passions into endeavors that enrich their respective vocations. May they continue to contribute to our nation's progress as they join our country's workforce and become productive members of society.

As the university marks another chapter in its long history, I trust that you will become more [invigorated] to demonstrate the Benedictine principles that have guided you and us --- kami — in your respective pursuits. Serve as examples of servant-leadership among your peers and let your enthusiasm and humility propel you towards further success as you build your respective careers.

This remarkable success of our fellow Bedan alumni in various fields and professions is truly a positive indication of our contributions [to] our country's continuing path to sustainable progress. With your determination to cultivate your talents and skills, I am confident that you can contribute further to the betterment of your respective communities and industries.

As one Bedan community, let us work together in forging a stronger citizenry who proactively responds to the call of service for our country and people.

As you leave the halls of your alma mater, I ask you to join me in our shared task of uplifting the well-being of our people and looking after the welfare of the poor and the marginalized. Hand in hand, let us march towards a more peaceful and progressive Philippines.

Again, congratulations to the Class of 2018. Mabuhay kayong lahat at ako'y sumasaludo sa inyo.

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