

Defending Moral Obligation: Duterte's Dauntless War Against Drugs

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As the mainstream media describes Rodrigo Roa Duterte, the 16th President of the Republic of the Philippines, widespread generalizations emerged. He was the country's first Mindanaoan president and acquired popularity among Filipinos by working on platforms to reduce drug addiction, corruption, and criminality, and received 39 percent of the vote in the 2016 Presidential Election. Back on the year 2016, during the first Presidential Debate, Duterte had sworn that he will eliminate the extensive propagation of drugs in the country with his first six months of authority. With the advent of his presidential campaign, arises the issue on extra-judicial killings from his ruthless hunt for drug pushers and users which is highly criticized by the human rights devotees. This was the cornerstone of Duterte's presidential campaign and the crime solution hallmark of his 22-year period as mayor of Davao City. While the president's critics state that this is unjust and immoral, this paper argues that Duterte's radical politics is necessary in the lessening if not total eradication of criminality and corruption that the country had been experiencing. Using the lens of Deontological Ethics and Utilitarian Ethics, this paper tries to explain Duterte's radical politics and why it is needed in the contemporary Philippine society.

Keywords: radical democracy, Duterte's war on drugs and criminality, Deontological Ethics, Utilitarian Ethics

Introduction

Prohibited drug use has far-reaching implications, resulting in long-term physical and emotional harm to users as well as negative consequences for their families, employees, and others with whom they interact. It has also negative impact on a person's health, frequently resulting in illnesses and diseases. Drug overdoses and other drug-related disorders cause many users to die prematurely. Roughly 0.5 million people worldwide have died as a result of drug abuse. More than 70% of these deaths are caused by opioids, with overdose accounting for more than 30% of those over all deaths (WHO, 2021). Some users are even parents whose children are left in the care of relatives or in foster care after their deaths. As a result of being isolated from other drug-using family members, children have difficulty forming bonds. They are often left in the care of relatives and in some cases to their grandparents who serve as full-time surrogate and assume responsibility as well (Behavioral Health, 2021). According to the current World Drug Report, by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, around 35 million people worldwide suffer from drug abuse disorders which require treatment services (UNDOC, 2021). The report also estimates the number of opioid users to be 53 million, up 56% over prior estimates, and opioids are responsible for two-thirds of the 585,000 persons who died in 2017 as a result of

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drug overdose. In the same year, 11 million people worldwide injected drugs, with 1.4 million living with HIV and 5.6 million living with hepatitis C. 271 million people, or 5.5% of the global population aged 15 to 64, were projected to have used drugs in the preceding year (UNDOC, 2021).

In the Philippines, drug trafficking and abuse influence practically every part of our life. The financial cost alone is staggering, but it is difficult to estimate the prevalence of illegal substances in the country. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on their estimation, marijuana is used by 3.5 percent of the population over the age of 15, amphetamine-type stimulants by 2.8 percent, and ecstasy by 0.01 percent of the total population (UNDOC, 2005). Moreover, the International Narcotics Control Strategy Report in 2016 stated that the Philippines have an estimated 1.8 million drug users, accounting for 2.2 percent of the over-all population (UNDOC, 2016). Without a doubt, drug addiction has had a destructive bearing on society, affecting people of all socioeconomic levels and demographics. The use of drugs in the country continues to grow as the year passed and as stated by The Philippine Dangerous Drugs Board, 859,150 were estimated to be shabu or crystal methamphetamine users, which is considered to be the country's most dangerous drug and a total population of 1.8 million drug users on the year 2016 (Lasco, 2016). This was before the Duterte Administration has started.

The consequences of drug usage and addiction include a stretched criminal system, lost productivity, and environmental harm. The most common arrest category is drug law infractions, which account for a significant part of incarcerations in municipal, state, and federal prisons. The Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR) recorded roughly 1.2 thousand crime events per 100,000 people in the same year which is very alarming (Statista, 2014). No one can deny that drug addiction is a societal problem that leads to a slew of crimes, financial difficulties, and shattered family, friendships and other relationships. Improved study and more exact statistics have revealed that the negative health effects of drug use are far more severe and pervasive than previously believed. Additionally, the increase was partly attributable to a 10% increase in the worldwide population aged 15-64; data now reveal a higher prevalence of opioid use in Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America, as well as cannabis usage in North America, South America, and Asia, compared to 2009. In the end, cannabis still remains the most extensively used drug on the planet, with an estimated 188 million people using it in 2017.

