

Part Six of the "Reinventing the Filipino Psyche"

By Bobby M. Reyes

The Philippine government, with the help of the Overseas Filipinos, must end its practice of begging for alms AKA economic and/or military aid from the industrialized world, especially from the United States. The Overseas Filipinos earn enough that the Philippines can easily give up its perennial quest for charity from foreign donors. The Filipino leaders must leave out the begging bowls from their luggage when they make official trips or even state visits to the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Germany, France, Italy, Japan and Russia – the so-called G-8 countries – and/or the other industrialized nations in Europe and Australia. Ending the Philippine participation in the "Alms Race" will make the Filipinos look good, feel good and proud of their socioeconomic independence.

I wrote in Part One of the "Reinventing the Filipino Psyche:" QUOTE. The Philippines does not have economic influence because its population that now exceeds 85 million souls does not have much buying power. For many Filipino families earn an average of a measly U.S. dollar per day. There is really no change in the income of the Filipino family. Then Philippine National Security Adviser Jose Almonte reported at a Socialist Congress in Chile in 1994 the same income of one-dollar a day.

Economic power translates to political clout. And as the adage says, mendicants cannot be choosy. This is the reality that sadly very few Filipino national leaders and many Filipino-American community associations cannot understand or refuse to understand. UNQUOTE.

Written by Bobby M. Reyes

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To read the article in its entirety, please go to this link: <http://www.mabuhayradio.com/content/view/156/90/>

But the Philippines can afford now to cast away the international image of a mendicant country. Filipino workers and immigrants earn annually in excess of \$42-billion—as spelled with a B—in the United States alone. Filipino Americans and the Overseas-Filipino workers (OFWs) in the United States remit a minimum of seven-billion dollars per year back to the homeland. And how much does the United States give per year in economic AND military aid? The American aid does not exceed two-hundred-million dollars per annum.

This writer has posted comments in some e-forums about the "Philippine Foreign Aid to the United States." Yes, it is the other way around: The Philippines is actually providing indirectly foreign aid to the most-powerful and richest country on earth. To read the article about this topic, please go to <http://www.mabuhayradio.com/content/view/71/51/>

In fact, the Philippines can be one of the few countries that can help in ending the world's "alms race." There are nearly nine-million Filipino souls toiling from the sands of Saudi Arabia to the sands of Nevada. There are Filipino merchant marines manning cargo vessels and cruise ships in all the world's seven seas. The Philippines is now the world's biggest provider of medical professionals. Perhaps the world, especially the G-8 countries, can take advantage of the skills of the Filipino in seamanship and medicine to bankroll the operation of a fleet of hospital ships that can minister to the needs of some of the poorest countries in the world, especially in the African continent. (More on this topic later this week in the Health and Medicine Section of this online publication.)

In short, the OFWs know the value of their services, the importance of their work and the dignity that their professional careers bring to their existence and consciousness. Perhaps the OFWs must indeed go home and participate in the electoral process, so as to "reinvent" finally the Filipino psyche, so that the Filipino mind can be productive to the maximum level. Perhaps the 2010 national elections in the Philippines will enable the people to change the prophetic words of Philippine Commonwealth President Manuel L. Quezon. It was Mr. Quezon who said that he preferred a government run like hell by Filipinos to a government run like heaven by Americans.

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Perhaps the OFW objective for the 2010 elections is to present to the Filipino people a government run like the Land of Promise, if not paradise, by Filipinos trained in America and other leading countries as an alternative to a government run like a nightmare by traditional politicians.

(To be continued . . .)

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