

PRESIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS OPERATIONS OFFICE
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INTERVIEW WITH PCOO SECRETARY MARTIN ANDANAR
BY CHRISTIAN ESGUERRA/ANC 21
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(COVERAGE CUT)

SEC. ANDANAR: Secondly is to be able to show the public and the international community the realities on the ground, the challenges that we are having; and thirdly is to be able to impress the rationale of the President which is basically to save the future of a nation by countering hard drugs.

ESGUERRA: So, what basically are the realities that you want to show here in this documentary?

SEC. ANDANAR: It's all there, all of the issues that have been thrown against the administration—

ESGUERRA: Like what?

SEC. ANDANAR: For example, human rights - it's in the documentary - the police scalawags, how the government is countering, how the government is... what the government is doing against these police scalawag. There are also—the numbers, the real numbers. We also have true to life case studies that we included in the documentary.

So it's a 50 minute plus documentary, it's all there. Everything from June 30 to today, all of the facts are there and this is the government's take on the war on drugs—

ESGUERRA: But is this the real situation?

SEC. ANDANAR: Yes, it is the real situation. We have the PDEA, we have the DILG. We also have the situation thrown at us. We also have the case of Kian Delos Santos, the 17 year old teenager that was killed in Caloocan and what the government did—

ESGUERRA: But what exactly would you like to set straight here?

SEC. ANDANAR: The reality!

ESGUERRA: But what do you think for example is the most unfair portrayal of the drug war which is somehow prompted the PCOO to come up with this documentary?

SEC. ANDANAR: The extra judicial killing that issue that has been thrown at the administration since 2016. So by showing all of the facts here in this documentary, then we are hoping for an appreciation of what is really happening on the ground. And of course it is a very important Christian to inform the public where we are taking this for the next three years; for the latter part.

ESGUERRA: What does the documentary say when it comes to extra judicial killings, there are no EJK?

SEC. ANDANAR: The documentary is saying that EJK is not a government policy.

ESGUERRA: But they happen.

SEC. ANDANAR: EJK, depending on what case you are looking at. So for example, you are looking at internecine of drug lords where they kill themselves for territory, then that's EJK from their end, right. But if you are asking if EJK is a national policy, it's a government policy, never been a policy of the national government.

ESGUERRA: But why would you even... for example, assuming that there was indeed a "policy." Why would the documentary say that there such a thing, of course not di ba?

SEC. ANDANAR: Of course not, well because that's the issue that's been thrown at us internationally.

ESGUERRA: The problem here being pointed out by a lot the victims, the relatives and human rights groups is that the President's pronouncements and the policies that he instituted set the atmosphere under which these things happened?

SEC. ANDANAR: Contrary to that, I would argue that because of the war against hard drugs, criminality has gone down, crime volume has gone down - actually it's here in this magazine that we published. The treatment of drug abusers have gone up; the number of barangays that were cleared of drugs have also gone up, that's more than 15,000; we are still targeting another 17,000 barangays to clear; plus the fact that fewer families say that they are victimized by common crimes, a drop of 7%. So, all the indicators would show that the war against criminality, the war against hard drugs have been very positive to our communities.

ESGUERRA: Okay, fair enough because we know that there are accomplishments for more than three years since the President launched his drug war. But what does the documentary say about the vigilante's style killings - masked assailants riding in motorcycles - because there are a lot of suspicion that some of them, if not most of them, were perpetrated by policemen themselves?

SEC. ANDANAR: You know, that's a very good question. Because according to the numbers that were given by our critics, they say 27,000 that have died, but that's really a

generalization and a very unfair argument from them that's all about drug war. 27,000 - this is the entire homicide cases that were recorded by the Philippine National Police—

ESGUERRA: But what is your figure when it comes to those who were killed by motorcycle riding men, vigilante's style killings?

SEC. ANDANAR: I don't have the number of the motorcycle or that riding in tandem style of assassinations. But what I can tell you, is that the numbers that were killed because of the drug war is about 5,700 to 6,000.

ESGUERRA: That is the official figure.

SEC. ANDANAR: Yeah, that's the official figure. But you know, it's important for us to talk about—because we are talking about riding in tandem etcetera, which basically hit its peak during the last administration. But if you check at the numbers, which are here, homicide and murder incidents from 2016, from 12,228; has gone down to 8,933 for 2018. Crime solution efficiency, from 57% in 2016; crime solution efficiency has gone up to 74.42% in 2018. Improved case disposition, you will see that from 2016, the disposition rate was 87%; in 2018, it's already 89% case disposition, court disposition. So in courts you will see that the conviction rate in 2016 was 22%; in 2018 it's 41.68%.

So, all of the numbers are looking up in terms of solving cases of homicide cases, murder cases and even the justice system.

ESGUERRA: But how about those who were killed in relation to illegal drugs. I think that is one of the biggest concerns. What exactly has the government done?