Furthermore, the propagation of drug use is also very evident in the Philippines and had the highest number of shabu users in the East Asia according to the United Nations World Drug Report (Rappler, 2016). Previous presidents before the Duterte Administration have not given emphasis to this issue for they are more concerned with the country's gradual economic growth. If there are some actions that have been taken, still it was not enough to control the drug trafficking and abuse that has been happening in the country. Consequently, various drug-related crimes escalated during those years and were seen on headlines. This is because many among the suspected drug lords and drug dealers are high ranked policemen, generals, and even well-known politicians (Aljazeera, 2017). Crimes such as abuse, murder, and rape have also occurred and infested the country, especially in the slums of far-flung areas and within the metros. In 2008, the Dangerous Drugs Board (DDB) conducted a poll that estimated 1.7 million drug users across the country (1.9 percent of the 2008 population). In 2012, the DDB and the Philippine Normal University collaborated on a different study that estimated the number to be considerably lower, at 1.3 million (1.3 percent of the 2012 population) (Rappler, 2015). In the preceding years, there were approximately 715 criminal incidences per 100,000 people. Over the previous six years, there has been a considerable increase in the number of crimes reported across the country

where the year 2014 has 1,161,188 million total reported crimes (Rappler, 2019). When the war against drugs has been instated, the decline regarding this issue is very significant. But amidst the on-going operation, various drug-related crime still happens which made the current president furious and pushes him to be more eager with his campaign. One case is the brutal murder of a 16-year-old Maribago High School student on March 12, 2019, and was discovered naked from the waist down, her face scraped to the bone, in an empty lot in Barangay Bangkal, Lapu-Lapu City. Upon further investigations, the victim had 16 stab wounds and had been raped. Three suspected men under the influence of drugs were arrested (Rappler, 2019).

This issue was seen as very crucial by the City Mayor of Davao who is now the Philippine's current president after snatching the 2016 National Elections. Since the time of being a Mayor of Davao City, one of the country's most thriving city, the aggressive man hunt for pushers and users (as described by his critics) of illegal drugs was his crime solution hallmark of his 22-year period of governance. And he made it clear that if given the chance to govern the country as well, he will continue to do so, to totally eradicate this issue, which he considers threat in the country. His usage of the term "adik" (addict), which in the Philippines has a negative connotation, reflects his belief that users of illegal drugs, like methamphetamines, cocaine, and marijuana, will negatively impact society especially with the country's criminality prevalence. He has also asserted, for example, that long-term shabu usage will "shrink the brain", rendering users "unviable as human beings on this planet, that is why he highly promotes rehabilitation programs for those who are exposed with illicit drugs". Duterte is also aware that within the previous administrations, even if drug lords were incarcerated, the circulation of illegal drugs within the prison cells is still freely happening. This is one of the ugliest truths of the country's justice system. He even criticized this issue during the 2016 Presidential Debates when Senator Mar Roxas claimed that the past administration had totally cleaned the spread of drugs in the country. Duterte rebutted how ridiculous it is to claim false notions when in fact, actions were not made and even if there were drug raids, drugs lords whose influence is very crucial lived a gluttonous life inside their mansion-like cells, and the proliferation of drugs continues.

Duterte has sworn in as president of the Philippines on July 1, 2016 and on the same day, he launched an operation against drug-related crime which ended in killing thousands of suspects in which he highly argues as lawful encounters, due to the grounds that a large population during the instigated drug raids have resisting arrest cases or what they call as "nanlaban" during seize and operations. Numerous people criticized his snatching of the presidency and a leader not coming from the world of the elites is strange and ludicrous, specifically that he came from Mindanao. Although the president gained prominence through the beauty of Davao City with his fervent governance, especially inside the city's issue on drugs and the intriguing Davao Death Squad, the latter received a lot of criticism, particularly from those who were an avid supporters of human rights, for they argued that the president has committed an immense violation in pursuing the war against drugs that led to the death toll of nearly 12,000 last January, 2021 (N.A., 2021). The campaign was not even stopped by the COVID-19 pandemic. It still continues as the president is now on his sixth year of administration.

