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No to 'Revolutionary Government'

The attitude of Filipinos toward the prospect of a presidential proclamation of a so-called "Revolutionary Government" was predominantly negative in the Social Weather Survey of December 2017, as revealed yesterday (1/12/17) in a public briefing by Gerardo A. Sandoval at the SWS Knowledge Center (www.sws.org.ph).

The SWS survey found a plurality of 39 percent that disagree with a prospective proclamation of a Revolutionary Government (or RevGov) by President Duterte.

A plurality is by definition the dominant side, whether a majority or not. In this case, it is 8 points above the minority 31 percent that agree with a RevGov. The difference between the two sides is statistically significant.

Those in the 30 percent remainder are neutral, plain and simple, neither pros nor contras. They may not be combined with either the pros or the contras to the proposal of a RevGov, without being tainted by political partisanship.

Only Mindanao supports RevGov. From its very beginning, a national Social Weather Survey has been designed as the consolidation of surveys in the National Capital Region (NCR), Balance of Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao. Figures for these four area-surveys are equally accurate.

The overall national disagreement to a RevGov is the net outcome of relatively strong opposition in Balance Luzon and Visayas, plus average opposition in NCR, that offset relatively strong support in Mindanao.

By area, the pro versus contra percentages are 34 - 41 = net -7 in NCR, 30 - 46 = net -16 in Balance Luzon, 26 – 43 = net -17 in Visayas, and 38 – 21 = net +16 (correctly rounded) in Mindanao. The intensity of support for RevGov in Mindanao is matched by the intensity of opposition to it in Balance Luzon and Visayas. The latter areas dominate the national consensus because they have much larger populations than Mindanao.

The popularity of the President is immaterial. This is the same survey that found 71 percent satisfied with President Duterte, with 13 percent dissatisfied, and 15 percent neutral. Among Mr. Duterte's fans, 37 percent support RevGov, and 35 percent oppose it, for a net +2 score, which is tepid.

On the other hand, among those dissatisfied with Mr. Duterte, the pros minus contras on RevGov are 20 – 41 = net -22. Among those neutral toward him, the pros minus contras are 16 – 60 = net -43. The strong opposition of nonfans of Mr. Duterte overwhelms the tepid support of his fans for RevGov.

Education and age are directly related to opposition to RevGov. By level of education, the net pro minus contra scores are -2 among nonelementary graduates, -3 among high school dropouts, -9 among college dropouts, and -19 among college graduates. Opposition to RevGov prevails in all ages, with single-digit negatives among adults below 45, and double-digit negatives among those 45 and up.

Presidential intentions to change the form of government are immaterial. Among the 63 percent perceiving the Presi-

* SURVEY
* REVGOV

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dent as planning to change the form of government, net opinion about RevGov is a very neutral -1. Whereas, among the 18 percent saying he has no plan, net opinion is -16; and, among the 19 percent who don't know if he has a plan or not, net opinion is -22.

The legality of RevGov matters. Among the 48 percent who think a RevGov is allowed by the 1987 Constitution, the pro minus contra percentages are 50 – 32 = net +19; this is strong support.

On the other hand, among the 27 percent who know that RevGov is illegal, the pro minus contra scores are 16 – 48 = net -32. Among the 24 percent who can't say if RevGov is legal or not, the pros minus the contras are 11 – 42 = net -31. The national consensus on RevGov is carried by the strong opposition among those who deny or else doubt its constitutionality.