

# ***PHILIPPINES: FRIEND AND FOE***

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## DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to the over two hundred news journalists who lost their lives through assassinations attempt to stifle freedom of the press, and to those who wish to make known to the world the true conditions in the Philippines [*The nation of reality of duplicity*] and murderous deeds of political regimes that from 1986 to 1991 alone, 32 Filipino journalists who dared to print the truth were killed, 27 of them outside Metro Manila.

Most of the crimes against news correspondents remain unsolved not out of lack of evidence but often out of lack of sincerity in solving cases which are an embarrassment to the Republic and its criminal force, elected government officials, the only major organized crime in the Philippines. Perhaps with the disclosures contained herein some compassionate civil workers may wish to redeem themselves.

This book is also dedicated to those brave Filipinos who dare defy a system which has corrupted their land from the lowest levels and continuing through to the various agencies, departments, and bureaus which purport to represent the people. "*A man in the Philippines is only an individual; he is not a member of a nation,*" with the system as it now is perpetuating this dichotomy and dysfunctionality of peoples to keep them un-united in any cause which may be to their advantage. —Quotation from *La Solidaridad*, May 31, 1890.

One does not need a college degree or exhibit high intelligence to see the waste of this country's highest and most valuable resources, its people. Proud and stalwart, they have stood side by side with their American counterparts in war and in peace. They rank second to none in bravery when put in a position of no withdrawal. Witness the thousands who were willing to surrender their lives in Edsa I and II in Manila.

For those content to live in fear, "*Surely there must be something strangely degenerating in the love of monarchy, that can so completely wear a man down to an ingrate, and make him proud to lick the dust that kings have trod upon.*" The words of Thomas Paine live on long after his death and the American Revolution which set her people free from the tyrannical rule of a despot king.

The Philippines ranks as Number Four in the Southeast Asian Countries in denying freedoms to the populace based on formal complaints registered. However this country has made it a concerted effort to suppress these complaints in an effort to look good in the eyes of the world and to proclaim proudly their democratic principles to developed countries, so the statistics available to the media are

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generally not reflective of the true conditions which exist under a totalitarian system. Having a democratic system, on paper, has not deterred those who would deny freedoms to others in order to further their own financial cause.

There appears to be an unwritten law in this land, and that is to further no cause, bureaucratically or judiciously, which may hinder the efforts of incumbent politicians or bring to light the criminal actions or faux pas [*indiscretions*] of civil servants in the total disregard of their duties and obligations to their country and to the public from whom they receive their salaries.

*"One of the greatest delusions in the world is the hope that the evils in this world are to be cured by legislation."* - Thomas B. Reed, 1886

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to acknowledge the many corrupt, fraudulent, and deceitful politicians and public servants that we have come across during our tenures in the Philippines, which inspired us to write this book. Their preoccupation in semantics and bureaucracy instead of getting the job done and helping the people has created a monument of paperwork to demonstrate to the world their graft, incompetence, and corrupt ways.

Our aim is to exploit not only the political system which denies the poor Filipino the right and access to the basic necessities of life, and also denies such prerequisites such as electricity, good drinking water, hospitalization and medicine, which many cannot afford, but also the bureaucrats, without whose support of corrupt political figures a good deal of the corruptness in government would not be possible.

These contemptible creatures whose sole purpose in life it often appears is to create [*or fabricate*] red tape in order to increase their wallets and which the legislature does little or nothing, except rhetoric, year after year. Corruption permeates political life and living in the Philippines at every level. The only transparency you will ever see in writing in this country may be in this book and those brave journalists with the courage to reveal what is happening at the unremitting threats to their lives.

This book was written after many interviews with expatriates from many European countries as well as Americans who married and decided to stay in the Philippines. Some have found it expedient to pay for the so called luxuries and favors to public officials [*agay*] while others we have spoken to have looked the other way or cared not to get involved, if there is such a thing here. The government spends millions of pesos annually soliciting tourism and foreign investors to visit and do business in the islands, yet it does little or nothing to correct the frauds and dishonesty which causes many to eventually leave with a feeling of hopelessness and frustration. The Chinese community was in an uproar as President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo apologized, after insinuating that a wealthy Chinese-Filipino businessman had conspired with the opposition to have his daughter kidnapped. "*Chinatown denounced the statement, coming amid 98 mostly unsolved kidnap-for-ransom cases against members of the community this year.*" -From *The Freeman* newspaper, 30 June 2001, pg. 11.

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**HISTORY**

The Philippines is a Republic which claims itself a democracy, yet denies basic human rights and civil liberties not only to the poor, uneducated, and under privileged but also to foreigners and visitors who come to visit these beautiful islands. Kidnappings of foreigners are suppressed by the government to avoid the loss of tourism which has sustained the economy through perilous financial times.

The Philippines is a story of promises and broken negotiations, a narrative of how a country remains a third world nation after the war and their ecstatic declaration of independence. A chronicle of the poverty imposed upon a hard working, industrious, and persevering people who struggle against a culture of corruptness inherited from Europe over four hundred year ago. The Philippines is a story of corrupt officials pointing fingers at everyone but themselves as the responsible factor in why this county cannot make significant advancements in alleviating poverty.

The Philippines is a story of how the oligarchy [*ruling few*] contains the masses with unlimited promises without delivery of the goods pledged; a history of racial poisoning by European government officials, which is condoned and practiced also by its Church leaders. A practice evident today by its advertisements genetically predisposed towards those of fair skin and tall applicants. What is grossly lacking is merit. The Church and state literally creating a social, financial, psychological caste system over 480 years ago.

What limitless power the Church has over its members cannot be established. Suffice it to say that the successful countries of the world today saw fit at one time or another in their history to secede from its tyrannical and servile demanding affliction. Those who still subscribe to the Church's acquiescence continue to suffer under despots and tyrannical dictators who know the masses fear them and will do nothing for fear of being alienated, tortured, and in some cases assassinated as an example for others.

The Catholic Church would have one believing, *"Tell us we are Catholics first and Americans or Englishmen afterwards; of course we are. Tell us, in the conflict between the church and the civil government we take the side of the church; of course we do. Why, if the government of the United States were at war with the church, we would say tomorrow, To hell with the government of the United*

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*States; and if the Church and all the governments of the world were at war, we would say, To hell with all the governments of the world. Why is it that in this country, where we have only seven percent of the population, the Catholic Church is so much feared? She is loved by all her children and feared by everybody. Why is it that the Pope has such tremendous power? Why, the Pope is the ruler of the world. All the emperors, all the kings, all the princes, all the presidents of the world, are as these altar boys of mine. The Pope is the ruler of the world.* — Quote from Upton Sinclair's "Profits of Religion," page 119.

To whom does one owe allegiance if there is a contradiction? Is it to one's country or to one's religion? And, what if there is more than one religion in the country, then to whom will one give the satisfaction of ruling over the others?

If you doubt the authenticity and veracity of this book I encourage you to write to your respective Embassy and ask them how many citizens from your country are being held as *'detainees'* in the Philippines, and while you're at it, what rights do you have if you should decide to visit. Ask your representative, "*What are the crimes of the detainees?*" You will be appalled at the answer. I have encountered businessmen who have gone through litigation and won their cases in court and are yet incarcerated for trumped up charges. You can only imagine what happened to their business stock. So all I can do by writing this book is appeal to your nature of common decency and fair play and start a letter campaign to '*demand*' equal rights and civil rights in this country for tourists '*foreigners,*' which begs for acceptance by developed countries, yet denies aliens the basics in human rights in actual practice.

The Pope asks forgiveness of debts of third world and developing countries. I can only ask that he reconsider what he is asking, in that too many citizens in developed countries have worked too hard for a living to give up their tax moneys to third world corruptness. If the Pope wants forgiveness of the sins of these third world countries in financial matters, then the Pope should ask the Catholics, "*Do you want to support graft and corruption and then let the tyrants of the world live in a manner in which they have become accustomed to in your country?*" Or will the Church stand up against these tyrants and take a chance of having the Church to pay their fair share in taxes.

The Philippines is a country where public officials heap platitudes, honors, awards, and certificates upon themselves, often times buying the votes of the people, as well as their political allies and adversaries, the politicians having become adept at fending off those who would

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oppose them in the media by proclaiming their contributions to the community, which would pall if the masses knew the true costs.

Bestowing great titles upon each other, these political criminals have learned how to maintain their composure in order to seek higher offices. They will, at times, reveal the indiscretions of others, but seldom file court actions for they also are guilty of similar dealings.

*"These are the times that try men's souls ... Tyranny, like Hell, is not easily conquered."* -Thomas Paine

Living in the Philippines can be a wonderful life of leisure or it can be a veritable nightmare depending upon the area you decide to visit, travel, or invest in. One must remember that this is a third world country, not just because of the poverty that exists nationwide, but due to the government and its lack of response to the masses. The Philippines didn't become a third world country by itself.

Organized crime as you will encounter it today was first introduced by the Spaniards when Magellan landed in 1521, bringing with him a corrupt style of Spanish government and seven Catholic missionaries, with their corrupt Church practices.

*"In every country and in every age, the priest has been hostile to liberty. He is always in alliance with the despot, abetting his abuses in return for protection to his own. It is easier to acquire wealth and power by this combination than by deserving them, and to effect this, they have perverted the purest religion ever preached to man into mystery and jargon, unintelligible to all mankind, and therefore the safer engine for their purposes."* -Thomas Jefferson.

Spain and Portugal are the world leaders in exploitation of new lands and disagree with each other necessitating a truce. A dispute over ownership of the new lands between Spain and Portugal is settled by Pope Alexander VI who draws an imaginary line to separate the possessions in the New World [*Line of Demarcation, 1493*]

Alas, poor Magellan, sets sail around the world, in spite of what had been told to him, only to meet his poor demise at the hands of the brave chieftain, Lapu Lapu, in Cebu. *"The Church says the earth is flat, but I know that it is round, for I have seen the shadow on the moon, and I have more faith in a shadow than in the Church."* - Ferdinand Magellan.

Years later, Miguel de Legazpi would set sail for New Spain [Philippines] with two ships, 380 men, plus five Augustinian priests in 1565. On 19 January, Legazpi sights land and takes possession of the land in the name of King Philip II of Spain.



As a concession to the corrupt Pope, Alexander VI, a system of government was initiated in the Philippines which incorporated both State and Church so that both would share in the wealth of this new land, a system, which from the start took and gave back little to the inhabitants. A system which pitted Church against State in a diabolical set of events, which in effect did little but to ascertain which group was the most corrupt. The gold and silver extracted and stolen from the inhabitants was sent to Spain as a reward to the Church and King.

Neither side will relinquish its powers in the Philippines, as government documents are created [*forged*] on behalf of corrupt officials to steal everything from the poor and given to the Spaniards who helped the King and Pope.

The Pope does nothing to counter-act these vicious acts of forced servitude [*slavery*] and the purloin of lands so long as the word of “God” is disseminated to all to gain future converts and again increase the Pope’s wealth.

Spain found it more expedient [*cheaper*] to subjugate the masses by means of religion than by military contingencies in her conquests of new lands. Spain, through conquests of new lands, would become one of the wealthiest countries in the world by the 16<sup>th</sup> century and one of the poorest and most despised by the 17th.

In the Americas, Christopher Columbus promised to keep only 10% of the wealth from the new world, the remainder would be divided up between the Church and King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. In 1751, King Ferdinand VI, of Spain, grants exemption to the paying of taxes and forced labor to three Filipino rulers: Lakandula, Rajah Matnda and Rajah Soliman in exchange for a friendship treaty. The Pope is well aware of the pitiable treatment of the natives and says nothing.

Spain conquered most of the new world lands with the explorers:

1. Christopher Columbus 1492-1493
2. Balboa 1513
3. Cortez 1519
4. Magellan 1519-21
5. Del Cano 1521-22
6. De Varga 1529-36
7. Pizarro 1532-35
8. De Soto 1539-42
9. Coronado 1540-42

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What happened to all this wealth stolen from the newly conquered lands? The gold, silver, and other treasures were soon lost by the monarchy through corruption, greed, and avarice and also caused Spain to lose her dominion over the new lands. Today Spain is no longer a world power:

1. Queen Isabella establishing the Inquisition to enforce “religious uniformity” also known as “purity of the faith” in 1478 [Which Catholic apologists claim wasn’t all that bad, after the Church destroyed many of the documents] The Supreme Council of the Spanish Inquisition ruled that solicitation either before or after confession was no crime. Years of debate will be required to determine whether a priest is guilty of violating his vows if he secures a girl for another priest’s sexual pleasure.

2. King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella declared “*Los Reyes Catolicos*” meaning “*The Catholic Monarchs*,” by Pope Sixtus IV in 1479, and given the power to appoint all Church dignitaries.

3. Christopher Columbus arrested and taken back to Spain in chains in 1496.

4. Queen Isabella’s daughter, “*Joan the Mad*” assumes the throne in 1504, continuing the sumptuous living and depletion of funds at the expense of the poor as did her predecessors.

5. 1519, Charles V, Holy Roman Emperor, reared in Flanders, could not speak Spanish, and tries to rule Spain through foreign advisers. Leader of Catholic attempts to suppress Protestantism.

6. Spain loses her navy [*Spanish Armada*] to Great Britain in 1588.

7. King Philip IV involved in excessive and costly wars with France, Germany, and Netherlands, 1605-1665.

8. King Phillip III, in 1609, expels 250,000 Moriscos, Christianized Moors, further depopulating Spain and disrupting its economy.

9. King Philip IV, succeeds to the throne in 1621, preferring culture to politics, he allows Gaspar de Guzmán, conde de Olivares, to run the government, with Olivares eventually being ousted in 1640.

10. Spain loses the Netherlands in 1668.

11. A compromise is reached in the Treaty of Utrecht, 1713, whereby most of Spain’s remaining European possessions are surrendered to Austria.

12. Spain loses Gibraltar in 1714.

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13. The people of Spain revolt, and in March 1808 overthrow Manuel de Godoy, appointed by King Charles I, and force Charles to abdicate in favor of his son, Ferdinand.
14. Spain loses Madrid to Napoleon in 1808.
15. Spain loses the American colonies 1810-1815.
16. Spain loses Columbia in 1813 and eventually all of her South American conquests due to corruption and a brutal authority, denying her subjects basic human rights. Today, the Church claims she has always been for the rights of the poor and oppressed.
17. Political anarchy is suppressed for a time when in 1874, a group of generals turn against the republic and restore the Bourbon monarchy with Isabella's son, Alfonso XII, as king.
18. Execution of three Filipino priests in 1872
19. Spain loses the Philippines in 1898
20. Laws are imposed upon the poor and not the rich. *"The greatest criminals...who have called upon themselves the indignation of the people with low and base crimes, can defend themselves and enjoy the guarantees by law. If they are convicted, they know to what they are sentenced and are often pardoned even before the end of their term."* –Jose Rizal. There is no doubt, that if Rizal were alive today, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, his religious and political beliefs would be just as avant garde now as they were in 1896, and, more likely than not would still be persecuted by those in power for demanding rights for the poor and underprivileged. Today, the government stands as a primary testimony to Rizal in being the major organized crime cartel in the Philippines.
21. War in Spanish Morocco becomes unpopular when the rebels badly defeat Spanish forces at Anual in 1921.
22. *"I swear before God and his holy gospels to maintain the Constitution."* And the Catholic Church was silent when the old fortress of Monjuich resounded with the moaning and screams of tortured men when King Alfonso, to check the threatened revelation of his theft of millions of dollars from the Spanish national treasury tore up the Constitution and set up the dictatorship of the brutal and debauched General de Rivers. - See *Alfonso XIII Unmasked*, by the greatest Spanish writer of the time, Blasco Ibanez. King Alfonso XIII runs away from Spain in 1931 and the falsified elections and other corrupt practices of the monarchy are allegedly ended.
23. October 1934, a Socialist-led workers' insurrection sweeps across Asturias and Catalonia proclaiming its independence from Madrid due to corruption.

24. The Spanish citizenry, oppressed and despondent over a corrupt church and government rebel and burn 170 Catholic churches, in the revolution of 1936.
25. Franco Dictatorship, 1939, under martial law, 37,000 are executed during the first four years alone.
26. 1975 the beginning of restoration of certain democratic principles by Juan Carlos I.
27. 1982, a plot by right-wing extremists to stage a military coup is discovered, and four military leaders are arrested and three imprisoned.
28. Scandals within the government, 1994, and 1995.
29. Cease fire in 1989, in exchange for negotiations with the Spanish government over Basque independence [*The Spanish have their Basques and the Philippines their Muslims*]
30. González, who now heads the Socialist opposition in parliament, is cleared of involvement in the death squads in late 1996 [20 *Basque separatists murdered by state-sponsored death squads*]

S.S. Prentice, many years ago, speaking of Spain said, "*On the shore of discovery it leaped an armed robber, and sought for gold even in the throats of its victims.*"

The Catholic Church also suffers significant setbacks during their corrupt history due to mass corruption, nepotism, simony, immorality, and assassinations. Instituting the Inquisition in 1480 in its feeble attempt to retain its ill gotten wealth, establishing the Crusades, which steal the wealth from the propertied Jews along the way to Jerusalem in eight futile endeavors to liberate the Holy City, and attempts to impede the spread of a new type of Christianity, Protestantism, which would make its tenets known to the new world, the Roman Church fails to acknowledge free will and individual rights and also lose its prominence.

1. 1215, Pope Innocent censures the *Magna Charta* and the bill of rights for the poor and mankind [*Although the Church claims to have always represented the poor*]
2. Pope Gregory IX initiates the Roman Inquisition and sets up the Spanish Inquisition in 1232, but the people and most of the rulers [*even most of the Bishops*], resented it, and did little until the monks persuaded the fanatical Queen Isabella, of Spain, to restore it. And, the Church and Spain get rich off of the wealth of the disposed Jews as well as the inhabitants of the soon to be conquered countries.

3. Pope Alexander VI, fathers four illegitimate children by Lady Vanozza Catani and two more from Dame Giulia. “A characteristic instance of the corruption of the Papal court is the fact that Borgia’s [Pope Alexander VI] daughter Lucrezia lived with his mistress Giulia, who bore him a daughter, Laura, in 1492 [the year of his consecration as Pope].” –From the works of J. McCabe, *Rationalist Encyclopedia*.

The Catholic Church has reluctantly abandoned their futile efforts to whitewash this historical figure of amazingly immoral and deviously unscrupulous Spanish descent. Especially after the work of the Catholic historian Dr. L. Pastor, it is impossible to suggest, outside of the Sunday school, that there has been any damage to the reputation of this Pope.

4. Pope Alexander VI’s illegitimate son, Giovanni, is appointed Duke of Gandia, Cesare is appointed Archbishop of Valencia at age 17, but later resigns to head the Papal Armies that subdue all those who refuse to acquiesce to the supremacy of his father, the Pope.

5. 1492, Pope Alexander VI, is so brazen in his conduct that at the actual time of his election he openly entertains his mistress, whose image he has painted on one of the walls of the Vatican Palace as the Virgin Mary, a fresco by Pinturicchio, a skeptical, self-indulgent artist, and the Pope’s children’s images are also placed in the “*Sacred Palace*.”

6. Pope Alexander contributes to the massive organized corruption in the Philippines via the Catholic friars who arrive with Legazpi, claiming the islands as the property of Spain [*the Catholic religious leader is Father Andres de Urdaneta*] enslaving the people to work the silver and gold mines as well as the fields. First the Augustinians, then the Franciscans, followed by the politically motivated Jesuits [*who will be expelled in 1768*], the Dominicans, the Recollects, and the Benedictines. These religious groups will spread the racial bigotry and religious intolerance of Catholicism among the ignorant masses.

7. 1503, the new Pope, Pius III, nephew of Pope Pius II, serves less than one year [1503] and is replaced by Guiliiano, nephew of Pope Sixtus IV. Pope Pius III who served only three weeks [22 September 1503 to 18 October 1503] may have been poisoned.

8. 1513, Pope Julius II. Nepotism is rampant in the Church, and Giuliano [Julius II] is appointed Cardinal at age 28. In 1492, he fled to France when Pope Alexander VI plotted his assassination. He returns in 1503, upon the death of Pope Alexander VI, and is appointed Pope after the short tenure of Pope Pius III.

9. 1521, abuse on the part of officials of the Church causes Pope Leo X, after many complaints, to reluctantly Excommunicate the Catholic Tribunal at Toledo, and to have the witnesses who appeared before its Inquisitorial trial arrested for perjury [*lying*]
10. 1522, Pope Adrian VI reiterates the Church's stand on censorship and denial of freedom of the press as well as denying Catholics the right to read the Bible.
11. 1524, Pope Clement VII will likewise condescend and on behalf of the Church, renounces all the works of Martin Luther.
12. 1534-Pope Paul III, fathers three illegitimate sons and one daughter. Pope Paul III makes his favorite bastard son, Pierluigi, Duke of Parma and Piacenza. Religious leaders in the Catholic Church are quick to deny illegitimate children rites and sacraments, and yet reject the children of the Popes as being declared publicly illegitimate. Paul III approves the Jesuit Order [*his private army*], and introduces the Index of Forbidden Books [*denouncing freedom of the press as well as man's right to make decisions as to his religious beliefs*]. He bestows Cardinality upon two of his teen grandsons.  
*"They are called Fathers, and they often are."* -Erasmus.
13. 1550-Pope Julius III who attempts to assert his authority over monarchies excommunicates King Henry VIII.
14. 1555-Pope Paul IV becomes concerned about alleged acts of priestly sorcery within the Vatican and after whose election, says Pastor, "*the evil elements at once awakened once more.*"
15. 1559-1565-Pope Pius VI, fathers three sons *Ask your local priest what year celibacy was initiated by the Church*
16. 1571-Pope Pius V initiates the Congregation of the Index [*Forbidden Books*] that had been confirmed by Gregory XII. In 1588, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January, the Index is further refined by Pope Sixtus V. Today the Church claims it has always proclaimed freedom of the press *Apologists will claim that Purity of Faith is necessary to protect the Church thereby necessitating the Forbidden Index or sometimes known as the Roman Index*
17. 1600, much of the history regarding the atrocities of the Roman Catholic Church is suppressed and/or downplayed as a minor or isolated case [*eighty years of barbarity, in which Popes Gregory XIII, Sixtus V, Urban VII, Gregory XIV, Innocent IX, Clement VIII, Leo XI, Paul V, Gregory XV, Urban VIII, Innocent X and Alexander VII did nothing to quell the brutalities or massacres committed against the*  
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Protestants]- See Fox's "Book Of Martyrs," and "Catholic History of the Popes," by Hayward, 1931

18. 1668, the Inquisition flexes its muscles, and the Santo Domingo convent appears to be in no short supply of instruments of torture nor are the Fort Santiago Dominican Friars or the Spanish imposed Audiencia in the Philippines. The poor Filipino was condemned to accept a religion in which he had no voice [could not become ordained], and attend to schools from which he could not progress [*colleges denied to him*]

19. 1678-Friar Felipe Pardo, Dominican Order, known as the "*Mad Archbishop of Manila*" refuses the decree sent by King Philip II of Spain to denounce the involvement of the Friars in the death of the previous governor.

20. 1691-1700-Pope Innocent XII showers money and favors on his relatives in the form of unearned court appointments nearly bankrupting the Vatican and diminishing the Church's potential for gaining converts in North America.

21. The Church anathematizes insects. In the 16th century, regular suits were commenced against rats, and judgments rendered.

22. 1768-The Jesuit Order is expelled from the Philippines for political involvement.

23. 1776-The Jesuits are expelled from the Spanish Empire for involvement in the affairs of the monarchy.

24. 1776-Pope Pius VI denounces the American *Bill of Rights* and the Declaration of Independence. Today, the Church still proclaims to have a history of human rights patronage.

25. One of the major Catholic losses was what is sometimes referred to as *The Protestant Republic of the United States*. The Vatican being so corrupt that the Papal treasuries were all but depleted due to nepotism.

26. 1810-1903-Pope Leo XIII endorses Pope Pius IX and Pope Gregory XVI's position *against* freedom of the press, *against* freedom to worship, and *against* separation of church and state.

27. 1821-Pope Pius VII, issues "*Ecclesiam A Jesu Christo*," on 13 September, specifying *Excommunication* for Catholics who become Freemasons and gives as reason for the censure the oath bound secrecy of the organization and their alleged conspiracies against the Church and state. In actuality it is due to their failure to profess the Catholic Church as the one and only true church of Jesus Christ the Lord Savior.

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28. 1831-Antonelli: This man was Cardinal Secretary of State to Pope Gregory XVI and Pope Pius IX, 1831-1878, who is considered as a saint by many American Catholics. He was the son of a poor wood-cutter and he robbed from the Vatican treasury and died a millionaire: he left behind \$20,000,000, to an illegitimate daughter and a countess to fight greedy relatives for his wealth.

29. 1848-Roman citizens had, due to the chronically foul and immoral condition of the Papal States, rebelled, and set up the *Roman Republic*, Pope Pius IX flees in disguise. In 1878, when Pius IX dies, the Italians are so angry regarding his corrupt administration that they stopped the funeral procession and tried to throw his body in the Tiber River.

30. 1863-The 'End to School Discrimination' in the Philippines is declared by Pope Pius IX, after 352 years of Spanish domination, the sacrosanct [*discriminatory*] Catholic schools are finally declared open to the indigenous native clientele in the Philippines, defying the Church's claim of starting colleges for the benefit of their *little brown brothers*. The first college founded was San Ignacio, which is later elevated to University status in 1621 by Pope Gregory XV. Our Lady of the Rosary [1611] was open for 242 years before the Holy Mother the Church allowed Filipinos to matriculate in its hallowed halls.

31. 1865, Pope Pius IX supports the Confederacy which supports slavery against then President Lincoln. The Church claims it has always been against slavery, yet the Church neglects to say the poor Filipino also was treated as a slave [*property*], unable to leave the land, and receiving poor wages, if at all.

32. 1878-1903, Encyclical, *Immortale Dei*, of Pope Leo XIII is no more than a inspirational utterance, translated, "*The Constitution of Christian States*," promoting the freedom of people to shape their own constitutions being no more truthful than that of Hitler or Mussolini. The title given to it in the English translation is a hoax, as the Pope's title is "*On the Constitution of Catholic States*," deceiving the American Protestants in a vain effort to gain their moral support. It was actually addressed to France, its primary objective was to chastise the French for daring to choose a constitution which placed all religions on the same level by excluding the Catholic Church from political organizations, the law court, and the school: which is exactly what the American Constitution did.

33. 1929, Pope Pius XI denies that there ever was a compact between the Axis powers [*Germany, Italy, and Japan*] and that it is

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just another lie to mortify the Church. He cannot deny the contractual agreement he made with Hitler nor the commemorative medallion struck for the Japanese dignitary in support of their world interests [*conquests*] Newspapers from 1929-1940 tell of the contract agreed upon by the Pope in support of the Nazis, Fascists, and the Emperor [*The Japanese referred to him as Amaterasu, the sun god*] The loyal Catholic Filipinos would be humiliated if they knew how their *Church* sold them out during the war for the promise of their Pope spreading the word of God through the rest of Asia, ignoring the brutalities of the Japanese for a few more pieces of silver. –Read, “*Correspondence of the First Lord Acton*,” 1917, Vol. I, p. 55, or the “*Cambridge Modern History*,” Vol X.

34. 1930, Pope Pius XI and Mussolini sign the infamous compact by which the Papacy undertakes to condone all of Mussolini's crimes in return for \$90,000,000 and special favors.-Read *The Appeal To Reason Library* by J. McCabe.

35. 1933, Msgr. Kaas, is sent to Rome to advise Pope Pius XI as to agreement with the Nazi Doctrine and that he said of Hitler: “*This man, the bearer of high ideals, will do all that is necessary to save the nation from catastrophe.*” Hitler does not share the same opinion as the Catholic Church and declares the Church, “*Negligible allies, as they had lost their power over men's minds in many parts of the world.*”

36. The Vatican media appendage, ‘*Osservatore*,’ tells us that at the close of the cordial interview between the Pope and the Japanese emissary, Matsuoka, he presented him with a gold medal, which had been specially struck for the momentous occasion of Japanese and Vatican cooperation in allowing the Church to initiate Catholicism in Asian countries, and Matsuoka declared to the Italian press that his talk with the Pope was “*the prettiest moment in my life.*” The Catholic Philippines, the only Catholic Asian country, is left ignorant of this ‘*Unholy Alliance.*” Having been sold out by their ‘*religious father*,’ who accorded the Japanese full cooperation by not nullifying the atrocities and conquests of the Japanese across Asia, including the Philippines, already Catholicized, with the alliance of the Pope and his “*Yellow Brother*” being a closely kept secret from modern Catholics. The representatives of the Vatican in Manchukuo and Japan working so amiably with the army and the government that even as early as 1934 a French Catholic writer was able to boast that “*no Japanese prince or mission now passes through Rome without paying its homage to the Sovereign Pontiff.*” -See the speeches at the Chicago International Conference on Religion in 1934, edited by A.E. Haydon,

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Moderit, *World-Trends in Religion*. The day after Christmas, Matsuoka, who was a Christian, says to the Japanese Diet, now Japan could take advantage of the war in Europe, that there would be peace only if America agreed that Japan should "*dominate the mainland and occupy a preferential position in Indo-China and the Dutch Indies,*" and to "*Dominate the Western Pacific,*" not for its own advantage, of course, but for "*the good of humanity.*" The Japanese occupation of the Philippines instilled upon the Filipino was also supposed to be for their own good and for the creation of an Asian Empire without American Imperialism. To this day the Philippine government has never voiced any displeasure regarding the Vatican Alliance with the Axis Powers.

37. 1934 Mussolini begins the slaughter in Abyssinia and the Roman Church does nothing and says nothing, eventually Pope Pius XI, after the slaughter, gives the Queen of Italy as Empress of Abyssinia the '*Golden Rose,*' which is the highest mark of Papal approval.-See J. McCabe's *Appeal To Reason Library, Annual Register*, 1934, p. 194, and the *Catholic Universe*, August 18, 1933.