This paper would like to analyze and understand Duterte's radical politics and why is it necessary in the lessening if not total eradication of criminality and corruption that the country had been experiencing, by anchoring it to Immanuel Kant's Deontological Ethics, Jeremy Bentham and John Mill's Utilitarianism. Is killing drug-addicts considered morally right? If not, what should a president do with this issue that has also led into killings of thousands of lives just because the perpetrator is under the influence of drugs?

Continuity and Change: Duterte's "Duty-Bound" Crime Solution Hallmark

"We will not stop until the last drug lord, the last financier and the last pusher have surrendered or are put, either behind bars or below the ground, if they so wish", Duterte declared during his first state of the nation address regarding on his battle in eradicating drugs in the country. This campaign is notably very popular around the world and is being criticized by human rights advocates both here and abroad. From the president's use of foul words to his aggressive way of governance, many people are alarmed for this had broken the "nakasanayan" among Filipinos. We are used to presidents being so soft-spoken, subtle, and who shows a very charismatic character on cameras, but with Duterte's snatching of presidency, his unfiltered words and the fact that he is from Mindanao did not help either. This could be assimilated to breaking the "status quo" and reforming a hundred years of an accustomed system of political activities and ideologies which is highly influenced by the elitist sector of the society. From the former administrations, Filipinos have witnessed how laws are made only for the rich. Many who suffered from oppression and discrimination came from the poor. If you do not have the name, money, and fame, justice will not be served rightfully especially if you are battling against the upper region of the hierarchy. Filipinos' concerns will not be remedied because those to whom the people have given power to govern have become a major contributor to the problem. The powerless are routinely exploited and subjugated by structural inequities in our institutions. In fact, some authors would definitely argue that the conservative Supreme Court's fondness for white-collar criminal defendants is part of a wider phenomenon: the court's profound and obvious persistent compassion for the wealthy. It has frequently sided with wealthy campaign funders, and large corporations (Cohem, 2020). The Court has been a haven of refuge not for the needy and weak, but for members of society who are doing very well on their own in the vast majority of situations. Favoritism, association, and personality-based politics will determine the kind of relationship citizens have with their public officials in states that are dysfunctional and badly administered (Maboloc, 2020). As a result, ordinary and poor people are denied access to the benefits of progress and their rights. When a community is often oppressed from its following rights, people cry to break the inequalities that are happening. However every community has its own status quo defenders and disinterested fraternity, both of which are known for sleeping through revolutions. Everyone is shouting for a change nonetheless when change is brought to them; they will react the other way. This is even one of a nation's greatest flaws where far too many individuals fail to stay awake during significant periods of social transformation. This is what had happened to the Philippine's current situation. Back in the 2016 National Elections, many assumed that putting Duterte in presidency would change and break inequalities. However when the administration started to straighten things in their right places, a large percentage of the population had reacted negatively.

Previous administrations have been chastised for their lack of political will. Duterte, on the other hand, has become a symbol of a strong leader with the charm required to bring about fundamental change who established radical ways in leading his country (Maboloc, 2020). The main difficulty for the current administration, according to Duterte, is to entirely vindicate itself from the same political disease that plagued its antecedents. The latter is zealously uprooted with the virtues of duty-bound notions and the maximum benefit for the greater population that he is so bent to solve and exterminate all the issues on drugs and criminalities in the country, regardless of the hundreds of critics thrown all throughout the years of his presidency. In fact, Duterte has ignored the most high-profile international condemnation of the drug war assassinations. It could be remembered that he threatened to withdraw the Philippines from the UN in reaction

