

Written by Bobby Reyes

Thursday, 20 November 2008 06:55 - Last Updated Thursday, 20 November 2008 15:00

J ay Valencia, a Pampango-American community leader, told several individuals at the Filipino-American Community of Los Angeles (FACLA) that the “planned demonstration against the visit of Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (PGMA) would not be given any permit, as the Secret Service is protecting her as a visiting head of state.” Mr. Valencia is the president of the Circulo Pampangueño of Southern California.

This writer told Mr. Valencia that people in the United States do not need any permit from the Secret Service and even from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) provided they keep moving on the sidewalk. The least that the police could do is to block off entrance to the parking area and inside sidewalk of the Sheraton Gateway Hotel but they could not prevent a legitimate exercise of the First Amendment done at the street sidewalk and on the opposite sidewalk of Century Boulevard fronting the hotel.

In the meantime, Larry Pelayo, a photojournalist and an officer of the Pampanga Day Festival, told this writer that his group was refused accreditation by the Philippine Consulate General to the November 21st reception for President Arroyo. The consulate reasoned out that the Pampanga Day organization is not a member of the United Pampanga Leaders' Council (UPLC), as headed by community leader Chito Mandap. Ka Larry has refused also to apply for accreditation as a media practitioner, as he believes also that President Arroyo should not treat the Filipino-American media like dirt. The RP President has refused to hold any press conference during her previous visits to the United States, including her trips to New York, San Francisco and Chicago in January 2008 and June 2008, respectively. Her Excellency has adamantly refused to hold a press conference with the Filipino-American press for this instant visit to Los Angeles. Ka Larry said that he would be at Century Boulevard to cover the planned demonstration of the Gabriela (GABNet), the Bayan Coalition, the Kabataang Maka-Bayan and Filipino-American college groups.

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Veterans belonging to the Justice for Filipino-American Veterans (JFAV) will also join the demonstration.

Veterans belonging to the Justice for Filipino-American Veterans (JFAV) will also join the demonstration, as they are protesting the inability of the Arroyo Administration to settle their Philippine pension, which is now in arrears to the tune of several billion pesos. President Arroyo, however, has been dispensing annually billions of pesos in congressional pork barrel, voucher-less cash disbursements (not subjected to audit) to local-government officials and top generals of the Philippine Armed Forces and the Philippine National Police, so as to maintain their canine-like devotion to her continued reign.

Sir Alfonso Aquino, the past commander of the Knights of Rizal (Los Angeles chapter) confirmed to this writer that some of fellow Rizalists and he will boycott also the reception for President Arroyo. Sir Al said that they will instead join the public demonstration against the visiting Philippine President.

Ernie Delfin, a columnist of the Asian Journal of San Diego and the Philippine Star newspaper of Manila, said that he would cover the demonstration but would not set foot in the ballroom reception for President Arroyo.

Several Knights of Rizal will boycott also the reception for President Arroyo and will instead join the public demonstration against her.

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It appears that the public demonstration tomorrow afternoon in front of the Sheraton Gateway Hotel at the LAX may become the single biggest public demonstration in the United States against President Arroyo or for that matter, against any visiting Filipino President. And since the venue is less than a mile to the entrance of the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX), it may generate a lot of coverage from the mainstream press.

Some quarters are questioning the wisdom of the Philippine government, which is facing huge budgetary deficits, in spending tens of thousands of dollars to occupy a huge ballroom and provide food and refreshments for an expected 1,500 community leaders and tame Fil-Am media practitioners.

A Filipino-American publisher, who has requested not to be identified, apologized to this writer for being unable to join the media boycott of the reception for President Arroyo. The publisher said that Fil-Am publications would lose advertising revenue from Philippine Airlines, Philippine National Bank Remittance, Philippine tourism, the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation and other Philippine companies if they join the boycott. In fact, it is public knowledge that some Filipino government officials are pressuring Filipino-American journalists and writers not to support the media boycott, as started by this writer and immediately supported by journalists like Romeo P. Marquez of San Diego, Ernie Delfin of Orange County and Ka Larry Pelayo of Los Angeles.

Almost all of the Filipino-American media outlets, including their online versions, are refusing to print news articles about the media boycott and public demonstration against the Arroyo visit. The protest organizers are using, however, e-mail blasts to inform the public of the planned anti-Arroyo demonstration.

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The MabuhayRadio.com has published the following articles about the November 21st Arroyo visit to Los Angeles:

[President Arroyo's Party Plans to Solicit Fil-Ams' Signatures for Petition for Her to Stay in Power](#)

[PESANTE-USA to Welcome President Arroyo in Los Angeles as Number-One Violator of Human Rights](#)

[An Open Letter to Consul General Aragon Over President Arroyo's Failure to Hold Press Conferences](#)

[President Arroyo Will Learn Finally the Overseas-Filipino Earth, Wind and Flair](#)

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[“A Night with the Philippine President”](#)

[GABNet Condemns Repeated President Arroyo's Foreign Trips and Calls for Massive Rally Against Her](#)

[Boycott-GMA Drive Generates Massive Support As Activists Confirm Protest Rally at GMA Reception](#)

[PGMA Asked to Give “State of the Nation’s Corruption Address” \(SONCA\) During Her USA Trip](#)

[President Arroyo Does Not Really Get It \(She Comes Back to the USA Begging Again\)](#)

Yes, very few Filipino-American publications can emulate what the MabuhayRadio.com does. Because very few of the so-called Filipino-American “journalists” (kuno) and writers have the guts to exercise true freedom of the press. They do not have the journalistic independence and

Arroyo Supporters Try to Intimidate Demonstrators But All-Systems Go for Biggest Anti-GMA Protest - Ma

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worse, some of them are called by the public as “envelopmental (sic) journalists.” # # #

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