

The BalikLaban Coalition of the United States is urging Filipino taxpayers to do a tax revolution by fighting the Gloria-Arroyo Dispensation's plans to impose new taxes or to increase the rates of existing taxes. The coalition joins Sen. Nene Pimentel in opposing the new and/or increased taxes being proposed by President Gloria M. Arroyo.

The BalikLaban has in fact proposed the immediate abolition of the Value-Added Tax (VAT) as the most-advisable economic stimulus. Cutting the taxes had been proven as one of the sound economic stimuli by American Presidents John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan.

This writer has called the Filipino First Couple as “VATman” and “VATwoman” respectively in this article, [Humor Is Now the Opium of the Filipino People](#)

The complete proposal for an overhaul of the Philippines' tax system can be found in this article,

[An Overseas-Filipino Political Party's Rx for the "Great Economic Depression" in the Philippines](#)

We now propose that the Filipino taxpayers start a tax “revolt” on April 15, 2009, which is the deadline for filing individual income-tax returns with the Bureau of Internal Revenue. The 2009 Tax Revolt can be joined by Filipino taxpayers who are not supposed to get any tax refund. The tax “rebels” can simply file for an extension of their 2008 tax return, so as to delay the collection of the taxes.

Then we suggest that all Filipino taxpayers and Overseas Filipinos wear a mask similar to what Batman and Batwoman wear. We can print on the mask phrases like “Down with VATman” or “Resign VATwoman” or any similar message.

The proposed Filipino “tax revolution” can be patterned after the original “tea party” of 1773 when American settlers, angered over a new British tax on tea, boarded ships anchored in the Boston harbor and dumped the tea cargo into the water. Perhaps we can all dump the Arroyo Couple, instead of tea, into the dustin of history.

What say you, Filipino taxpayers? Can we force the Arroyo Dispensation to

undertake tax reforms and abolish the VAT as a first step?

Here is the latest press release on taxes sent by the Senator Pimentel’s Press Office:

Inadvisable to Impose New Taxes during Economic Crisis – Senator Pimentel

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Q. Pimentel, Jr. (PDP-Laban) today said the administration’s plan to impose new taxes or increase the rates of existing ones betrays its insensitiveness to the economic condition of the majority of Filipinos who have been affected by the global financial crisis.

Senator Pimentel said Congress is being coaxed by Malacañang to impose a tax on text messaging and to raise the tax rates for so-called “sin products” (liquor and cigarettes) to make up for the deficiency in revenue collections and to narrow down the budget deficit.

“But in times of economic slump, it is wrong for the government to impose new taxes. How can you justify a measure that will add more burden to the people at a time when they are suffering from financial hardships?” he said.

“That should not be the action of a government that cares for the welfare of the citizenry. What the government should do is to stimulate the economy and not to make life even harder for businessmen and consumers.”

The minority leader reiterated his stand that if and when it is extremely necessary to slap a tax on text messaging, it should be charged against the cellphone service providers and not against the phone subscribers. He said the service providers are raking in so-much profits on which the tax on text can be applied.

However, Senator Pimentel said it is doubtful whether any new tax measure will be approved by Congress this year given the unfavorable circumstances.

* First, he said that normally legislators are reluctant to pass any new tax measure during the period preceding an election.

* Second, he said the administration has yet to account for the use of the multi-billion peso collections from the road-users' tax in the face of allegations of illegal disbursements.

* Third, he said President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo has vetoed special provisions in the 2009 general appropriations act designed to enhance transparency in public spending. One provision that was vetoed would have required the President to submit to Congress a breakdown on the disbursement of lump sum appropriations and the recipient agencies.

“Clearly, the mood in Congress is against new taxes. What we lawmakers want is for the executive branch to exert more efforts in improving collection of existing taxes and to plug the loopholes in the collection system. In short, the challenge that the executive branch must face is to reverse the decreasing tax-collection efficiency,” Senator Pimentel said.

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Monday, 13 April 2009 07:29 - Last Updated Monday, 13 April 2009 07:51

Describing the plan to slap new taxes as ill-conceived, Senator Pimentel said the administration should have instead included tax relief measures, especially for distressed industries, in its much-ballyhooed economic-stimulus package. # # #

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