to criticism from UN authorities, particularly UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein. Furthermore, comments by the ICC prosecutor criticizing "high officials" of the Philippine government for public statements that "seem to condone such killings and further seem to encourage state forces and civilians alike to continue targeting these individuals with lethal force" prompted Duterte to seriously consider the withdrawal of the Philippines from the ICC (Human Rights Watch, 2017). With Duterte's administration, moral discourse and political discourse are two distinct things, and he highly believes that his war against drugs will resolve the criminalities and evident corruption within his tenure. This kind of government is often argued by a well-known analyst of a radical democracy, which is a style of democracy that pushes for radical equality and liberty expansion. In simplest definition, this is the study and application of democratic political contestation of theory and practice (Little & Lloyd, 2009). Pursuing this further, Christopher Ryan Maboloc, an Associate Professor at Ateneo de Davao University and a distinguished political analyst of the current administration, further argued that through the birth of radical democracy in the Philippines, politics cannot and should not be limited to logical speech because doing so binds politics to the limiting boundaries of rationality. In a society like the Philippines, where people's lives appear to be unusual, the conventional manner of doing things will not work. Through the eyes of the people, morality and justice are two inseparable things. But the truth is that ethical considerations upon some political matters call for a much deeper understanding, especially on different scales of situation. Since Duterte's regime, many are abashed with the turmoil brought by the transition from an administration that has focused on exponential growth to eliminating the roots of evil from the country. The current administration's war on drugs is depicted as immoral because of the thousands of lives being killed in the operation as a consequence. But many did not fully comprehend that the goal of the said campaign is to abolish the drugs proliferating the country to lessen crimes and other societal problems, and not the killings of drug addicts and drug pushers. And because people are so easily manipulated by the media and the corresponding critics, it was also a huge factor of influence why an enormous percent of the Philippine's population had "demonized" the president.

Duterte Through the Lens of Deontological Ethics

Let us understand the campaign on "War Against Drugs" through the principle of Immanuel Kant's Deontological Ethics. For Kant, "the character of humanity consists in the ability of being universally legislating though with the very condition that is also subject to the same legislation" (Britannica, n.d.). Man's logical nature allows him to comprehend the notion of moral good and this understanding is the root of moral obligation. Kant believes that moral duty is universal. As a result, it applies to everyone at all times. Moreover, since the human individual is fully capable of deliberating, following rules, and making choices, he is subject to the moral law (Holmes, 2007). Kant's ideology can help explain the administration of Duterte where the president is so inclined upon eradicating the drugs in the republic because he sees this as a threat to humanity and as a leader; it is his imperative to act upon it. "The obligation to act from reverence to law" is what Duterte is acting upon his administration (CI:361). Thus Duterte's will and intention is good because for him, he loves the Philippines and would even sacrifice his soul just for the betterment of the country. In a similar manner, as explained by Kant, the will is good, not because the consequences are good, nor because it is capable of attaining the end which it seeks, but "it is good in itself, or because it wills the good". Right action, in Kant's opinion, is ultimately a rational action. As a duty-based ethics, Kant believes that ethics is made up of directives concerning what we ought to do. In his categorical imperative, the word "imperative" refers to a

command or order and with Duterte's way of governance, this is his imperative. For Duterte, it is his duty to protect the country from all possible threats and his duty will be carried on no matter what are the consequences for he presupposes that this is for the best.

Another point to consider is that for Kant, duty is the supreme norm of morality or "the obligation to act from reverence to law" and the human person knows the good internally through the autonomy of the will. The president's will on abolishing the proliferation of drugs is fueled by his desire to also at least lessen one of the many factors that lead to crimes and corruption. Duterte already knows from his mayoralty until presidency that drug misuse is frequently accompanied by a negative social impact on the community such as a destructive bearing on industry, education and training, family, as well as its role in violence, crime, financial difficulties, housing issues, homelessness, and vagrancy. And many of these are apparent in the Philippines, dragging the country from being still the "sick man of Asia". Drug-related crimes have been thriving in the country that have taken away many lives and Duterte thinks that "adiks" as he calls pose catastrophic threats to society, as well as personal devastation.

