

By Bobby M. Reyes

Part Two of a Series on Philippine Independence

Poet-pundit Fred Burce Bunao is my literary mentor. He told me that a Greek philosopher once said, " **History is the art of choosing from among so many lies that which resembles most the truth** ." Mr. Bunao, who looks that old, could not recall, however, if it was his friend, Herodotus, or another pal, Pliny the Elder, who said it.

During one of his last visits to Los Angeles, I told my Filipino literary idol, Max V. Soliven, of Mr. Bunao's observation about history. I told Mr. Soliven, who was then the dean and doyen of Filipino columnists, of my campaign against the "hoaxbalahaps," who concoct fraudulent claims about supposed Filipino historical milestones. Mr. Soliven (now deceased) laughed and wished me well in my crusade to stick to the truth.

July 4, 2010, is the third anniversary of the declaration of the "Filipino-American 'Interdependence Day,'" as declared by Bobby Reyes, Poet-pundit Fred Burce Bunao and Company in Los Angeles in 2007.

Maybe our conversation led Mr. Soliven into writing in one of his later columns the problem of mistaking "hysteria for history." This led Mr. Bunao and me to organize our version of the "Filipino-American National Historical Society (FANHS)." Mr. Bunao and I founded the "Philippine-American National Hysterical Society (PANHS)." We are the living testament to Mr. Soliven's dictum. But at least Mr. Bunao and I do not mistake hysteria for history. We only make fun at the people who do so. And every year, to underscore my campaign against the hoaxbalahaps, Mr. Bunao gives me the "PANHS de Sal" Award, which consists of a bag of dinner roll and a prize of one-million dollars, payable at one dollar a year for the next million years.

Fourth of July or Doce de Junio?

Which is the true Philippine-Independence (P-I) Day? Is it July Fourth or Doce de Junio (as I like to call the event)? The issue now borders on the level of hysteria. As Bobit Avila reported, I wrote in an essay in 1996 that July 4, 1946, is the real P-I Day. The Philippine History Group of Los Angeles (PHGLA) web site still carries my article in its archives. People may read it at this link <http://www.bibingka.com/phg/misc/july4.htm>

When I was elected the overall chairman of the P-I Fiesta and Parade held on July 7, 2003, at the Historic Filipinotown in Los Angeles, I was faced with a quandary. How do I reconcile both events and appear not to abandon my belief of the legitimacy of the Fourth of July P-I? I explained that the June 12, 1898, declaration of independence was for the First Philippine Republic. It was a declaration of freedom from Spain. The Fourth of July in 1946 marked the beginning of the country's independence from the United States and the start of the Second Philippine Republic. And my comrades at the PHGLA could live with my explanation.

A Date with Doy Sometime in August 1997, then Philippine Independence Centennial Commission (PICC) Chairman Salvador (Doy) H. Laurel visited with the Filipino-American community. My wife and I were invited to a reception at the Philippine Consulate General (PCG) in Los Angeles. He was in town to rally Filipino Americans for the coming P-I Centennial. I was personally known to Dr. Laurel.

We came in early and many of the Filipino-American guests adhered to the so-called "Filipino time." I had, therefore, lots of quality time with Dr. Laurel. I presented him my 1996 essay about the 1946 P-I Day and an autographed copy of my political novel, "One Day in the Life of a Filipino Sonovabitch." I suggested to Dr. Laurel that the PICC could support our Media Breakfast Club's slogan for June 1997. The slogan was, "1898-1998: A Century of Philippine-American Relations and Interdependence." Dr. Laurel asked me to write him and he would see if the theme that I suggested could be done for the United States. But I never heard

The Fourth of July Is RP-US "Interdependence Day" - MabuhayRadio

Written by Bobby M. Reyes

Wednesday, 04 July 2007 11:23 - Last Updated Tuesday, 02 July 2019 20:02

again from Doy Laurel. Our club came up with the only P-I Centennial commemorative coffee mug in June 1998 in Southern California. The mug had both the Filipino and American flags and the slogan printed in it.

From a historical perspective, Dr. Laurel missed the point that I argued with him. I told him that Americans were indifferent to the June 12, 1998, P-I centennial. Because they maintained that America granted the real independence to the Philippines only on July 4, 1946.

