

Love Letters Sent to President Gloria M. Arroyo - MabuhayRadio

Written by Bobby Reyes

Friday, 21 September 2007 03:38 - Last Updated Saturday, 24 November 2007 10:58

(First Part of a Series of Articles)

Filipino history will probably say someday that this writer was one prolific sender of "love letters" to Filipino Presidents. I call them "love letters," as the motivation is based on the sender's love of country.

My literary comrades and I sent several "love" letters to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (GMA). I'll reproduce some of them in this instant article. We did not receive any reply to any of our correspondence to the Philippine President.

Immediately after the EDSA II revolution that installed Ms. GMA as President, we published our greetings in our online magazine. We sent hardcopies to the Office of the President through the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles, California. It is the way to send official letters to the President, following the rules of protocol.

Our greetings read, QUOTE.

Congratulations,
President Gloria M. Arroyo

The writers and editors of the Yimby Amerasian-Filipino Online Magazine join the great majority of Filipinos and Filipino Americans, in particular, in wishing you every success as you assume the leadership of the Filipino nation.

We wish you good luck in restoring the rule of law, limiting government regulation, expanding the economy, providing moral leadership and protecting individual freedoms that are all essential to putting the Philippines back on track. The Filipino-American community stands ready to help you in that effort. Please let us know what we, Overseas Filipinos, can do to help the Philippines and her people.

God bless the Philippines. May God's peace be with you and the Filipino people. UNQUOTE.

On May 29, 2001, we sent another letter to President GMA in two ways. One was sent through the then Senate President Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr., and the second was coursed through then Consul General Edwin D. Bael. Our letter read:

QUOTE.

We have the honor of submitting the following ideas in solving some of the pressing problems of

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the Filipino people that your Administration wants to tackle. We decided to course this correspondence through the good office of the Hon. Senate President Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr., because he is one national leader who answers letters even from Overseas Filipinos.

In the matter of the latest kidnapping made in Palawan by the Abu Sayyaf band of terrorists, we suggest most respectfully to Your Excellency to secure the assistance of the United States of America. The Armed Forces of the Philippines, especially the Philippine Navy, do not have the capabilities to obtain satellite reconnaissance of Basilan, Sulu and other islands in the area. We doubt if the Philippine military can monitor the cellular telephone and other radio communications being made by the kidnapers. All of these high-tech crime-fighting tools can easily be provided by the United States, the assistance of which can be obtained considering that three of the kidnapping victims are Americans. If the Philippine Navy can destroy the vessels of the Abu Sayyaf gang, then the terrorists cannot operate in the other islands of the Philippines, Malaysia or Indonesia.

Our online magazine has been trying to offer suggestions to the Philippine government. Our January 2000 issue published for instance published an editorial entitled, "The Philippines Must Ask Help from Foreign Governments to Pinpoint Identities of Terrorists." A printout of the said editorial is attached for your reference. Our suggestion was not followed by the Administration of former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada.

We will submit formal proposals to Senate President Pimentel when he comes to speak as the guest of honor during the Philippine Independence celebration in Los Angeles, California, on June 9, 2001. The proposals will also be addressed to Your Excellency. Some of our proposals are meant to provide solutions for the settlement of the Philippines' foreign loans, a proposal to develop fully the Philippine tourism industry and a Reform Agenda for Philippine education. We will also submit our position papers on several projects proposed by Senate President Pimentel, to wit: a Federal Republic system, a National Identification Card and voting rights for Overseas Filipinos. Some of these ideas are currently being discussed in the pages of the Yimby.com.

We will also submit to Senate President Pimentel an invitation to the Philippine Government to join us in doing a Million-Man Filipino-American March that we proposed at the National Mall at the Washington Monument in Washington, DC, on July 6, 2002. The proposed march is a celebration of the Centennial of Filipino-American Friendship, the details of which are published starting in the May 2001 issue of the Yimby.com. UNQUOTE.

Re-submitting Previous Letters

When President GMA visited Los Angeles on Nov. 21, 2002, I was selected by the Philippine Consulate General as one of 30 community leaders who would have a private reception with her. I prepared a 3-ring binder that contained our previous letters, aside from a covering letter. After the usual handshakes and greetings with Her Excellency and the photo session, I quietly went to the side of the First Gentleman, Mike Arroyo. The President was having more photo sessions with her classmates from the Assumption College. I introduced myself to Mr. Arroyo

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and reminded him that we were classmates in some subjects at the Ateneo de Manila College of Law, where I had stints with its 1970, 1971 and 1972 classes. (I was then a working student and I had been dropping out in my senior year due to my frequent work assignments outside of the Philippines.) Mr. Arroyo, who belonged to Class 1972, recognized me finally. I told him that my media group had been writing to his wife, the President, and nobody bothered even to acknowledge our letters. I gave him the binder that contained duplicates of the letters. I thanked Mr. Arroyo for letting the President know of our concern for the homeland and I bid goodbye.

The result of that meeting with Mr. Arroyo and with the First Gentleman? We did not get any response at all to any and all of our letters.

By tomorrow, we will reproduce another love letter that New York-based columnist Ricky Rillera signed and delivered to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel in New York City. It was about our idea on how the Philippines might be able to pay off her foreign loans. Likewise, we did not receive even the courtesy of an acknowledgment of our Sept. 25, 2003, letter to the President.

(To be continued . . .)

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