Moreover, Deontological Ethics of Kant imposes to "let the justice be done though the heavens may fall" (Shockley, 2019). According to this, at least some actions are ethically required regardless of the consequences for human flourishing. The morality of every human act is determined by a good will; Kant, in this regard, insists to derive any moral worth from our actions and humans must do them from the right motive (Holmes, 2007). Duterte's style of governance with his name being ascribed to harsh and ruthless administration could be attributed to this ideology due to the grounds that the morality of his action is based on some aspect of the activity itself, and not on the quality of the action's outcome or consequences. In accordance to Deontological Ethics, the rightness or wrongness of an act has nothing to do with results or outcomes but it is about what the human person as an autonomous being intends to do. Duterte argues during his first public speech that "the problems that bedevil our country today which need to be addressed with urgency are corruption, both in the high and low echelons in government, criminality in the streets and the rampant sale of illegal drugs in all strata of Philippine society and the breakdown of law and order", thus it is a must to strongly advocate change and reform which according to Maboloc (2020), is the president's "leftist" attitude, which is very radical in terms of making decisions in politics. Amidst disparate critics thrown and political divide not only from his own country but the United Nations as well, Duterte has remained heavy-duty for he knows very well that the meaning of every struggle that he may face in terms of making decisions in politics cannot be consistent for the democracy of a country is very diverse; thus it should be open to radical strategies.

The desire of the current administration to totally abolish drugs in the country which is aimed at the neutralization of illegal drug personalities nationwide is contingent to his decision on being very firm in pushing the war against drugs. As supported though Kant's duty-bound ethics, "nothing can possibly be conceived in the world or even out of it, which can be called good without qualification except a good will" (Kant, 2002). This is Duterte's categorical imperative that is rooted to prudence rather than morality, which is aligned to Kant's belief that a human person knows what is right and wrong through using his own intellect. Duterte knows that the proliferation of drugs in the Philippines will result to no good; thus he acted legitimately upon it. He highly believes that this campaign would generate peace, which is essential for sustainable socio-economic advancement. As he stated in his SONA in the year 2017, "the fight against illegal drugs will continue because that is the root cause of so much evil and so much suffering that weakens the social fabric and deters foreign investments from pouring in...the fight will be unrelenting as it will be unrelenting".

Accordingly, since the pronouncement of the said campaign, between July 2016 and November 2019, the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) launched 151,601 anti-illegal drug operations, resulting in the arrest of 220,728 people and the deaths of 5,552 suspects. During the same time period, anti-drug operations rescued a total of 2,799 minors participating in illegal drug activity (Paroccha, 2020). Consequently, under Oplan Tokhang, the PNP has carried out 163,622 anti-illegal narcotics operations, resulting in the arrest of over 256,000 drug personalities, the deaths of over 6,000 in police operations, and the surrender of over 1,200,000 people (Calinawan, 2019). This drive is often misunderstood as a lot of killings have been recorded from the point that it started but unknown to many; the Oplan Tokhang (known in the Visayan language as “toktok-hangyo”) is a national law enforcement project that aims to warn drug traffickers and users through approaching them and talk about surrendering to the officers. When they do, they will be put into rehabilitation centers and will be given a chance to renew their lives. Since this crusade has been started, criminal incidences have steadily dropped as a result. From more than 626,000 in July 2015 to June 2016, total crime is reduced by 58,276 (9.30%) in the first year of President Duterte’s administration. This is reduced by 79,647 instances, or 14.02 percent, in the second year, which covered the months of July 2017 to June 2018, and by 2.91 percent in the third year, which covered the months of July 2018 to June 2019. According to PNP figures, overall crime was decreased by 9.8% during Duterte’s first year in office. Statistics also reveal that crime incidence was reduced by 61,409 in Duterte’s first year in office compared to his late predecessor President Benigno Aquino III’s administration (Rappler, 2017).