38. 1939-Pope Pius XII is called the "*greatest moral coward of our time*" by the BBC for the Vatican's untold involvement in WWII and clandestine accord with Hitler and Mussolini as well as the Emperor of Japan [*who claimed to be the son of god*] Heads of the Shinto and Buddhist religions were bought, literally, to support the conspiracy, and the Vatican promised that if it were given a monopoly of the Christian missions it would see to it that the Gospel was accommodated the noble design of exploiting the slave labor and vast resources of China, Indo-China, Thailand, etc! –Response to Hitler by the pitiable German Bishops, "*We give our vote to the Fatherland but that does not signify approval of matters for which we could not conscientiously be held responsible*" *Catholic Times*, March 27, 1936, and the *World Almanac* of 1939, pg. 236

39. 1940, the blind Petain [*Henri Philippe Pétain, the French military and political hero of World War I*], tramples on the last remnants of democracy in France, the Papal newspaper, the *Osservatore Romano*, July 8, hails his restoration of "*the principle of authority*" with enthusiasm and says that in this respect "*the aims of the dictatorships coincided with those of the Church.*" – From J. McCabe, *Rationalist Encyclopedia*.

40. 1946, the Emperor of Japan publicly, and reluctantly, renounces any relationship to being a descendent of God to his people.

41. 1983, John Paul II re-institutes the Inquisition, now the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, formerly the Congregation of the Holy Office, sometimes referred to as Shared 18

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Congregation of the Roman and Universal Inquisition.

Formerly, "*Secretariat of the Congregation of the Holy Office of the Inquisition.*" Is the Pope preparing to assert his "*right of the sword*" or his duty to put apostates to death? [*Listen to a Catholic Apologist explain how the Pope had the right to condemn people to death*]

42. 2000-The Pontiff apologizes to the Jews, but clings to the billions of dollars stolen from them by the Nazis and secreted away in the Vatican bank. -? -See: lawsuit, *Alperin v. Vatican Bank*, filed in November 1999 by Serb, Jewish, and Ukrainian Holocaust survivors against the Vatican Bank seeking return of Nazi loot from wartime Yugoslavia has run into an apparent "*Wall of Silence.*" Tom Easton and Jonathan Levy, who represent the 28 plaintiffs suing the Vatican Bank have asked a Federal Magistrate in San Francisco to order the Vatican Bank to divulge information about itself including its ownership.

43. What we have in the Philippines, believe it or not, is a mirror reflection of their faith. Gazing into their religious past reveals what exists today.

We find, within the sacred archives of Catholicism as practiced by the Vatican and its representatives: rape, plunder, assassinations, forgery, and deceitfulness. Concealing of material facts and ostracizing those critical of the system. All inherent within the Catholic organization [*There is nothing new under the sun*] and suppressed by portraying an organization which purports to represent the poor and underprivileged. Who do they truly represent?

On religion, "*I think they were intended not so much to secure religion as the emoluments of it. When a religion is good, I conceive that it will support itself; and when it does not support itself, and God does not care to support it; so that it's professors are obliged to call for help of the civil power, its a sign, I appetent, of its being a bad one.*" -Benjamin Franklin, "Franklin Works," Vol. VIII, pg. 506.

Apologists now dismiss the peccadilloes of the Popes as history and muck racking even though it continues into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. -Read Father Antony, who wrote under his old nom de plume, Joseph McCabe, in "*Rationalist Encyclopedia.*" Will the Church clean up its act with the advent of new technology [*computers and the Internet*] or will it continue to present a facade of denial, and persist in its intimidation against those who challenge its self-proclaimed God given authority?

The corrupt Church, having inherited the degenerate ways of the Romans, forces their system upon the indigenous peoples of the Philippines, threatening and cajoling the natives to convert. Today, the forced oppression has left its mark in the culture via an attitude which dares not question authority. Centuries ago the inhabitants

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being excommunicated and condemned to an eternal death for daring to confront the Church or anyone in power for that matter.

The Catholic Church will now assert itself in the cruelest and most diabolical manner in order to prevent any independent free thinking, or any society from flourishing in the Philippines without their explicit and expressed approval as two of the gravest corrupters in history will now join hands in the plunder of new lands.

Was it not the Americans, and their defiant liberalism, that convinced the world that killing a man for his religious convictions was wrong, much to the chagrin of the Roman Catholic Church? The American writers of the Declaration of Independence, knowing full well of the corruptness in this institution, wrote into the articles the right to religious freedom and separation of church and states, although in America, the churches still relish their tax free status.

*“I discovered that everyone in my poor country lives in hope of sucking the blood of the Filipino, friars as well as administrators. There may be exceptions, as they claim, but few and far between. This is the source of great evils and of enmities among those who quarrel over the booty.”* –Jose Rizal.

In a country that professes sanctity of the family, yet does little or nothing to protect it by ignoring the plight of the majority, one remembers the words of Adolf Hitler, *“The state must declare the child to be the most precious treasure of the people. As long as the government is perceived as working for the benefit of the children, the people will happily endure almost any curtailment of liberty and almost any deprivation.”* Who represents the family? Who protects the family? Government has failed and so has the religion of the people.

The legacy of the Church lives on in the acquiescence of its people in the Philippines who are fearful of contradicting authority, based upon the Church’s long history of possible death and torture and now stigmatizing and excommunication to all who dare to defy her. Politicians have used this submissiveness to further their plunder of the lands, continuing where the Church ceased to become implicated due to political involvement and the expelling of the Jesuits. One cannot ask for freedom on one’s knees. *“Hath your property been destroyed before your face? Are your wife and children destitute of a bed to lie on, or bread to live on? Have you lost a parent or a child by their hands, and yourself the ruined and wretched survivor? If you have not, then are you not a judge of those who have. But if you have,*

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*and can still shake hands with the murderers, then are you unworthy the name of husband, father, friend, or lover, and whatever may be your rank or title in life, you have the heart of a coward, and the spirit of a sycophant.*” –By Thomas Paine. Individuality is the bane of Catholicism as well as the present day corrupt officials.

Political criminals now appear to be the norm and not the exception in the Philippines, while crimes against their country seldom meet their eyes, all they do now is terrify. In Church they genuflect, asking forgiveness for their sins, so they may rob the suffering. Money is their need, indifference is their seed. Heaven help those who speak out against the corrupt official, the Church won't.

In the Moro society, the natives were used to settlements or barangays ruled by a datu, joining together occasionally for protection. There were three kinds of datus.

1. Datus in fact- were in charge over groups of people or territory.
2. Datus in name- a courtesy title for those born into aristocratic families although they often had no powers.
3. Royal Datus- descendants of the first Sultans, except those who achieved their status via their skills. “*Except for those Filipinos of Chinese or Negrito stock, the Filipinos are racially one people.*” – Read *Muslim Filipinos Heritage and Horizon* by Peter G. Gowing, 1979.

Representing five percent of the population, the Muslims have been the source of major conflicts, due primarily to their being un-Hispanicized or Christianized like their counterparts.

Forced out of Luzon and the Visayas during the early encounters with the Spaniards in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, they remained fiercely proud and independent. It was not until 1898 with the pacification programs of the Americans that the Moros began to assimilate into the prevailing culture. The Catholics have prevented any further integration due to superstition and primarily religious differences extinguishing any further westernized ideas.

The Muslims are proud of having a history dating that of their Christianized brothers and of having been able to challenge the Spaniards, never surrendering their religious beliefs. In 1578 and 1579 the Spanish governor General, Francisco de Sande, ordered the commanders of two military expeditions against the Maguindanao to arrest the “*Preachers from Burney who preached the doctrine of Mahoma.*” See *The Philippine Islands* by Blair and Robertson, IV: 178, 234.

The strong distrust of the Christians and Muslims, which continues today, can be traced to the teachings of the early Catholic Church and

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Spanish attempts to extinguish these people. In 1578, Governor Francisco de Sande issued orders to Captain Esteban Rodriguez de Figueroa to ascertain who the Muslim leaders were and arrest them, the mosques were to be torched wherever, “...that accursed doctrine has been preached and you shall order that it be not rebuilt.” The Spaniards coveting a fanatical hatred of the Muslims. In 1893, Luis de la Torre, a Spanish officer, claiming, “*The Moro race is completely antithetic to the Spanish...and will ever be our eternal enemy...that the instant they antagonize us, they will be promptly and severely punished.*” -From Najeeb Saleeby, “*Studies in Moro History, Law and Religion,*” 1974.

The strong work edicts of the early Filipinos are corrupted by the Spaniards by “*Siestas,*” in which a prolonged interruption from work is approved by their captors. That and the introduction of massive “*religious*” holidays has made these islands difficult to establish international corporations with indigenous forces as in many areas the inhabitants have a reputation for poor work habits which must be overcome [*observance of timeliness on reporting to work and adherence to established work days*]

Spices were a lucrative trade, and in 1521 the Portuguese Viceroy, Alfonso de Albuquerque attempted to subdue once and for all the Muslims in the Philippines, “...the great service which we shall perform to Our Lord in casting the Moors out of this country, and quenching the fire of this sect of Mafamede so that it may never burst out again hereafter; and I am so sanguine as to hope for this from our undertaking, that if we can only achieve the task before us, it will result in the Moors resigning India altogether to our rule...”-See Benda and Larkin, *The World of Southeast Asia: Selected Historical Readings*, 1967

It is in the year 1535 that Villalobos names the islands “*Las Filipinas*” after Prince Philip of Asturias [Later to become King Philip II] The Catholic friars convert the natives to Christianity; the natives unwittingly accepting Spanish law along with their religious beliefs. Later on in history the friars would be instrumental in stealing their lands by convincing them that they did not have any written legal title to their property therefore no legal claim to their estates, forging a multitude of documents on their way to personal enrichment, evidenced today by the moneyed few with Spanish surnames.

Catholicism is used as a ruse, perpetrated upon the poor indigenous peoples to pilfer their lands and anything else of value in the name of God and the King, and this deception of the natives is to play a

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pivotal role in future dealings with the liberated masses and the future republican government's attempts at land ownership and so-called agrarian reforms.

Land reform has failed in the Philippines due to the continuance of graft and corruption, the present system built upon favors and gratuities, which only the rich can afford, giving only lip service to the poor, "...*The land Reform Program failed to rectify land distribution not only because many landowners have been able to circumvent the law but basically because it has a very limited coverage...landless rural workers were excluded in its scope. Moreover, the program exempted farms devoted to export crops such as coconut, sugar, abaca, and fruit trees, thus, favoring not only the local big land-owners, but also their foreign counterparts.*" –Ruth S. Callanta, "*Poverty, the Philippine Scenario.*"

Many will find it difficult to believe that only 20% of this beautiful land is arable due to soil salinity and the need for irrigation. Yet, Israel survives with a land that is 50% arid or semi-arid, and now exports \$1.3 billion in agricultural products.

The Catholic Orders of Augustinian Recollects [1606], Jesuits [1581], the barefoot Franciscans [1578], and Dominicans [1587], all vie for power in this new land and are often in disagreement with each other over control of this emerald in the sea. Justice is denied the Filipino by both the Church and Spanish officials, via appointed government administrators, who see the native as ignorant and of lesser value than their distinguished European counterparts.

*"The history of Spain, I think, is the darkest page in the history of the world. It would be simply infamous to hand those people back to the brutality of Spain, Spain has been Christianizing them for about four hundred years. The first thing the poor devils did was to sign a petition asking for the expulsion of the priests. That was their idea of the commencement of liberty."* -From the book, "*Our New Possessions,*" by Robert Green Ingersoll, Bank of Wisdom, Box 926, Louisville, KY 40201.

The friars, unable to gain the upper hand with their fellow Roman Catholic Orders, cite the Papal bull of Adrian VI, AD 1459-1523, as their authority to perform duties in the Philippines independent of the local Bishop, with whom they disagree with on how to rob the new Christian members, the inhabitants. The natives, not realizing the paternalistic attitude of the friars as a form of racism, are subjected to forced labor [*slavery*], payment of high taxes on the stolen ancestral lands they once owned, and conversion to Christianity under severe penalties for non-acceptance. They are in effect, slaves to a religious

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organization, which even today denies this dark passage of Christian history. Has the Church ever made any gestures to right the wrongs of its representatives? Has the Church ever made any true attempts to help the poor?

The laws integrated by Spain are intended for the Spaniards and not the Filipinos and the Church, which was supposed to instill in the native the meaning of truth, honesty, and high morals, instead teaches them forgiveness for the crimes of their oppressors as crimes by the new oligarchy go unabated into the present century.

The Spaniards are protected by their court system and even their religious beliefs by not allowing the Filipino due justice under the law or even to become priests, although the church espoused equality and fairness. A hypocritical regularity which continues today in denial of equal rights to the poor who are still waiting for their political messiah to rescue them from this cognitive dissonance of rules of order for the rich. When it comes to helping the poor, suddenly those in power have cranial hemorrhage and are unable to see the tree from the forest in interpretation of laws meant for the good of the people and not the good of the affluent.

The religious institutions, the universities, built by the Jesuits, likewise, are for the Spaniards, although the Church now likes to twist history by claiming that these institutions were built for the indigenous Filipinos. The government officials and clergy end up quarreling with each other and killing and poisoning of officials is not uncommon.

The struggle of State power versus spiritual authority continues in the newly discovered lands as well as in Europe Everything is for the Spaniards, with the poor Filipino treated appallingly, and it is not until 1863, when an end to school discrimination in the Philippines is ordered by Pope Pius IX, after 352 years of Spanish domination, that the sacrosanct [*discriminatory*] Catholic schools are finally, and reluctantly, declared open to the indigenous native clientele in the Philippines. Dissatisfied with corrupt Spanish rule and the dishonest practices of the Catholic clergy, in 1896 the brave Filipinos revolt under the leadership of Andres Bonifacio, having formed the Katipunan in 1892. The first Philippine Republic coming into existence on January 28, 1899 with General Aguinaldo as the first President. If an electorate does well in office, Filipinos are quick want to elect his progeny in the hopes that they too also will be good leaders, forgetting the saying, "*When we are planning for posterity, we ought to remember that virtue is not hereditary.*" –By Thomas Paine.



A shining star in the history of the Philippines is Jose Rizal, who boldly wrote of the corruption in government, and decried the atrocities committed against the poor by the Church and its support of corrupt bureaucrats. *"The love of country can never be expunged once it has entered the heart, because it bears a divine mark that makes it eternal and imperishable."* –By Jose Rizal.

The Church, which continually proclaims to represent the poor and depressed, continues in its conspiracy of silence in suppressing the truth and its efforts to become more affluent. -An interesting note is that when researching the word 'fria' in the 1998 Microsoft Encyclopedia, that nowhere did the word 'Catholic' appear when referring to the friars.

Against all that he was taught and sermonized by the Catholic Church and government, Rizal remained a force against the evil they spread, against those whose only crime was being of a darker skin, against those who were enriching themselves by abusing the masses. Even his Jesuit friend tried to dissuade him by exclaiming, *"the right of Spain to the occupation and afterwards the domination of the Philippines was a Divine and natural right..."*

Regarding the corrupt bureaucracy, *The great difficulty that every enterprise encountered in dealing with the administration contributed not a little to kill off all commercial and industrial movement. All the Filipinos, as well as all those who have tried to do business in the Philippines, know how many documents, how many comings and goings, how many stamped papers, how much patience is needed to secure from the government a permit for any commercial enterprise. One must count on the good will of this official, on the influence of that one, on a heavy bribe to a third in order that the application should not be pigeon-holed, a valuable present to a fourth so that he will pass it on to his superior..!"* –Jose Rizal

Nothing has changed in government in over one hundred years . The politicians thrive on mass media proclaiming the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior on the one hand while stealing from the poor with the other, with nary a blink of the eye or feelings of remorse for their crimes by either themselves or the Church [see *Corruption in this book* ]

What does this say for change? In over four hundred years since Spain unified the archipelago with the introduction of a Christianized-State government, little else has been accomplished without assistance from foreign powers. American writers computed that before the Philippines were taken over the Church squeezed 113,000,000 pesetas a year out of the poor people of the Philippines,

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and this doesn't include the corrupt public officials [who benevolently attended services, thanking God for their enrichment every Sunday] -From J. McCabe in "*Rationalist Encyclopedia*."

A cursory look at other countries conquered by Spain and its national religion will reveal the true nature of the beast [*The Roman Church*] as being forgers of third world countries swamped in corruption, fraud, and dishonest politicians [*Chile, Brazil, Columbia, Panama, El Salvador, Valenzuela, Columbia, Paraguay, Argentina, Bolivia, Mexico, etc.*] The Catholic Church, through the early friars, taught them well regarding lying, cheating, and forging of public documents. America, founded on Protestantism, circumvented the corruption of the Catholic Church and encouraged individuality, which the Church has sought to suppress for centuries.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> President of the United States stating, "*Let us, then, fellow citizens, unite with one heart and one mind. Let us restore to social intercourse that harmony and affection without, which liberty and even life itself are but dreary things. And let us reflect that having banished from our land that [Christian] religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of a bitter and bloody persecutions.*" - Thomas Jefferson.

If businessmen want continuity...they have it here in the Philippines. A fair playing field? Definitely not! Continuity, most assuredly! Continuity, for things seldom change in a third world country, with the controlling advocates of crime quite content to maintain the status quo, which is to support only those who support them in their never ending quest to gain more power [*money*].

Each administration will appoint new officials and each administration will reap the harvest at the expense of the poor. Each new administration will talk of change while each does little or nothing [*except, perhaps, more talk*]

The American government rule existed from April 14, 1898 after the capture of Manila from Spain. The occupation and broken promises made to the Philippine people is a dark chapter in American history, with the last American Military Governor being General Arthur MacArthur, father of Douglas MacArthur, who had a good heart, but whose hands were tied by a discriminatory bureaucracy.

The practice of giving amnesty to rebels dates back to 1902, when the United States President, Theodore Roosevelt, declared peace in the Philippines and placed the islands under civil control, granting general amnesty to Filipino rebels.

The amnesty is as follows: "Now, therefore, be it known

*that I, Theodore Roosevelt, President of the United States, by virtue of the power and authority vested in me by the Constitution, do hereby proclaim and declare, without reservation or condition, except as hereinafter provided, a full and complete pardon and amnesty to all persons in the Philippine archipelago who have participated in the insurrection aforesaid, or who have given aid and comfort to persons participating in said insurrections, for the offenses of treason or sedition and for all offenses, political in their character, committed in the course of such insurrections pursuant to orders issued by the civil or military insurrectionary authorities, or which grew out of internal political feuds or dissensions between Filipinos and Spaniards or the Spanish authorities, or which resulted from internal political feuds or dissensions among the Filipinos themselves during either of said insurrections."*

*"Provided, however, that the pardon and amnesty hereby granted shall not include such persons committing crimes since May 1, 1902, in any province of the archipelago in which at the time civil government was established, nor shall it include such persons as have been heretofore finally convicted of the crimes of murder, rape, arson or robbery by a ny military or civil tribunal organized under the authority of Spain or of the United States of America, but special application may be made to the proper authority for pardon by any person belonging to the exempted class, and such clemency as is consistent with humanity and justice will be liberally extended; and, further, provided, that this amnesty and pardon shall not affect the title or right of the government of the United States or that of the Philippine Islands or any property or property rights heretofore used or appropriated by the military or civil authorities of the government of the United States, or that of the Philippine Islands organized under the authority of the United States by way of confiscating or otherwise, and, provided, further, that every person who shall seek to avail himself of this proclamation shall take and subscribe to the following oath before any authority in the Philippine Archipelago authorized to administer oaths, namely: "I, — —, solemnly swear (or affirm) that I recognize and accept the supreme authority of the United States of America in the Philippine Islands and maintain true faith and allegiance thereto; that I impose upon myself this obligation voluntarily, without mental reservation or purpose of evasion. So help me, God.'" —From the Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia.*

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The primary difference between this amnesty and that given by more recent administrations in the Philippines, is crimes are not forgiven. The present government has a tremendous task ahead as it clashes with its history in providing amnesty to rebels, forgiving them their sins in rape, plunder, and assassinations [*a polite term for murder*] against the people of the Philippines.

Ransom, unwittingly, being given to perpetuate the imprudence of rebellious civil insurrection.

The United States, during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century sought to be like their early colonists, to expand, and to declare new lands under their dominion. To their dismay, the Philippine people fought this colonialism, as they saw only the tyrannical rule of another suppressive government, and organized to overthrow this new colonial power.

The American government sought to suppress these seditious actions, but the American public could see no purpose in attempting to dominate a country which they deemed too far away to serve any useful purpose. This and the cost in American servicemen's lives negated the usefulness to the public as to the worthiness of having a colony thousands of miles away with no apparent threat to the United States in the near or far future.

The racist attitude of American politicians cannot be denied, especially during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century era. On 9 January, 1900, Senator Albert Beveridge gave this speech before the United States Senate "*...it would be better to abandon this combined garden and Gibraltar of the Pacific, and count our blood and treasure already spent a profitable loss, than to apply any academic arrangement of self-government to these children. They are not capable of self-government. How could they be? They are not of a self-governing race.*"

*"They are Orientals, Malays, instructed by Spaniards in the latter's worst estate...They know nothing of practical government except as they have witnessed the weak, corrupt, cruel, and capricious rule of Spain. What magic will anyone employ to dissolve in their minds and character those impressions of governors and governed which three centuries of misrule has created? What alchemy will change the oriental quality of their blood and set the self-governing currents of the American pouring through their Malay veins? How shall they, in the twinkling of an eye, be exalted to the heights of self-governing peoples which required a thousand years for us to reach, Anglo-*

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*Saxon though we are?*” –Senator Beveridge on Imperialism, from the “*Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia*.”

Corruption continues in the Philippines with the help and continuous interdiction of various corrupt presidencies and their administrations that exploit both the natural resources and the people of this beautiful land to the extent that they [*the Philippine government*] have initiated various agencies which travel worldwide to induce new investors and tourists to visit these luxurious islands in the Pacific. It remains a third world country due to its present policy of laissez-faire government which does little to transform existing policies and corrupt bureaucrats content with the system, and who merely plead to the public on election years how they will change the structure for their benefit, yet after election do little or nothing to change the status quo.

“*Promise them anything, but give them nothing!*” appears to be the standard of the politician.

The Philippines Islands [*all 7,107 islands*] are unique in that they share the cultures of various groups of peoples, Polynesian, Chinese, Malaysian, and Spanish, Moro, with a small scattering of European and American [*the 1990 census has 60.7 million people residing here*]. The population consists of 84% Catholic [*often referred to as ‘the seat of Christianity’ in the Far East*], 4% Muslim, and 12% various Protestant denominations.

Located only seven hundred and fifty miles from Vietnam or about two hours by jet from Hong Kong, it is a centrally located predominantly English speaking country [*there are over eighty languages and dialects spoken here*]. The temperature hanging around 80° F. almost year round [27° C.], with an average rainfall of 80” per year, which keeps the vegetation lush and green. The rainy [monsoon] season is from December to April. So, if you plan to visit during this period, prepare to get wet. The typhoon [*stormy*] season is from June to October, and travel by boat is not recommended unless you travel by the larger or more modernized shipping lines.

If it were not for the extensively corrupt officials, the Philippines would be an ideal haven for those who suffer from various types of arthritis or polio as the continuous warm weather is conducive to a diminishing of pain for those sufferers. The warm streams also contribute to ocean waters which afford the individual pain sufferers relief as well as the divers a most pleasurable swimming environment. What we have though is a continuous recycling of the same old corrupt officials year, after election year. Those who have

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learned how to play the game do so willingly and profitably. The reprocessing includes the corrupt bureaucrats who have also learned how to play profitably by sharing some of their ill gotten wealth with elected officials to retain their positions, when and if they are ever investigated.

As foreigners in this strange and exotic land, we, the editors, will attempt to convey what we have encountered in this exotic land. We will present the good, along with the bad and the ugly. Cultural rules, prevailing norms, mannerisms, values, and customs as well as local mores can be confrontational if one is rigid in his or her ways. It appears that customs [*graft and corruption*], from a political perspective, take precedence over the very laws which they claim as a democracy to uphold. "*Custom*" is the English word for '*mos*': the Latin root of "*morals*," and ethos: the Greek root of "*ethics*," which is completely ignored when it comes to politicians as portrayed in the movies and mass media with politicians flagrantly flouting their mistresses and great wealth to the consternation of the Church and the poor taxpayers as it generally suits their perceived masculine nature.

As a norm we have found the people wherever we have traveled to be pleasing, courteous, and most hospitable. Of the politicians and the political scene, all we can say is to stay clear of them...you are a foreigner and will always be one and if you are involved in an incident you will not forget what we have just stated.

If you are considering investing, traveling, or residing in the Philippines, then this book is a must to read from a perspective, which does not hold back or pull any punches. We are blunt, perhaps brutal in our presentation of facts and information, which we believe can assist you in adapting to the ways here. We will cite the prevailing norms, along with the Filipino thinking, which some may or may not like. If there is to be a change, let it be for the better. Cultural shock in this land can be quite devastating when one gets through the veneer and discovers to his or her amazement that perhaps this is not the emerald island one perceived in the literature read in the States as disseminated by travel agencies.

Many Filipinos think Americans and foreigners as a whole are rude and arrogant. Hopefully this book will bring about a better understanding on both sides as to what is said and what is intended and perhaps a mutually beneficial relationship will develop. The Filipino, is a fun loving person, no country is perfect though, and we will get into what irks foreigners as well as to what irks the Filipino about foreigners.

*"The duty of a philosopher is clear. He must take every pain to ascertain the truth; and, having arrived at a conclusion, he should noise it abroad far and wide, utterly regardless of what opinions he shocks." -- Henry Thomas Buckle.*

## CHAPTER ONE-ARRIVING IN THE PHILIPPINES

The Filipino is composed of many races, cultures, and languages, and one will find during his or her travels that many are knowledgeable in English, even if only the basic words; enough to get by on. If you wish to learn the language, that is another story, for that would be dependent upon where in the Philippines you will be visiting, the two primary languages being Tagalog and Visayan [plus English]. Books are available at bookstores and airport terminals on the conversational languages spoken. Even the signage across the Philippines is in English, the local languages being written also using English letters will give you the opportunity to try and pronounce the local town names [*Many of the names can be real tongue twisters to foreigners*].

Customs officials and immigration officers will ask the customary questions and check your passport to verify that it is up to date, how long are you staying, do you have the proper visas, and stamp it. If you are staying more than three weeks you will need a visa, as well as a return ticket [*round trip ticket*]. Upon your arrival [*most likely an airport terminal*] you will be bombarded with people trying to gain your attention.

Where do you want to go? Do you want a taxi? Can I help you? Travel arrangements can be made at your point of origin via the Internet which is recommended since they offer significant discounts, which is difficult to obtain once you arrive. Generally the larger hotels offer two rates [*which they do not advertise, one is for locals and the higher price, of course is for visitors*]. Also during peak seasons accommodations may be limited.

If you have made hotel accommodations or wish to stay at a major hotel, generally speaking, the larger hotel chains will have a van waiting in front of the airport waiting for passengers. If not, they will have personnel outside holding up placards or signs with their names written across the signs and personnel ready to take you [*usually free of charge*] to the hotel.

If you wish to travel as economically as possible you can stay at a pension house, lodging house or rent a spacer [*cot or bed, if you wish*

*"We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth,  
however bitter it may be."* Jose Rizal

*to save money, you can rent a bed in a dormitory type environment*]. Check out your options before you arrive. The political climate changes constantly and some areas are safer than others. The State Department issues Notices to advise travelers as to which areas to stay out of [*Travel Advisories*].

Many cabs from airports will try and charge an exorbitant flat rate, which is illegal, but the Land Transportation Office [LTO] does not enforce the laws here. Even some five star hotels permit this exorbitant price fixing by allowing cab drivers to charge visitors a flat rate. Cab drivers will also tell you that their meter does not work. It is probably safer to catch another cab.

There was an international incident in Cebu where the cab driver charged the occupants [*navy military visitors*] an exorbitant rate and an altercation and fight ensued. The military men ended up paying hundreds of thousands of pesos in fines and the cab driver was left without even so much as a charge being filed against him for violating the laws. This is what this book is about. I wish to convey what is the law and what is reality.

If you want to read nothing but good things about the Philippines go buy a book or literature disseminated by your local travel agent, major hotels or contact the:

DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM

DOT Bldg., Agrifina Circle

Rizal Park, 1000, Manila

Philippines

523-8411

News stands within the airport terminal sell books on the Philippines, the price range is from two to four hundred pesos. The difficulty in traveling about the islands lies in having so many dialects using various words meaning the same thing and deciding which to use, Cebuano and Tagalog being the primary languages spoken. Television programs are in English, Cebuano, and Tagalog. As an example: Money, salapi, kuarta, and kuwarta. Or, Reservation, reserbasyon, pagpanigana, paglalaan, or laan. Once you establish where you will stay, the difficulties will soon be overcome by the willingness of the locals to help you.

Even if you plan on traveling to a multitude of islands, the locals are impressed by foreigners willing to undertake learning their language as well as their culture. If you speak or understand a little Spanish, this can also be most helpful as a lot of words are derived from Spanish and many Filipinos understand Spanish numbers. Arriving at

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*“We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth, however bitter it may be.” Jose Rizal*



your hotel or place of accommodation you will check in and perhaps want to rest. Drink only bottled water. This means not ordering drinks with ice cubes in them [*Ask the clerk at the front desk if it is safe to do so if unsure*].

If you don't know your way around in the big cities, catch a cab. It's good to use a cab or even more economically, the jeepney, wherever you go. Remember, when using a cab, to use one with a valid working meter; otherwise you will end up in an argument over how much to pay. The Filipino attitude is this is their country, so you will usually be in the wrong, regardless of the circumstances. Ask people at your hotel as to which places or areas are to be avoided for security or safety reasons. There are many nightspots in the major cities offering safe entertainment and good food. Travel by cab at night in major cities. The cost is very insignificant compared to your safety.

