

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino “Nene” Q. Pimentel, Jr. (PDP-Laban) today urged President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to drop her government’s libel case against Archbishop Oscar Cruz of the Archdiocese of Lingayen and Dagupan to spare her from criticisms that she continues to pursue a policy of vindictiveness against her critics.

Instead of getting back at her critics through harassment suits, Senator Pimentel said the President should heed their challenge to undertake honest-to-goodness measures to clean up and reform her graft-ridden government.

Editor’s Note: To read the issue and dispute between President Arroyo and Archbishop Cruz, please go to [Filipino Bishop Follows MabuhayRadio Editorial and “Excommunicates” the President](#)

He asked why Malacañang and the Department of Justice has resurrected an already dead case against the Lingayen-Dagupan Archbishop which stemmed from his published remarks that some female employees of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (Pagcor) were made to act like “guest relations officers” (GROs) when they served as usherettes during the birthday party of First Gentleman Juan Miguel Arroyo at the Malacañang Park on June 26, 2004.

Mr. Pimentel noted that the Manila prosecutor’s office had already dismissed the libel suit for insufficient grounds a long time ago but Justice Secretary Raul Gonzales overturned the decision only now apparently upon the prodding of the Palace.

“GMA should reconsider her DOJ moves to harass Archbishop Cruz unless she wants to be remembered in history as vindictive virago,” the opposition lawmaker said.

“GROs are a respectable lot compared to thieves in government.”

Senator Pimentel said the motive for the libel case against Archbishop Cruz becomes even more questionable in the light of the fact that the First Gentleman had dropped his libel complaints against more than 50 working journalists last year in the spirit of goodwill and reconciliation. # # #

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