The country’s crime rate has been steadily declining, indicating that the government’s anti-drug drive is working. For drug use, 16 law enforcement officers and 145 others were fired for various drug-related offenses. Anti-drug activities also resulted in the arrests of 292 government employees, 262 elected officials, and 67 uniformed troops. Furthermore, the rehabilitation component of Duterte’s drug battle is still overlooked. Nueva Ecija launched the country’s largest drug rehabilitation center, a 10,000-bed facility, in 2016. The 60-bed Agusan facility debuted in September 2016 followed by the 576-bed Bukidnon and 150-bed Saranggani facilities, which were finished late last year. Between 2016 and early 2017, more than 1.2 million drug users and pushers turned themselves in. Police commanders were tasked with keeping an eye on them to make sure they will not go back to their old ways. Some went through therapy and 316,494 people completed recovery and wellness programs. Despite poor press, opinion polls from 2017 and 2018 show strong popular support for the drug war. Colombia, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Indonesia have indicated an interest in adopting the Philippine National Police’s Oplan Tokhang method for persuading drug users and pushers to stop using drugs and reform (Pitlo, 2019). Because of this there has been seen an increase of confidence of local and foreign investors in investing within the country’s vicinity. Subsequently, the majority of investments that have occurred under Duterte’s administration have come from traditional allies such as the United States, Japan, Europe, and neighboring countries like Singapore and Hong Kong. Mainland China has yet to make a significant impact on the overall investment landscape in the country. Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows into the Philippines hit a new high of \$10 billion in 2018. This fully corresponded to the Joint Foreign Chambers (JFC) of the Philippines’ foresight predictions. Correspondingly, in a recent assessment, The US News & World Report, in collaboration with Y&R’s BAV Group and the University of Pennsylvania’s Wharton School, named the Philippines the “Best Country to Invest in” (Forbes, 2018). Despite its political chaos from numerous critics and nemesis of the president, the Philippine economy continues to thrive and boasted significantly. These are a few of the noteworthy effects of his war against drugs which is a “duty-bound”

crusade to save the country's youth while maintaining peace and order. The will is good, not because the consequences are good, nor because it is capable of attaining the end which it seeks, but "it is good in itself, or because it wills the good" (Shockley, 2019). And to Duterte, this is what matters the most, a genuine and meaningful change.

The Other Side of the Door: Duterte as a "Consequentialist"

President Rodrigo Duterte has created an unparalleled ruckus in the political lives of the Filipino people in his almost six years in power. Duterte has made more international news than any other Philippine president in recent memory (Maboloc, 2019). In his speeches, he is very infamous for viciously attacking his detractors verbally. He has vowed to imprison and execute people who plot to "destroy the country". According to Pulse Asia, one of the country's most reputable polling firms, Duterte has retained his support ratings above 75 percent for the most of his reign, compared to his three predecessors. Another leading survey organization, Social Weather Stations, has not recorded a net satisfaction rating for Duterte lower than +45, which is considered "good". However because he had antagonized the "Catholic Church" this has been his huge critic ever since his presidency. In addition, in what he calls an "independent" foreign policy, he has changed relationships away from the United States and the European Union, favoring China and Russia instead which also caused a huge turmoil among critics once again. Nevertheless, the president remained sturdy with his choices.

Duterte's belligerent actions or outspoken demeanor are reminiscent of historical heroes who have behaved as people's liberators. From a Western perspective, such behavior could be classified as "populism" (Maboloc, 2019). This is a political method that aims to appeal to regular people who believe that established elite groups ignore their issues. When supporters of President Duterte are asked why they voted for him, they frequently reply that he alone is capable of achieving the best possible outcome for the people. They believe that what matters is the result, which only he can deliver, and is based on a moral cost-benefit analysis. Students of ethics would immediately recognize this as utilitarian moral reasoning. This could be attributed to Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill's Utilitarianism, two late 18th- and 19th-century British philosophers, economists, and political thinkers. The maxim of this philosophy is "The greatest good for the greatest number" (Tardi, 2020). Duterte argued that the involvement of politicians, military and police personnel, and ordinary people in the distribution of illegal drugs facilitates the disintegration of political order. He said that widespread illegal drug use is to blame for a variety of crimes, acts of social deviance, and other socio-economic issues like poverty. This explains why Duterte is so gripped in abolishing traces of illicit drugs, to save the country for the present and future generations.