If in Manila I recommend a taking a taxi everywhere you go, even if it is only a few short blocks. Why take the chance of getting mugged or robbed for a few pesos? A cab ride for a short distance is usually about one dollar [*U.S.*], and longer distances are based on the meter, which is far less than American prices. Personally, I prefer Cebu, the traffic isn't as horrendous, and the weather is a little milder. During the monsoon season, Manila tends to have an unpleasant odor due to sewer problems that have been ignored by politicians for years. Don't say anything about it or you might be deported for bad mouthing their country and be declared a '*persona non grata*' as one famous American actress was in 2000.

*We are still using for our guide, rules which are as obsolete as a belief in the flatness of the earth.*-Joseph Lewis

## CHAPTER TWO-THE PHILIPPINE PEOPLE

For the last few years the government has advocated a one nation one people concept. Unfortunately what we have developing is a one people no nation concept in which the politicians are attempting to take all that they can and retire in other more affluent countries with total disregard as to what is happening to this country or its people. It would be comical, if it were not true, that each party for the last fifty years has elected representatives on a get rid of graft and corruption platform. The people are forgiving, too forgiving. And as it happens so often in the Philippines, it is often the poor who are asked to forgive the wrongs committed by their arrogant elected officials.

*"We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth, however bitter it may be."* Jose Rizal

The Filipino values “*pakisama*.” This is a desire not to offend anyone or to cause someone mental anguish. In Bohol it is known as “*kaikog*” where a Filipino will go out of his way to refrain from angering or embarrassing one in thought word or deed. If you wish to visit Bohol, a beautiful resort to lodge at is Bohol Tropics, situated along the beach in Tagbilaran City. You may contact them by phone at: 411-3510 or FAX. No. [038] 411-3019 or at their E-mail address:

www.boholtropics.com or ever@boholtropics.com

The exception to this rule, when encountered, is foreigners. You may not be given the same courtesies, as your Filipino counterpart [*after all blood is thicker than water*] Otherwise, embarrassment is to be avoided at all costs. From avoidance of raising one’s voice in public to not chastising an individual in front of his or her peers to avoidance of publishing anything which could be construed as embarrassing to an individual, especially a public official, whether the information is true or not is irrelevant.

Caution: if you get excited due to a wrong inflicted upon you, try not to raise your voice. This is an embarrassment, and security guards or the police may strike you [*usually in the gut region, so it does not show any scars or bruising. They are quite adept at this, and of course they will deny this, as they have witnesses, their fellow officers. They are also quite proficient at cover ups*]

You can get by on English, especially if you speak slowly and avoid large words. Most people in the Philippines speak or understand some English and are more than happy to help someone, even foreigners. Their warm smiles and ingratiating demeanor will make you feel at home almost immediately. The people will even open up their homes to you to make you feel comfortable and make your stay in the Philippines more enjoyable.

Remember, this book will tell all. So it is up to you the reader to decide if you wish to visit the Philippines, as we will show the good side as well as the dark side and what to avoid in order to make your stay in the Philippines a pleasant one, if you should decide to visit, live, or invest. Do not mock the Presidency as this is legal grounds for deportation. The Filipino can ridicule his government, but not the foreigner. They are very sensitive about this as well as their National Anthem. If one treats their national heroes with respect as one would his or her own, there should be no difficulties here.

### CHAPTER THREE –CULTURES & LANGUAGE

Visiting the Philippines, one will encounter, as a foreigner, that Filipinos do not like to say, “No!” They will avoid hurting your feelings and also will not admit if they do not know how to do something. If a Filipino hesitates when asked a question it could be:

1. He or she does not know the answer.
2. He or she does not want to do what you ask.
3. He or she is embarrassed.
4. He or she does not understand the question.

From experience, it can truthfully be said that it is sometimes extremely difficult to elicit a “Yes” or “No” response from a Filipino. One tendency Filipinos have is the raising of their eyebrows when you are speaking to them. This is not to be construed as a “Yes” or “No” response. It merely means that they hear you or are listening. It doesn’t mean they are going to do anything. As stated before, if they hesitate, rephrase the question, or ask someone else. We are used to receiving an answer when we ask a question. The Filipino will just look at you. What does that mean? Absolutely nothing. He or she is just listening. Speak slowly when asking questions.

The Filipino is the recipient of over four hundreds of years of domination, first by the Spaniards, second by the Catholic priests and friars who founded schools [*only for the Spaniards and later opened up to the indigenous peoples*], The Catholic friars stole from them and threatened them with excommunication if they challenged their authority, third, by the Americans [who treated them not much better than the Spaniards], and eventually the Japanese [*bent on their world domination of all inferior non-Japanese peoples*]. These successive periods of domination have left a striking characteristic in the Filipino, which is most evident in dealing with employees and public officials. When asking a question or making a request, usually, before you can even finish asking the question, the employee or official is already thinking of an excuse. In this culture there is no “right” or “wrong” way of doing something. If you are the type of person who wants everything “now” or who is short tempered, then perhaps you should visit somewhere else.

The people here are in no hurry to do anything, which brings us to “Filipino Time” and “American Time.” To ask someone to be somewhere or meet you at a specific time is asking for problems. You must specify whether or not you are allowing for cultural differences. The Filipino generally allows an hour to an hour and a half for meeting schedules.

“We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth,  
however bitter it may be.” Jose Rizal

Many of the words in the Cebuanon language are spelled phonetically. In cases where there are no words in their language to describe the subject the English word is used. Therefore you will encounter a mixture of Cebuanon and English wherever you go, and Tagalog and English [*known as Taglese*] when visiting the Luzon Provinces. You must understand that these islands are visited by European as well as American visitors and the English spoken in Europe, Australia, and New Zealand versus the English spoken in America sometimes leads to difficulties in pronunciation for the locals. The Filipino is very self conscience about speaking English correctly and will try to speak the best he or she knows how. So, have patience with them if the natives do not pronounce words exactly as you do. Even Americans do not all pronounce words the same.

#### CHAPTER FOUR-POLITICS

The government keeps the people ignorant as to the true political picture in order to maintain its control, yet the politicians are non-directional in that legislation initiated is seldom, if ever, implemented due to cronyism, favoritism, graft, and corruption. *“Although there has been some economic improvement since World War II, the Philippines has not made as much progress as other Asian nations-notably Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore. The persistence of political, environmental, and population problems make it difficult to raise the general level of prosperity.”* -From Compton's Interactive Encyclopedia © 1998 The Learning Company, Inc. Quick to criticize foreigners, and especially Americans, yet easily angered when criticized.

Do not get involved in any political conversations ... period. You never know the political inclinations of the person you are talking with and Filipino people are very opinionated in their support of politicians, even when they, the politicians, do wrong. Presidents have stolen millions of dollars [*not pesos*] from this country and the people still love them.

In the 2001 electoral process over 100 persons had been killed; 27 of them were incumbent officials and local candidates, 61 were civilians. Most were killed in the run-up to the elections, and 5 of the total were killed in Mindanao on May 17 in an incident during the vote counting. 141 wounded and 30 remain missing. This is reminiscent of the 37<sup>th</sup> Pope, in AD 366, Pope Saint Damasus, whom Saint Jerome, secretary to Damasus, briefly confirms the account of 36

*“We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth, however bitter it may be.”* Jose Rizal

the massacres in his "*Chronicle*." To all the corrupt officials in the Philippines, practitioners against their fellow brethren [Amos 5:7-15, 8:4-6], who steal from the poor and rob from their nation, let them reap their true inheritance. -Read Psalm 109.

The story is also told by two Roman priests in a petition to the Emperor, in Migne's, "*Libellus Precum*," vol. XIII, the only difference between them is whether the supporters of Pope Damasus, at the election of the Pope, murdered 137 or 160 of his rival's supporters. -See Petrucelli della Gattina's *Histoire Diplomatique des Conclaves* (4 vols., 1864-6), in French or Miss V. Pirie's *Triple Crown* (1935).

Even the sequestering of the Catholic Cardinals was an effort to curtail assassinations within the Christian conclave in the days when the briberies ran to millions of dollars and the murders to 200, when there were grave deliberations, and the Cardinals visited each other in their cells [*the cubicles*] -From *Man's Search for Spirituality*, by E. Christopher Reyes.

Due to corruption rampant in this country, few if any of the political violence or crimes are ever solved. The number one violator of human rights and civil rights being the National Police and the second greatest violators being the LGU or local government units [*this is the local barangay officials, councilors, mayors, board members, and governors*] The laws are used to increase their financial status, not your civil or human rights.

Officials will oftentimes try to make you believe that they are doing you a favor when in fact, all they are doing, if they do anything, is performing their assigned duties as prescribed by laws, rules, and or local regulations. You can get almost anything you want, if you are willing to pay the price.

If you should decide to pay [*lagay*] the public official might be back the following year, or less, to ask more money for something else or claim that his efforts in reconciliation of your dilemma were for a specified period and further considerations are necessary.

Understanding the Filipino laws is not difficult if one keeps in mind that they were modeled after American laws and it doesn't take a lawyer to figure out when they ask for money that it is not on the up and up [*legal*] The most common form of asking for money is multiple barriers [*inability to process simple forms*] creating a bureaucracy of red tape for you.

If you offend an official, by offering them money [*an insufficient amount*], he or she could bring charges against you for offering them a bribe which is against the law. Its kind of a "*Catch*

"We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth,  
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22,” so if you decide to cooperate, get a Filipino you trust to be your go between, that way you can always claim a misunderstanding, which is what the public official will claim if you file a complaint against them for asking for money. It is common knowledge that officials have declared their innocence even when marked money has been used and been found in their possession, with dye marks all over their clothing and on their hands as well.

What the politicians have succeeded in is basically keeping the people from combining their efforts, keeping the masses from organizing, keeping the citizens from orchestrating any effort against the corrupt system, except in those isolated cases where the President is removed from office. But the Presidency is only part of the problem. People still believe that by cutting the head off the dragon the rest will surely die, but this dragon merely grows another head. The Presidency, although representing the country to the world, as a democracy, does little else, as the bureaucracy is what keeps the hydra alive.

It is a divide and conquer mentality in which the individual rights have been suppressed for centuries and ironically the individual is not really the individual, but the masses. It was the American statesman, Benjamin Franklin, who stated, *“and being to be found in all the Religions we had in our Country I respected them all, though with different degrees of Respect as I found them more or less mixed with other Articles which without any Tendency to inspire, promote or confirm Morality, served principally to divide us and make us unfriendly to one another.”*

And, it was Franklin, realizing that democracy was the duty of all said, *“A Republic if you can keep it.”* Franklin, early on realized that the honest God fearing citizenry must stand up and be counted as one and not individually if they were to survive as a democracy, *“We must all hang together or assuredly we will all hang separately.”* – Benjamin Franklin. Another hero stated, *“Tis not in numbers but in unity that our great strength lies... We fight not to enslave, but to set a country free, and to make room upon the earth for honest men to live in.”* –Thomas Paine.

Rizal was perhaps the greatest statesman the Philippines will ever have, and he was murdered for his beliefs. He was the political Messiah the Philippines was not ready for. He believed in all people being treated equally, regardless of social class, birth, or religion. He was a threat to a corrupt establishment [*A corrupt Church and a corrupt government*], which early on recognized his political as well

as religious enmity that must be invalidated most expediently. A famous American novelist, living during the same period wrote, *"I bring you this stately matron named Christendom, returning bedraggled, besmirched, and dishonored from pirate raids in Kiao-Chow, Manchuria, South Africa, and the Philippines, with her soul full of meanness, her pocket full of boodle, and her mouth full of pious hypocrisies. Give her soap and a towel, but hide the looking-glass."* –From Mark Twain, in a speech to the Red Cross, New York, Dec. 31, 1899.

Each and every time someone complains about the governmental process, corruption, and lack of implementation of existing laws that person in most cases must go it alone, without support, without that bastion of civic mindedness which you find in most free world countries. And it is this dichotomy, which prevails and makes the masses fearful of authority in the Philippines. For only those in authority are fully aware of the implications and necessity of organizing, dividing, and conquering.

While proclaiming to be free and democratic, this country in reality acts no better governmentally, than its repressive tyrannical neighbors. With its unsung heroes, its resilient poor who suffer, and paying the unwarranted price of being deprived of adequately priced medicines, adequate housing, food, and public transportation, the poor only receive lip service from their so-called elected representatives.

The Filipino officials often state that foreigners complain too much, and if they don't like it, leave! That's a cop out which many Filipinos share. Yet, the country wants tourism, but does not like having the Filipino people exposed to human and civil rights from abroad. Alas, it is a threat government can live with, as foreigners are treated like the rest of the indigenous population *[Denied of rights at every opportunity]* Each and every case of deprivation of rights will of necessity be recorded as an isolated incidence, it at all.

What is most evident here is where does the money go? If the people are paying taxes for the basic necessities of roads, hospitals, schools, and government, then why doesn't the government provide them properly and in adequate amounts? The reason is, that much of the public tax money goes into the pockets of those entrusted with community funds. It is graft and corruption that has made these people members of a third world country *[many politicians like to use the term developing country]* and graft and corruption that will keep them at the lower income scales of the world.

*"We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth, however bitter it may be."* Jose Rizal

From the barangays, to the mayors, to the governors, all the way up to the highest offices of the land tyranny rules. Electors fearful of the elected. In essence, what we have is a society run by criminals who whet their appetites at the lower levels of government preparing themselves for the feast at the national level at the expense of the people, and all the time proclaiming to be the representatives of the people. No one wins an election unless he or she proclaims to represent the masses.

What we have is a society run by scandalous criminals, without shame, without honor [*except on plaques visibly displayed on their desks, for those who still doubt their integrity*] who now are expanding their sphere of influence by preying upon defenseless tourists and immigrants.

Not content with merely sucking the very life blood from the local constituency, these public officials now turn to a new and generally wealthy clientele, the foreigner, who is unaware of the mechanizations of the corrupt bureaucracy, and who can be contained with threats or eliminated with deportation.

*“At most my crime would be having desired what the Constitution and our laws grant us...it would be to have...sought our freedom, and I say freedom and not independence because I well know that a people can be independent and enslaved at the same time...”* –Jose Rizal, *“The First Filipino, A Biography of Jose Rizal,”* by Leon Ma. Guerrero. Times have not changed in over one hundred years. Even Rizal was deported for his insistence of rights for the masses.

Research has revealed that many foreigners have first hand knowledge of crimes perpetrated against other foreigners or have heard of foreigners being treated less than appropriately here in the Philippines. And, after spending years here, many do end up leaving these beautiful islands, fed up with having to deal with arrogant corrupt officials constantly begging, like the beggars in the streets of the major cities, for more money, while producing less work. When will it end? When will the foreigner be treated with respect and protected from corrupt officials? When will the people of the Philippines wake up and demand respect for themselves as well as their country from corrupt officials?

The world is moving at an accelerated level with the advent of computers. Corrupt officials now feel compelled to steal more to solidify their financial holdings so that they may retire in luxury in America or some other developed country, which is a means of

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protection from their national investigators who feel out of sight out of mind and often do nothing to extradite the miscreants.

## CHAPTER FIVE- EMERGENCY ORGANIZATIONS

One never knows when an emergency will arise. For this reason we have included the following organizations which have proven invaluable to us:

Retired Activities Office

PSC 517 Box RC

FPO AP 96517-1000

Director: Jim Boyd

[raocabr@mozcom.com](mailto:raocabr@mozcom.com)

Tel: 63-045-888-2748

Fax No.: 63-045-888-5079

Mr. Boyd works primarily with retired U.S. military in the Subic Bay, Luzon area. But, don't let this fool you. For he has a wealth of resources to assist Americans [*and other foreigners*] visiting or staying in the Philippines; from contacting Red Cross and Embassy sources for emergency notification of illness, death, medical; emergency evacuation for medical reasons via U.S. military aircraft; to passport and visa assistance.

Mr. Boyd knows the ins and outs of working with Filipino organizations and customs officials. His organization works on donations and is appreciative of any assistance or contributions. This organization has a data bank on specialized medical practitioners who are board certified in various fields of medicine and Mr. Boyd can direct you to a hospital or doctor qualified for specialized treatment if the occasion should arise. I have nothing but praise for this gentleman and his highly trained staff of hard working personnel.

Another highly respected and hard working organization that helps Americans worldwide and that has a representative in Manila who will do what they can to help the traveler is:

American Citizens Abroad

1051 North George Mason Drive

Arlington, Va. 22205

USA Fax: 703-527-3269

*"We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth,  
however bitter it may be."* Jose Rizal

American Citizens Abroad can assist you in obtaining medical insurance during your visit to any foreign country as well as provide invaluable information and other resources if you have children you may wish to enroll in school. If the emergency is political in nature [*accused of a crime or threatened with deportation without due process*] then it perhaps best to contact the British Embassy. It is unfortunate, but even our overseas military personnel have learned that they will get a more favorable response from the British Embassy than from our own Embassy staff.

The American government has long known of the graft and corruption in the Philippines and for this reason has generally negotiated treaties and formal agreements to deter our military from having to be tried in Philippine courts where one is accustomed to buying a favorable decision. This has caused a considerable amount of embarrassment to existing administrations as independent anti-American [*anti-colonial, anti-American, anti-imperialist, anti-anything*] groups resent this third world treatment.

We can empathize with these groups, although we do not agree fully with their tenets. It is an international shame which cannot be ignored.

Yet the American government is all too willing to feed the average American citizen to the wolves should such a similar situation arise regarding the individual's rights and freedoms. If you are detained, without cause, you can demand to see or speak to your Consulate in the Philippines. However, if you have need of assistance the American Embassy will merely provide you a list of attorneys to contact to resolve your particular dilemma. And, if you write, at the bottom of their return correspondence it will state:

No record of this correspondence has been made. If you should write again concerning this matter, please return the original of your correspondence.

This alleviates keeping statistical records and correspondences regarding Mr. or Mrs. Average American Citizen. In other words, you're on your own [literally]. The United States will refer you to a list of attorneys who will gladly take your money for defending your rights in this corrupt country.

Write to your congressman or senator and ask what our government is doing to remedy this abhorrent practice in the Philippines.

Ask your elected representatives:

Why should American citizens lose their rights when they step foot on foreign soils? What is the purpose of the American Embassy if not to protect Americans? If the American government is aware of the abuses incurred by its citizenry in the Philippines, then why do we support such a regime by spending millions of dollars of American tax-payer's money? What is the American government going to do about the abuses in order to protect Americans visiting the Philippines?

Agencies and organizations you should keep available [American citizens] are:

Citizens Consular Services  
Room 4817  
Department of State  
Washington DC 20520

Emergency Situations or Disasters:  
Citizens Emergency Center  
Department of State  
Washington, DC 20520  
202-647-5225

Voting assistance:  
Office of the Secretary of Defense  
Pentagon Room 1B457  
Washington, DC 20301  
Or  
Democrats Abroad  
C/O Democratic National Committee  
20 Ivy Street, SE  
Washington, DC 20003  
Or  
Republicans Abroad  
C/O Republican National Committee  
310 First Street, SE  
Washington DC 20003

For income tax information:  
Assistant Commissioner  
Internal Revenue Service  
950 L' Enfant Plaza

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Washington DC 20024

Or

IRS Service Center  
Philadelphia, PA 19225

For passport information in the Philippines:

Citizenship & Passports  
American Embassy  
Roxas Blvd., Ermita,  
1000, Manila, RP

It will perhaps be faster and easier to ask Jim Boyd of the RAO office and his personnel to assist you, since they have a van which makes regular trips to Manila and are also easier to contact via e-mail. Mr. Boyd will respond only when he has an answer to your problem, so do not become worried or alarmed if his reply is not immediate. I cannot say enough regarding the hard work this organization has performed regarding the care and treatment of our military personnel and Americans who have decided to reside in the Philippines. Passports and visas are their specialty area, so there aren't too many problems which they have not encountered, from lost passports, expired visas, etc.

For a list of schools recognized overseas:

Office of Overseas Schools  
A/OS, Room 34, SA -6  
U.S. Department of State  
Washington DC 20520  
202-875-6220

or

European Council of International Schools  
18 Lavant Street  
Petersfield, Hampshire  
GU32 3EW  
England

Or write to:

Director  
Department of Defense  
Office of Dependents Schools  
2461 Eisenhower Avenue

Alexandria, VA 22331-1100, USA  
202-325-0188

For availability of jobs overseas in teaching:  
International Schools Services  
15 Rozel Road  
PO Box 5910 Princeton  
New Jersey, 08543  
609-325-0885

For aptitude or achievement testing:  
College Board ATP  
Box 6200  
Princeton, NJ 08541

#### GLOSSARY

**AFP**-Armed Forces of the Philippines. Brave, stalwart, and dedicated Filipino soldiers, marines, navy, and air who are called upon continually, administration after corrupt administration, to support a government against those who would advocate the violent overthrow of this pseudo-democracy.

Despite limited resources and obsolete equipment, these gallant men go where few would dare to venture. It is a pity that the government will not contribute more to their salaries and other allowances to assist their families. Those who retire from the military should be given priority in public housing developments.

A high ranking Philippine general once stated it would take the Philippines twenty years to upgrade its military forces with modern equipment. His lack of knowledge is quite evident in that how can one modernize any army when all one receives is obsolete equipment? The Philippine government will criticize the U.S. for an agreement they say they will not sign, they sign it, and then criticize us for denying them full sovereignty. All I can say, is don't sign anything you don't like.

**American Embassy**-A tax supported agency supposedly to protect Americans. American servicemen mockingly turn to the British Embassy if they encounter problems in a foreign land due to their country's poor record in enforcing human and civil rights for Americans in foreign lands.

Suggestion:

*"We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth,  
however bitter it may be."* Jose Rizal

The Embassy should maintain an on going log as to complaints filed against the host country [*computerized for easy follow up and accessibility*]

Continuous denial of rights of American citizens should be pursued by a formal complaint to the host country's Embassy, and if no action is taken within a specified time, American legislators should consider more punitive actions.

American tax-payers spend a lot of tax money here with little to show for their investment. If the government refuses to grant Americans rights, declared under their own constitution, then tourism should then be curtailed.

**Arrogant**-Overbearing manner, haughty, egotistical. What politicians think of foreigners who do not cater to them and pay "*grease money*" for services which are already taxed and paid for.

Arrogance is:

1. Elected officials who ignore the law.
2. Elected officials who extort moneys.
3. Officials when caught in the act of an indiscretion deny they were at the scene of the crime and pay witnesses to attest to their being somewhere else.
4. Bureaucrats who do not have time to process your permits but will do so if you avail of a "*fixer*."
5. Officials who tell you, "*If you don't like it, leave!*"
6. Post office employees who think the mail service is for their personal shopping enjoyment.
7. Elected officials who methodically steal from their constituency.

Government employees incompetence continues with impunity.

Drivers of public transportation vehicles extorting large amounts from travelers at public terminals go unpunished.

Public officials do not respond to written communications.

Elected officials do nothing regarding high cost of medicine [except talk about it, many Filipinos would be surprised to learn that many medicines are actually cheaper in the States]

Elected and public officials who patronize gambling establishments in violation of public laws.

Elected officials who challenge the credibility of all by denying intelligence to anyone but themselves. Does this mean insulting our intelligence or are we also the victims of cranial rectal inversion?

Relatives of former officials who file cases for being denied their human rights after being accused of pilfering billions [dollars] from

the government, substantiated by existing bank accounts, worldwide. See account no. 885931, Union Bank, Switzerland, transferred to Liechtenstein and British Virgin Islands as a tax haven. How did a president on a salary of \$8,000 U.S. per year amass a wealth worth billions of dollars? It is estimated that the Presidential Commission on Good Government has recovered only P79 billion pesos with billions yet to be recovered.

Elected officials who are quick to compare themselves with former U. S. President Nixon, when caught. Nixon wasn't accused of stealing, only covering up and impeding the investigation. How does another Philippine President support five capricious families on a P25,000 [\$500 US] per month income? Isn't it sad that most people have already forgotten the Malacanang official who was making trips, twice a week, to Hong Kong with satchels containing hundreds of millions of pesos, unopposed by customs officials?

1. Elected officials who blame their political enemies for their chauvinist dilemmas.

2. Elected officials who strike foreigners, with the assistance of their body guards, and then deny any such assertion.

3. Rich citizens with private armies who do as they please, irrespective of the law.

*“Movie scribes remember that in his previous life as an action film star, Joseph Estrada wasn't exactly tolerant of a bad press. He was sometimes so mad over what had been written about him that he would seek out the offending reporter and express his displeasure by urinating on the man. Erap doesn't do that anymore. But he can still spew out the equivalent of Presidential piss.”* –by Sheila S. Coronel.

How about the son of the President? Last year, Jinggoy Estrada, the former Mayor of San Juan, was manager of the Knights basketball team, and along with his bodyguards ganged up on a referee after the game because they did not agree with his calls against their team. The MBA Commissioner's office, of course, did nothing.

Arrogance is a President who fails to:

1. Obtain a license to sell
2. Obtain an environmental clearance certificate
3. Obtain a development permit
4. Obtain sanitation and water potability permits
5. Obtain permits for water diggings
6. Obtain zoning clearance certificates and building permits
7. Obtain homeowners' clearance certificates and barangay clearance certificates

8. Becomes involved in irregular subdivision of the transfer certificates of title covering the one-hectare project area-  
From pcij.org

SEC records confirm that before November 1998, Estrada was a principal shareholder of JELP, involved in the construction of 36 homes without the necessity of permits, since its formation in 1992, when he was still Vice President. But even after he had divested himself of the shares, he was an active participant in the real estate business. Residents of a subdivision near the JELP housing project in Antipolo stating they witnessed Estrada himself taking an active part in supervising the project in 1997 and 1998.

Where did the construction money come from for JELP, which reported losses from its operations: P1.5 million in 1997 and P7.9 million. With only about P11 million in cash, securities and receivables, it is difficult to understand how the firm could have repaid its P188-million liabilities of short term debt or its P144 million worth of real property.

Estrada's November 1998 divestment from JELP creates more problems. SEC records show that the President transferred his 80,000 shares in JELP worth P8 million mostly in favor of the First Lady (60,000 shares) and a new director, Genoveva de la Fuente (20,000 shares). –From the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism pcij.org

Estrada's administration is reminiscent of the Vatican in the 10<sup>th</sup> century when Pope John X was raised to the Papal throne by Empress Theodora and her family, and the immorality that issued forth is known by Cardinal Baronius, the "*Father of Catholic History*," as "*The Rule of the Whores*." Was President Estrada expecting the poor tax payers to support his vices. –From "*Man's Search for Spirituality*," by E. Christopher Reyes.

*"The connection between vice and meanness is a fit subject for satire, but when the satire is a fact, it cuts with the irresistible power of a diamond."* –By Thomas Paine.

Estrada, using fictitious names, had accounts in Metrobank (believed to be close to P1 billion); RCBC, where another P600 million is reportedly kept; Asia United Bank, Bank of Commerce, and Allied Bank. In addition, he kept under his own name, \$3 million [dollars] in Citibank. He also had P143 million in a numbered account in Urban Bank, which he withdrew just before it closed in April 2000. Plus, there was the money that found its way to presidential mistresses, including Enriquez, whose account in PS Bank had deposits of P650 million, many of them from the same bank branches that were

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transferring money to the Velarde account. He was the logical product of a system that provided a president such wide discretion that allowed him, in the words of sociologist Walden Bello, to "*centralize crime under the presidency.*" - From the Internet pcij.org

**Assessor**-responsible for the tax base of real property. You don't stand a chance complaining here as they merely do the bidding of the public officials. Response to a complaint from a tax payer in Bohol: "*Since he is stupid and very hard to understand, he doesn't agree with my appraisal and assessment being the municipal assessor of Dimiao,*" 28 Jan. 2000. Didn't know Assessors had degrees in Psychology or were able to give psychological assessments over the counter in the Philippines. The municipal engineer, Mr. Teodulo Halasan doesn't fare much better attempting to force Mr. Reyes to pay taxes based on cubic meters of his house. Gross ignorance of the law or gross foolhardiness in asking for 50,000 pesos to resolve the matter? The mayor merely looks the other way. "*Where knowledge is a duty, ignorance is a crime.*" -By Thomas Paine.

Suggestion: public officials should be held responsible for their actions and held accountable for ignoring the requests and correspondence of the tax payers. If the immediate supervisor is made aware of the infraction and does nothing, they too should be held accountable and penalized.

**Banks**-During the impeachment trial bank officials denied secret accounts, money laundering, and other criminal practices. Read what the World Bank has to say about this matter in this book. In an article, 16 March 2001, in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer*, journalist Cathy C. Yamsuan states, "*The Court of Appeals has ordered the Office of the Ombudsman to respond to Allied Banking Corp.'s claim that it cannot be compelled to surrender records pertaining to accounts kept by former President Joseph Estrada and his mistresses.*" Allied Bank is only one of twelve banks ordered to submit bank records [*And these are only the bank accounts the government is aware of, as nothing has been said of the Hong Kong banks or any other overseas banks*]

With the bombing of the World Trade Center on 11 September 2001, nations are looking for further assurances regarding the security of their internal treasures as well as their national borders. The Financial Action Task Force, a Paris based anti-money laundering body initialized by the Group of Eight [*developed countries*] giving the Philippines an ultimatum in which to pass a law or face sanctions.

Trade Secretary, Manuel Roxas, stating that developed nations could

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severely limit financial provisions here. The Bankers'

Association of the Philippines is at a loss as to how to make money [under the table with secret accounts] and still comply internationally, the United States, as well as other countries being prepared to limit assistance as well as money, grants, and loans to the Philippines. –*The Freeman Newspaper*, AFP, 25 Sept. 2001, pg. 25, Henry Lim, Editor. “*This is one case wherein we are rushing the approval of a bill because there is a gun pointed at our heads.*” –Representative Eduardo Velsos, *The Freeman Newspaper*, 2001. The Philippines banking industry has for decades enjoyed the most secretive accounting system, and this was not intended to protect the poor, but the rich who have for years socked away their money and need anonymity to protect their criminality. Passing such a law is of no major obstacle in the Philippines, as in other laws, the problem is implementation.

