

Written by Ernie Delfin

Tuesday, 21 July 2009 07:10 - Last Updated Tuesday, 29 September 2009 14:31

The following is a reproduction of an Open Letter sent by our columnist, Ernie Delfin, to President Barack H. Obama by Federal-Express (FedEx) on July 20, 2009. Mr. Delfin is a past Assistant Governor of the Rotary's District 5320. He is also a small-business owner-entrepreneur with operations in Southern California and Southern Nevada. He is a past president of the Filipino-American Chamber of Commerce of Orange County, California. The letter is about the Philippines-United States relations insofar as the Gloria Arroyo Administration is concerned. Mr. Delfin writes also for the *Asian Journal* of San Diego, California, and the *Philippine Daily Star* of Manila, Philippines.

July 20, 2009

His Excellency, Barack H. Obama

President of the United States of America

White House, Washington, D. C.

Dear President Obama:

An Open Letter to President Obama About the Coming Visit to the White House of Gloria Arroyo - Mabuhay

Written by Ernie Delfin

Tuesday, 21 July 2009 07:10 - Last Updated Tuesday, 29 September 2009 14:31

The scheduled meeting of the Philippine President Gloria M. Arroyo with your Excellency on July 30th in the White House, upon your invitation or upon her request, is BIG news in the Philippines this week.

It is also reported that about 100 Congress people are rallying to accompany her, spending taxpayers' money in a political junket!

As one concerned American citizen who was born in the Philippines, a former Republican, now an Independent who voted for you last November, I am taking this rare opportunity to write this OPEN LETTER to voice out my strong sentiments, that are shared by millions of Filipinos all over the world who are also very much aware of the many man-made socioeconomic-and-political problems of the Philippines, many of which are caused directly or indirectly by the present political leadership. It is my opinion that because of the great leadership role that the POTUSA has in world affairs, your official pronouncements, words of advice or admonition can definitely cause some positive changes almost immediately. Your official position on many US-Philippine issues will not be taken lightly by the Philippine leaders who need American support simply because "no country is truly independent without economic or financial freedom".

And the Philippines sadly still belong in that category. The United States

, despite her own problems, still remains a major force in effecting change in the world.

I am listing just a small sample of major problems out of a hundreds of various issues, which I hope that your powerful office can address and/or discuss them with the Philippine president in order to alleviate the pains and suffering of the Filipino people during these very challenging

An Open Letter to President Obama About the Coming Visit to the White House of Gloria Arroyo - Mabuhay

Written by Ernie Delfin

Tuesday, 21 July 2009 07:10 - Last Updated Tuesday, 29 September 2009 14:31

times. The State Department or the Pentagon or the CIA and our U.S. Embassy in Manila should be very familiar with these problems:

FIRST and foremost is the perennial issue of graft and corruption. Graft and corruption are often the root cause of many socio economic problems, breakdown of law and the burgeoning poverty. Transparency International and even the World Bank consider that the Philippines is now among the most-corrupt countries in the world, the biggest factor that adds greatly to the costs of doing business in the Philippines. It is a common knowledge that illegally-gotten wealth from the Philippines are

also deposited or invested in the United States

and in other friendly countries. Through your leadership, Mr. President, these filthy-rich politicians, including many who are officially attached to the First Family of the Philippines, including

military generals, can be easily be unmasked by simply disclosing and

auditing their assets in America. The AMLA if enforced aggressively can ferret the truth and expose these ill gotten wealth of many dirty politicians and their families and if possible given back to the people. To this date, much of the looted wealth of the Marcos's are still in litigation and that was over 20 years ago!

It's morally and legally unconscionable for any public officials to flaunt or hide their "wealth" in America

, knowing pretty well that their legitimate salaries as public officials can not support such acquisition of wealth. Even Philippine military generals

or their families have been caught bringing thousands of "stolen" dollars

and laundering them here into the United States and

some generals, including

An Open Letter to President Obama About the Coming Visit to the White House of Gloria Arroyo - Mabuhay

Written by Ernie Delfin

Tuesday, 21 July 2009 07:10 - Last Updated Tuesday, 29 September 2009 14:31

the so-called “Euro generals”

were also caught bringing thousands of undeclared Euros by the Custom officials in Russia. The case of this certain Gen. Carlos Garcia (who is in “prison” for a much-lesser crime) whose family was caught by the US Customs is just a tip of the ice berg of the corruption in the highest echelon of the Arroyo government. Recently the U.S.

government deported a former President Arroyo’s appointed Undersecretary of Agriculture, named Jocelyn “Joc Joc” Bolante who was the alleged mastermind of a multi-billion peso graft-ridden mess known as the “Fertilizer Scam.” To this date, nothing has been resolved to know the truth as the Executive Department seemed determined to hide what really transpired in this gargantuan scam that happened before the 2004 presidential election.

In preparation for the 2010 elections, IF EVER ELECTION IS REALLY HELD, graft and corruption practices are expected to rise to raise more campaign funds to influence the results of the election. In the past, even President Gloria Arroyo was allegedly involved in rigging the results of her election. To this date, the “Hello Garcia controversy” where the President Arroyo was allegedly heard demanding that she must have a winning edge of at least a million votes over her opponent has not been resolved. Too much political spinning, obvious lying and lack of transparency from

Malacanang

Palace

are resorted to hide the true picture of the country right now. You can explicitly remind the Philippine president to “behave” or suffer the anger of the Filipino people like how Dictator Marcos that was forced to go on exile to

Hawaii

with the “help” of the

USA

in 1986.

