

(Part III of the Series on &quot;Love Letters to the Philippine Presidents&quot;)

Since June 1988 my writer friends and I tried to entice the Philippine government to consider the brainchild of Mr. James D. Robinson III, an American captain of industry. Mr. Robinson proposed the organization of a new entity that he called the &quot;Institute of International Debt and Development (I2D2).&quot;

### **Love Letters to President Aquino**

As I told then visiting Foreign Affairs Minister Raul Manglapus in August 1988, we sent to the Office of then President Cory Cojuangco-Aquino my columns about the I2D2 in the Manila Standard's Los Angeles edition and the Philippine Journal. A few months later, I told the same message to then Philippine ambassador to the United States, H.E. Emmanuel Pelaez, during his visit to Los Angeles. Both promised to look into the matter. Nothing happened to our proposal.

### **Love Letters to President Ramos**

Retired Gen. Fidel V. Ramos became the Philippine President in 1992. My friends who are alumni of the Philippine Military Academy sent copies of my columns about the I2D2 to the three retired generals who were then manning the Office of the President (OP). When President Ramos visited Los Angeles on Nov. 21, 1993, we prepared two identical copies of our I2D2 proposal of repaying the foreign debts of the Philippines. Both copies came in with a 3-ring binder. The first set of documents I handed to Mr. Ramos' press secretary, Nena Aragon Decena, who was then a publisher of a Filipino woman's magazine, handed the other set to First Lady Ming Ramos. The First Lady was Ms. Nena's close friend. Both sets of documents were given during the First Filipino-American Media Conference held at the Los Angeles Sports Arena. The OP or even the Press Secretary's Office never bothered even to acknowledge receipt of our letter and supporting documents.

### **Angara Meeting with Robinson**

Then Senate President Edgardo J. Angara agreed to become the guest of honor of the 1994 Philippine Independence Day celebrations in New York and Los Angeles. I brought out again the I2D2 proposal. I was able to arrange a meeting between Senate President Angara and Mr.

Written by Bobby Reyes

Monday, 24 September 2007 01:57 - Last Updated Saturday, 27 October 2007 14:23

---

Robinson at the latter's office in New York City. On June 6, 1994, I accompanied Mr. Angara and his companion, Atty. Avelino Cruz, to see Mr. Robinson. (It was like a reunion for me, as Atty. Cruz was one of my professors in the San Beda College of Law.) The I2D2 concept was discussed during the meeting. Senate President Angara promised to bring it to the attention of President Ramos. But then again, nothing happened.

I could not forget that day. Not only was it the golden anniversary of the Allied Landing at Normandy, France, but I had also an appointment that afternoon with Mrs. Jean MacArthur at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. (I was able to see Mrs. MacArthur, courtesy of her Filipino-American nurse. Unfortunately, I forgot my camera at my rented car that was parked somewhere in Midtown Manhattan. And so I did not have pictures of both the Angara-Robinson meeting and with my appointment with Mrs. MacArthur.)

## Love Letters to President Estrada

Then Joseph Estrada became the President. His First Lady came to visit the Filipino-American community in California. There was a reception for her on Dec. 3, 1998, at the Bonaventure Hotel in Downtown Los Angeles. I prepared again two sets of the I2D2 documents and a covering letter. I handed both copies to Mrs. Rosellyn E. Magsaysay, then the first lady of Zambales, who arranged the reception. I saw Mrs. Magsaysay give one of the copies to First Lady Loi Estrada and the other copy to her aide-de-camp. The EDSA II Revolution came and went but still nothing happened to our I2D2 proposal.

I discussed the letter in Part II of this series about the I2D2 proposal that we sent to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. That was done in September 2003. And still there is not even an acknowledgment of receipt from the OP.

How come Philippine Presidents refuse to discuss a viable way of repaying the country's indebtedness? How come they all refuse to consider making the Philippines the pilot project for the I2D2? Is it because the I2D2 would make the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund obsolete if Mr. Robinson's brainchild were to succeed? Or as some of their critics say, some Philippine government officials profit from the Philippine practice of paying religiously the interest and debt-servicing fees for the foreign loans year in, year out?

Perhaps now that Ms. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is a lame-duck President, she may like to discuss the I2D2 option as an additional step in securing her legacy. After all, 20 years have elapsed since we proposed the I2D2 solution. And the Filipino government whiz kids - under four Presidents - have not thought of anything that would totally wipe out and/or repay the country's foreign indebtedness in a similar fashion that we have proposed. What gives?

If still President Arroyo would not even consider studying our I2D2 solution, perhaps the Overseas-Filipino Workers-led Political Party (being organized for the 2010 elections) may include it in its economic platform or even program of government.

## Why Philippine Presidents Refuse to Answer Love Letters that Discuss the I2D2 Option - MabuhayRadio

Written by Bobby Reyes

Monday, 24 September 2007 01:57 - Last Updated Saturday, 27 October 2007 14:23

---

(To be continued . . .)

[Joomla SEO powered by JoomSEF](#)