WITH the downfall of communism in the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, known then as USSR, in the early 90s, pro-democracy groups in the Western world thought history proved that capitalism was the politically correct and best economic system on earth.

The events of the past two years, however, have been raising challenges to the capitalist system.

Some would sanitize the problem by referring to “dysfunctions of capitalism.”

The worst recession since the Great Depression of the 30s is one such serious challenge.

It now appears that President Obama’s expensive economic stimulus of 2009 did not really work as intended.
The hundreds of billions of dollars given to big capitalists, it now appears, did not trickle down to the American people.

Rather, the benefits are said to have remained in the hands of capitalists.

The gap between the many who are poor and the few who are rich is ever widening.

(Yes, I'm referring to U.S. situation.)

Corporate capitalists in Wall Street remained in their lucrative jobs and became richer, while the main street people became jobless and poorer.

Having said that, the silent majority in America is on the rise again.

First, it was Tea Party.

Now, it is Occupy Wall Street movement.

(Although, with social media, I'm not sure if this unspecified large segment of the population could still be regarded as silent. The term “silent majority” was popularized by President Richard Nixon in the 1969 presidential campaign when he rallied Americans who were not joining the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations at that time to support his candidacy. Apparently, that segment of America’s population made Nixon win.)

Occupy Wall Street movement is now widespread that a bandwagon effect is being felt around the world.
Although, the movement does not have formal leadership and membership organization, the protesters are collectively shouting economic related problems experienced in their respective communities, like joblessness and selling out of the people by Wall Street bankers who received huge sums of money from the government’s recovery funds two years ago.

People from all walks of life with grievances to air are with the movement.

Even young Pinoys, who belong to the Bayan movement, were seen marching with the demonstrators in downtown Manhattan in New York City.

The Chairman of International Monetary Fund predicts that the Occupy Wall Street movement will spread to Asia, including the Philippines.

Time magazine came out with a cover story this week titled “Return of the Silent Majority.”

In it, an organic farmer is quoted saying that the Occupy Wall Street movement is a group of people who are seeking to have their issues and their voices heard, regardless of their background.

In a way, the movement has similarity to Philippines’ First Quarter Storm Movement in the 70s that led to People Power Revolution in the mid-80s.

Although, both Filipino movements centered on one political issue, restoration of democracy.

As history tells us, both movements achieved their goal.

Democracy was restored in the Philippines after they ousted the Marcoses in 1986.
The Occupy Wall Street Movement is still in its nascent stage.

No one knows what it would attain and when.

But one thing is certain, there is widespread dissatisfaction in America and elsewhere.

***

Finally, I heard from my good friend with deep intellect, Jimmy Blas.

Last week, he disagreed with my opinion about F. Sionil Jose’s recent “Shallow” article in a Manila newspaper.

With due respects to Jimmy, who used to be Second Secretary in the Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Philippines to the United Nations, he is one of the reasons why I maintain that Senor Jose gave us a sweeping and careless generalization of Pinoy as lacking in depth of intellect.

I may admit belonging to that generalized remark, but certainly, not Jimmy.

Whoever read Jimmy’s Letter to the Editor in last week’s issue of FR would agree with me.

At any rate, I’m glad we have differing opinions.
Otherwise, deeper *Pinoys*, like Bert P., might think one of us was not thinking.

BTW, before I leave this topic, I invite my friend Jimmy to watch the “Batang Genius” portion of Manila’s “Happy, Yippie, Yehey” TV show on TFC.

He would see elementary grade students answering difficult questions in math, history, current events, etc., correctly and instantly.

There are questions asked in that program that even young normal adults, like Jimmy and I, could answer correctly within few seconds given to the young participants.

If I may add, what I consider truly shallow in a man’s life is when one cannot win the heart and yes of a woman and be his wife.

Or men whose love lives are zero (in the tradition of Coca-Cola’s no sugar content soda).

***

The late heart and soul of Apple, Steve Jobs, said in part in his now famous commencement speech at Stanford University in 2005:

“...don’t lose faith...find what you love...love what you do...keep looking...”

I cited the lines because I wanted to paraphrase the advices.

I’d put them as: “don’t lose faith...find whom you love...love and marry who you find...”
Is PNoy listening?

I am.

mcaball241@aol.com