**Bastos**-Visayan for dirty, filthy mouth or action. Beware of raising your voice to a Filipino as this in itself is an insult. The Filipinos are usually pretty cool in keeping their tempers.

**BID**-Bureau of Immigration Department-another highly corrupted organization. You will receive little or no assistance if you file a complaint against one of their ‘*distinguished corrupt officials.*’ Regarding an airport incident in which a handicapped American citizen was struck from behind and kicked while prone on the ground by an Immigration Official, in response to the American’s complaint, “*...we need you to furnish us the first name of the Immigration Officer concerned, before we can take action on your complaint and start an investigation regarding this matter.*” Signed by the incumbent Commissioner at the time, 10 May 1999, Rufus Rodriguez, who is now part of the defense team for former President Estrada. Corporal Egay did a marvelous job of attempting to extort money as compensation for the alleged assault upon Airport Security personnel. Remember, this is their country, “*Filipino First!*” Regardless of the laws of the land, truth, or justice.

Of the thousands of employees in the Bureau, no one will lift a finger to investigate which employee worked at the particular station on the date in question. Bureaucracy here protects its own and ignores complaints from foreign tourism. Previous administrations stated they had cleaned up the Bureau, of course the present administration will claim the same as they have already stated they are investigating the graft and corruption within the Bureau of Immigration, in a few months, they also will claim they have cleaned up the Bureau.

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Bureaucrats owe allegiance only to the almighty dollar.

Suffice it to say we, the people, are not high on the priority list, when it comes to rights. Unless, of course, you are willing to pay for those rights in financial rewards to the bureaucrats. I have often wondered why the people give them a salary. It is distasteful to me to have to compensate someone twice for doing, which oftentimes is an inadequate job at that. The Bureau of Immigration grumbles about the lack of funds, but this will not hamper them from traveling to the site of a complainant to assist a complaint filed by a fellow official and harass the foreigner.

Witness a German Immigrant residing in Canlusay, Macrohon, in Southern Leyte who has been visited and harassed several times by public officials, threatened with deportation, even though he has broken no laws but merely fell from grace with the local officials [*will not pay grease money or acquiesce to their self-proclaimed elevated image*]

Suggestion:

1. Does the Philippine government truly want to know of the corruption in the BID? It will not discover the complaints by inspection of their records as the bureau suppresses complaints filed [*quite common in the Catholic Church also*]
2. If the Bureau is sincere in weeding out corruption, an exit poll could be taken at the major air line terminals with a questionnaire given to tourists [*all foreigners*] departing the country. This way, an accurate count could be maintained with little room for fraud on the part of officials. The form will have only the outgoing flight number and no name.
3. The BID ignores complaints filed by foreigners since, by law, you have to be in the country to file a complaint [*a law which protects the errant official*] In other words, once you leave, the complaint is round filed [*destroyed or forgotten*]
4. A copy of each and every complaint should be forwarded to the respective Embassy with a follow up to ascertain if any action has been taken. Americans should contact, in writing their respective representatives and congress people and ask why America spends so much money helping this country when Philippine officials deprive foreign citizens of their basic God given human and civil rights. Even the Philippine Constitution gives rights only to their 'citizens,' and even they file their complaints in America [*2000 tortured denied human rights alone during the Marcos regime*]

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5. If the Philippine does not address these issues, then America should issue a warning in their Notice to Travelers regarding visiting this country and curtail tourism until this situation is remedied. Tourism is the bread and butter of this country and it the rights of visitors should not be denied merely to appease the pocket books of corrupt officials.

The present administration has already undertaken a clean up campaign in the BID, or so it says [*this is not the first and most likely will not be the last, as it is common practice to merely transfer the miscreants without rewarding any penalties*] Only time will tell if anyone goes to jail, loses their job, or pays any fines for corrupt practices and the depriving of foreigners of their rights and due process. What we have in the BID is 'bureaucratic terrorism.' The government, with its lackeys, acting as the largest terrorist organization in the country, not only against foreigners, but against the very people it purports to represent.

As of the writing of this book the Bureau of Immigration has stated that it is conducting *another* investigation to rid the Bureau of graft and corruption, and of course has issued another deportation notice to the author of this book, while refusing to cite any charges [BSI-D.C. No. ADD-01-115, and Memorandum Order No. ADD-01—17]

1. Will these 'investigations' never end?
2. When will this Bureau finally take responsibility for the actions of their employees instead of suppressing the facts?
3. When will officials be disciplined for their bad behavior?
4. When will the Bureau set up a hotline for immediate action instead of years of never ending paper work in which to further conceal their crimes?
5. When will the Bureau start obeying its own laws?
6. When will the Bureau leave law abiding citizens alone instead of being the political minions of corrupt officials?

**Bilateral Donor**-a person or entity [*company or corporation*] could ensure the proper use of aid funds by procuring goods directly and delivering them "*in kind*" to project beneficiaries. While this may ensure bribe-free procurement, it does nothing for [and could possibly undermine] the borrower's [*recipient's*] accountability. On June 20<sup>th</sup> of 2001, Indonesia had its loans called by world banks due to flagrant violations of banking principles. This undermines the country's ability to borrow in the future and increases the interest rate to be paid by that country's tax constituency.

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Full transparency and accountability is what people want, not only in the Philippines, but world wide. The poor tax paying public is tired of rhetoric [talk and more talk] Filipino politicians don't like to punish bureaucrats as some day the axe may fall on their heads for doing the same thing.

**BIR**-Bureau of Internal Revenue-A recent study by the Transparency International (Philippines) shows that for every P2,000 tax collectible, only P1,000 is actually collected because P500 goes to corruption and collusion, while the remainder goes to "defects" in collection, which the government cares to look the other way. Other BIR insiders confirm this, saying that whenever there is collusion between revenue personnel and business taxpayers in particular, the liabilities could be reduced by as much as 90 percent, *via negotiations*, which leaves a meager 10 percent for the government coffers.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been prompted to comment in a report on the Philippine Tax Administration Assistance Project it did jointly with the Internal Revenue Service of the United States: *"The current situation is that various organizational units...within the Bureau are fighting over the jurisdiction to audit taxpayers."* The result, according to USAID, *"Is inequitable treatment of taxpayers, even less control about how taxpayers are selected for audit, and the potential for integrity compromises."* The business taxpayers who give the PR would rather call it by other names-"nuisance fee" or "foot" or "coffee" money. For all these colorful euphemisms, PR [public relations] is really nothing more than a bribe that enriches corrupt BIR personnel and deprives the government of needed revenue. -From the Internet pcij.org

According to the tax fraud examiner, 30 percent of the revenues collected goes to the examiners of the group assigned to audit a taxpayer while the supervisor's share is 15 percent. The division chief and the assistant chief each get 20 percent. The rest of the PR goes to the higher officials such as the commissioner, the assistant commissioner, and deputy commissioner in charge of the group doing the assessment.

The tax fraud division examiner also says that regional directors lobby for the retention of their posts or for promotions to higher positions by making "*representations*" with the appointing committee, which includes the BIR Commissioner. Asked what "*representation*" means, the examiner replies, "*bribe money.*" He also says that the standard "*representation*" is P5 million. Perhaps the

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requests go higher in that congress and senatorial representatives do nothing to stop this debacle and waste of taxpayers' money. BIR's 1998 total collection reached P337.177 billion. This represented a share of 80.9 percent in the government's total tax revenue in 1998 as opposed to only 63.4 percent in 1993. Huffs Panganiban stated, "*Dapat hangaan din kami,*" We should be admired. What arrogance!

Unscrupulous BIR personnel have somehow managed to stonewall attempts to computerize the agency, streamline its operations and professionalize its ranks. This in turn has left the honest personnel at the BIR demoralized and desperate—and many taxpayers angry and frustrated.

Consider what has become of the BIR's much-ballyhooed five-year tax computerization project (TCP), which was funded by the World Bank to the tune of \$42 million. A U.S. consultant based in the Philippines also confirms that a computerized audit system "*is one of the functionalities that fell by the wayside,*" so that the selection of taxpayers to audit is still based on "*personal judgment.*" Another foreign consultant says this "*allows them (the examiners) more discretion*" and greater opportunity "*to cover their tracks.*" –From the Internet pcij.org

Will there be change? In an article by Deidre Sheehan/Manila on July 5, 2001: Rene Banez has possibly the worst job in the Philippines. As head of the tax authority, his mission is to stamp out rampant corruption at the Bureau of Internal Revenue. Appointed tax commissioner in January by President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, the former tax lawyer knows he has a battle on his hands. "*This is a fight between good and evil,*" he says. "*We need a holistic and radical approach to the problem.*" As if to highlight the magnitude of the problem, only this month 14 tax collectors were charged with depositing into their own bank accounts \$750,000 of the \$1 million in income tax they had collected in a province north of Manila. More than half of Filipinos surveyed nationwide several years ago said they thought 40% of taxes collected were pocketed by corrupt officials. For years, the BIR has been preserved from change by the cosy relationship between tax officers, businessmen and politicians. Tax examiners often strike deals with businesses in which they set a low tax charge in exchange for a payoff.

Both sides also call on political patrons to influence the deal in exchange for kickbacks, says Coronel [PCIJ staff member] All three groups have a lot to lose from a clean-up of the BIR. Like the Church 54

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which also finds difficulties in returning the moneys of the Jews, political figures have difficulties in differentiating their own money from that of the people.

The uproar this month over Banez's first attempts at reform show how tough his job is going to be. Performance reviews of tax officers in 115 revenue districts were conducted to see which of them were meeting collection targets. Some 48 officials were transferred; the less efficient were moved away from the richer tax districts. The backlash was instant. *"How can he justify this?"* rages tax officer Edmundo Vasquez, who is being transferred from the capital's affluent Makati business district to a province south of Manila. Vasquez accuses the commissioner of playing favorites. He and his colleagues have run full-page newspaper ads blaming Banez for the *"demoralization, antagonism, depravation, insecurity of tenure, injustice . . . that has taken root in the BIR."*

The bureaucrats actually went to court for temporary restraining orders halting their transfers and they urged the President to sack Banez. Most ominously, they appear to have persuaded Justice Secretary Hernando Perez to take support their cause. Secretary Perez also seems to have difficulty in deciding what is the people's money and what is the bureaucrats wealth. According to local press reports, Perez has written to Arroyo urging a rethinking of the transfers.

Will the new administration give Mr. Banez the latitude necessary to clean up the BIR?

1. Will the new administration let Mr. Banez gather the evidence necessary to bring charges against these misfits?
2. Will the new administration let Mr. Banez try these miscreants for betrayal of public trust?
3. Will the new administration let Mr. Banez try these individuals through the DOJ for stealing?
4. Will the new administration let Mr. Banez try these criminals for misappropriation of public moneys?
5. Will the new administration try these officials for tax evasion?
6. Will the new administration after centuries of blind Justice now attempt to also cripple her?
7. Will the new administration accept gifts and gratuities from BIR officials and let them retain their positions?
8. Will the new administration attempt to suppress truth, justice, and the new Filipino direction of equality for all?

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The government wants to businessperson and citizen to pay their taxes. But, what about the officials stealing at every stroke of the clock? Are they declaring moneys earned? Are they declaring moneys stolen? Are they declaring taxes owed? Tax evasion by public and elected officials is supposed to be presented in RA 6713, but is ignored for the sake of public officials. Which brings up another issue. Why do we call them public officials if they don't represent the public?

*"When one villain is suffered to escape, it encourages another to proceed, either from a hope of escaping likewise, or an apprehension that we dare not punish."* –By Thomas Paine.

**BJMP**-Bureau of Jail Management and Penology. You don't want to go to jail in the Philippines. The water will give you diarrhea and the food lacks enough nutritional value to sustain foreigners. Of course, for about \$800.00/month [US] you can obtain upgraded accommodations at most facilities. Says Supt. Mercedes Foronda: *"Ask them if sexual harassment exists, they will say no. But ask them when and how it happens, alam nila (they know)."* A greater danger comes from abusive prison guards and officials who enter women's quarters, disregarding internationally accepted prison guidelines, and the BJMP's own rules. Director Romeo Peña of the PNP Directorate for Investigation, for his part, says, *"Rape sa babae bihira. Rape sa lalaki meron. (Females being raped are uncommon. But there are cases of men getting raped)."* by Luz Rimban and Chit Balmaceda-Gutierrez. It is ironic that the PNP is highly distressed over a new movie which made its debut in 2001, entitled, *"Red Diaries,"* which portrays the police in a bad light. *"The film, "Red Diaries" depicts a battered wife of a corrupt police officer who lets his colleagues gang-rape her after discovering she was having an affair."* –From *The Freeman*, AFP, 2001. In the real world, perhaps the movie portrays the police far better than they deserve. I am sure that there are some good police men, only I have not had the pleasure of meeting them.

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners mandates that *"men and women are to be kept in separate facilities,"* a policy that both the PNP and the BJMP have tried to follow whenever possible. But the cells for females do not always afford women inmates privacy and security from the male prisoners.

Jails are supervised by the BJMP, which runs 11 percent of all local jails. The rest are still controlled by the Philippine National Police (PNP), to be eventually transferred to the BJMP. The BJMP, 56

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however, covers the largest prisons where more than 80

percent of the more than 27,000 inmates are confined.-From the Internet  
pcij.org

Which brings up another issue. Who does the most harm? The criminal who robs from the ordinary citizen and is incarcerated by the system or the politician who steals from the ordinary citizens and is protected by the system?

**BOC**-Bureau of Customs: in Singapore officials can clear cargo in an hour. In the Philippines you will encounter months or years. Unless, of course, you pay “*grease money*” to the proper authorities. If you bring a car into this country, you will end up paying double what it cost by the time customs gets through with you. During the delay process they will also charge you for storage fees while they procrastinate in their jobs. Past administrations have replaced Bureau heads with their own people without any evident changes in policy [*corruption continues*] Why not? It’s lucrative, rewarding in that the chances of being punished are slim or none. If one relinquishes a hold on some of the money stolen, he or she can still retire a millionaire.

Suggestion:

1. Declare a time limit in which to release merchandise and imported items.
2. If the time limit is exceeded then let it be noted in the evaluation of the employee who is in charge and this could be reflected in his advancement, or lack thereof, in the Bureau or agency. Lack of an immediate response could also open litigation and lack of responsibility against the agency.
3. Copies of all actions taken [*or not taken*] should be forwarded to the businessman in question.

In the 2 June 2001 issue of *The Philippine Star*, Senator Barbers stated, “*The Department of Finance should put an end to what is possibly the longest running smuggling operation involving officials and employees of the Customs Bureau...there appears to be no effort on the part of the BOC hierarchy to put an end to smuggling schemes as they seem to be swayed by tempting amounts of money being offered to them to the detriment of the national government.*”

It was George Washington, first President of the United States, who said, “*Few men have the valor to withstand the highest bidder.*” In the Philippines, few bureaucrats have the valor to withstand *any* bidder.

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The various corrupt bureaus and agencies are mere sycophants to the ruling powers in the congress and senate doing their bidding, special favors, etc., in order to hold onto their positions despite all obstacles.

**Bohol**- An interesting side note: while surfing the Internet, I came across a picture of a former congressman. This congressman was underscoring his support of human rights issues in the Philippines. This is the same congressman who personally called the Bohol Board Members and requested they deport the arrogant foreigner who filed a complaint against the ‘*Honorable*’ Mayor Sylvia Adame, of Dimiao. [*Of course, one must expect this ‘Honorable’ former congressman to deny such accusations*] So ironic! “*Public officials and employees shall at all times be accountable to the people and shall discharge their duties with utmost responsibility, integrity, competence, ad loyalty, act with patriotism and justice, lead modest lives, and uphold public interest over personal interest*”-as per RA 6713, Sec. 2., *Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees*. How many ‘*Honorable*’ public officials do you believe could endure the implementation of this act?

Mayor Adame in her response to the complaints by Mr. Reyes, continuously refers to him as a ‘*stranger*’ and a ‘*foreigner*,’ “*transients like Mr. Reyes,*” “*foreigner-visitor,*” “*his being a foreigner,*” etc., which according to Filipino interpretations of Biblical lore deprives him of any rights [*read Hebrew 11:13, Ezekiel 16:32, Matthew 25:35, John 10:5, Leviticus 19:16-18, Leviticus 22, verses 10-13. Leviticus 25, verses 44-46 allows for stigmatizing of a foreigner and for a stranger having lesser rights than the clan and Exodus 12:43, 1 King 8:41, Psalm 18:44*], and many more all with the same negative connotations, it also being okay to bear false witness and steal from those not of your clan, neighbors, etc.

Perhaps Ms. Adame is appealing to the age old dictum of former President Carlos P. Garcia, 1957, who saw foreigners as a threat and developed the philosophy of ‘*Filipinos First*,’ which appears to be the prevailing custom here, especially in Bohol, the homeland of Mr. Garcia, where, often, in spite of the judicial laws of the land, the Filipino is given not only given the benefit of the doubt, but all due respect and courtesies.

The Filipino government, at all levels has deemed this as an acceptable risk, in their efforts to maintain the status quo, and although they repeatedly speak of ridding the country of graft and 58 “*We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth, however bitter it may be.*” Jose Rizal

corruption, bureaucrats and politicians are quite content to leave things as they are.

From the riding on public conveyance vehicles where conductors are slow to give foreigners their change to the tourist store where shop keepers are want to give incorrect change, the story is the same, 'caveat emptor,' especially regarding foreigners. And who will you complain to? As of this date, there are no governmental agencies in the Philippines who will cater to much less enforce any laws of this land to protect and/or assist the foreigners. If you should have cause to file a charge against a Filipino, for any reason, once you leave this country, your complaint is moot and pointless as the laws dictate that you have to be in this country to pursue a case, and the legal action will be filed away.

If you should remain in the Philippines to pursue your litigation you will encounter a corrupt court system that even the U.S. military shies away from in the Visiting Forces Agreement which angers right wing Filipinos. One must constantly be aware of the fact that there is no justice in the Philippines. Just think, why do Filipinos file court cases against their government in America? This government is repressive of civil rights, human rights, and any rights that challenge their corrupt system.

The politicians accept the standard that as foreigners, we have plenty of money. This justifies, in their minds, their stealing, criminal acts, and lack of respect for those from another country. If a foreigner does not pay tribute, they are threatened with deportation and automatically considered arrogant for not accepting the prevailing norms and customs [*which of course is corruption of the politicians*] Although the Constitution of the Philippines grants basic rights to its citizenry, unlike the American Constitution which grants rights to the people, technically we, as foreigners, have no rights, except those which our sovereign nations voice in protest against this country. Also, since the politicians deny rights to their own people, what could compel them to grant rights to foreigners who can't even vote?

Historically, foreigners not having any rights, are even mentioned under ancient Roman law. The ancient Roman civil law being composed of rules and regulations which governed the Romans exclusively, defining their rights and privileges; the law of nations, known as '*jus gentium*,' which determined the rights and privileges of foreigners. The latter precluded the foreigner or alien from having any share in purely Roman institutions. –See *The Ten Commandments*, by Joseph Lewis. Today, foreigners are still deprived of their rights in the

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Philippines, from the time they step off the plane at the airport or disembark from the ship.

*“Where there are no distinctions there can be no superiority; perfect equality affords no temptation.”* –By Thomas Paine.

In Bohol the Provincial Board Members didn't even attempt to show any semblance or appearance of impartiality or fairness in summoning a *'foreigner'* while setting aside his complaints against the *'Honorable'* Mayor Adame of Dimiao. What do the *“Friendly City”* officials care about one who has already made a commitment to reside in this land and can not vote? If you're still interested in visiting Tagbilaran, Bohol you can contact their official agency: Tourism Information Center at 038-235-5497 or visit their website at: [www.tagbilaran.gov.ph](http://www.tagbilaran.gov.ph) It might be novel to ask what rights you might enjoy while visiting Tagbilaran City [*The so-called City of Friendship*] and who is entrusted to enforce those rights, if any.

If you should visit Bohol, the tourism Information Booth is located across from Bohol Quality department store.

The asymmetrical interpretation and enforcement of Constitutional Law as well as the Republican Act 7160 [*Rules and Regulations Implementing the Local Government Code of 1991*] has had a significant impact upon the economy [*A fact which local as well as national figures care to ignore, which is another problem in the Philippines. A Laissez-faire attitude is the bureaucratic response to most problems*]

In 1962 the value of the peso was 3.85 to one. Now it is 53.7 to one and losing value monthly. Is this due to the price of oil? Then why doesn't the value of other world currencies fall? The government officials are good at mendacious statements which they distribute to the new media as to the cause of the peso devaluation. Mostly lies. The value of the peso [*world market*] is dependent upon their actions or inactions as the case may be. All else is incidental.

Some people [*politicians*] can't see the tree from the forest. *“But then, with lesser investments coming to the Philippines because other countries are more 'friendly' to foreign investors, this means there will be lesser jobs available in the job market. Consequently, we shall be seeing more Filipinos getting out of our country to work abroad. How pitiful!”*-From an article in *The Freeman* newspaper, by Valeriano 'Bobit' Avila, July 5, 2001. [vsbobita@mozcom.com](mailto:vsbobita@mozcom.com)

Lack of consistency in implementation of existing laws has turned many investors away from ventures in not only the Philippines, but 60

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many other Southeast Asian countries. Hence, the necessity to strive to acquire new, naive investors.

Visitors [*Tourists*] will fare even worse against elected officials. Being naive as to the laws and their rights, it would be best to contact the British Embassy regarding any serious dispute if you should encounter any nasty incidents while visiting or traveling here.

One will discover that, in general, Filipino elected officials are uneasy when foreigners do not agree with them. Used to getting their way and seldom, if ever, challenged, except perhaps by another politician, they do not like to be contradicted. They will be economical with the truth and expect you to believe whatever they say.

This leads to another issue. Time. If you are doing business here, then it is incumbent upon you to set time schedules, something many Filipinos dislike. We have *American time* and *Filipino time*. Something similar to the Mexican, *manana* [*not today or tomorrow*]

The Filipino strives to please, therefore, if you ask for something, the Filipino will remain cordial and respond with a “Yes,” and you will not be any further ahead in receiving answers or knowing whether a task will be done then when you asked the original question. A “Yes” signifying they hear you and not necessarily understand or will do as requested. Good Luck! You will need it if doing business here.

Deprivation of rights and freedoms usually occurs where you live, if you should decide to stay. This is their country and the local officials feel foreigners are arrogant if they do not abide by local customs [*prevailing norms*] This includes paying them tribute for favors or doing anything which they already receive a salary for.

Foreigners call it extortion, graft, and corruption. Public officials like to think of it as expediting the matter and have duped the average Filipino to accept this practice or practices as the spoils of holding office.

In the *Bohol Times*, Attorney Salvador Deputado, also a staff member of the Bohol Institute of Technology, on 20 August, 2000, wrote, “...the municipality of Dimiao is waging “war” against a foreigner...this is the first time ever that some Boholano officials have officially joined hands to expel a foreigner...Reyes [*American citizen*] must have committed something grave that has offended the officials of that town [Dimiao]...he is supposed to be thankful he was welcomed and accorded full respect by the officials...records will show that he’s become too busy for comfort.” Mr. Reyes, being

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arrogant enough to think that he does not have to pay tributes to the municipal mayor or workers, is in deep bio-degradable waste.

Mr. Deputado unerringly reveals the truth in stating that Mr. Reyes is too busy for comfort. He claims to represent the rights of the Boholanos, but evidently Mr. Deputado only represents the demands of politicians who seek his protection from the media. Instead of praising Mr. Reyes for making environmental issues and corruption public, Mr. Reyes is castigated by the system which says it wants to eliminate graft and corruption, but in truth, is quite content with the status quo. Being quick to perform their bidding for a few pieces of silver, Mr. Deputado further states, *“He has filed complaints before the DENR, the Department of Finance, the Department of Justice, the Provincial Assessor’s Office...,”* and the list will go on and on. Mr. Reyes has sustained damage to his property to due a negligent administration and has every right to protect his investment. Unfortunately it means public officials doing their job, which they are often lax to do. It means public officials obeying the law, which they are often naught to do. It means public officials doing their job, which they often refuse to do, unless of course one is willing to compensate them, generously.

As, none of the agencies contacted will respond with any action, and seldom acknowledge a letter. *“...the officials of Dimiao are asking for his deportation,”* which is the Filipino response to anyone who dares challenge their system. You lose your rights when you step off the plane or ship you came on. He further states, *“Nobody can question the prerogative of local government officials regarding this matter. It is presumed that they are looking after the general welfare of the people.”*

My goodness, if public officials look after the welfare of the people:

1. Why is the school system in such a deplorable condition?
2. Why are the streets and highways deteriorating before completion?
3. Why can’t the Bureau of Revenue account for the millions of pesos lost every year?
4. Why are the national policemen involved in scandal after scandal?
5. Why can’t local officials enforce environmental laws?

Need I say more? Is Mr. Deputado supporting the corrupt system? War? Didn’t know one could declare war without notifying the other party. It can happen in Dimiao where Pastor Q. Maguyon, Vice-62

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Mayor, and Dennis Magtajas, SB Member, who has also had numerous complaints filed against him and has been protected by the Ombudsman's Office, Vasayas, ...let's face it, the mayor got the whole municipal council to vote to separate the *'Terror of Dimiao,'* Mr. Reyes from his wife and ship him back to the States. Such is politics here, that rights mean little, when it comes to the prerogatives of the elected officials. Like their religious beliefs, if they say black is white or white is black, few dare contradict them. Saint Ignatius is known for his writing of "*Spiritual Exercises*" from which we receive: *Rule Thirteen: "To be Right in Everything, we should always hold that the White which you see, is Black, if the Hierarchical Church so decides it, believing that between Christ our Lord, the Bridegroom, and the Church, His Bride, there is the same Spirit which governs and directs us for the salvation of our souls. By the same Spirit and our Lord who gave the Ten Commandments, our Holy Mother the Church is directed and governed."* —From *Man's Search for Spirituality* by E. Christopher Reyes, Dimiao, Bohol. The Filipino politician rules with flattery, unfulfilled promises, and an iron hand.

Bohol, believe it or not, is a picturesque island composed of 47 municipalities situated only one and one-half hours from Cebu, by fast boat, with a population of just under one million, and an average temperature of 29° C. Except for the politicians, the inhabitants are remarkably friendly. Invested with white sand beaches, tarsiers [*smallest monkey in the world*], Chocolate Hills [*ancient geological formations*], and impressive diving sites.

Potable water will be the key issue in the future with Cebuanon politicians already lining up to support a fresh water pipeline from Bohol to Cebu. Construction funds for the building of this pipeline and the building of the pumping facilities will line many a political pocket.

But what of the poor Boholano? Reports and documents disseminating the negative aspects of this pipeline are already being suppressed, lost, or even destroyed for all we know. Needless to say, the politicians are trying to make this look like the best thing to come along since sliced bread.

**Bureaucracy**-what is killing the Philippines. They are virtually drowning in a sea of bureaucracy of their own making while the world is passing them by. Bureaucrats are more concerned with obtaining their "*side money*" than doing their job, creating a vast back-log in administrative work and complaining of being overworked [*which is difficult to prove if you ever have occasion to*

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*visit any public agency and see civil servants reading newspapers, sleeping, not at their desks, texting on the telephone, etc]* Often a foreigner cannot obtain a permit because the only person who can issue the permit is on vacation or out of the office [*What this means is that this individual doesn't want anyone to intrude upon his "thing" which is his or her supplemental income*] The purpose of bureaucracy is to formalize and standardize in an effort to normalize daily tasks to expedite the work load.

Suggestion: Permits should first be signed by the individual who is responsible for same. Republic Act 6713, Section 4 (e), requires public officials to act in a prompt and courteous manner...and to avoid red tape. Which, again, is seldom if ever enforced.

**CA**-Commission on Appointments. Rampant favor swapping, undue pressure, patronage and corruption cast doubts on the integrity of the Commission, which even former Senator Santiago admitted as much herself, describing it as, "*basically a horse trading agency, a completely political agency.*" According to Santiago, members of the Commission, even before they are chosen to represent their parties in the body, already have a mental list of the people they want to put in certain key Cabinet positions.

*"Very obviously, the only way they can accommodate each other is to observe the quid pro quo rule," she says. "I won't object to your protégé as long as you don't object to mine. So, it's really horse-trading or log-rolling at work. The personal merits of the nominees take a backseat are just considered irrelevant."* Senator Flavier, like Santiago, recalls being asked by some members of the Commission for commitments regarding contracts, projects and employment of certain individuals.

Even military officials who are up for promotion are apparently not spared from such requests or favors. A current Cabinet member says one high-ranking officer, who happens to be his friend, complained to him that he was being asked to fork over an undisclosed amount by someone from the Commission. Comments former Senate President Ernesto Maceda: "*Somehow, most members of the Commission, probably accepting the fact that most people lie on their ITRs (income tax returns), don't consider that a major defect. I guess the feeling is that everyone cheats anyway.*" Senator Enrile, while questioning a nominee about inconsistencies in his financial record, was visibly irked by a comment implying that his queries were immaterial because the committee had already endorsed the candidate. Even the military appointments must seek the approval of



the commission, many of whom ask favors if not outright gifts. Can any honest officers be appointed with this system, especially if they have no money? –From the Internet pcij.org

*"As long as dishonorable success outranks honest effort, as long as society bows and cringes before big thieves, there will be little ones enough to fill the jails."* –By Ingersoll

All sessions, required, with the Commission on Appointments should be videotaped or tape recorded.

1. Those recommended for advancement should be given the opportunity to see the scores of the other participants to see for themselves if they have been treated fairly.
2. A period of time for protests should be allocated.
3. All promotions should be held in abeyance until the protests have been resolved.
4. All questions should be job related. Asking someone to help a relative or for money is not a job related question and that individual should be released from service on the CA Interview Panel.