In utilitarian philosophy, the concept of harm results to punishment. Punishment has been employed in the legal system to maintain societal order. Simply expressed, it promotes social justice by punishing wrongdoers in order to alleviate the suffering of those who have been mistreated. In a similar manner, Duterte thinks that punishing an offender has ramifications for both the criminal and the society he has injured. To solve this, it must be consistent with the highest happiness thus the penalty should produce more "good" than "bad". The concept of utilitarianism is to minimize damage in order to enhance happiness. This concept asserts that "activities are right in proportion to the extent to which they tend to promote happiness, and incorrect in proportion to the extent to which they tend to generate the opposite of happiness". Happiness, in other terms, is pleasure combined with the absence of pain. However, this desire to be happy must not come at the expense of

other people's happiness, as they, too, have the right to be happy in the same way that the other person does. As a result, utilitarianism is based on the pursuit of aggregate pleasure. Through this philosophy, Duterte's radical strategies could be understood in the grounds that the administration believes that sanctioning a wrongdoer not only punishes the offender, but it also deters future offenses by the same individual or other people since they are aware of the consequences of their actions. Utilitarians think that justice is served when the law makes a person aware of the predefined penalty if he does harm to others. It is "an eye for an eye", "a tooth for a tooth" premise in some beliefs (Tardi, 2020). If having the offender indicted, convicted, and executed results in a lot more happiness, then the law is useful since justice is served and applied. This is a more extreme kind of utilitarianism that goes well beyond liberalism because this can only be achieved through liberal policies (Lesser, n.d.).

In his 2019 SONA he still asserts that "Developmental gains will not be felt by our people in the countryside if we cannot maintain law and order... "Yang peace and security, wala"yan. [peace and security are nothing]...we need to enforce the law". This is often the rhetoric of the president concerning the issue on illegal drugs. In keeping with his commitment to combat narcotics, government corruption, criminality, and terrorism, he makes these offensive assertions, which infuriate local and international diplomats who are not used to such arguments. Illegal narcotics, in Duterte's opinion, are the root cause of long-standing societal issues like poverty, political corruption, and economic uncertainty. As the country is confronted with cases filed in the International Criminal Court, this becomes a social concern. The basic idea of the remarks is to terrorize a few wrongdoers in order to safeguard the numerous law-abiding citizens. To bring order to the community, it is vital to reign with an iron fist. The alternative of disobedience to the law should never be considered. He notices that Filipinos are not taught to respect and fear the law. To put it another way, utilitarianism entails doing something ethically repugnant in order to benefit the overwhelming majority.

Going back to the very main concept of utilitarianism which is to minimize damage in order to maximize happiness, in understanding the president's war against drugs, he emphasizes how important it is to execute the law to effectively eliminate criminalities, corruption, and issues on drugs. He believes that solving the country's problem about drug addiction and proliferation would also solve problems such as poverty, delinquencies, and exploitation. He wants to eliminate this for it obviously harms the country. It falls as choosing what is the good for the maximum number of people. While the mainstream media often describes the president negatively, according to a poll issued by Pulse Asia in October 2020, 91 percent of Filipinos approve of Duterte's performance in the country's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, which has cost lives and livelihoods (Mercado, 2020). Only 5% of respondents disapproved of the President's performance, while another 5% were indecisive, according to the survey results. Duterte's rating was the highest among top government officials like Vice President Leni Robredo with 57 percent approval, next is Senate President Vicente Sotto III with 84 percent approval and Speaker Alan Peter Cayetano who garnered 70 percent approval. This only means that according to the Filipinos, the president is really doing a great job. Furthermore, with the president's war on drugs, Social Weather Stations' quarterly poll of 1,200 Filipinos gave Duterte's three-year campaign an "outstanding" grade, with 82 percent satisfied due to a sense of less drugs and crime in the country (Staff, 2019). This is the goal of Duterte's six-year administration to lessen, if not totally eradicate the criminalities that are happening in the Philippines. He acts as a very strict father with compassion, whose authoritative guidance will guide his child to the right path. In becoming an effective leader, how willing are you to strictly enforce the law in order to save a certain number of people and maintain peace and economic sustainability?

Well, the Philippines' president says he is certain that he would, just to protect the common good and he will never deny that just to please the sweeping hypocrisy of some critics and politicians who have done far worse.