SEC. ANDANAR: Okay, it's also here—

ESGUERRA: Cause we are not getting any... somehow credible figures from the Philippine National Police, usually they would just say, this cases are being attended to; but how many were convicted, how many cases were filed for example?

SEC. ANDANAR: Well, okay. So for instance, here, the conviction rates of illegal drug cases, you will see that from 2016, cases with conviction rate was only 1,138; in 2018, it rose to 77,000.

ESGUERRA: You are referring to drug users and pushers?

SEC. ANDANAR: Conviction rate, yeah; conviction of illegal drug cases.

ESGUERRA: I'm actually referring to those who were killed in relation to the campaign against illegal drugs and the... let's say policemen who were involved and let's say summary execution of suspects during police operations?

SEC. ANDANAR: That's a good question. An example would be the Kian Delos Santos case. Three policemen—I mean that's basically the mother of all cases.

ESGUERRA: Oo nga, pero there's no debate regarding that.

SEC. ANDANAR: Yeah.

ESGUERRA: Good thing that they were convicted, the three policemen, but how about the other cases?

SEC. ANDANAR: There are more than 400 policemen that were already fired from the service because of cases that involved illegal drugs.

ESGUERRA: But how many were convicted because they killed suspects who were actually supposedly nanlaban, but actually did not put a fight.

SEC. ANDANAR: It's a good question, with that specific question and the details. I don't have the details with me right now, but what I'm saying is that more than 400 of these cases have resulted to the firing of more than 400 policemen.

ESGUERRA: But does the documentary address that issues clearly?

SEC. ANDANAR: It's there and you will watch it tonight.

ESGUERRA: As in for example, what exactly happened to the cases of killings in connection to anti drug operations?

SEC. ANDANAR: Yes, it's being addressed in the docu—as I said, the documentary would have the side of the government; will also have the questions of the critics and it will be answered in that documentary, 50 minutes.

ESGUERRA: In the first place, why the need to come out with this documentary? Do you feel that you are losing the propaganda war?

SEC. ANDANAR: It's not that we feel, but we believe that—it is the mandate of the Presidential Communications Operations Office to communicate the message of government and to communicate the side of the government, the narrative of the government.

ESGUERRA: Pero why only now?

SEC. ANDANAR: No, we've been doing that for the last... with different forms. Say for instance, we came up with an advertisement that was directed by Brillante Mendoza; we

also had numerous journals that we released. Now we have the campaign called the *Real Numbers* to challenge the fake numbers that were coming out during those times. We have *Rehabinasyon*. We have all sorts of programs, but the documentary that we have now is the first time we're—it's just one form of communication, and we'll have more.

ESGUERRA: Who's the primary ... who is the main intended audience of this documentary?

SEC. ANDANAR: Two audiences: The Filipino citizens and the international community. In fact, we will have a special screening for members of the diplomatic community here in the Philippines.

ESGUERRA: So it's in English or Filipino?

SEC. ANDANAR: It's on Tagalog. It's in Filipino but the version that we will show the internationally community is dubbed into English and there is also a subtitle.

ESGUERRA: Isn't this just a way to somehow to deodorize a brutal drug war?

SEC. ANDANAR: No, no, no. It's essentially our job to tell the story of government. I mean, it can never be just one sided; you have to hear the story of government. Whatever the President says on television, on the newspaper, online/internet, all his arguments are here in this documentary.

ESGUERRA: Sir, what is the main point of the documentary when it comes to those who were killed by assailants riding in tandem?

SEC. ANDANAR: Well, you asked that earlier—

ESGUERRA: Hindi, ano exactly iyong ... what is the version of the document there? These cases or incidents were the handy work of drug syndicates fighting among themselves?

SEC. ANDANAR: It is difficult to point out which case is which. But we focused on the case of Kian Delos Santos which we know that it was a case of kidnapping the person, getting him from the house which was shown on CCTV and executing him.

ESGUERRA: Okay. I'm asking about the vigilante-styled killings because we know that there are seemed to be two categories in the conduct of the drug war: One, the group of suspects killed during police operations, and that in itself raises a lot of questions because allegedly, policemen are very trigger happy – that's one side. The other side is, what exactly is the government doing when it comes to those vigilante-style killings? Because you know for a fact that that is also the responsibility of the government to address those issues, and those killings should not be happening.

SEC. ANDANAR: Yeah, those killings should not be happening. We do not condone those types of—well, we don't condone killing for that matter. What we are doing here is the Philippine National Police are still running after people who are killing people. It's the ... to serve and protect the people.

ESGUERRA: But what are the results, it's been more than three years?

SEC. ANDANAR: I will show you the conviction rates as I said, as I showed you earlier—

ESGUERRA: Specific doon ha sa vigilante-style killings.

SEC. ANDANAR: Yeah, I can give you the details of that.

ESGUERRA: Is that in the documentary?

SEC. ANDANAR: What is in the documentary is the Kian Delos Santos.

ESGUERRA: Yeah, why focus only on the Kian Delos Santos killing?