If the system does not rectify itself, then personal interviews should be done away with and only the records of the individuals recommended will go before the review panels.

**Casual Employees**-a political reward to those who help the winners in their political quests. Some are good employees, while others, as the term reflects, have a more casual approach by merely showing up, and seldom if at all. Why can't they be required to work like the private industry individual? No work, no pay!

**Catholic**-over 84% of the Philippine population is Roman Catholic and they are proud of being the only Catholic Asian country.

**Cebu**-The self-proclaimed pride of Central Visayas, Cebu is the center of commercial and industrial progress in the region. Metro Cebu now rivals Metro Manila in generating business, many businesses choosing to relocate to Cebu due to grid lock, crime, and pollution in Manila. Mactan Island has an international airport, where the Immigration officials are also better supervised than at Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Pasay City [aka *Manila Internatinal*]

Even Japanese businessmen now prefer the safety of Mactan Airport, Cebu, to that of Manila, where they are often harassed, and sometimes beaten, by officials attempting to extort money from them. Cebu sports a 250-hectare export processing zone in Lapu-Lapu City that accounts for half of the exports originating from the Visayas.

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The industriousness of the people of Cebu is further illustrated in the locals not waiting for international moneys to clean up the environment, as local politicians will most likely deplete the funds for their personal use, but have taken it upon themselves to make the beaches cleaner and safer for the tourists.

The primary issue is the preponderance of public transportation vehicles extorting exorbitant fees from those who disembark, taxi drivers claiming their meters *'don't work,'* and jeepney drivers and tricycle drivers charging more than the prescribed limit.

Suggestion: The Cebu Tourist Information Center should have a *'hotline'* advertised in the newspapers or prominently displayed at airline and shipping terminals where tourists can receive a fast response to their problems and their complaints addressed adequately. You will run across this problem all across the country at every major point of embarkation.

During typhoon *'Ruping'* in the Aquino administration, the poor Cebuanos were taxed to the max spiritually as well as financially with the Federal government allocating three checks for storm damage and assistance, which bounced. The Disaster Coordinating Committee Chairman at that time was none other than Fidel Ramos, who personally visited the typhoon stricken areas.

**Cell Phones**-Be cautious with your cell phones as they are a commodity highly prized by unscrupulous thieves who will snatch them in the cities.

**China**-the main competitor of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Asian world. 452 million Chinese are now learning English. Soon, the Philippines will no longer have the prestige of being the only English speaking Asian country.

China is also making a concerted effort to clean up graft and corruption in their bureaucracies and has declared a five year limit to rid the country bureaucracies of 50% of the public employees and cut back on national agencies as well as duplication of services provided the public.

**Civil Servants**-The corrupt and the corruptible, willing to do the bidding of politicians at the betrayal of their country. The bureaucratic infrastructure tasked with performing the will of the legislative branch of government. Also known as the *'Obstructionists'* as they will impede progress at every turn in order to increase their personal financial status. Those who have made the public their civil slaves. Many civil servants hold several positions,

incompetent in all of them, but receiving salaries from all.

When will the government confine them to:

1. One position
2. One salary
3. One responsibility
4. One accountability

All you will hear from them is how they cannot do anything because their hands are tied within the system when all the time it is they, the civil servants, who have tied the hands of justice in their betrayal of public trust for personal gain. A betrayal of public faith in a system that is corrupted with civil servants who cater to the politicians and the elite at the detriment of the national good. The penalty for those who dare challenge this corrupt system is politically motivated assassination.

**COMELEC**-Commission on Election, tasked with circum-locutions and bureaucratic pedantics to convince the general population that they were not robbed in the previous elections by the establishment. Using, and twisting the law, to the advantage of the ruling class, this agency is paid for by the poor at the detriment of the poor.

Suggestion: COMELEC should render decisions *before* an election, and *not after* the people have voiced their opinion.

**Comfort Women**- 200 Philippine comfort women file a class action suit in California, because the Philippine government will not come to their defense on the atrocities committed against womanhood during WWII. The politicians are quick to defend their honor but less so in defending the honor of their fellow countryman and that of their country.

Elected officials are more concerned with receiving kickbacks from Japanese businesses than addressing the crimes committed against their women. Korea, in 2001, addresses this issue, as well as China, in the newly published Japanese textbooks which gloss over the same issue, concealing material facts to save face. Korean and Chinese officials demand an apology and recognition of the atrocities committed by Japan.

The Japanese are concerned with making their soldiers look good during the war and not causing embarrassment to their families as many former officers are now established and reputable businessmen. This does not negate the fact that they raped and plundered China, Mongolia, Korea, and the Philippines.

**Corruption**-Corruption is an issue as old as governance itself in the Philippines. Filipinos therefore tend to be condescending about

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corruption in their government. They are not shaken that most public officials are corrupt, although they may sometimes be astonished at the magnitude of the pilfering and the governmental agencies involved.

*“Despite its free-wheeling image, the Philippine press is beholden to its owners, some newspapers more so than others.”* Sheila S. Coronel.

Returning immigrants appear to be the vanguard in expressing their distaste and un-satisfaction as more and more Filipinos are now raising concerns about the in effectiveness of government performance, the un accountability of government departments, and the lack of transparency of government agencies in providing adequate accounting measures required by law, but negligently [*purposely*] overlooked by one administration after another and when discovered, seldom is anyone reprimanded, except perhaps in the news media. They have come to realize that democracy in itself does not ensue that government officials and institutions are immune to the corruption that plagues their pseudo democratic regimes.

Congressmen spend "*pork barrel*" funding for their personal benefit and enrichment while they proclaim to the people, "*It's the other guy who's stealing.*" The name of those politicians who do wrong is not revealed until just prior to elections and then nothing is ever done afterwards.

Legislators and Malacañang use the national budget to reward cronies and friends who supported them in their efforts for re-election.

Public officials skim off Billions from the sale of public properties which are under assessed.

Telephone monopolies circumvent laws and taxes to their advantage.

The Bureau of Immigration, a lair of corruption, is used to harass and deport foreigners who complain of the system. Complaints being lost or if documented being declared an "*Isolated Incidence*" to protect a system vitiated by political favoritism and lack luster officials, who maintain their status within the Bureau year after incompetent year.

Contractors and officials obtaining financial kick backs from infrastructure projects financed out of public coffers.

Politicians who use the people's money for their personal election campaigns.

Office of the Ombudsman, allegedly created to assist the people's claims against corrupt, instead looks the other way, and finds, instead, legal technicalities concealed in pedantics in order to shield their shame for not prosecuting errant public officials.

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It has therefore become incumbent upon citizens' groups and paramilitary forces to fight for what their constitution grants them.

Lack of integrity, morals, virtue, and principles. Abuse of power is rampant in the Philippines at all levels of government. Each election year the politicians will talk of cleaning up crime, graft, and corruption, yet, when elected will do little or nothing about it. It sure makes for good speeches and nothing else.

A veteran banker and campaign insider, Espiritu was one of Joseph Estrada's election fundraisers in 1998, collecting money from businessmen to bankroll the popular former action star's campaign. Edgardo Espiritu recalls the time, early on in Joseph Estrada's term, when a beaming president told him what it was he enjoyed most about being in Malacañang. "*Napakasarap palang maging presidente (It's great to be president),*" Espiritu, who was then finance secretary, remembers Estrada saying, "*even without asking for funds, dumarating na lang (they just come).*" Espiritu has known Estrada since the 1970s. "*He was something of a bully, that was all,*" he recalls, "*he was really just after the small gain.*" Says a businessman who has been friendly with Estrada from his days in the Senate: "*As long as he could maintain his wives and his lifestyle, it was okay. It was just the usual corruption.*" by Sheila S. Coronel

The move to wage war against the present system is manifested in the paramilitary groups that demand social change and are dissatisfied with worsening conditions evidenced by increased poverty and crime. Incompetence, graft, and corrupt ways are actually rewarded by high ranking officials to bureaucrats by not punishing the offenders. Complaints by an American residing in Dimiao for lack of implementation of existing laws are answered with, "*...adopts the standard of governance in the U.S. as the yardstick in the performance of duties by the Philippine officialdom which is grossly unfair considering that we are still a staggering third world country...*" Staggering? Surely it is not the mayor who owns many houses! Staggering? For whom? The only one's appearing to be staggering in the Philippines is the honest hard working poor.

Mayor Sylvia Varquez Adame of Dimiao would have been more prudent to at least sit down and discuss the complaints, as delineated by law [RA 6713] rather than ignore many written letters and attempt to stifle due process regarding the issues. See SB Resolution No. 65, S. 2000 and complaint RAS-VIS-2000-0064, however, arrogant politicians do not like being dictated to...especially by foreigners attempting to

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have them enforce the prevailing laws. Her actions are not unique but indicative of the lack of cordiality prevalent within the provincial areas in the superciliousness of local authorities to deny the masses, as well as visitors, their civil liberties.

Mayor Adame has fought and bought her way to her present position of authority with the support of the Ombudsman's Office, which has been meticulous in overlooking the numerous complaints filed against her in her political career. The Ombudsman's Office, contrary to public belief that it represents the people, is an agency which does an admirable job in shielding elected officials from those who seek justice, and sad to say, all at tax payers expense. "*Guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism.*" –George Washington.

On nation wide television one sees the poor, innovative in their epicurean delicacies, cooking up bats, dogs, and rats. Perhaps if the corrupt politicians had to eat those tasty morsels they might have a more open attitude regarding the suffering of the underprivileged.

Regarding the [free] donation of a fire pump truck and pay-loader from the City of Los Angeles, which Mr. Reyes tried so nobly to procure for the good of the citizens of Dimiao, Mayor Sylvia Varquez Adame states, "...nobody in his right mind would be interested to deal with him, much less with this very onerous donation." Onerous? A free gift is now onerous? The only requirement? Payment of the shipping fees. -Documents regarding Response Dated 8 May 2000. One should ask Ms. Adame, "*How much is onerous?*" How could she know if she never solicited bids? It seems quite apparent when dealing with many public officials, if they cannot pocket anything [financially] the matter is soon dropped. Character assassination lives on from the early Church authorities to the present day politicians who carry on the torch of inequity and dominance. The only justice the poor will see, and foreigners, will be on television and the movie houses.

Suggestion:

1. Immediate suspension of public employees, without pay, until the complaint is heard and a decision rendered. Public servants can prolong a case indefinitely via their knowledge of the Ombudsman process and political contacts.
2. If the Ombudsman's office does not take action within a reasonable amount of time [60 days], then the case should automatically be forwarded to the courts and the complainant notified. This would eliminate the complainant from losing due to time restraints and abolish the long waiting period so often encountered.

3. If the employee retires or is transferred, then one will receive no assistance from bureaucrats in following through with their claim or complaint. By suspending the employee, immediately, records can be secured until the complaint is heard. If the employee is found innocent he or she shall receive full back pay.

4. Elected officials should be accountable for their actions and denial of due process at all levels should require the public reprimand and or fine.

It has become a common practice in the Philippines for civil servants as well as elected public officials to burn the building down to cover up their crimes [*this has become a sort of a bilateral election event*] Investigations are moot in that seldom is the perpetrator caught, or the evidence sought found. I often wonder why important documents are not kept in fireproof files.

Although most Filipinos are quick to criticize the Marcos regime there is a small light gleaming. In his "*Internal and External Corruption in the Philippines' Tax System (A) and (B)*," Robert Klitgaard of Harvard University, states, "*In an effort to weed out corruption in the government, President Ferdinand Marcos of the Philippines fired 2,000 government officials suspected of corruption, among them the commissioner of revenue, in the fall of 1975.*" History now tells us that each President in the last fifty years merely replaces one incompetent group with another. And the sad part is that, in most cases, the individuals guilty of theft, forgery, and other crimes go unpunished. If a public servant retires or quits, seldom are any charges brought against him or her.

In September, 1975, President Marcos names Justice Efren Plana as the new Commissioner of Revenue to head the Philippine Bureau of Internal Revenue, who assess conditions in the BIR, where he finds many types of both internal and external corruption, including the payment of lagay [*speed money*], various types of extortion and bribery, embezzlement, and personnel scams. Justice Plana attempts to clean up the BIR by implementing a new performance evaluation system, revamping the Internal Security Division, punishing the *most* corrupt BIR officials, and instituting other internal restructuring measures.

The Philippines is not unique in this situation as problems found in most tax systems in third world countries are indicative of the dilemma they must face and resolve. Justice Plana's actions for improving the selection of agents, manipulating rewards and penalties, installing an internal intelligence system, raising the moral

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costs of corruption, and restructuring the tax collector taxpayer relationship, however, did not wholly solve these problems. although they did lead to minor gains in the battle against corruption in the BIR.

Selective regulatory actions will not solve the issue. A grand scale clean up, in all agencies, is necessary and mandatory if the Philippine government is to succeed in its efforts to rid the country of graft and corruption and disencumber itself of a pestilence which has been symptomatic of their culture for centuries.

**DA**-Department of Agriculture-From the files of the Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism: On May 7,1998, amid the heat of arguments and while a probe on Esperat's allegations was making progress, the DA's office in Cotabato City was gutted by fire. Because the incident took place just a few days before the presidential elections, the fire was dismissed as just another election-related event [politicians concealing their thefts]

But one year after the fire, two witnesses, regional property custodian Pembain Sangcopan and security guard Carlo Carulasan, swore in written affidavits that Montaner and his friends burned down the DA office to destroy evidence of their wrongdoing.

Carulasan narrated that on April 30 and May 4,1998, he saw Montaner's driver bring two gallons of gasoline and flammable substances to the accounting office of RFU 12. Sangcopan, the property custodian, managed to save some documents from burning, which included the list of P7.9-million worth of office supplies which were supposedly bought by RFU 12 in 1996, but which Sangcopan testified were never delivered.

With witnesses being harassed, shot, and killed regarding this incident, nothing has been resolved regarding the retrieval of tax payer's moneys from corrupt officials.

Agriculture Undersecretary Domingo Panganiban said his department received P77 million in September 1997 through a Special Allotment Release Order (SARO) given by the Office of President Ramos, through the budget department. The amount was supposed to be spent for the Clark Centennial Exhibit in the Expo theme park. Re-adjustment, line item changes, re-allocations, all are familiar tactics in the government's endeavor to move money where it's not supposed to be. -From the Internet pcij.org

**DECS**-Department of Education Culture and Sports, which has corrupted the education system in the Philippines. The department cannot allocate monies for books and schools but can find the money



to acquire new cars for their top officials. Continued corruption may soon result in only the rich capable of affording good education, if it has not reached that point in outlying provinces already.

In an editorial in The Freeman newspaper, 13 June 2001, pg. 10, we have, “*Officials complain about rising crime and unemployment but never seem to realize that all this is a product of the idiot factories we call the educational system.*”

When a medium-sized book publisher based in Quezon City set out last year on a trip to a regional office of the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS), she carried a bag bulging with wads of cash. The envelopes she carried held P1.17 million: P1 million or five percent of the contract for the regional director; P50,000 for the supply officer; P15,000 for the accountant who obligated the money; P40,000 for the chief accountant; P5,000 each for the accounting clerks; P10,000 for the cashier who released the check; and P20,000 for the auditor.

Adding other “*expressions of gratitude,*” to other officials, including the 40 percent for the congressman who provided the funds, the payoffs ate up more than 50 percent of the contract she had landed. DECS suppliers work within a range for the “*tapon,*” money set aside for bribes, from a low of 20 percent to a high of 65 percent of a contract. The commission that agents actually kept for themselves—five to 10 percent—fell outside the range.

Agents who have been supplying the DECS since the 1970s years speak longingly of the days when bribes were smaller and bribe-takers were fewer. “*People in the old DECS were nicer,*” recalled an agent-turned-publisher. “*You’d just bring them to a nice restaurant and give them a little. The employees were happy with token amounts.*”

Today millions of Filipino schoolchildren don't have textbooks and those that do are often using substandard texts, pages upside down, poor grammar, incorrect spelling, and often, the books are torn and tattered. A financial and cultural deprivation perpetuated by their own people in the continuing struggle for bureaucratic self aggrandizement [enrichment]

“*I do not speak of the young men in this country, among whom I know many who are really worthy; it is not that they lack ability, no; they have much talent, much determination. But the defects of the educational system have the result that they work harder to less advantage, as happened to us there.*” —Jose Rizal.

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According to the suppliers, one high-ranking education official who resigned last year now has a posh resort in Mindanao. A retired regional director, meanwhile, owns a house in Ayala Alabang and Xavierville. Another ex-regional director operates a big private school in Luzon. Remarked the agent-turned-publisher: *"They're so corrupt, it makes you cry."* -From an article by Yvonne T. Chua

In another article by Yvonne T. Chua, an investigation has shown that DECS awarded a P81.7-million peso contract to CKL Enterprises, owned by 53-year-old businesswoman named Jesusa T. de la Cruz. a long-time supplier, which is paid in full prior to deliveries ever being made. CKL Enterprises has supplied only 40 percent of the 185,086 armchairs it contracted to deliver by April 24, 1997. It has not shipped a single armchair to Eastern Visayas, Western Visayas and Western Mindanao. Even in Metro Manila, where the chairs are made and shipped from, only 10 percent of the supposed beneficiaries have gotten their share.

Jesusa T. de la Cruz of Binalonan, Pangasinan, as owner of CKL Enterprises, used to be a small time businesswoman in the 1970's and was one of the DECS's biggest contractors, supplying teachers' uniforms, school desks, office furniture and instructional materials. She is also involved in the construction of school buildings.

DECS starts paying before De la Cruz makes full deliveries, despite a strict prohibition by Presidential Decree 1455 regarding advance payments for procurement of supplies, materials, equipment and services without approval of the president.

A number of purchases by DECS Region XI from de la Cruz's firms were also found to have questionable price tags. In 1991, auditors noted, Giomiche [another company owned by de la Cruz] supplied the Davao City school division construction materials that were overpriced by as much as 695 percent. COA said the government got shortchanged by P512,967.70. -From the Internet pcij.org

Even the Ombudsman Aniano Desierto, sides with other bureaucrats in justifying their indiscretions, incompetence, and lack of a proper payment plan to protect the tax payers by clearing ex-Education Secretary Ricardo Gloria, former Education Undersecretary and now Western Samar Rep. Antonio Nachura and DECS chief accountant Blanquita Bautista of any criminal and administrative liability in letting CKL Enterprises get paid before deliveries were made..." *The judgment astonished education officials and people familiar with bank practices.*"

The poor Filipino, unknowingly, pays bureaucrats, with multiple degrees and high salaries to render decisions against the people. Whose side are they on? Definitely not the masses. Then why not terminate them and hire people who work for the people and not those stealing from the people?

In the 1980's, desks bought under a P30-million World Bank funded project were found to be grossly overpriced or made of cheap wood, forcing many of the state employees involved to flee the country with their ill gotten gain, thereby avoiding prosecution.

DECS Undersecretary Antonio Valdes, said they have made it harder for such people to profit from these lucrative procurements, yet he merely issues a verbal warning to DECS suppliers to unlearn their old tricks, instead of going after the perpetrators of magnanimous losses of public moneys and seeking to remove those culprits who gorge themselves upon the public coffers. Until the day comes when public officials go to jail for stealing, nothing will obstruct those who seek personal reward from continuing with their transgressions.

Suggestion: dismiss the department heads if they cannot resolve the problems. They are good at only coming up with elaborate excuses, using their education to conceal that which is only too obvious to the layman. As highly paid executives at a managerial level, they are supposed to resolve problems, not create them.

1. In the provincial areas teachers show up late to classes and often leave early. Lack of proper supervision is causing a distressful situation in providing an adequate education for the predominantly poor who reside in the outlying areas.

2. Children are without books, yet the high ranking officials can receive kick backs for paperbacks which contain poor grammar, misspellings, and pages upside down. Solve the problem: Terminate the official for incompetence. Isn't that done in private businesses? You eliminate the non-performers? Why not in public agencies? Don't come out with more justifications. Is this what the hard working Filipino is paying for?

3. Pass legislation to curb this monstrosity regarding kick backs. Or, do the masses lack representation?

4. Sports are a dismal failure due to officials draining the coffers to live lavishly while the competitors live a Spartan life. The Philippine people are embarrassed again and again due to nepotism and poor training, yet government appoints the same do nothing officials in a Peter Principle mentality. Draw up a contract with the sports representatives as to what is expected. An increase of [%] in

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winnings or however they wish to do it. Isn't this how sports managers are hired? On the basis of success?

5. The educational system should allow the students to enroll year round instead of having to wait the following year for transferees or for students who have recently moved into the area. This will curtail so many young people meandering about with nothing to do in the provinces as well as in the cities. In many cases the crime rates will fall as discovered in the States.

6. Contractual agreements shall be binding and non-delivery, partial delivery, or delivery of items not within the specified guidelines shall render the contract null and void.

7. Contracts shall be paid in full upon delivery and not promises.

8. Procurement of books should be delegated down to the local level of responsibility and accountability. This way the locals can deal directly with those responsible instead of having to deal with Manila for everything to be lost in a maze of bureaucracy. This would also open up the arena to small businessmen and local entrepreneurs. The World Bank has required DECS to adopt its procurement system for a Bank-funded purchase of textbooks. At least P200 million will be used to buy books from the private sector for schools in 26 poor provinces. –From the Internet [pcij.org](http://pcij.org)

**Delicadeza**-An effort not to embarrass those in high places. Title 13 of the Penal Code, Chapter 1, defines a libel as a malicious crime, vice, or defect [*real or imagined*] any statement, which causes the dishonor, discredit, or contempt of a natural or judicial person. For a foreigner, this is difficult to understand. Why should a public official be afraid of being embarrassed if they are stealing from the public trough? If they don't want to be mortified, then stop stealing. As a conscientious observer, I must say unequivocally and without mental reservation, to relieve the distressed is a duty incumbent upon all men. Are we the clergy, taking vows to keep secrets from our fellow man of the wrongs of another, even if the wrong is committed upon children? I will report all crimes. If the public official is offended, so not it be. Let them sue me, which is their favorite saying to the public anyway. Let their crimes be aired in a public court for all to know. This is why public officials believe they are exempt or seldom held accountable for their deeds and unpleasant declarations about others. Their arrogance is unqualifiedly self serving.

1. The art of a bureaucrat or politician to impose his or her will upon the individual [*victim*] in such a manner as to make the

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victim feel guilty for exposing a crime or corrupt act perpetrated upon the individual in question.

2. Remnants of an early Christian era when one did not dare call a corrupt priest a crook [*under penalty of excommunication or even death*]

3. The capacity for making people feel sorry for a political figure after they have stolen money from the public.

4. An entitlement politicians now feel unconstrained to apply only to themselves.

5. “*Religious without a conscience.*” –Jose Rizal.

6. Another word for a bio-degradable by-product not discussed in mixed company.

**DENR**-Department of Energy and Natural Resources. Another do little department paid for by taxpayers. A complaint filed with the DENR regarding waste materials being deposited into local streams and rivers was met with a three person delegation that stated, “*Since the pollution is from private residences, there is nothing the DENR can do about it.*”

Hypothetically, a metropolis with a population of one million people can deposit their waste materials into adjoining rivers and the DENR can do nothing about it [*It falls within the jurisdiction of the local government units, who generally do not enforce these laws*] Local officials would like government moneys or foreign assistance, that way they can deduct their customary percentage from the fund.

One cannot speak of the environment without the issue of Subic Bay arising. The United States in an agreement with the Philippines gave all structural improvements as well as the latest in machinery and medical equipment in exchange for the Philippine government accepting the cleanup of toxic wastes.

When the U.S. military pulled out of Subic, corrupt officials allowed ‘*their*’ people to go in and strip the facilities bare. Danielle Knight in her article “*Environment: Toxic Legacy of US Military Bases,*” Washington, Mar. 31 (IPS), states, “*The United States is evading its responsibility for the public health damage and threats it has left in the former bases,*” they declared. “*US negligence threatens the lives and the environment of the communities surrounding these facilities.*”

In effect, what we have is a concerted effort to charge the American tax payers twice. The first time being in the donation of millions of American dollars in improvements and the second time in paying for something which was already agreed upon. It would cost about one billion dollars to clean up the toxic mess, according to Christina

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Leano and Amy Toledo, two researchers with the People's Task Force for Bases Clean Up, located in Washington. Knowing how the system works in the Philippines, congressmen, and senators are supportive of the U.S. cleaning up the waste, or more acceptably would be for the U.S. to pay for the waste cleanup so elected officials could then dip into the billion dollar funds.

Drinking water wells reportedly have been contaminated by waste from the base and some people have taken barrels once used to hold solvents and pesticides from the bases and now use them to store water and other items. *"The highest prevalence of these problems occurred in communities closest to or on the base and highly contaminated sites,"* says Leano. *"The Philippines has neither the financial nor the technical capacities to deal with the problem."* I am sure the Philippine government can replace the contaminated barrels with clean ones. The bureaucrats and elected officials sit on their laurels in million dollar mansions in affluent neighborhoods *[often built with tax payers' money]*, yet claim the government cannot help its own people.

The US Pentagon says that it has no legal authority or legal liability to do anything with regard to environmental contamination at former overseas US bases that have already been returned to the host country, unless there was a plan negotiated before the transfer. *"Nothing in international law or in any of the agreements between the Philippine government and US that gives rise to any liability to do anything,"* says Gary Vest, an Environmental Affairs official at the US Department of Defense.

*"The United States has not owned up to its toxic legacy and future visiting forces will only create more toxic and hazardous waste, be it in the form of ammunition or cleaning materials,"* says Leano. *"Toxic and hazardous waste is part and parcel of military exercises."* This issue should be resolved in future agreements as it is quite evident that the US military is not solely responsible for toxic contaminations. What does the Philippine government say of their military toxins? This is completely ignored in the media as the government has already stated that it lacks resources. But why force the US to shoulder the burden and not also the Philippine government in contaminating the environment in joint exercises? What happens to the environment from Filipino military exercises?

The government officials want money, they want foreign money to flow so they may enrich themselves as they did when the U.S. pulled out of Clark and Subic leaving behind a wealth of equipment and

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auxiliary building. The US taxpayer has already born the cost of billions of dollars in donated military equipment, buildings, training, and support when the government calls for our support during a revolutionary [*coup*] attempt [*which efforts are also suppressed from the media*]

Suggestion: the DENR should be:

1. Responsible over all environmental issues, both public and private. Both industrial and agricultural.
2. If a public agency is responsible for contaminating or polluting the environment as it now stands all the agencies mock the system by pointing to each other as the responsible agency while none do anything to resolve the matter. The same with the citizenry, commercial and industrial wastes. One agency. No foot dragging. No years in court to resolve.
3. The DENR should have ultimate responsibility and over all control of all cleanup. One centralized location. One agency. If politicians want to dip into the funding, then finger pointing as to responsibility would be centralized in that the funding agency would also have access to the books upon request. If the request is denied or postponed [*delayed*] for whatever reason, then so will the funds.
4. A citation is to be given once an ocular inspection confirms the complaint and a specific period of time to resolve shall be worked out or penalties will automatically kick in.
5. The complainant should be given a written response as to actions taken within 15 working days as required by law. Extensions of time would require signatures of both parties to the agreement.
6. Public officials who conceal contamination, such as in the tourist resort area of Boracay and complaint filed in Dimiao should be disciplined. Coliform being a disease causing bacteria which is detrimental to the health of locals as well as tourists. –See The Freeman Newspaper, article, 22 Sept. 2001, pg. 2, DENR Exec Kept Mum on Marigondon Coliform to Protect Tourism by Jose P. Sollano.

**DILG**-Department of Interior and Local Government, supposed to be responsible for monitoring the Local Government Units [LGU's], but seldom does, thereby causing the conflagration of corruption which exists in the local provinces. What a waste of tax payers' money! All those bureaucrats who sit around for lack of work and paid for ignoring the pleas of the citizenry.

Suggestion:

1. Call a department meeting and set goals. Those who cannot meet the standards of good governance should seek new employment.

2. Set parameters. A case will be opened and resolved within a specific period of time or automatically elevated to the next level where stiffer fines or restrictions can be imposed.

3. There are many honest and hard working Filipinos ready and willing to work for the salaries public officials claim is insufficient. Newspapers should allow free advertisement space for want ads.

4. There are too many good laws on the books in the Philippines to be ignored. They only lack enforcement. Public officials should enforce the laws without regard as to social or financial status.

**DOJ**-Department of Justice, Rogues in robes, obstructers of justice, usually replies to written correspondence [*many departments seldom will*], although Republic Act 6713, Sec. 5, (a), mandates a prompt response on letters within 15 working days. Action itself is seldom taken. The idea, enshrined in the *Code of Judicial Conduct*, and often ignored, is that magistrates should "*avoid impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in all activities.*" Justices now appear and are quite apparent in the parties of the rich and infamous adjoining Manila.

*"How easy it is to abuse truth and language, when men, by habitual wickedness, have learned to set justice at defiance."* –By Thomas Paine.

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Narvasa, heads a tarnished tribunal. Eduardo R. Ceniza, senior partner and head of litigation in the country's biggest law firm, Sycip, Salazar, Hernandez and Gatmaytan, wrote a letter to the chief justice. *"In my 37 years of practice I have never seen the image of the Supreme Court and the court system sink to such levels in the eyes of the business community,"* he said. –From the Internet [pcij.org](http://pcij.org)

Many feel that the corruption process and disgrace of the court system began with the Marcos regime and martial law. But history shows that it has existed since the Spaniards and the friars, only its manifestations were not so prevalent as to be noticeable by even the naive masses.

In 1993, the Palace ordered the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) to conduct a secret probe on the Court. *"Prominent lawyers admitted to me that they actually paid off,"* said the senior NBI official assigned to the case. But apart from what the lawyers reported, he found no solid evidence of corruption.

The DOJ is the shame of the Filipino people and the cornerstone for poverty and corruption. Seeking justice here is an effort in futility.