Conclusion

In solving issues such as this case, people need to understand that the face of politics is very broad and unpredictable. There is no uniform face of justice. Through the eyes of people, morality and justice are two inseparable things. But the truth is that ethical considerations upon some political matters call for a much deeper understanding; especially on different scales of situation. Thus politicians are expected to make decisions even if these decisions might not follow an ethical perspective that is acceptable to everyone. Most of the times, political discourse and moral discourse are two different things and politicians are expected to make decisions even if these decisions might not follow an ethical perspective that is acceptable to everyone. Duterte believes that politics is about negotiations and agreement according to Maboloc (2020) and that is why his decisions are often misunderstood because he chose the radical way. In the real face of democracy here in the Philippines where the clash between the elites and those of the lower sector of the hierarchy often results to oppression and injustices to the latter, citizens should not expect a certain and universal form of consensus where in fact, the system of justice being influenced by the highest rank of the hierarchy often neglects the community's significant claim. An effective leader should consider a more substantive form of justice—a justice that will serve all the people who deserves and a political system that will benefit the majority. However, the typical emphasis on a universal idea of human rights appears to be undercut by Duterte's unwavering insistence of the use of violence against its opponents in order to safeguard the interest of the people. And because the mainstream media often demonizes the image of the president, issues on extra-judicial killings are being used to contest against the current administration. Through the lens of Deontological Ethics, we all know what is right and bad, good and evil, on some level. The problem is not moral doubt; it's the suppression of what we already know to be true, good, and real. It furthermore posits that "An action is right if you obey the 'prima facie' duty that becomes a 'duty proper' or binding duty in a given situation" (Shockley, 2019). On this regard, the person in authority should do their duty because it's their moral obligation to do so. This is because the ethics of Deontology is non-consequentialist. For this reason, this means that this is more concerned with the decision or action itself—the motivations, ideas, or ideals that underpin the decision or action—than with the outcomes or consequences of that decision or action. This logic is based on the importance of acting on principle in a specific situation. With Duterte's aggressive governance against criminality in the Philippines, this only means that he believes that he has the capacity to do so because it is his duty as the leader of the country. In addition, by appealing to people's emotions, Duterte has effectively decentered and disarticulated political authority in the Philippines. He's out there tearing down outdated customs which is a very clever strategy to respond to the cries of his country, particularly the poor (Maboloc, 2020).

Furthermore, Duterte as a Utilitarian highly believes that the greatest individual liberty is consistent with an equal liberty for others (West, n.d.). However it must also take into utmost consideration the possible consequences of the action and should go with the greater good for all. Duterte argued that the involvement of politicians, military and police personnel, and ordinary people in the distribution of illegal drugs facilitates the disintegration of political order and infests the system of the Philippines. He said that widespread illegal drug use is to blame for a variety of crimes, such as acts of social deviance, and other socio-economic issues like poverty and that is how he justifies his war against drugs. He believed in the feasibility and desirability of

progressive social change achieved through radical democratic processes and consequently assumed that human nature is fundamentally contended that the greatest happiness will result from a major change in society, and that is what Duterte is trying to unfold within the political affairs in the Philippines. He is doing the maximum good, and has to make decisions for the advantage of the maximum population of the country.

President Rodrigo Duterte is now on the last term of his administration. However, it is given that the improvement that he seeks for the Philippines still did not reach its peak, given the many problems that the country has, and the disinterested Filipinos that also attack the administration itself. What our country truly needs are politically dynamic and participative citizens that would not terrorize the administration itself, but rather be supportive at the same time critical if needed. No government would want their country to totally banish and so is our administration. Many people seem to forget this idea, because condemning the country's political system is the new "trend" nowadays. With Duterte's radical means of governing the country, he is going all the way to exterminate the evident structural injustice that is happening which is taking advantage of the defenseless. The reform and change that this administration had promised way back in 2016 had to start from its extremities and the "nakasanayan" among the Philippine politics will be of no help. Without a doubt, it is quite obvious that Duterte succeeded where the former administrations have failed years ago. The face of the Philippine's democracy is very diverse as stated by Maboloc (2020); thus there is no one uniform notion of justice. As a leader of the current administration, Duterte as a strong president acts like a strict but compassionate father who ensures that people do their duty and corresponding obligations as an abiding citizen (Bayod, 2020). He faces every single day roads of decisions to make which comes with aggressive remarks via national television and spurs of ruthlessness especially on his war against drugs. But one thing is for certain, whatever road he will take, it will always be for the betterment of his country, and for all the citizens to have their freedom and equality that they truly cry for.

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