Then I was elected the overall chairman of the 2006 Kalayaan P-I Steering Committee in Los Angeles. Filipino diplomats conducted the election at the PCG. Again I had to explain my stand on the June 12 P-I vis-à-vis the July 4 P-I. I tried to persuade the Kalayaan volunteers to adopt a second theme for the Kalayaan celebrations, aside from the official theme given by the Philippine government. I suggested this theme, "Making Filipino Americans look good, feel good, proud of their multiethnic heritage and prouder of their positive contributions to the United States." Either my suggested theme was too long or the community's command of history was too short.

The Philippines declared the Fourth of July as "Philippine-American Friendship Day" after the P-I Day was shifted to June 12 in 1962. Perhaps we should declare the day as "Philippine-American Interdependence Day."

A Symbiotic RelationshipIt would appear that for a greater portion of the more-than 100 years of Filipino-American ties, symbiotic relations developed between the two countries.

The United States' healthcare-and-hospital is now dependent on Filipino medical professionals. Some Catholic and Protestant parishes in the United States are now dependent on Filipino clergy members. Some public schools in some American cities are now depending on Filipino teachers to fill in the vacancies that no Caucasian or even other Minority-American teachers would accept. Even Dole and Del Monte are partly dependent on their pineapple plantations in Bukidnon Province, Mindanao, Philippines, for their canned pineapple products.

The Fourth of July Is RP-US "Interdependence Day" - MabuhayRadio

Written by Bobby M. Reyes

Wednesday, 04 July 2007 11:23 - Last Updated Tuesday, 02 July 2019 20:02

The Philippines in turn is dependent on the United States for military hardware and other needs by the Philippine Air Force and Navy. The Philippine economy is dependent on the American market for some of its export products. The Philippine national economy depends on the remittances of the Overseas-Filipino workers and immigrants. Filipino Americans account for nearly 70% of the remittances to the Philippines or in figures, more-than \$7-billion per year.

If plans are approved, there will be a resumption of voluntary enlistment in the United States military by Filipino citizens, thereby, aiding the American and international fight against terrorism. Some American companies will also be dependent on call centers in the Philippines to service their customers in the United States. These are just some of the socioeconomic symbiosis between the two countries.

{xtypo_quote} Globalization is just a mere euphemism for interdependency. As the world figuratively gets smaller and smaller, countries are forced to rely on other nations for goods, services and/or raw materials. - Bobby Reyes {/xtypo_quote}

If the Filipino-American community will work for it, perhaps by 2011, the Fourth of July will also become known as "Philippine-American Interdependence Day."

The United States celebrated in 2009 the centennial of the William Howard Taft presidency and the golden anniversary of Hawaiian Statehood. These were two events that Filipino Americans could have piggy-backed on to highlight the historical links between their homeland and adopted country and their positive contributions to the world's only superpower. But nobody did except for our motley group in Los Angeles, California.

(As updated on July 3, 2010)

To read Part I of this series, please go to

[Reconciling the 1898 and 1946 Philippine-Independence Days](#)

The Fourth of July Is RP-US "Interdependence Day" - MabuhayRadio

Written by Bobby M. Reyes

Wednesday, 04 July 2007 11:23 - Last Updated Tuesday, 02 July 2019 20:02

=====

* H ere is the background of this writer's family ties with the Laurels. The Reyes Family was one of the key supporters of his UNIDO political party. My father, Dominador, was also the handpicked candidate of Dr. Doy's father, former President Jose Laurel, for congressman in Sorsogon Province. The old-man Laurel was the presidential candidate of the opposition Nacionalista Party (NP) in the now-infamous 1949 elections, which was characterized by massive cheating and violence. The Laurels could not forget the election-day massacre in Bulan, Sorsogon, where my father's followers shot dead the town mayor and several policemen who tried to intimidate voters to cast ballots for the Liberal Party candidates. The NP and the Laurels provided a legal-defense fund for my father's followers who were acquitted in a high-profile trial. # # #

{mos_mb_discuss:1}

[Joomla SEO powered by JoomSEF](#)