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Complaints of foreigners will be answered with, "...we will request the assistance of the Department of Immigration to investigate the personality background, status of citizenship, and the integrity of the character of this *'foreigner.'*" If you complain [*as a foreigner*], you could be deported [*Filipino justice*].

In 1993, responding to widespread accusations on corruption of the Justice system [*including those from then Vice-President Joseph Estrada*], about "*hoodlums in robes*," the Supreme Court created a committee composed of Narvasa and two retired justices to look into the allegations.

"*We won't spare anyone, no matter who gets hurt*," the chief justice vowed then. "*We won't hesitate to let the hammer fall...*," unless of course its upon themselves or one of their cronies.

The committee worked tirelessly for two months, spoke to over 70 witnesses and came out with a report that was widely criticized in the press as a whitewash. It reluctantly recommended the investigation and filing of complaints against a few judges in Makati but refused to entertain complaints against Supreme Court justices because they were "*nothing but gossip.*" Basically, it was a case of self discipline and the courts failed miserably. Eschewing wrongdoing and patting themselves on the back for "*fooling the people once again.*'

Narvasa chaired the committee, even if, among the complaints it investigated, was an anonymous paper which accused him and his kin and cronies of corruption. Of course, he investigated himself and found himself v indicated of any wrong doing.

The committee also exonerated Justice Hugo Gutierrez who had been accused of passing off as his own, a decision supposedly written by a lawyer of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., a party to the lawsuit he was deciding. Prior to the investigation, Chief Justice Narvasa had already cleared Gutierrez of any culpability. In an interview, he admitted that he even tried to dissuade the justice from resigning. —From the Internet pcijorg

Complaints will often be answered with something like a first or second endorsement, etc. Most often complaints will be merely filed away. Do not get your hopes up if you receive a response. Seldom will anything worthwhile be accomplished.

Here in the Philippines a written response acknowledging your complaint is considered action. In most parts of the world it is merely paperwork in preparation for resolving the issue. Corruption is not the only issue here as lawyers cite the Court's heavy workload, due to its inability to render decisions and its seeming incompetence and lack

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of brilliant legal minds. All these, they say, combine to make a Court where laws and procedures are applied helter-skelter. They accuse Andres Narvasa, who has been chief justice since 1991, of failing to lead the tribunal toward any discernible direction or coherent philosophy.

Precedents, on which the entire system of law is based, are overturned with enough frequency to confound the legal profession as well as some of the country's top lawyers, the Courts failing to rule with coherence and clarity on any disputes.

In December 1995, for example, the Court decided against the US manufacturer of Lee jeans which sued a local garments firm using the Lee trademark, Emerald Garments. The local firm, had been sewing an almost exact replica of the Lee logo on its jeans, except that it added the words "*Mr. Stylistic*" in small print. By deciding in favor of Emerald Garments, the Supreme Court overturned some two dozen precedents on the infringement of trademarks. It also went against the Philippines' international commitments to honor intellectual property rights. What are they telling foreign investors? What are they telling the world? Who are they trying to fool? The people who put their faith in the system or themselves?

*"That was a crazy decision,"* said lawyer and former Senator Rene A. V. Saguisag. *"I saw the logos and there really is a confusion in the public mind. It set a very bad precedent from the standpoint of law, public opinion and our international standing."* It is quite clear, that Lee jeans thought they had a fair playing field, but like the Security Stock Exchange, the system, is bet understood by the Filipino, who knows he [or she] can buy their way to any decision they want.

*"The legal system is no longer predictable and stable,"* said law professor and practitioner Haydee Yorac, who once served as election commissioner. *"Corruption aside, there has been no effort to establish a systematic order. I have nothing against the Supreme Court overturning established decisions, nothing against reversing precedents perceived to be wrong or against the Constitution. But in most instances, they don't even cite any basis for doing so."*

In many cases, the majority of justices go with the ponente's arguments for or against a case. The first step, then, is to get the ponente's identity. Although this is secret, lawyers say some Supreme Court personnel sell the information for something like P2, 000. Once the ponente is known, the approach begins.

This is why many big law offices have a two track practice: one track being to line up the legal arguments in the case and the other to lobby

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with members of the Court. "The key is to get the ponente," said Saguisag. "Some law offices would look for a connection, a former law school classmate, a kumpadre, a former justice, or a former associate in the law firm where the justice used to work... The game is to look for the katapat, the one whom the justice cannot refuse. In a transactional society, the katapat has some ascendancy."

One medium-sized company, for example, put a retired justice on its retainer so he could arrange access to Supreme Court justices. "The company gives him an initial fee of P50, 000 and after he contacts the ponente justice, our petition which is initially denied and practically a dead horse, at first impossible to revive, is suddenly given due course," the company lawyer confided in a 1995 letter to Saguisag. A separate payment was arranged for the justice, but the lawyer was not privy to the amount. Former President Estrada has availed of the services of a former Supreme Court Justice on his defense team, apparently assuming that the Filipino and the world is ignorant of his intentions.

One businessman interviewed believes he lost his case involving property worth hundreds of millions because he did not approach any of the justices and use their knowledge and vulnerability to acceptance of money. By the time he realized that his opponent was lobbying with the members of the Court, the decision had already been written.

"We've learned our lesson," said the businessman. "It's a bidding war. It's a business. It's a question of how much the property is worth to you, how much you're willing to pay... We were caught off guard. We should have bribed in the beginning. Unahan na lang."

But while businessmen can charge pay-offs as part of the cost of doing business, many lawyers are aghast. "We're very frustrated, we're helpless," said a senior lawyer in a Makati law firm. "We don't know what more to do. You can't rest if you have a case because your opponent may be maneuvering. Our ethical and moral dilemma is, you can't sit back while your client tells you, 'You must do something.' But what can you do that's ethical and moral? Our cop-out is, we tell the client, 'Do what you think you have to do.'" -From the Internet [pcij.org](http://pcij.org)

Suggestion: the judges have no one to blame but themselves for the lack of respect of the judicial system, for they revue cases in which blatant miscarriages of justice occur and seldom are any corrective measures taken against one of their own for selling out their honor and the pride of their country for a price. The primary blame for the poor governance of the country must be borne by that agency which

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has been so derelict in its duties in allowing abdication of the elected officials of their constitutional and legal responsibilities.

1. All public officials must be held responsible and accountable for their acts.
2. A periodic revue should be done to ascertain which judges have the most appeals pending and if the appeals were justified and whether or not the Judge's decision was within the intent of the law.
3. A committee of public and private sector individuals [*bar qualified as well as private citizens*] should be set up to evaluate the system and the judges whose actions are questionable.

Ramon Tulfo, 21 April 2001, in the Philippine Daily Inquirer says, "*Some justices will change facts at will, completely ignoring all the records, to reach a legal decision. The other justices who concur in the decision did so without reading the records of the case.*" From experience, true, true, true! Sad, but true. Justices change the rules regularly to support and defend the corrupt aristocracy and perpetuate the will of the privileged.

The United States had its '*Untouchables*' during the Prohibition Era to clean up crime. Perhaps the Philippines needs to appoint decent, law abiding managers, with free reign, to clean up the various agencies of graft and corruption. It appears that political meddling in the affairs of inter-agency transactions and transfers is primarily responsible for the depressing state of affairs now existing in government.

In the United States, American citizens can travel north to Canada, or south to Mexico and cross the borders without visas or passports. If the Philippine government opened up their borders and allowed all who wished to leave the freedom to do so, how many would stay? This is the true test of democracy and freedom. Freedom to choose. Would the Philippines then be left with only corrupt officials to steal from each other?

**DPWH**-Department of Public Works and Highways: responsible for roads, highways, and bridges. Another very corrupt agency which the governmental administrations talk about but do little or nothing, year after political year. High ranking department heads retire in sumptuous luxury in the finer parts of Manila at the expense of the people.

Suggestion: in Russia when a quake devastated many buildings the government went through the records and arrested all the contractors

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and public officials who had any dealings with the collapsed structures due to poor workmanship and materials.

In the Philippines, highways are deteriorating before they are actually finished. No one accepts responsibility for anything.

Politicians talk about cleaning up the mess, but actually do nothing but talk.

Contracts call for three to four inches of asphalt and only ½ inch is actually laid.

1. Who signed off on the contract?
2. Who pocketed money from the contract?
3. Who is to be held accountable?

Again the poor people are actually the ones who suffer as tricycle drivers, jeepney drivers, and bus drivers have to travel on roads that are unsafe in any country, including the Philippines, incurring high maintenance expenses while no agency wants the burden of enforcing laws, governmental contracts, or responsibility.

There is one case in which the mayor of a city actually off loaded dirt onto the paved streets causing not only dust, but a dangerous situation, took pictures of the streets, and received money for paving the streets which were already completed.

Agencies pass the buck. Until bureaucrats are held responsible, as per the law and constitution, there is no hope. For the poor will become poorer while the rich will enjoy the fruits of their labor [*that of the poor, not the rich*] In Cebu, a concrete road is deteriorating within one year of completion. The officials blame heavy trucks.

If the road is a primary artery to the city, should not this have been taken into consideration? Have any core samples been taken to ascertain if the road was completed to specs? Often the issue is not the deterioration but the continued pouring of money into a project which should have been monitored properly but kick backs and pay offs have placed the burden and responsibilities on the taxpayers, which rightfully belong to the bureaucrats.

Various departments spent about P929.9 million, 78 percent of which was taken from the DPWH. Funds allocated for the building of streets, highways, and bridges, instead, went for the construction of Ramos' Centennial Theme Park at Clark. Most of these releases were made at a time when FCCC had just been incorporated and was still a private entity. Government then was a minority shareholder yet it was already spending big sums.

President Ramos and Secretary Enriquez, together with five former department secretaries, according to the Senate blue ribbon

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committee, failed to show or present evidence that the amount that *“they funneled or caused to be funneled to the 1998 centennial celebration and its related projects had come from savings of their departments, agencies and/or offices, or had been specifically appropriated for such purpose.”*

Enriquez arguing that Executive Order 292 allows a realignment of funds on two conditions: there are *“savings”* from which the transfers will be taken, and the item to which the augmentation is being made must be an *“existing item in the budget.”* The realignments they made, he insisted, satisfied these two conditions.

Such fund transfers were made at the expense of other projects. The DPWH, for instance, completed only 34 percent of its 1998 infrastructure program, way below the 85 percent goal it was eyeing for the year. To date, it has completed only 59 percent of its 1998 work program.

Thus, the Senate blue ribbon committee concluded, the sums spent by the Ramos government on the Centennial Expo *“constitute a gross misuse and wanton misapplication of scarce government resources during a period of devastating financial crises.”* –From the Internet pcij.org

**Drugs**-a continuously growing threat here in the Philippines, as law enforcement agencies are often implicated in the sale of and cover up of efforts to eradicate the barangays of drug elements. The islands suffer as all developing *[and developed countries as well]* from the scourge of drugs which are responsible for increased crimes and an augmented burden upon society. Some say drugs are here by invitation, not by invasion, however, the facts remain that society does not need this dirge which destroys everyone in its path. Drugs were the scourge of society in the days of Socrates who recognized the diabolical effects they had on the people and realized the need to eradicate this dilemma.

**DSWD**-Department of Social Welfare and Development, oddly enough, this department manages to stay out of the news as much as possible.

**Ecumenical**-Christian unity. This is a Christian world and like it or not discriminates against non-Christians, which is one of their problems with the Mindanao Muslims. Catholics need to learn, via education, to appreciate the diversified cultures of their land. Periodically the Muslims will organize into new para-military factions to show their dis-satisfaction with Imperial Manila and its intolerance towards them by denying them equality in funding and

sharing of government resources. The Muslims becoming feared in Mindanao for their willingness to fight for what they know is their inheritance and right to a classless society.

In Mindanao, all sorts of people and groups compete for legitimacy and recognition with the local government in the province, including the Marines, the Army, legal and illegal loggers, the *ustadz*, the Catholic priests and laity, and kidnappers. The Christians, who had migrated to the province, control the economy, while the Muslims remain the poorest of the poor.

Abdurajak, leader of the Abu Sayyaf's, and his preaching of the Islamic faith provided his province-mates temporary escape from the ills of society and corrupt governance. It did not take long for him to convince hard-core recruits that it is the Christians who continued to deprive them of life's barest essentials. The Abu Sayyaf gained headway in Sulu Province on Jolo Island, which, like Basilan, is among the Philippines' 10 poorest Provinces. —From an article by Glenda M. Gloria on the Internet pcij.org

**Electrification**-the government has made a commitment to the people to divest itself of Napocor, and reduce the cost of electricity [*which is now the third highest in Southeast Asia*] Taxpayers will be bridled with the commercial debt of P150 billion, incurred by Napocor, due to years of cronyism, nepotism, and ineptness in management [*The Bataan Nuclear Power Plant fell by the wayside long ago*]

In an article "*In Haste, Arroyo Government Approves Controversial IMPSA Deal,*" Luz Rimban states that just four days after assuming office, the government of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo gave the final approval to the most controversial power project in the country: a \$470 million hydroelectric power contract that was awarded to the Argentine firm IMPSA [*Industrias Metalurgicas Pescarmona Sociedad Anonima*] In an article dated 16 Nov. 2000, by Deidre Sheehan, she quotes Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as saying, "*We need to immediately send the message that we will be a government of transparency and a level playing field.*"

The Argentineans have attempted for years to sway the congressional members with various types of enticements [*you figure it out*] The Argentines, who brought us Eva Peron who instituted a lottery system and mass advertising to cover up the theft of the country's wealth. The Argentines whose civil servants went on strike, nationally, July 2001, in an attempt to force the government to increase their salaries [*Due to corruption and ineptness the government reduced their*

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*salaries 13% and also reduced their retirements, pension plan]* Isn't there a law on the books regarding foreign ownership of power companies? But, since when have congressmen ever worried about the law? Argentina suffers from a \$128 billion deficit and has imposed a 13% across the board reduction in federal spending, yet they have available funds to help the Philippines? Something is substantially remiss here!

For eight years, the project to rehabilitate and operate the 750-megawatt Caliraya-Botocan-Kalayaan [CBK] power complex in Laguna was in limbo due to various state agencies and rival private companies objecting to what they said was the favorable treatment IMPSA was seeking from the government allegedly showering millions of pesos upon legislators.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, who was then just two days in his post, set aside these objections and removed the legal obstacles to the turnover of the CBK complex to the Argentine firm, and two weeks later, on February 7, the government-owned National Power Corporation [NPC] formally handed to IMPSA the most strategic power facility in Luzon. What Perez signed soon after he became justice secretary was the document IMPSA had been waiting for. That opinion deviated from the norm: It is not numbered [*unlike other justice department rulings*], and has not yet been published, reflecting a *lack of transparency*. The Macapagal regime claims transparency will be the hallmark of her administration, and yet business goes on as usual, the politicians placing their personal assets before those of the people.

The haste with which the turnover was made under an administration that had barely come into power has raised eyebrows in the power sector. It has also focused attention on the role played in the IMPSA saga of two well-connected individuals who have helped steer the Argentine company through the rough waters of three administrations: Mark Jimenez, a former trusted crony of ousted President Joseph Estrada, and Carlos Villa Abrille, a half-Argentine businessman who has been Philippine Ambassador to Buenos Aires since the time of former President Fidel Ramos.

It was Villa Abrille who was helping iron out the kinks in the IMPSA deal up to the last days of the Estrada administration. Three days before the president was ousted, businessmen close to him said, the ambassador was in Estrada's Greenhills mansion, seeking Malacañang's help in getting a justice department opinion favoring IMPSA. On January 18, a newspaper article said former finance



secretary Edgardo Espiritu had cited *"the IMPSA power plant project, supposedly involving Mark Jimenez, as the first among many allegedly anomalous transactions."*

The IMPSA case, dating back to 1993, shows the lack of transparency in the awarding of multibillion-peso government contracts. It also reveals the opportunities for brokering and deal making that arise from the privatization of the potentially lucrative power sector with almost total disregard as to the interest of the people.

*"There have been unseen hands working on this contract,"* said Senator Sergio Osmeña, Jr., who has been opposing the IMPSA contract for the past two years. Osmeña, however, is himself identified with the Lopez family, which owns the First Private Power Corp. The Lopez' lost out to IMPSA, even if they, too, had their connections in Malacañang.

*"That's the difficulty with business in this country, it's not a level playing field,"* said a businessman familiar with the IMPSA case and who has brokered deals between government and private firms since the Marcos era. The case of IMPSA has been the most publicized, but similar questions have been raised about other power plant contracts, including the one involving the rehabilitation of the Binga hydroelectric power plant in Benguet. What these cases have in common is the connections private companies make at the highest levels of government to wangle contracts advantageous to them at the detriment of the public.

What do these 'honorable' politicians care, so long as they get their *"piece of the action."* Isn't that what politics is all about? Take as much as you can while you can and don't worry about the poor? Promise them [*the masses*] anything, but give them nothing?

What may have convinced lenders to invest in the project was a line in the Secretary Perez ruling that *said, "...the Republic of the Philippines has validly and effectively consented to the transfer and assignment to the Lenders of all of CBK's rights under the Government Undertaking."*

Former finance department officials said the statement commits the government to agreements entered into by IMPSA and its creditors. *"It's a dangerous statement to make,"* said a former finance assistant secretary. *"It's an additional defense for IMPSA against the NPC. It could put the Republic in a very precarious situation."* In other words, what do they care, if there are any negative repercussions [losses] the people will just pay more for electricity. Sad to say, but

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over and over again we see that the personal financial gain of politicians is more important than the financial interests of the country. Their only consideration is when they can buy another new car and make another trip to the States to spend their money, without the prying eyes of the Filipino news media.

Passing the buck, is indicative of this administration as well as the previous, as newly appointed Justice Secretary, Perez, defends his decision. *"There is nothing illegal in the contract,"* he said, adding that the IMPSA opinion was just one of the standard rulings justice secretaries are made to sign. *"To begin with, I didn't know it was controversial... My staff looked into it and if there's any impropriety, it should have been discussed at other levels."* Isn't the status of Justice Secretary to protect the interests of the nation or has Secretary Perez never been informed of this?—From pcij.org

A study made by Dr. Wayne White of the U.S. based consultancy firm Foresight Associates reveals, the San Roque Dam Pangasinan power project is not a low cost provider of electricity.

A competitive project, White says, should provide electricity at approximately P2 per kWh or less. But sample calculations of monthly billings included in the PPA range from P13 to P21 per kWh, six to twelve times the *normal* cost of power. While Filipino politicians proclaim the savings and safety of the dam, a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers with expertise on structural, environmental and geo-technical aspects of earth and concrete structures, Grifoni expresses doubts whether the design of such a sensitive project like the San Roque dam was based on the recommended maximum credible earthquake [MCE], the most severe level of earthquake, to be able to withstand its effects, which does not include other potential safety factors such as sediment and upstream mining wastes. —From pcij.org

**E-mail**—The downfall of a corrupt presidency, in an article by Alecks P. Pabico, *"Estrada did try to bully his critics, including the media, into silence. But his scandal-tainted, bumbling presidency had no choice but to endure the wrath—and wit—emanating out of some 200 Web sites and about a hundred email discussion groups that sprouted like kangkong during the rainy season, especially after 'Juetenggate' broke out last October. All engaged in anti-Erap rhetoric; all clamored for his resignation, impeachment and ouster. Among the most prominent of these online endeavors was elagda.com, which tried to solicit a million signatures in 21 days to pressure Estrada to step down. The arguably quixotic effort failed, amassing only 90*

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115,000 sign-ups. But out of it emerged 25,000 e-mandirigmas (cyberwarriors) across the globe, organized in an e-group that waged letter-writing campaigns to the senator-judges in the impeachment trial.”

**Embarrassment**-what the Filipino people endured worldwide during the impeachment trial of their President. The world was witness to Philippine justice on television, and what did they see? A mockery of the system, with no shame, on the part of the senators whose only interest was in protecting their own financial indiscretions by concealing how politicians obtain and retain illegal bank accounts to fund homes for mistresses and trips to the States.

**Facilis Descensus Averno**-fä-ki-‘lis-dÄ-‘skÄn-‘sus-ä-“wer-nÖ-“*The road to evil is easy.*” The problem with politics. Suggestion: the Filipino people should look at the historical facts and not listen to present day pontification of the politician. What has she or he done to improve the quality of life in their town or city? How much went into their pockets?

It is an accepted practice in the Philippines for government officials to pocket a percentage of the monies allocated to their municipality or province.

This means the people actually have to pay twice for everything. If the leaders cannot live off of their salaries, perhaps they should seek another line of work. The poor have to budget their meager incomes, why not the rich? Many politicians merely see the people and the public treasuries as an endless bank account to use at their own discretion.

**Falsus In Uno Falsus In Omnibus**-“*Falsity in one, falsity in all.*” Similar to American law, if one is caught in a lie, the testimony is thrown out, as the individual has proven himself or herself as a liar. Courts do not like to enforce this if the liar is a public official, but for you or I...beware!

**Freedom of the Press**-Although the Filipino proclaims he has basic freedoms, amongst which is Freedom of the Press, in actuality it is non-existent. Witness the tragedy in the year 2000 when the Manila Times declared bankruptcy due to the President exerting political pressure on the subscribers and advertisers because the newspaper wrote an article describing the President in an *‘unfavorable light.*” The classic *Times Magazine* was also banished from the Philippines due to an article eluding to the corruption of the Presidency. This lack of freedom of the press dates back to the history of this land when the Catholic Church was instrumental in banning material which it

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deemed objectionable via the Forbidden Index, and still does, to a certain degree.

**Frustration**-What you will encounter when dealing with bureaucrats and other elected public officials in the Philippines. You will not be able to obtain permits, licenses, documents, etc., because:

1. The official in charge is on leave and no one else in the office can assist you.
2. You have come to the wrong office and need to present your documentation to another municipality or city.
3. You will be given documents to fill out and upon completion will be given another set of documents [*not necessarily a complete set*]
4. You will be told to fill out the required set of documents in triplicate and when you return with the documents, you will be informed that you now need five complete sets.
5. You will be told to furnish 1x1 pictures and when supplied you will be informed that the pictures must be 2x2 format.
6. The pictures will not be accepted because you did not wear a shirt with a collar or have on a jacket.
7. The picture is in black in white and must be in color.
8. The pictures are in color and must be in black and white.
9. The documents supplied are incomplete [*not your fault*]
10. You must come back in the afternoon.
11. You must have an appointment.
12. You must come back tomorrow.
13. The background in the pictures is of the wrong color.
14. The pictures are no good because they are more than X-number of days old.
15. The required documents are not notarized.
16. No one will help you because they are too busy.
17. Your documents have been lost.
18. Your documents are sitting at the bottom of a large pile and will not be processed for some length of time.
19. Public officials will be seen reading newspapers and texting but no one will assist you because they don't have an assistant to facilitate your paperwork.
20. And the list can go on and on and on...

Needless to say, the bureaucrats will do everything in an attempt to force you to hire a 'fixer' who will assist you and who knows how much to give each officer [*under the table*] Things have not changed

in over 100 years since Rizal first brought these matters to the attention of the world.

**Gambling**-a game of chance. Cockfighting, Lotto, and Bingo are the legal favorites [*Although the Church denies that Bingo is gambling*] Jai-alai has been attempting legalization for some time now and a senior Malacañang official, conducted a probe in 1995, when Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, Narvasa, was accused of delaying the release of a decision banning the resumption of jai-alai to favor his eldest son, Andres Jr., who ran the jai-alai restaurant. The chief justice was also seen dining with controversial businessman Sy Pio Lato, the jai-alai franchise holder, while the Court was deliberating on the case.

In an interview, Narvasa said the meeting took place at the retirement party of his cousin. "*There were hundreds of people there,*" said the chief, but he was put in the same table as the franchise holder, Sy, who was also a guest.

When the Court ruled on the case, Narvasa inhibited himself but he did not release the decision immediately. He cited a constitutional provision saying that all decisions taken by the court en banc should be *signed by every member who took part in the deliberations*. One of the justices was then ill and could not sign.

Later, however, lawyers in an impeachment case filed against Narvasa, prosecutors were able to dig up 72 decisions made by the Court which were *not* signed by all the justices.

**Graft**-illicit gain. Financial rewards by illegal means. Common amongst the bureaucrats and elected public officials who clash with their rivals for promotions and then abuse their positions to gain more rewards with total disregard to the consequences and how their actions affect the people and the future of their country[*Compare with the corruption in the Catholic Church during the Medieval Era when the Borgia and Medici families clashed over the Papacy*]

Many politicians as well as civilians are killed or assassinated [*polite verb to describe a heinous crime*] every election year in the Philippines. The price of campaigning is high, and the rewards for winning are even higher. Again, the ones who really suffer are the poor.

Suggestion:

1. Suspend public employees who have cases filed against them.
2. Allow no one to run for public office who has any case outstanding over one year, or allow no paycheck to the public official

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until the case is resolved. I think that will clear up the back logged court system. This will also prevent continuations and further waste of public monies in the court systems.

**GRO**-Guest relations officer. An acronym intended to alleviate the shame for those young ladies who are compelled to work the night club scene in order to support their families. The media likes to blame foreigners for anything and everything that is wrong with the Philippines and ignores the local tourism which perpetuates this trade.

**Gun Control**-During the previous administrations the Philippine government succeeded in removing guns from the law abiding public [*sources say the corrupt military made a lot of money selling weapons confiscated from decent citizens, without ever being compensated, and acting in conformity with the law*] The public is now at the mercy of drug lords, warlords, crooked politicians and their goons, and a corrupt police system which in many cases are the culprits behind large scale crime. It's not a pretty picture.

**Historic**-the islands are full of beautiful historic sites as well as a population friendly milieu. Many colonial stone structures dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

**Honor**-Love this word. It takes on a new meaning here: what the politicians demand but seldom deserve.

Honor is a title given to preserve the precious vanity of those who might otherwise have more descriptive adjectives supplemented to their family names [*Not that most aren't deserving of it*]

A title once given by Kings to those who helped the monarchy giving the individual dispensation from the laws of the land. Many politicians actually think and act as if they are above the law.

**Hospitals**-If you are in need of a good hospital, contact the RAO in Angeles City, which is in this book. There are some good doctors here in the Philippines. Some hospitals, however, make it a practice of charging foreigners extra [*there are two pricing schedules*] Other hospitals make "extra" money by hiring doctors to fabricate [*forge*] false medical records with fake indigent patients and applying for federal funds. "Destitute" and "indigent" patients are paid to lay in hospital beds when the declared inspection officials are to appear. Health officials are aware of this, but look the other way, if they get their "cut."

Suggestion:

1. Do not allow health officials to announce their inspection dates.
2. Rotate the staff regularly.

3. Supervisors should get out in the field to follow up on inspections randomly.

4. Random samples and follow ups should be conducted periodically to find out what is happening to the taxes of the people.

**Hotels**-there are many beautiful hotels throughout the country as well as tourist spots. Try and make reservations if you can as some are usually booked for holidays and high tourist season. In some cities the water is shut off at night, rendering sprinkler systems useless, therefore keep this in mind if you get a room on a top floor. Or, ask the clerk at the front desk if they have a back up water supply [as well as an emergency generator system] to ease your conscience.

**Ignatius of Loyola**-AD 1491–1556, Loyola is founder of Society of Jesus [*Jesuits*], which started many illustrious colleges in the Philippines [*for the families of the Spaniards*]

**Justice**-The Dept. of Justice, Immigration, Customs, Education, Public Highways, Department of the Interior and Local Government and every major government organization is riddled with graft and corruption, often rendering decisions to the highest bidder, a fact they attempt to conceal from the public and tourists, but is plainly visible when traveling in the more than adequate amount of poor who pay the price tenfold for corruption which robs them of a decent livelihood.

Suggestion:

1. Periodic evaluations of the decisions of the judges should be done to ascertain if the judges are rendering decisions in keeping with the intent of the laws.

2. All complaints [regarding governance] should be handled by a centralized office.

3. The complainant should receive an acknowledgement of his or her complaint and a caseworker to follow the complaint through.

4. An investigation should be followed with a letter [*within 15 working days*] to the complainant acknowledging who the case worker or investigator is along with a copy of the results to the complainant.

Often cases are investigated without letting the complainant knowing and therefore defenseless to act upon the "*accepted findings*" of the agencies involved. A case in question had a foreigner assaulted at Aquino airport and investigated without notification of the complainant [*foreigner*] with a decision being rendered after acquiring affidavits from the accused and his associates. –See complaint No. ADM-0-99-0732 and OMB-0-99-1770 in which the

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Ombudsman's Office covered up the airport assault, and make it appear that a polio victim, recovering from cancer, with a titanium prosthesis device in his back and having undergone three knee operations did physically assault airport security personnel and a member of the Bureau of Immigration. Mr. Reyes was surprised to discover that Mr. Aniano A. Desierto, Mr. Christopher S. Soguillon, Mr. Rainer C. Almazan, Mr. Cezar M. Tirol II, and Ms. Mary Susan S. Guillermo of the Office of the Ombudsman, Manila, did not declare an on-site transient miracle in order for Mr. Reyes to fend off or assault so many individuals [*depending upon whose story you care to believe, and undoubtedly, being in constant 24 hour pain, Mr. Reyes would have been more appreciative if the miracle had lasted more than a few moments*]

At no time was a request for additional information asked from the victim, either for clarification or otherwise. The Ombudsman in Manila dismissed the case for "*lack of merit*" and another attorney from the Ombudsman office, after the accused admitted beating the foreigner, further stated that the foreigner instigated the matter. A cover-up, from start to finish. Filipino friends in the States merely stated, "*Welcome to the Philippines, Filipino style!*" Assaults against foreigners, at the Manila airport, are common here due to corruption from the bottom up, only you don't read about it because they aren't, in many cases, recorded.

**Kangaroo court**-A mock court. The Filipino is knowledgeable in how the system works and the courts oblige [see Justice] therefore it is often a moot point in filing a case, as the highest bidder will often win. There may come a day when this term is referred to the Filipino court system, much to the consternation of the '*honorable*' judges.