SEC. ANDANAR: Because he is the face of this—it is the case that's been focused. It is the case that's been thrown at the government since time... since that happened, until now. So what we're doing is we're showing the public what the government did to the three policemen that... were the suspects and now already convicted.

ESGUERRA: Okay. Now you mentioned the figure, I think the Philippine National Police figure when it comes to the suspects killed during police operations, at least 5,500 from July 1, 2016 to June 30, 2019. So iyong sa figures ninyo nadagdagan na 'di ba. So siguro nasa 5,700?

SEC. ANDANAR: Five thousand seven, five thousand eight, yeah.

ESGUERRA: But do you think that's worth it?

SEC. ANDANAR: What's worth it?

ESGUERRA: Five thousand seven hundred suspects killed in three years.

SEC. ANDANAR: Okay, there are more than—as mentioned by the President, six to seven million addicts in the country. And out of these addicts, 1.5 million have already surrendered and 480,000 plus have already submitted themselves for rehabilitation – voluntarily ha.

ESGUERRA: How many again?

SEC. ANDANAR: Four hundred eighty thousand plus.

ESGUERRA: Volunteered to be rehabilitated.

SEC. ANDANAR: Yeah, and they are rehabilitated. Now, if you—the argument is always human rights. So you have the human rights of these 480,000 to 490,000 rehabilitated drug users and the seven million drug users. The President always argues if the father becomes addicted, then you have a dysfunctional family already, kasi what will the mother do? The money that was supposed to be for food is now being bought... used to buy drugs.

And if you look at the 5,700, compared to the number of people that have actually benefitted – everybody! In this studio, people who go home to ungated communities - lahat nakikinabang diyan. So this is a war on hard drugs that is to save the future of a nation. Now, if you do not do it, then this country will just be a basket case.

ESGUERRA: But what does the documentary say when it comes to human rights violations that have been identified? I won't say alleged anymore because you know that these things are happening. You have the accounts coming from the relatives. Of course they would say na 'hindi naman nanlaban eh,' but they were killed. Of course, the police version would be, of course it was in the course of official duty.

SEC. ANDANAR: Yeah, it's what the police says and what the—

ESGUERRA: But does your documentary acknowledge that?

SEC. ANDANAR: It's what the police says and what the families of the victim say. Now, the accounts of the policemen is that they have an official raid with the... an authorized raid with the approval of the courts. And when they were in the process of accosting the person who is pushing drugs, unfortunately ay nanlaban, may dalang bala, may dalang baril, and that is the story. And the story of the victim is naturally would say, 'No, hindi totoo iyan.' But the facts are there, that there is drugs at may baril iyong biktima at lumaban sa pulis.

ESGUERRA: You yourself are convinced that those 5,700 suspects are people, all put up a fight that's why they were killed?

SEC. ANDANAR: I would say that it is part of the authorized police operations. Of course, I cannot say conclusively that each and every case is like this and like that – mahirap mag-conclude eh, kasi iba't ibang kaso iyan.

ESGUERRA: But when you look at the numbers somehow are you convinced?

SEC. ANDANAR: I am convinced by the reason of the... the reasoning of the policemen.

ESGUERRA: Okay. Now before I let you go, let's move to another topic. Did the President's—

SEC. ANDANAR: Can I just plug before you ask that question?

ESGUERRA: Okay, go.

SEC. ANDANAR: 7 P.M. tonight, the documentary is called “Gramo.” It will be shown on your government channel, PTV. And it will be streaming live on all the PCOO-managed Facebook accounts.

ESGUERRA: And you also have a magazine, right?

SEC. ANDANAR: Yeah, the magazine, this is the “Saving the Future of a Nation: Countering Hard Drugs.” This will be given to the media. It was already given yesterday, and will also be distributed to the international community.

ESGUERRA: Okay. Before I let you go, one last point, regarding the President’s actions and pronouncements against the two water concessionaires in Metro Manila. Number one, the fears that: Is he just trying to replace those two so-called oligarchs with an oligarch of his own?

SEC. ANDANAR: Oh no, definitely not! The main point here is that we should not be entering into onerous contracts. This is in fact, doing the business community a favor by telling them that there is no room for corruption in our business industry and under the term of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte; and there are no sacred cows. You’ve been asking for big fish, and there you go.

ESGUERRA: Because we’ve been hearing certain names for example, this was also addressed previously, the past few days that the Villars might actually be coming in that’s why the two other water concessionaires are being focused on.

SEC. ANDANAR: I don’t think so. I think that would ... I think the purpose here is to send the message to both Maynilad and Manila Water that the President is not accepting this kind of reasoning and this kind of onerous contract that’s why the MWSS revoked the extension of the contract and both Manila Water and Maynilad already wrote a letter to the President which will be read by Sal Panelo later.

ESGUERRA: Okay. Secretary Martin Andanar, thank you very much for joining us.

SEC. ANDANAR: Thank you so much.

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