

EBJF 25th Foundation
9 July 2011, LRI Design Plaza

Before anything else, I would like to thank all of those who, in one way or the other, made sacrifices to preserve for 25 years the memory of EBJ, who paid the ultimate price to help us regain our freedom after 14 years of martial law.

I think we can all look back with fond and cherished memories at the many varied accomplishments of the EBJF that were so painstakingly achieved. And they are many. I can recall with pride and honor when the Foundation first saw the light of day and began the pursuit of a dream to provide local government with the skills, expertise, and most of all the commitment and desire to make better the lives and the living of their constituents. This was likewise the dream of Evelio until his life, so full of promise, was brutally and mercilessly ended in a small public toilet in Antique by political opponents who mistakenly believed that ending his life would also mean the end of a dream.

The quest of Evelio did not die. It lived on for 25 more years in the EBJF and will continue to live on the hearts and minds of those and whose lives have been touched and changed because one name and those who have made innumerable sacrifices in the Foundation believed that a better Philippines is possible.

Today, I have a few wishes:

I wish that we were simply celebrating 25 years of accomplishment and achievements;

I wish that we could present you with our plans for the next 25 years;

I wish that with congratulations for the past 25 years a message of God speed could be on our list for the Foundation.

I wish, most of all that I did not preside over the closure of the operations of the Foundation.

Although I am proud of what the Foundation has accomplished, I am also sad that after all these years, the time has come for us to close shop. But, I have not lost hope, for without hope, we have nothing. I wish that all of us will continue

to pray that someone out there will pick up from where we have left of and continue the quest that Evelio, a friend, a classmate and a true servant of the people lived and died for.

I know we must face reality and bow out gracefully but let us do so with heads, held high for what we leave behind and with hearts full of hope that the Almighty will somehow touch the heart of someone who will continue what the Foundation so proudly leaves behind.

Again, thank you to all who have given part of their very lives to make a dream come true.

Good day and enjoy the presentation and be proud. Maraming Salamat.