**Laws**-The Philippine Constitution is the law of the land. And, the legislature is imposed upon to pass laws as are necessary to promote the general welfare of the country. Unfortunately, lawmakers appear to write laws merely to quell the outcries of the poor at the amusement of the rich and powerful. The law, in its present state, now bars prosecution of cases involving unexplained wealth among government officials within a year from national elections. Does this law help the people or the politicians? Was the intention of this law to promote or prevent corruption?

**L'état, c'est moi**-[lÀ-ta-se-mwa], French: the state, it is I. The attitude of most politicians. From the local mayors who run their little fiefdoms, to the governors who cater to them in hopes of getting re-elected. The public official may appear to be helping you, but beware,



his or her only interest is often only financial gain. Do not be deceived by these somnambulists who only appear to be performing rudimentary functions.

**LITFRB**-Land Transportation Federal Regulatory Board, another do little agency. “*No one filed a formal complaint,*” or “*It is not within our jurisdiction,*” are terms familiar to those who have tried to use the powers of this agency.

Suggestion:

1. If a wrong is known, it should be investigated...period.
2. If the respective agency is not endowed with powers to investigate it should forward the complaint or incident to the agency which does have the power to act.
3. Passing the buck within agencies is another bureaucratic maneuver to circumvent justice here. The DILG should reprimand and if necessary remove those in power from agencies which pass the buck and refuse to perform tasks within their jurisdiction.

As the price of oil escalates worldwide, jeepney, taxi, and tricycle drivers are compelled to present their cases before the ITFRB to justify an increase in their fares. The drivers having to show a loss before they can substantiate an increase.

Suggestion: Develop a policy whereby the rates set by public transportation drivers can be automatically increased based on the cost of gasoline or diesel at the pumps. A public notice being issued notifying participants as to the amount. This would alleviate the cost to the drivers of having to negotiate through unions and other representatives, which at best a slow and tedious process, which only exacerbates their losses.

**LTO**-Land Transportation Office-another bureaucratic agency which will do nothing, unless a formal complaint is filed. And even then, will interpret the law to assist other bureaucrats [allegedly not within their jurisdiction, not filing in a timely manner, lacking the proper affidavits, etc.] This is the prevailing problem in the Philippines. Public agencies do nothing, even when they know a wrong has been committed. Bureaucrats have become lazy and noncompliant in their jobs and have used any excuse as reason not to perform the functions which they are in effect being paid for.

The following adjectives are too nice to be used to describe some of the public servants: negligent, arrogant, incompetent, not qualified, ill-mannered, and unsuitable. And yet, as the Filipino, complains of this dilemma, the government continues to do nothing [*except more talk regarding the problems which continue to plague the public*]

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## Suggestion:

1. All criminal acts which fall within an agency's jurisdiction should be investigated, regardless of whether or not there has been a formal complaint filed.
2. Failure to follow through upon an omission in the line of duty or the offender should be punishable by automatic suspension of the supervisor first in line for responsibility and accountability for the offense committed.
3. Periodic field inspections should be made to ascertain if taxi drivers, jeepney drivers, and tricycle drivers are complying with the law as to preset public transportation rates.

Even the sports writer, Mr. Graeme A. Mackinnon of The Freeman newspaper wrote of an ugly incident in his 22 June 2001 article... "*As we pulled away from the curb the driver advised that the fare was P150. The blood began boil, then calmly I told the driver...*" Exploiting the foreigner is a common practice, which the LTFRB should address and rectify before there is another ugly incident such as occurred in Cebu.

**Magellan**-AD 1480–1521, a Portuguese navigator, and explorer who was defeated and killed by the native chieftain, Lapu Lapu, who had inferior weapons. Introduced corruption with the arrival of the friars and the acceptance of Spanish laws, from which the Filipino has never recovered.

**Malversation**-misbehavior or corruption in office. Betrayal of trust in a corrupt administration. Seldom is action taken against public officials and less than that against elected officials. Those entrusted with public funds enrich their personal accounts at the expense of the public with public agencies pointing fingers at each as to who is responsible for taking action against the culprits [another form of passing the buck as governmental agencies have an unwritten code of doing nothing to help the public, or so it would appear]

**Masons**-The Free and Accepted Masons. As a fellow brother, it grieves me deeply to have to mention this dignified group, but for lack of action in the exclusion of members who bring shame upon this illustrious body of men, I must. The renown Daniel Webster speaking to his fellow Masons said, "*Let our object be, our country, our whoel country, and nothing but our country. And, by the blessing of God, may that country itself become a vast and splendid monument, not of oppression and terror, but of wisdom, of peace and of liberty, upon which the world may gaze with admiration forever.*"

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This is I believe in wholeheartedly without any mental reservation whatsoever.

The Brotherhood in the Philippines has been grossly neglectful in attending to its own and setting them on the right path. The vows taken were to help one another, not to protect one for his crimes. Therefore, if ever you should wronged by a Mason in the Philippines, mail your complaint to the following:

The Grand Lodge of Free & Accepted Masons of the Philippines  
Plaridel Masonic Temple  
1440 San Marcelino Street  
Ermita, Manila, 1000  
Tel. No. 524-3263  
Fax No. 522-2218  
E-mail: [glphils@surfshop.net.ph](mailto:glphils@surfshop.net.ph)  
[micon@surfshop.net.ph](mailto:micon@surfshop.net.ph)

Or  
The Supreme Council, 33°  
1733 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW  
Washington DC, 20009-3103  
USA

A proud history surrounds the Masons whose allegiance to God and country has made them a persecuted group throughout history. Too much respectability is encompassed in the brotherhood to let a few scalawags tarnish their heritage. Rizal, believing in the principles of Masonry, was a member, as was George Washington [*the first President of the US*] and most of the signers of the Declaration of Independence.

**Mass media**-Believe it or not, the newspapers and other mass media often report the corruption which is so rampant across the country. And it is often used as an instrument of the corruption it reports. Exposing the wrongdoing of local governments and businesses is not the only reason for the existence of community papers.

Television personalities, regrettably, will only televise that which they are paid for or which will not rock the existing oligarchy. Nothing too controversial on television, perhaps after the newspapers have had their say.

Newspapers are sometimes published even if they lose money, their chief objective being not profit but influence. In a country where there is intense competition among rival elites in the political milieu and for business opportunities subject to arbitrary and not always

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unbiased state regulation, businesspeople are inevitably forced to use every weapon in their arsenal to influence those who run the apparatus of government. Owning a newspaper can mean having legitimacy and political clout.

In a study done on the community press six years ago, University of the Philippines professor Crispin Maslog found that not all papers had been set up with noble motives in mind. Some swiftly became mouthpieces of their politician-owners, while others promoted the mercenary AC-DC (attack-and-collect, defend-and-collect) type of journalism, using their papers as means to blackmail local businessmen and politicians.

Emilio Yap personifies the interventionist press proprietor, running the Manila Bulletin newspaper in a manner that some Bulletin editors describe as authoritarian. *"The courts are the closest to Yap's heart because of his many lawsuits,"* says an editor. *"He is still uncertain about the future of his company and he believes that the courts will decide his fate."* Part of the uncertainty stems from the still unsettled claims of Eduardo Cojuangco and of Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. on a significant chunk of Bulletin shares. -From pcij.org

The Manila Times editors prevailed in 1995, when the paper was preparing to run a special report on questionable expenses incurred by the Office of the House Speaker, Jose de Venecia, got wind of the article. The family was divided. John Gokongwei himself did not want to displease the Speaker, who had begun hinting of past favors. The Gokongwei daughters, however, put up a fight. The editors were also adamant, fearful that if they gave in to this request, it would open the floodgate to similar demands. In the end, the editors, and the daughters, won. They were not as successful last March, when Robina Gokongwei-Pe, apparently on orders from her father, wrote the front page apology to Estrada, after an article was published describing his unscrupulousness.

But Times editor-in-chief Malou Mangahas, founder of PCIJ, and a member of its board, sees the editor-proprietor relationship as a continuing struggle, and considers that with some battles won and some lost, the editors' odds of winning are fairly even.

Until the murderers of the journalists are brought to justice, does the Philippines truly have freedom of the press? The unmitigated killing of news media personnel deprives society of its right to know and the only means by which corruption can be brought to the forefront so that it may eradicated once and for all.

*“Some writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness positively by uniting our affections, the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.”* –By Thomas Paine.

**MCIA**-Mactan Cebu International Airport. This agency has made remarkable advances in the last few years. Many tourists now preferring to embark and disembark here rather than Manila. Less traffic, faster processing, and a relaxed native ambiance. Negative incidences in the past, to my knowledge, have been addressed and rectified, with increased security and upgraded facilities. The Immigration officials in Manila declare another cleanup campaign, which in the lingua franca means more of the same...nothing! The primary issue at Cebu is will they now improve the taxi situation or will they continue to allow the taxis to fleece the tourists.

**Naïve**-lacking in worldly wisdom. How the politicians like to keep the natives. The Filipino is much smarter than you think, the major problem is how to combat corruption when all public officials cooperate with each other and render their laws, and even their constitution, to meaningless pieces of paper.

Corruption could not exist without the political lackeys, bureaucrats, who support the elected officials. They protect each other. If a high ranking official is terminated from his position for gross misconduct, lack of accountability, misplaced ethics, or whatever, just wait until the media calms down over their indiscretions, and the same names will reappear as heads of other agencies. This tacit acquiescence goes on year after year.

**NHA**-National Housing Authority: a governmental agency tasked with providing housing for the poor. Heads of this activity are by way of political favors and it is quite obvious in the do little attitude of the staff. Kick backs, lack of proper implementation of federal rules, unaccountability, etc. Across the nation, when a housing project is completed, it is advertised all over the country to show the people that the agency exists and has completed something.

The poor when given housing often have to sell their homes because they lack food.

Suggestion:

1. Housing for the poor should be monitored more responsibly

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2. Political favoritism should be curtailed if not eliminated entirely
3. A covenant should go with the land so that it may not be sold or title transferred for a period of years, insuring the families who are relocated into low income housing the opportunity the establish themselves in the community
4. Job training and assistance should be made available along with relocation
5. New owners should be fingerprinted, photos taken, and adequate documentation received so that the recipients can be properly identified and declared ineligible for other housing opportunities.

**Notary**-required for documents submitted in a formal complaint. Many lawyers will not notarize [refuse] when they discover you are filing a complaint against a public official.

Suggestion:

1. The process of filing a complaint should be simplified without the necessity of a notary.
2. When and if the case goes to court, or is heard by a regulatory body, a court official can certify and document that what the complainant says is true and to the best of their ability.
3. Simplification of the complaint process will help the poor who are often naive as to the political system and must acquiesce to the corrupt system, thereby suffering quietly.

**NFA**-the National Food Authority which has representatives who travel worldwide, at public expense, to cheat the people of the Philippines, by procuring rice at inflated prices and pocketing huge profits. Viet Nam was once an import nation and in the last ten years has become an export nation of rice. And the sad part is they used Philippine technology to gain that status. According to Gil C. Cabacungan of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, 23 May 2001, pg. B-3, *“The country is fast losing ground in the region’s tourism business with more tourists now going to Viet Nam than the Philippines and with Brunei currently being groomed as a hub for the New Zealand-South America route.”*

Will the Philippines continue to be an importer of rice while their neighbors become rich due to corruption in the bureaucracy?

Suggestion:

1. If the bureaucrats cannot contain or eliminate the graft and corruption within the agency, then replace them.
2. Appoint independent monitors to review acquisitions.

3. Review political appointees as to their effectiveness in prior positions in eliminating graft and corruption. What was their previous success record? Political favoritism at the expense of the people will soon be at the expense of the country as well if action is not taken.

**Noblesse oblige**-nŌ-“bles-€“blÈzh\, nobility obligates, cir. 1837, the obligation of honorable and responsible behavior associated with high rank or birth. Politicians enjoy many privileges without the related responsibility and accountability which normally goes with such privileges. Kind of like little kings and queens, responsible to no one. Perhaps these public officials retain the ‘*Honorable*’ placards on their desks to avoid more discernible uncomplimentary adjectives being enjoined to them.

**Ombudsman**- The elected officials are granted forgiveness via the Ombudsman’s Office. More than half of all cases filed before this office are dismissed for lack of merit, which is a bureaucratic term for the complainant is not properly:

1. Notified
2. Informed of judicial etiquette
3. Advised of how to file formal charges
4. Alerted to re-filing or case would be dismissed
5. Politically connected [Evidence was not properly secured and disappeared [as is the case regarding drugs and other contraband materials]
6. Lacks merit because the complainant didn’t pay or isn’t influential enough.

Most cases against elected officials contrary to news accounts are not dismissed due to lack of merit on the part of the complainant’s charges, but lack of merit upon the office tasked with investigation. The Office of the Ombudsman will not:

1. Notify the complainant of any requirements.
2. Notify the complainant or request additional information if necessary.
3. Notify the complainant of any time parameters.
4. Notify the complainant in writing with copies or affidavits already submitted.
5. Notify the complainant of anything which could jeopardize the position of the respondent.

It appears that the Office of the Ombudsman was created to protect/insulate public officials from being sued. There is definitely no fair playing field as you cannot sue a public official without going

“*We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth, however bitter it may be.*” Jose Rizal

through this office, the official on the other hand can bypass this office. The layman is at a distinct disadvantage as many politicians arrogantly challenge them to ‘*Sue me!*’ Knowing they can’t without the approval of this body which shelters them from the masses.

What does this say for the system? Of course, in a highly political matter, if the case starts from the top and works its way down, rest assured the high ranking officials may receive a daily report [*such as the Office of the President*], the poor Filipino complaining that it’s not what you know, but who you know that counts. “*Men who look upon themselves born to reign, and others to obey, soon grow insolent.*” —By Thomas Paine.

The Office of the Ombudsman is at no loss in the expenditure of public moneys as the Visayan office spends P30,000.00 on a junket to Iloilo City for four prosecutors. Their states purpose? To appear at the hearings of two of its cases involving motions for reconsideration. An investigation revealed there was no scheduled hearing since the Regional Trial Court in Iloilo was celebrating the centenary of the Supreme Court. In other words, the court was closed. From an article by Fred P. Languido, of *The Freeman Newspaper*, 23 June 2001, pg. 2. And, of course, all the supervisors will pass the buck as to responsibility and accountability.

This is the agency tasked with accountability of public officials, public moneys, and public waste. This agency, being a part of the Judicial system should attempt to maintain transparency at all time, at all costs, in order to maintain the semblance of law and order.

In an article by by Cecile C. A. Balgos she states, “...*Ombudsman, Aniano Desierto was accused by newly appointed Solicitor General Ricardo Galvez of ignoring evidence when the Ombudsman dismissed a complaint against alleged Marcos crony Herminio Disini. And while the Office of the Ombudsman has finally managed to file a case regarding the multibillion-peso Public Estates Authority-Amari land scam, the Sandiganbayan has, on motion of those accused, resolved to return the case to it for reinvestigation.*”

“*The graft court apparently saw merit in the claims of the accused that the Ombudsman had disregarded their rights to procedural due process... Far from striking fear in civil servants and bureaucrats from doing questionable deeds, the Office of the Ombudsman instead has been eliciting disappointment—if not contempt—among many of those seeking redress for the wrongdoing of public officials.*”



“...the Office got caught in a scandal involving 11 dead bank robbery suspects, three generals, a colonel and over 20 of their men, plus 10 television sets supposedly bought on a 20 percent discount.” Hooray for Ms. Balgos! As a foreigner, Mr. Reyes, personally, had three cases brought before Mr. Desierto, and can attest to the incompetence of his office.

1. Never notified of any investigations.
2. Never requested submission of affidavits regarding cases.
3. Never requested to appear.
4. Never requested to give testimony.
5. Never furnished affidavits of alleged witnesses.
6. Never notified of affidavits by alleged witnesses.
7. Never has Mr. Reyes been denied of his due process, of course, except in the Philippines, where the masses have become accustomed to it.

In Cebu, the Supreme Court issued a 25 page decision against one of their own, Judge Marcos, for his “*Having tarnished the image of the judiciary, respondent must be meted out the severest form of disciplinary sanction-dismissal from service.*” Executive Judge Galicano Arriessgado saying the Marcos case should serve as a lesson to all government employees to follow the standard norms of morality. Goodness! What is the court saying? That judges can deny us due process, accept bribes, threaten us, cost the tax payers billions of pesos in corrupt decisions, just don’t appear publicly with your girlfriends?

It appears that on decisions of morality the judges are to be held to a higher standard than the President. It appears that decisions on principles hold more credence in their moralistic values system than the pain and suffering of the masses by virtue of bringing embarrassment upon the judiciary for what? Flaunting his relationship? Or was it just only too obvious? I believe the judiciary should take a long look at other rogues in robes who are also a disgrace, and just because they haven’t been indicted doesn’t mean that the judicial branch is off the hook, more the reason to examine their own ethical doctrine.

Private complainants have resorted to holding rallies in front of the Office of the Ombudsman in attempts to make it move faster. Early last year, irate members of the Justice for the Ozone Victims Foundation, Inc (JOVFI) had such a demonstration.

Many young Filipinos lost their lives [over 160] in a fire at a club which never should have opened its doors due to lack of adequate

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exiting and the only door leading out opening in the wrong direction. The few survivors waiting years for their settlement. The fire, on March 18, 1996, took many lives, but more than that it showed the cover up by officials denying responsibility.

An investigation conducted after the fire showed it was caused by an electrical overload of the disco's electrical system, and also revealed other violations of the national building and fire codes, including the absence of fire safety devices, lack of proper sprinkler system, lack of an automatic alarm system, as well as properly marked or lighted fire exits. No Quezon officials have been indicted.

Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena is hard-pressed for kind words to say about the quality of work done by the office that investigates, prepares and prosecutes all the cases filed in his court. Instead, he deadpanned in an interview last year: "*Our level of frustration is increasing, while our level of tolerance is beginning to be worn down.*"

*"Their filing of flawed informations is intentional,"* insisted a seasoned lawyer who has had clients who filed complaints at the Ombudsman, "*unless they're really that stupid in that office.*"

In typical bureaucratic fashion insiders now say Desierto may not be entirely to blame as far as the Office's snail-like pace is concerned. In large part, this flaw can be traced back to the tenure of Vasquez, who some insiders said was already set in his ways when he began his seven-year term there. Desierto has been with the agency long enough to implement changes if he so desired. His ineptness, unsuitability for the position which requires someone with administrative confidence, and negligence is all of his doing or lack of same. A do nothing administrator.

*"Substantial adherence to the requirements of the law governing the conduct of preliminary investigation, including substantial compliance with the time limitation prescribed by the law for the resolution of the case by the prosecutor, is part of the procedural due process constitutionally guaranteed by the fundamental law,"* said the Court. *"Not only under the broad umbrella of the due process clause, but under the constitutional guarantee of 'speedy disposition' of cases as embodied in Section 16 of the Bill of Rights (both in the 1973 and 1987 Constitutions), the inordinate delay is violative of the petitioner's constitutional rights."* As late as August 1997, the Ombudsman still had pending cases dating back to 1979.

In truth, the only beneficiary in any delay in the processing of complaints at the Ombudsman's Office is an accused who is guilty. A

veteran trial lawyer said bluntly: "*Hindi na due process yan, eh* (That's not due process anymore). *Undue process na.*"

After waiting for months for the Office to issue a resolution. Six days later, the group got what it wanted—or so it thought, until its private counsel saw the Ombudsman's handiwork. "*The Ombudsman made sure that the case will be filed, all right,*" said the JOVFI lawyer Rod Domingo Jr. "*But (it) also ensured the acquittal of the accused.*"

Aniano Desierto, was called before the Senate to answer questions on reported anomalies in his Office and an impeachment complaint against him was also lodged in the House of Representatives. Desierto snubbed the Senate, but made an appearance in the House, where he successfully maneuvered to fend off the move to throw him out of office. Fortunately, he did not emerge from the fray unscathed, and neither did the institution in which he remains the head.

May 1996, an Ombudsman insider leaked to media that Desierto had received 10 television sets from businessman Faustino 'Pong' Salud. In a March 1996 affidavit, de los Reyes had mentioned Salud as having contacted his family, claiming to represent "*a group of Chinese businessmen who wanted to help*" Lacson regarding the Kuratong Baleleng gang killings where eleven members were allegedly rubbed out after being arrested [Lacson is now a senator]

Ombudsman Desierto readily admitted getting the TVs, eight of which had been raffled off to Office personnel during their 1995 Christmas party. But Desierto said he had paid for them, albeit with a hefty discount—which turned out to be 10 times more than what Salud's firm usually gave to customers. Desierto described Salud as a friend "*of more than 20 years.*"

The Ombudsman produced a receipt, but it was dated January 3, 1996, two weeks after the TVs were delivered to his office. Makati Rep. Joker Arroyo wondered if the payment was a mere "*afterthought.*" Sen. Ernesto Maceda remarked then: "*Ganyan ba ka-cheap si Ani? Sampung TV sets lang? (Is Ani that cheap? Only 10 TV sets?)*"

If Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez was to be believed, the answer to that question was no, with a twist. Golez was the vice-chair of the House public order and security committee, which was then still conducting hearings on the Kuratong Baleleng case. It was there that Golez revealed that sometime after the Feb. 14 clarificatory hearing, Desierto bought a P10 million house at the upscale Tierra Pura subdivision in Quezon City. The plot now thickens.

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Desierto, whose 1995 Statement of Assets and Liabilities (SAL) showed a net worth of only P6 million, countered that he had sold a house and lot in Marikina to buy the Tierra Pura property. A daily also quoted him as saying, "*Kung tutuusin, I'm worth more than that.*"

But Desierto probably later regretted mentioning the Marikina property. He and his men had said it had been sold in February 1996 for P7.5 million. Desierto's 1995 SAL, however, listed its value as P3 million. A report to the Senate Committee on Justice and Human Rights also noted that the property's buyer declared its market value at less than P1 million just five days after the sale.

It was the deed of absolute sale itself that attracted Golez the most, though. For it bore the signature of Elizabeth R. Desierto, the Ombudsman's first wife, who by then had been residing in Australia for more than a decade and had remarried. Elizabeth would deny by fax, phone, and post any knowledge of the document. She would also say the last time she visited the Philippines was in 1983.

Further checks by Golez revealed the notary public whose name, signature and registry number were affixed on the deed may not have been in the country at the time the papers were supposedly prepared and signed. The residence certificate number that was supposedly Elizabeth R. Desierto's turned out to be issued to someone else. The tax account number also said to be hers was declared invalid by the Bureau of Internal Revenue.

On July 24, 1996, Rep. Golez filed an impeachment complaint against Ombudsman Desierto. Included among the three charges was the "*falsification after falsification*" Desierto allegedly committed in the Marikina property sale. Golez said these were tantamount to "*acts of betrayal of public trust, and also (constituted) corruption.*"

The complaint said Desierto "*committed further violations of the provisions of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act (R.A. No. 3019) and related statutes, in the purchases, at a drastically reduced price, amounting to a prohibited gift, if not a bribe, of a number of television sets, through the intercession of the same intermediary who had allegedly negotiated for the 'success' of the clarificatory hearing in the Kuratong Baleleng case.*"

But Desierto never had to defend himself in Congress. The complaint was dismissed for "insufficiency in substance." "*Of the 42 members of the House Committee on Justice present at the hearing, only nine voted in favor of impeachment. Said an irate Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman.*" The majority decision has erroneously meandered outside

of the averments of the complaint. It mistook the navel for the asshole."

In an interview a year later, Aniano Desierto said he *"prepared the information personally to make sure I did not commit a mistake...so that they would not say later that I favored the military."* He said he did not know the officers involved in the case because they were junior to him. But he hinted that it would not have mattered otherwise.

*"Since I assumed office,"* said Desierto, *"I have filed charges against 17 generals. So why would I choose (to help) Lacson? .... What could I get out of him? Don't tell me I was afraid of him. I've been ambushed before. Besides, if I was really scared, why would I charge the majors, the sergeants? These are the more dangerous people. These are the killers."* He added: *"I knew that the moment I made (Lacson) principal, the court would dismiss the case immediately. With accessory, they can't dismiss it. Because it's true."*

Desierto said his critics, whom he scoffs at as mere *"corporate lawyers,"* did not realize that an accessory after the fact in a murder case can be punished with a maximum jail term of 15 years per count if found guilty. *"There were 11 crimes,"* he said, *"so that means 65 years. Now, the other one is life imprisonment, if he's principal. Which one do you want, the 65 years or life imprisonment, which is up to 40 years only?"*

But Diokno, who is known for his work in human rights cases, noted: *"E hindi pala siya marunong magbilang (Well, he doesn't know how to count). You'd have to multiply that 40 years by 11 counts, too. So that's actually 440 years as against 65 years."* Human rights take a back seat to proclaimed \$ rights of the supercilious politicians.

The Ombudsman's flawed mathematical ability, however, is not the only problem here. The truth is that while Desierto may not have been found guilty of any wrongdoing, neither has his innocence been proven. Like an untreated wound, the suspicion about Desierto has festered as a result, and a foul smell has hung over his Office as well. Sen. Raul Roco said it best during the 1996 Senate hearings the Ombudsman had chosen not to attend: *"(When) there is any cloud, when there is any accusation against the man, it should be answered and explained fully. Because refusal to explain tends to suggest not so much fleeing from the truth, but fleeing from the questions and fleeing from the committee. And it does not therefore strengthen, it does not therefore bolster, the standing of both the institution and the Ombudsman."*

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This all seemed rather lost on Desierto, who would not only refuse to resign, but would even declare at one point that he was "*at par with the President.*" More than a year after he struck a good great deal on 10 TV sets and then generously gave most of them away, he would be a portrait of confidence, saying his Office had regained its bearings quite quickly from the scandal that ensued. This proved, he said, that it was "*formidable.*"

But some insiders were not as cocksure, with one admitting outright that "*there is still that stigma.*" The same official also commented: "*If there is integrity in the leadership, it would follow that the institution would also have that. If the leadership is corrupt, expect a ripple effect in the entire organization to follow the leader.*"

**Obdurate**-one who is stubborn and persistent in their ways.

1. A foreigner who refuses to pay "*grease money*" to public officials [*failure to adapt to prevailing norms and customs*]
2. A public official stubbornly persistent in wrongdoing
3. Bureaucrat hardened in feelings toward rich foreigners
4. A foreigner who is resistant to persuasion or softening influences to pay "*grease moneys.*"

**PAOCTF**-Presidential Anti-Organized Task Force: special group of Philippine Police tasked with addressing crime, abductions, and terrorism in the Philippines. Dissolved for their involvements in crime, extortion, and threats to the citizens whom they were sworn to protect. Many major crimes are committed by the Philippine National Police [*PNP*] or ex-military personnel [*who else has the weapons?*]

**Pardon**-to absolve or release one from the consequences of their actions. In the Philippines it is accomplished by ignoring the formal complaints of the masses and inundating the poor in massive paperwork while claiming to help them.

**Peso**-the monetary unit in the Philippines. The devaluation which is cause for concern to the people. Government officials via mass media blame money speculators, inflation, and oil prices. Everyone and everything but the true cause and that's government. The value of any country's money is the faith the world has in the ability of that country to repay its debts.

The International Monetary Fund has publicly admitted, on numerous occasions, that 10-30% of the loans to the Philippines "*disappears*" or falls into the pockets of politicians, but of course the politicians will say the devaluation of the peso is dependent upon the price of oil on the world market. Then why doesn't the American dollar fall, or

the British pound? Only the Peso falls, at the detriment of the Filipino economy.

**Philippine Embassy**-a personal visit to the Embassy in Los Angeles regarding an assault upon a fellow handicapped American, with a follow up letter [registered mail] elicited no response whatsoever from this organization. A political front for party animals at taxpayers expense.

**PNB**-Philippine National Bank: established in 1916, and due to incompetence and malfeasance of its officials, some of who are now high ranking elected officials in government, has had to be rescued four times [*number five is presently in the works*], yet administration after administration continues to pour the money of its taxpayers into a bank that refuses to act right. At present, the bank is suffering from 40% of its total loan portfolio being composed of bad debts [owing the government, the people, 25 billion pesos] Unrecorded advances? Conjectural debt swap transactions? Long term discounted government paper? Yes! And all are poor banking practices.

**PNP**-Philippine National Police, the number one violator of civil and human rights. They have won the ire and shame of the Filipino, nationwide.

**Politicians**-Who do the people have representing them or attempting to represent them? Of the 22 politicians currently running for Congress, most of them under the ruling Lakas party, are facing charges ranging from graft to rape [*rapist re-elected although still in prison*] and murder.

Even when charged and convicted, congressmen can almost always rely on protection by their colleagues. It took months of intense debate before Jalosjos, then undergoing trial for the rape of a minor, was finally expelled from the House of Representatives. Not only did he get special treatment while in jail, his fellow legislators, including Senator [*And now President*] Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who personally paid a visit to see him as well.

The list of potential governmental representatives includes former Health Secretary Hilarion Ramiro who resigned from his post amid scandalous bribery charges in 1995 and former Bongabong, Mindoro Oriental mayor Renato Reyes who has been charged with the murder of a barangay captain. Also included are Tomas Joson III, who is campaigning for Nueva Ecija governor while in jail on charges of murdering his opponent Honorato Perez in 1995, and Antonio Kho, Masbate gubernatorial candidate, who is charged with the 1995 murder of his rival Rep. Tito Espinosa. Pasig mayoral candidate

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Wainright Rivera is being investigated by the Ombudsman for his involvement in the multimillion-peso Amari bribery scandal, while in Plaridel, Bulacan, mayoral candidate Florencio Paraña has been charged with drug dealing. *"Although officials are not immune from suit, they have so much influence that they can neutralize or intimidate people,"* says lawyer Haydee Yorac, who is seeking a Senate seat.- Frompcig.org

A corrupt judicial system vulnerable to corruption and political pressures has engendered many officials a false sense of security and many look upon the masses as with impunity and being untouchable. Are they correct? Unfortunately it appears so as the system is lax in investigating and condemning one of their own.

