

## **AMERICAN PRESIDENTIALISM NOT APPLICABLE TO THE PHILIPPINES**

The presidential system of the United States is not applicable to the Philippines, because it arose out of a different setting and served a different purpose.

The American presidentialism arose out of the perception and judgment of their founding fathers that the colonies suffered from an abuse of the broad legislative and executive powers of the monarchy. Accordingly, upon the establishment of the United States of America independent of Britain, they purposely limited the power of the federal government, by separating the President from Congress, among other measures taken.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/separation\\_of\\_powers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/separation_of_powers)

In the Philippines, the problem was never about a strong and aggressive government. Rather, the problem has always been about a weak and timid government, unable or unwilling to promote the common good, whenever the people's interests conflict with the vested interests of the entrenched oligarchy. It is observed that the oligarchy, comprised of a few closely knit and immensely affluent families, has managed to exert strong influence over the politics and economy of the country over the past seventy-five (75) years (since the 1935 Constitution). Thus, the premise and purpose of American presidentialism does not apply to the Philippines.

The blind and adulterated adoption of American presidentialism has only perpetuated the stranglehold of the oligarchy. Firstly, it weakens the capability of the government to enact and implement law reforms, because the President is separated from Congress, turning them against each other. Secondly, it weakens the capability of the common people to exercise representative democracy, because direct national elections (for President and the Senators) is inherently biased in favor of "rich" and "famous" candidates.

Even under the American presidential system, the President and the Senators are not elected directly at large nationwide. The federal Senators are elected at the local state level. On the other hand, the American president is elected by a national college of electors, comprised of representatives again elected at the local state level.

Thus, the adoption of a parliamentary Congress by the country is advocated. Firstly, the proposed system strengthens the capability of the government to enact and implement law reforms, by merging the President with Congress, which will be the parliamentary Congress. Secondly, it strengthens the capability of the common people to exercise representative democracy, by replacing direct national elections for President and the Senators, with indirect national elections for President, coupled with regional elections for Senators, local elections for District Representatives, and sectoral elections for Party-List Representatives.

The localization of the selection process promotes fair democratic elections, because it eliminates the bias for "rich" and "famous" candidates, and thus expands the roster of winnable candidates for national positions.

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