



PUTTING PEOPLE IN POWER---AND OTHER HORROR STORIES

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In a few months, the voting populace of my country will be trooping to the polls and casting their ballots to propel new local rulers and national lawmakers into power. Several months before, numerous political aspirants already began their tyranny of our senses via TV and radio campaigns, murals at the most unlikely places, streamers and tarpaulin signs bearing their countenances and stickers prominently displayed on public vehicles of conveyance. The only word missing from such bombardments is VOTE, but people are not so dense as not to be able to deduce what those aspirants' intentions are for posting such materials. I sometimes wonder how there can be such a thing as premature campaigning when such manner of plastering each and every available open space with candidates' names and faces is so blatantly done.

However, such practices only go to show just how powerful voting society truly is. Very soon, those very candidates will be doing all sorts of publicity campaigns in order to forward their desire to be anointed by the public into political offices. Those candidates will be dancing to the most viewed video on YouTube, will be raising their arms endlessly in the air at the risk of getting lymphatic abscess, will be jumping and looking nutty as a fruitcake all over the stage, will be kissing babies and handing out paper fans and flyers and doing all other forms of crazy stuff just so people remember them come election day. Definitely, those candidates will not be wasting precious time and money doing nothing to drive their ambitions home. And oh, don't forget those endless hired passenger vehicles with loudspeakers and annoying, LSS-inducing jingles blaring. I dread the time I will truly hate the music video that's been the most widely watched on YouTube. What dreadful jingle will the candidates pay someone to create? Good for the jingle makers, bad for the public that will eventually have to tolerate listening to the jingles day in and day out.

Power truly rests in us that vote for our officials, local and national. See how they spend so much just so we install them in power? Unfortunately, our choices often do not reflect the true will of the wise among us. We welcome all candidates into our homes via TV, radio and other forms of media. Sadly, we seldom vote into power the truly service-oriented ones. And even if we do install honest ones, they seldom get unaffected by the affectations and trappings of their authority such as graft and corruption. They come in clean and seldom leave unblemished, with their hands untouched by dishonesty. Power corrupts, and many times, absolute power corrupts absolutely. What's even more scary is how we have come to accept that reality so readily.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. Have you ever had the ambition to become a politician? Why or why not?
2. Why does power corrupt so often?
3. Talk about a political leader you so admire. What makes this leader unique?
4. Justify the statement that the public holds ultimate power over those they vote for.
5. How can an honest individual hope to serve people in complete selfless service? Be as specific as needed.