

The not as bright as  
before and perhaps



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The first time I saw some of the terrible conditions that people live in, I was shocked. We were inside the car out to the site, when just along the highway, it seemed as though a little town had appeared, made of more shacks than I had ever seen in one place.

There must have been 100 houses made out of rusted corrugated tin sheeting, scraps of wood and street signs. There was no electricity or running water, and garbage was scattered everywhere. Children were playing in the dirt next to clothes hung on barbed wire fences to dry.

Not that I was a stranger to the situation, but simply seeing and being reminded of the harsh realities in this world is appalling enough. I admit that I was first reluctant to visit the area knowing what I would be seeing.

However, as I went along with the activities, I was just surprised at how my indifference towards the poor turned into a real concern for them. I am thankful for that this outreach activity opened my eyes to see the real situations of my fellow countrymen. At the same time, realizing the plight of others made me feel lucky in a lot of ways. I also came to realize that a lot of times we don't really know the blessings that we have and just take these for granted.

What also came to my mind is the upcoming elections. Most of the people there I know for a fact will vote for that person they know could help uplift their situation. I pity them because they have been indoctrinated by such insincere candidates who give them nothing but false hopes, save for some who really want to help but wouldn't win anyway. For me, however, this

situation of our countrys poor will not change. I know Im not being optimistic, but its just the reality.

With the national elections promising another mediocre candidate, the poor will sure get poorer. Things are not as bright as before and perhaps will never be. No matter how many people or politicians would help these people, they wont really succeed unless they help themselves and change their dependent mindsets. This I believe is the root of poverty.

Its a chain of evil that will go on unless one of them will be brave enough like Rizal to go out in the open, slap each of their faces, and tell them to get up and do something. Of course, there are other factors such as corruption and unemployment, but truly if each of them become aware of their situation and act accordingly, things might just get better. As for us students, I believe that it is our role not to spoon feed the poor because it will not do them good.

Instead, it is our responsibility to instill awareness, not just to them but also to our peers. Moreover we should be able to facilitate the growth and development of our country by doing our best in our chosen field, while also keeping in mind our social responsibilities.