SECOND, the many published human-rights abuses, disappearance and killings allegedly perpetrated by the military continue. An example is the high-profile disappearance of Jonas Burgos, a social-justice-for-farmers advocate, where the military was implicated. Like many cases, this remains unsolved after a couple of years now. Just this week, Melissa Roxas, a

An Open Letter to President Obama About the Coming Visit to the White House of Gloria Arroyo - Mabuhay

Written by Ernie Delfin

Tuesday, 21 July 2009 07:10 - Last Updated Tuesday, 29 September 2009 14:31

Filipino American in California has sued the Philippine government for her abduction alleged by the military of the Philippines. Another unsolved murder was that of a journalist, Marlene Esperat, in Mindanao who was highly critical of the government officials who were involved in the Fertilizer Scam (Bolante) five years or so ago, that remains unsolved. There are 1,013 victims of extra judicial killings since 2001 when Pres. Arroyo came into power and thousand cases of documented human-rights abuses according to KARAPATAN Human Rights Organization. The Amnesty International and the world media also are aware of these human rights violations.

Editor's Note: Here is the latest update from TIME magazine about the case of the abducted Jonas Burgos:

[The Philippines' Disappearing Dissidents](#)

<http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,1813070,00.html>

An Open Letter to President Obama About the Coming Visit to the White House of Gloria Arroyo - Mabuhay

Written by Ernie Delfin

Tuesday, 21 July 2009 07:10 - Last Updated Tuesday, 29 September 2009 14:31

These samples of unflattering reports do not mean that I hate or dislike President Arroyo that much, but writing this OPEN LETTER means I love the country of my birth much more and wishing that the Philippines also has an opportunity to have a better future for

the next generations after us.

THIRD, Fighting against “terrorism” in the Philippines, especially in Muslim Mindanao should be reevaluated using some economic magnifying lenses. Military might alone will never solve these centuries-old-conflicts without economic progress where these poor people can feed, educate their families to have a better life. So, instead of all those expensive “military exercises” and military budget enriching lucky companies that produce armaments and war paraphernalia, the USA

instead should assist the
Philippines

to build more infrastructures, factories, better agricultural systems as well as pre and post-harvest facilities especially in the countryside where the “communist leaning” groups thrive. Many of these poor people who steal are just bandits whom I brand as “economic mosquitoes” as they also need food for self preservation; they are not necessarily communists as the government always claims.

FOURTH, Medicare benefits for eligible citizens, especially those of Filipino ancestry, should also be extended to all eligible citizens or patients although they are treated OUTSIDE the United States

. It will cost the government less, with proper protocols and internal control, to allow health care delivery to Medicare patients in the
Philippines

.

This is especially applicable to the dying breed of Filipino-American veterans who might want to spend their remaining years in the
Philippines

. The primary reason why they are not going back home is that they will not be eligible for their Medicare benefits outside the
USA

and its territories.

FIFTH, Economic, Educational, Employment and Entrepreneurial cooperation between the USA and the Philippines, as partner nations, must be enhanced. A lot of opportunities exist in both countries. The Philippines can offer Americans a lot of business and capital opportunities. On the other hand, USA can offer a lot of employment and professional opportunities. However, the immigration process must be revisited and some needed immigration reforms must be implemented. Many qualified and eligible Filipinos (and other nationalities for that matter) want to come to the United States to work and contribute to the good of society as productive professionals and skilled laborers. This immigration process, however, has too much red tape that makes it very costly to those who want to come to America, like the qualified teachers, nurses or doctors or physical therapists. The process needs to be evaluated and necessary steps to streamline the process be done as soon as possible.

LAST, but not the least, as you consider the successor to our country's Ambassador to the Philippines, the Honorable Christie Kenney, please choose another competent, compassionate professional who understands the unique cultural–socio political situation of the Philippines as it painstakingly continues to seek its own place in the sun and who can inspire the Filipino citizens like the beloved President Kennedy who challenged his fellow Americans “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country!

An Open Letter to President Obama About the Coming Visit to the White House of Gloria Arroyo - Mabuhay

Written by Ernie Delfin

Tuesday, 21 July 2009 07:10 - Last Updated Tuesday, 29 September 2009 14:31

Today, as USA and the entire world celebrate the 40th landing of American astronauts on the moon, I ask you my dear President to lead and inspire us to become the instrument of change we want to see in the world. Yes, as you eloquently wrote in your book 'AUDA CITY OF HOPE' there is great hope

in our country and the world

but

it is our collective responsibility to work and become more responsible not only for ourselves but

for our neighbors, locally and internationally. As I sign off, I pray that the next leader in 2010, after President Arroyo, is a leader like you who can truly inspire and show the people how to LIVE SIMPLY SO THAT OTHERS CAN SIMPLY LIVE as human beings!

I pray that God bless you with great health and wisdom during your presidency. My best wishes to you, and your lovely family, my dear President!

Respectfully yours,

ERNIE D. DELFIN

An Open Letter to President Obama About the Coming Visit to the White House of Gloria Arroyo - Mabuhay

Written by Ernie Delfin

Tuesday, 21 July 2009 07:10 - Last Updated Tuesday, 29 September 2009 14:31

Proud Rotarian, Orange County, CA

District 5320 past Asst. Governor

Small Business Owner-Entrepreneur

Email: ernie.delfin@gmail.com

[Joomla SEO powered by JoomSEF](#)