

Written by Bobby Reyes

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Filipino-American activists and human-rights advocates are preparing a massive “welcome” for visiting Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (PGMA) in Washington, DC, and New York. She is scheduled to meet with President George W. Bush at the White House on June 24, 2008. The Filipino Americans (who will “welcome” her) plan to burn her effigy in front of the White House – unless of course federal agents would prevent the massive demonstrations from taking place. This information was confirmed to this writer by a Washington, DC-based publisher, who prefers to remain anonymous.

Among the issues that the Fil-Am demonstrators will be ventilating to the American public and their national leaders are the Arroyo Dispensation’s human-rights abuses, including the disappearance and killing of civil-rights workers and journalists, the genocide-like treatment of Filipino Muslims, the theft of American military-economic aid and the use of Philippine ports as trans-shipment points for the smuggling of prohibited drugs to the United States, among other pressing problems. Mrs. Arroyo has been branded by her local and overseas critics as the “most-corrupt and most-cruel President the Philippines ever had.”

The White House said, “President Bush welcomes the opportunity to talk to President Arroyo about ways to advance our close bilateral cooperation on a broad range of areas, including (the) ASEAN, Burma, counter-terrorism, defense reform, food security and regional economic integration.”

There are reports that Filipino-American demonstrators as far as Los Angeles and San Francisco (California) and the Midwest are teaming up with Filipino firebrands in the nation’s capital and from New York and the Eastern Seaboard. Some of the protesting groups have been sending to American congressional leaders and Washington policy makers documentation about the abuses of the Arroyo Administration and the Philippine military leadership. The claimed abuses are described also in this article, [It Is Time for Filipino Americans to Stop Playing “Mr. Nice Guy”](#).

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This publication has learned also that the very-popular Philippine ambassador to the United States, H.E. Willy C. Gaa, has been appealing to Filipino-American community leaders not to support the activists and advocates who intend to stage massive demonstrations against the Arroyo visit. Ambassador Gaa has been reported to be talking to community leaders in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and the New England States about the need to respect the Office of the Philippine President, even if many Overseas Filipinos despise the occupant. The leaders of the planned demonstrations against the visit of PGMA plan to field demonstrators to picket the entrances at all the venues where she is scheduled to appear.

The Office of the Philippine President and the White House issued separate statements about the January 24th visit of PGMA to the United States. The press statements say that both governments welcome the Bush-Arroyo Summit that would take up a wide array of topics that are of paramount concern to both countries.

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The Office of the Philippine President announced that PGMA would also meet with other key American government officials and members of the United States Congress, Filipino World-War II veterans, Filipino-American community leaders, businessmen, investors and environmental groups in Washington, DC, and New York City.

The ASEAN-US Business Council and the United States Chamber of Commerce will also jointly host a dinner in honor of President Arroyo in Washington, DC.

While in New York, PGMA will host a reception for the Permanent Representatives of the United Nations “to push the candidature of Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago to the International Court of Justice.” # # #

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