*"The system is corrupt and someone in power can be confident that even when he steals left and right, no serious charges will be leveled against him,"* says lawyer and former senator Rene Saguisag. *"Position, perks and power are used by those who wield them."*

Congressmen have the power to investigate other branches of government and to approve budgets. Legislators facing charges can - and have -- put pressure on those investigating them by making privilege speeches and initiating official inquiries on government agencies, investigative agencies, and bureaucrats dependent on annual allocations from the national treasury. Congress also has the power to impeach justices of the Supreme Court and officers of constitutional bodies. Rep. Ceferino Paredes, charged with graft by the Office of the Ombudsman, remains in the House of Representatives, even if the Supreme Court had ruled that he should have been suspended. *"Perhaps they have the impression that once they become congressmen, they assume an aura of power and influence that gives them some kind of shield or protection,"* says Sorsogon Rep. Bonifacio Gillego. *"In addition, the kind of influence and connections they develop in the period of their incumbency can add farther to their armor or shield."* In Sorsogon, Representative Gillego's own district, two persons accused of graft are running for Congress. Lakas candidate Rodolfo Gonzales, a former customs collector, is being investigated by the Ombudsman on several charges, including the failure to remit P528 million worth of taxes. His opponent Jose G. Solis, is a former official of the environment and natural resources department who is being investigated by the Presidential Anti-Graft Commission.

Very often, unless there is public uproar, officials are rarely tried, much less convicted. *"By and large, if you're in power, unless you are*



*accused of a crime so unpopular, like you axed your grandmother, people don't care very much,"* says Saguisag, who has lawyered for officials accused of high-profile crimes.

Quezon congressional candidate Imelda Rodriguez is facing charges in the US. Both she and her husband Eduardo, the incumbent Quezon Governor, will soon face extradition charges for their alleged involvement in insurance fraud. Mrs. Rodriguez has been arraigned in a Los Angeles court where she and her husband have been accused of faking the death of her mother Gloria Gener in order to claim \$51,000 in insurance money. Why is that a punishable crime in the US and not here?

Both the son of the former dictator, Ferdinand Marcos, Ferdinand 'Bongbong' Marcos Jr. and his wife, Imelda used their positions in Congress to derail or at the very least delay House investigations on their family's wealth which has been estimated in the billions of dollars *"The pressure alone of a Marcos in Congress - whether it's Bongbong or Imelda - creates a kind of atmosphere where, given the Filipino sense of delicadeza and reluctance to antagonize people in public, makes it difficult for anyone to grill them,"* says Gillego. *"That alone is a victory for people who come to Congress with a smeared past."*—From an article by Sheila S. Coronel

The question should now be, *"Can a third world, developing, Philippines, continue to fight militant groups?"* Is the government, with their blatant theft of public moneys, trying for fourth world status? With many senators fighting over their 'lions share' of the national budget, as well as congressmen, it is a shame that the people are the ones that have to suffer for their greed and incompetence. It is the people who elected them and it is the people who can remove them.

1. When will the people see the light at the end of the tunnel and demand accountability?
2. When will the people demand that those who steal from government [*which is the people's money*] should also be incarcerated [*go to jail*]?
3. When will the people demand representation? Notice the word is demand, they should not have to ask for what is rightfully theirs. A new class of people needs to rise up from the scourge of poverty and demand what is lawfully theirs.
4. When will the people see beyond the oratory conflagrations and base their votes on what politicians have done for them and not what they promise to do for them?

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It was not too long ago I read an article in the paper by an elected official who wished to change the constitution to allow electorates more consecutive terms in office saying that in the first term the incumbent was just learning the ropes, the second term learning to draft legislation, and the third term to use political contacts. Therefore a fourth and subsequent terms are necessary to implement their legislation. What bovine scatology!

If the politician cannot enter office and start off doing something in his first term, what makes the people think he, or she, will do something in subsequent terms of office? In private business its sink or swim. You make money or you don't. So be it in politics, do something for the people or get out! Look at the condition of government agencies, losing money year after year and the government only increases taxes to make up for their deficits.

Why not do what private industries are mandated to do? Fire the incompetents! Are bungling bureaucrats indispensable? Demote the bureau or agency heads and move in a fresh team to streamline and become cost efficient. If not, gone in 60 days. How long does it take to find out there is not going to be anything substantial done to remedy problems? Year after year inept bureaucrats point the fingers at everyone but themselves.

And elected officials let them, as the money disappears, as the fixers are the only ones who can accomplish anything, as the people pay two to six times what they should for salaries, as the government suffers from lack of ability to get the job done. If they are unhappy with their salaries, then let them seek employment somewhere else, as is done in the private business sector. Perhaps then the Filipino will obtain a public official who is happy to have a job and stop complaining while he, or she, robs the nation of its pride and sustenance.

*"The common people like to be deceived; deceived let them be,"* – Celsus.

The Catholic Church fares no better in its capture of moneys belonging to others and the silence of the majority through suppression of facts via the world controlled media. The Filipino politicians are a reflection of their beliefs as practiced by their religious leaders, attempting to conserve their pride by concealing their thieving acts against the people.

1. If it were not a crime to steal money from the people, then why the secrecy of re-alignment of public moneys and the concerted efforts to document 'ghost' workers and 'fictitious suppliers'?

2. Why the concealment of essentials regarding money which does not belong to the principals.

**Pseudo-Democracy**-the state of affairs as it now exists with government officials proclaiming a democracy while denying the constituency their God given and inalienable rights as proclaimed under the constitution of the land. A condition rampant due to favoritism, nepotism, and inaction by those officials sworn to uphold the laws of the land, yet ignore with impunity.

**Public Servant**-there appears to be no such thing in the Philippines as public officials are concerned with their own welfare and not that of the public to which they are sworn to uphold.

Suggestion:

1. Due to the high incidence of graft and corruption cases and the destruction of public documents it would be wise to suspend the public servant immediately upon a case being filed against him or her.

2. The civil servant would be entitled to full salary upon being proven innocent. This would alleviate public officials from dragging the case on for years in court and obtaining continuations, as well as protection of evidence.

**Punishment**-There are three primary reasons why an individual should suffer punishment:

1. To establish a precedent which will benefit society, by serving as a deterrent to future offenders.
2. To separate the offender from those individuals whose rights he would violate and harm.
3. To correct and deter the offender for his/her and society's benefit.

Criminal actions are generally punished, unless, of course, the criminal is a public official, in which case their dishonest actions are rarely, if ever, penalized. Sometimes their alleged crimes are published in papers, but again, rarely followed through with punishment. The incoming official will usually pretend he is going to prosecute. Election time, the politicians will again drag up the past indiscretions of their opponents, but will not file a formal complaint [*A sort of unwritten law prevails, I won't punish you if you don't punish me for crimes committed while in office*] Such is the state of affairs that now exists, and is the *raison d'être* why militant groups dare challenge their government. Where political criminals are often buried with a hero's ceremony.

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**Quezon**-elected the first president of the newly formed transitional Commonwealth of the Philippines in 1935 and reelected in 1941. Quezon stated, *“I would rather live in Hell run by Filipinos than Heaven run by Americans.”* A play on words from, *“Better to reign in hell than to serve in heaven.”* And the Filipino politicians have literally created a ‘hell’ for the underprivileged masses while they enjoy the benefits of heaven. This didn’t stop him from living peacefully in ‘heaven’ [the United States] during the occupation of the Philippines run by ‘hell’ by the Japanese.

**Rain**-water falling in drops. In some areas the rains falls down, sideways and up [it rains hard, to say the least] The water is warm, usually a matter of whether or not you care to get wet.

**Recall**-A method of democratic process, which is part of the checks and balances, and seldom if ever used in the Philippines. Instead, the people will tolerate six years of mediocre governance, and then elect a new official. All the time asking themselves what went wrong. If there is a disease which has infected your system, why wait six years? To save face, or is it delicadeza? Regardless, the masses must use the tools available, otherwise they will continue to suffer another four hundred and eighty years.

**Revised Penal Code of the Philippines**-1992 Revised: Republic Act 8177 and 8353. Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives regarding offenses and criminal liabilities.

**ROTC**-Reserve Officers Training Corps. Even this vast organization supported in colleges and universities across the nation is not immune from graft and corruption. If this country is intent on implementing a program from which to draw from for its military purposes, a program to instill pride in one’s country, then the government should support it and the cadets. Many cadets having no intentions of ever joining the military, should not be compelled to join ROTC unless there is a significant lack of interest, in which case positive motivators should be instilled..

1. The first year the cadet would be reimbursed tuition fees for classes mandated by the government.
2. The second year the cadet would be reimbursed tuition and books for classes favorable to joining the military.
3. The third year the cadet would be reimbursed tuition, books, and given a uniform allowance.
4. The senior year the cadet would be given all of the above plus a small monthly stipend to help in his graduation efforts.

**Rules and Regulations Implementing the Local**

**Government Code**- 1991-RA 7160, the bread and butter of guidelines for the implementation of Philippine rules, regulations, codes, and objectives under local rule. Which, in most cases is ignored. It was meant for local autonomy of the communities in regulating themselves, but graft and corruption begins at the local level. Nothing gets accomplished without the local officials getting their piece of the action [*financially*] Barangay Captains and Counselors are given a copy of this book [*which few if any read*] and even given classes. Those who can read and understand it go on to bigger and better political crimes.

**Sacred**-Filipinos hold their religious icons and images as sacred and these should be respected as you would your own religious beliefs.

**Salus Populi es Suprema Lex**-from the Latin, meaning: the welfare of the people is the supreme law. Politicians like to use this to inspire the people into thinking that they are for the poor.

**Sangguniang Panlalawigan**-Municipal Council, tasked with answering complaints regarding corrupt officials. In Bohol, the public officials, Board Members, of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, merely responded by ignoring the complaint filed by a foreigner for implementation of existing laws and by forwarding a petition for the removal of the foreigner, calling him of dubious origin and background, negative attitude, undesirable alien, a liability to the local community, inability to adjust, inability to adapt to dominant culture [graft and corruption?], and of course their immediate solution is immediate deportation.

Petitions signed by less than 1% of the population are evidently, considered representative of the municipality in that the petition was then forwarded to the Bureau of Immigration for action to be taken. Apparently lacking intestinal fortitude or testicular appendages, politicians are more concerned with preserving their precious vanity and saw fit to support the mayor who would offer party support then to entertain a case, which was filed rather than enforce the laws of the land.

In five requests to appear before a special committee, for charges the mayor brought against a foreigner, in retaliation for his filing charges against her as a 'lawbreaker,' the mayor never appeared. In Filipino law this is known as defiance, which you or I might be held accountable, but this is the Philippines where elected officials rule by decree rather than any democratic process, much less any laws. The Boholian Board Members chaired a "*closed session*" to hide their

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shame and perceptible spinelessness, thereby avoiding mass media coverage and protection.

Those who will not cow tow to politicians are in for a real struggle, but they would rather you just leave. Again, the Sangguniang Bayan as a governmental agency generally does nothing for the foreigner when it comes to complaints against one of their so called “*honorable*” officials. Facetiously referred to by the locals as “*Law makers, law breakers.*” It’s kind of like they can walk on water without getting their toes wet attitude and they take offense at anyone challenging one of their kind.

Their attitude is, “*If you don’t like it, leave.*” It is ironic that in response to a formal complaint filed by Mr. Reyes, of Dimiao, which was ignored, a special committee was convened to investigate the foreigner, chaired by none other than a Board Member, who heads the “*Friendly City’s*” Tourism Board in Bohol, the ‘*Honorable*’ Isabelito B. Tongco. With legal assistance from the ‘*Honorable*’ Tomas D. Abapo, attorney and Chairman of the Committee on Good Government, and of the services of ‘*Honorable*’ Eufrasio M. Mascarinas and ‘*Honorable*’ Severino S. Caberte, sitting on the board, Mr. Reyes can truthfully say the tourist doesn’t stand a chance attempting to seek justice in Bohol with so many ‘*Honorable*’ gentlemen to contend with. The title ‘*Honorable*’ is fast becoming a pejorative here.

My advice is to stay away from people who have to advertise themselves as ‘*honorable*’ as this is a dead give away that they’re just trying to convince themselves and others of the title, which few deserve.

Even the Vice-Governor, Edgar Chatto, who received many of the highest honors in the land, ignored requests for investigation of the mayor, and he is now a congressman, perhaps with the a little financial support from Mayor Sylvia Varquez Adame? Government officials have a distinct proclivity towards protecting their own, over and above the laws of the lands if necessary. Perhaps Mr. Chatto, House Assistant Majority Floor Leader, is now preparing to deprive the rights of foreigners on a national scale. Is Mr. Chatto another example of Bohol’s finest, ignoring complaints which could possibly bring truth to the actions or inactions of his fellow political cronies?

Such is politics: Resolution No. 2001-270. “*Vox Populi Est Suprema Lex,*” In other words, “*The voice of the people is the supreme law,*” Also known as the Aguinaldo Doctrine [*Aguinaldo vs. Comelec* (102 SCRA 1) and *Salalima vs. Guingona*] “*A long habit of not thinking a*

*thing wrong, gives it a superficial appearance of being right.*” –By Thomas Paine. The voice of the people or the voice of the politicians? It is quite evident what has happened here.

*“Sensible men should never guess.”* –By Thomas Paine.

The people have been convinced that this is the Aguinaldo law is the law of the land. Perhaps it is, but the Aguinaldo Doctrine is against all the laws of nature and civil rights in that:

1. It assumes that the people are aware of all the indiscretions and crimes of the political figure.
2. It supposes that there is a fair playing field and all parties will be treated equally.
3. It presupposes that there will be no graft and corruption in the involvement of the decisions rendered.
4. It presumes that the elections are fair.
5. It takes for granted that justice will be swift and not manipulated by politicians to their advantage.
6. It takes for granted that the officials did not buy any votes.

The Aguinaldo decision represents merely the will of the politicians in another one of their twisting of the law to gain further advantage over those who seek justice. All of the above lacking or any of the above lacking, the Aguinaldo Doctrine does not represent the will of the people as politicians want you to believe. The rogues in robes have struck again against the people who they have sworn to protect. Who protects the masses? History has shown, not the justice system. Who protects the masses. Statistics will show, not the Ombudsman’s office.

Who protects the masses? Ask any poor person or anyone on the street and they can tell you. No one represents them. No one has the moral fiber to stand up for what is right. Financial rewards dictate who is represented and the poor lacking same are denied the rights sanctioned by a Constitution which is nothing more than a piece of paper to flaunt in the face of developed countries proclaiming, *“Look at us, we are also a democracy!”* But, are you really a democracy? Ask the poor who are compelled to carry the burden. Ask the poor who are denied benefits. Ask the poor who receive little but are asked to give what little they do have. Is this a system erected to the principles of equality, truth, and justice?

*“It is easy to tell a lie, but it is difficult to support the lie after it is told.”* –Thomas Paine, *American Revolutionist*.

As stated earlier, the Philippine bureaucrats have perverted an already corrupt system brought over from Spain and acknowledged by a

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previously corrupt clergy. This angers many Filipinos who are quick to defend their Catholic faith. Yet, many can personally cite instances of clerical abuse, but would rather look the other way and pretend it doesn't exist. Perhaps, then, someday, it will go away. The Church has taught them that.

The Aguinaldo Doctrine as applied in the Philippines is a veiled attempt to lend dignity and legitimacy to a political process where there is none. One can say without equivocation or mental reservation that the revolutionary leaders who laid down their lives for the brave Filipino would roll over in their graves if they knew that the once honorable name of Aguinaldo is now being tainted to support the crimes of politicians under the guise of "*Will of the People.*"

Next, the politicians will try to have you believe that:

1. It is the will of the people that the government is corrupt
2. It is the will of the people to go to bed hungry
3. It is the will of the people not to buy school clothes for their children
4. It is the will of the people that they remain poor.

What do the politicians know of the will of the people when all the legislation they pass only enhances the suffering of the poor and elevates their personal financial status and that of their political cronies?

The government believes it has succeeded in fooling the people and now attempts to fool the world [*read the World Bank report in this book*]

But, foreigners, in general, are more sophisticated in such matters, so what we then encounter is a despising of those aliens who refuse to accept the Filipino political interpretations of law. The people know what is happening, but are embarrassed when foreigners speak of such issues. The rogues in robes having added just another layer on the cake to insulate the politician from accountability to the people, the Aguinaldo Decision.

If a public official has charges brought against them, the Sangguniang Panlalawigan, or the Ombudsman, for that matter, will delay the matter until after elections, or actually until forever if they want.

What happened to RA 6713, Sec. 4, (e) regarding prompt action?

They forgot long ago their morals, ethics, and respect for others.

These minor issues are only manifested when their names appear in the news media. If the official can postpone justice and is re-elected, then all their sins are forgiven. Just another political means to rid the courts of hopeless cases against dishonest politicians. As they say in

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the political-ghetto [*if there be one*], “*Corruptus is Supremus*,” Corruption is Supreme.

“*Dura Lex Sed Lex*.” The law may be harsh, but it is the law, the only one who ever appears to suffer from the law being the poor [*and of course, foreigners*] The Filipino lawmakers rank among the world’s best in applications of venalities of government, ability to misplace their ethics at the appropriate or most auspicious moments, and in their unscrupulous interpretations of legal matters to make the public officials shine like luminary figures.

If this were not a Catholic country, no doubt, the politicians would have proclaimed themselves as messiahs long ago. Those who bring charges against political figures are made to appear as the malevolent and diabolical creatures of civilization, denizens of the deep, and beasts of the devil.

Mayor Sylvia Varquez Adame made the following appeal to the Provincial Board of Bohol, on September 28, 2000: “*Further, may we strongly urge the august body of the Sangguniang Panlalawigan of the Province of Bohol and all the concerned authorities, to immediately act on our petition and SB Resolution, in order to avoid prolonging the irritation and animosity among our constituents as against Edward C Reyes. ‘A SECOND OF DELAY IS A CHANCE FOR THE DEVIL TO MOVE IN.’*” This is what politicians think of foreigners who demand equality, truth, and justice! Not in their lifetime, not if they can help it. Of course they will, verbally, support the platform of righteousness, but not in practice. “*It is an affront to truth to treat falsehood with complaisance.*” —By Thomas Paine.

Politicians here are like the big bullies one sees in the Hollywood movies, taking by force what they cannot attain by lawful measures.

Next, Mayor Adame might include Mr. Reyes in her prayers appealing to God, along with her appeal for perhaps more money, to cast him out of this earthly realm and condemn him to never-never land or something of that nature, perhaps where the climate is considerably warmer.

Is Mayor Adame, the pride of Bohol, representative of what we have to look forward to as regards good governance?

1. A Mayor who refuses to implement local laws as manifested by law in RA 7160.
2. A Mayor who acts defiantly by refusing to answer requests to appear before the Sangguniang Panlalawigan.
3. A Mayor who denies foreigners due process.

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4. A Mayor who is arrogant in refusing to answer correspondence.

5. A Mayor who appears to have fought and bought her way to a top position in Bohol and ignores environmental laws.

The Good Governance Committee of Bohol, as practiced by the Provincial Board Members, would perhaps be of better use to the constituents of Bohol if it were eliminated entirely as it has shown itself to be just another bureaucratic impediment to justice for not only the *'foreigners'* who reside in Bohol, but to the Filipino poor. Sylvia Adame is now President of [LMP] the League of Municipalities of the Philippines, a national Mayors organization, and holds many other highly acclaimed positions where, perhaps, she can now enlist the services of her fellow mayors in depriving rights to foreigners and tourists to the Philippines.

Even the newspapers in the Philippines appear to support the bureaucracy as they proclaim the insidiousness of the poor public official who must spend his or her money to defend himself against the multitude of claims registered against them. Their money? Not hardly! Most often they [*elected officials*] use misappropriated tax-payer's money, if the case should ever reach that level. Public servants parading about, as if they are innocent? Quite the opposite. A quick trip to any municipal or provincial building will dispel this rationale if one asks for help in governmental matters. Many public officials lacking the requisite courtesies if lacks the obligatory recompense for doing a task they are already getting paid for.

But, of course, all are innocent, until proven guilty. Therefore, all public officials are innocent if they can circumvent the judicial system.

The lips of the public servant are only too eager to ask for money and their greedy hands are only too willing to accept. Witness the countless fixers who harbor these various public agencies.

So, don't say I didn't warn you. Being forewarned is being foretold. Nice place to visit, but don't press the issue on equal rights or justice. That's a no-no.

Suggestion:

1. Bringing charges of wrong doing against an official should be simplified.
2. A public prosecutor or qualified administrator should assist those indigents who lack the financial means to retain legal counsel.
3. An informal hearing should be convened to ascertain the specifics of the charges and propose amelioration, if possible.

4. If there is no meeting of the minds, then the Ombudsman should be an alternative and not a prerequisite.
5. Many politicians claim embarrassment, shame, and humiliation when charges are brought against them, as if their sanctified lives have never encountered sin. If after the informal meeting, or meetings if necessary, being unresolved, then and only then should records be made available to the press.
6. With its past statistical history of lack of adequate investigations, poor implementation of existing laws, and apparent denial of rights to the masses, perhaps it would be better if the office were eliminated entirely, saving the poor taxpayers money and providing access directly to the courts for adjudication regarding complaints and infringements upon the law by public officials.

**San Miguel Brewery**-The government is still involved in political and legal disputes as to who owns what in this corporation. Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., one time political crony to Ferdinand Marcos, the late dictator has taken charge of San Miguel Brewery, successful in the past at manipulating political connections to increase his wealth, he now has proved he can also run a private business in a competitive atmosphere. But, "*he is definitely a political animal,*" says Sheila Coronel, executive director of the Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism. In fact, Cojuangco has been involved in politics since the 1950s, holding positions from local councilor to congressman, and running unsuccessfully for president in 1992, with Joseph Estrada as his running mate. The government's fear of leaving Cojuangco in charge of San Miguel may be founded on its suspicion that he may use company funds to support opposition candidates who could help him protect his business interests, says a public policy analyst. The San Miguel boss was one of this country's wealthiest and most formidable men under the tyrannical Marcos regime. In an era when political power was enforced by violence, Cojuangco earned a reputation as a ruthless opponent, having his own private army, reportedly staffed with Israeli-trained commandos, and as one of Marcos's cronies he is viewed as partially responsible for the corruption that helped bleed the economy dry. "*He is probably one of the best businessmen in the Philippines,*" says a local business journalist. "*But I still think he has something to answer for, for being a crony of Marcos.*"-From The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism

**SEC**-Security and Exchange Commission: well, need I say anything regarding this "*august*" body of corruption? International news agencies have already made public the insider trading, corrupt

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dealings, and presidential involvements in deals which have progressively increased the bank accounts of the special few at the expense of the people.

A fair playing field for investors? Definitely not! Public bureaucrats admit and then deny that the Social Security System was devastated by insider trading using public trust funds. After all the disclaimers, the poor Filipino sees a significant increase in the amount of monies he or she has to pay into the system. Was the law broken? Yes! Have any of the principal players been barred, fined, or suspended? As of the writing of this book, no! Bureaucrats continue to defend the previous administration while investigative journalism continues to ferret out more involvements in the mishandling of public moneys.

Trying to start a corporation here? You may have to avail the services of a “fixer” who knows who to pay and how much. If not, you will be inundated with astronomical paperwork, one sheet at a time. In college it was known as “multiple hurdles.” You will be asked to provide a specific document, and upon your return you will be given another “set” of documents. Of course items will be missing, and perhaps you will be referred to another city for some reason or another. The list goes on and on. As stated previously, bureaucrats are drowning in their own red tape and don’t even know it.

Suggestion:

1. Streamline the agency so each and every office can accommodate a prospective client
2. Give the client a punch list of “all” items required along with respective fees and assign one individual to help.
3. If the person handling the case is out of the office or sick, a replacement should be immediately available.
4. Legislation should be passed and enforced requiring more transparency.
5. Those individuals, firms, or corporations found acting or doing business not within the prescribed rules, regulations, and intent of the law, should be banned from dealing with the stock exchange.
6. Members who break the rules should be dealt with judiciously and immediately.

With the dust not having settled from the SEC fiasco, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is already claiming the need for easing some of the stricter provisions of the Securities Act. *“Now that we have established an atmosphere of transparency and a level playing field, we can afford, I think to be more developmental in the*

*Securities Act*,” said Mrs. Arroyo. Has transparency really been promulgated? See *The Philippine Star*, 2 June 2001, pg. 19.

Foreign investors cannot dump their stocks and must do so over a period of time in order to recoup their investment. Time will tell if foreign investors really feel safe in the Philippine Stock Exchange.

**Senator**-Elected public official sworn [?] to protect the public’s interest but whose primary considerations are only to protect their own assets and augment their net worth. Senators are elected nationally which is another reason they are seldom held accountable for their actions. Being elected by regions would show more transparency in their voting of allocation of funds. Many completely forget their constituency once elected and move into the fast immoral pace of Manila and its ‘*spend set*.’

Responsible for the permanent curtailment of human rights in the Philippines. One senator proclaiming that if you do not exercise your rights you lose them. It is easy for the senator to say this because he has distanced himself as much as possible from the masses and he knows little of the daily suffering and abuse of the people he claims to represent.

1. Can one exercise a right one has never had, except on paper?
2. Who can you voice your complaint to that will take action?
3. Who listens to the poor?
4. Are the only law abiders in the Philippines the poor, because they cannot afford to buy justice?
5. How many more years will Imperial Manila command the poor to suffer?

Colonial Manila continues to grant the rich and infamous more and more rights while denying all others any privileges whatsoever.

1. Did the Filipino people surrender the Spanish yoke of tyranny for that of a morally bankrupt senatorial conquest?
2. Was there ever a time when public officials represented the people?
3. Will there ever be a time when the public official will do the will of the people?

Like the Church, they only claim to represent the people while they gorge themselves off the public sentimentalities and wishful thinking of a better day to come.

**SSS**-Social Security System-The latest fiasco is that the Social Security System was tampered with by elected officials in the highest of places. Political lackeys deny this, but the facts speak for

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themselves. Contributions have increased, but the benefits haven't. The resilient poor, again, have to pay the price for incompetence, corruptness, and obsequious behavior by officials who receive high salaries for their servilence.

Estrada exceeded his predecessors in the deployment of state pension funds for the purchase of shares in corporations weakened by the continually falling peso. He obtained this by receiving the complicity of the heads of SSS and GSIS whom he himself had appointed. GSIS Chief Carlos Arellano, being one of his boyhood friends, while SSS Chief Federico Pascual, once headed Allied Bank, owned by another Estrada crony Lucio Tan. Estrada using funds from governmental agencies in an attempt to complete and take over what Ramos had started. The Centennial Expo would be prime real estate if one would also institute gambling.

*"I was vehemently against the deal," says Espiritu. "Had GSIS and SSS done due diligence, they would have not lost so much money. After PCI merged with Equitable, the share price went down to an average of P98, and the present value is at P52 to P53. How would you justify that to the members? They lost a lot in the transaction. There was no excuse for that decision."*

Previously, SSS administrator Renato Valencia on June 10, 1997 proposed the creation of a new company to take over the Centennial Project at Clark. He also proposed the creation of a "*financial consortium*" consisting of the SSS, GSIS, DBP and Land Bank from which P1.4 billion could be sourced.

An NDC official said, "*The Expo is the first in a long, long time that NDC entered into a project not on the basis of the merits of the venture.*" The NDC official said the Expo continues to be a "*problem*" for them because of the no-win situation. "*If we stop operations, all the more that the public will criticize NDC. But if we continue, we will be subsidizing it.*" So, we have SSS moneys being dumped into a Presidential project which appears as a negative cash flow endeavor but which bureaucrats are afraid to say no to the President Ramos and his whim for immortality. In May of 1998, a study by the accountancy firm Sycip, Gorres & Velayo suggested that NDC withdraw from the venture as soon as possible because the returns on investment were very low. "*But we can't just do that because the loan requires that FCCC has to be government owned – NDC has to pay the loan first,*" the NDC official said.

Suggestion:

Poor investments by officials should call for their replacement. In private industry sector, failures are rewarded with termination. In public agencies bureaucrats are rewarded for kiss ass [sip sip in the vernacular]

1. The SSS should make their services available in outlying regions by providing faraway area banks with adequate documents so the poor can avail of their services without having to travel to the distant cities.

2. Banks tasked with aiding SSS should increase the hours available.

3. Graft and corruption has also invaded this agency with contributors often discovering they have no SSS moneys recorded in that someone has fraudulently used their name to withdraw contributions. Adequate documentation should be required and names of SSS officials, who are often the culprits, should be held responsible and accountable. Why punish the contributor and not the official who oftentimes helps in the disappearance of funds.

**Steal**-it's a shame that we have to add this definition, but apparently many Filipino politicians don't know what stealing is, claim ignorance, defy the system, or show utter contempt for what the definition means: steal \ˈstɛ(ɪ)\ *verb* stole \ˈstɔɪ\ sto•len \ˈstɔ-lən\ steal•ing [ME *stelen*, fr. OE *stelan*; akin to OHG *stelan* to steal] (bef. 12c). verb intransitive:

1. To take the *property of another* wrongfully and esp. as an habitual or regular practice

2. To come or go secretly, unobtrusively, gradually, or unexpectedly

3. To take or *appropriate without right* or leave and with intent to keep or make use of wrongfully <*stole* a car>

4. To take away by force or unjust means <they've *stolen* our liberty>

5. To take surreptitiously or *without permission* <*steal* a kiss>

6. To appropriate to oneself or beyond one's proper share : make one self the focus of <*steal* the show>

7. To move, convey, or introduce secretly : SMUGGLE

8. To accomplish in a concealed or unobserved manner <*steal* a visit>

Synonyms: STEAL, PILFER, FILCH, PURLOIN means to take from another *without right* or *without detection*. STEAL may apply to any surreptitious taking of something and differs from the other terms

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by commonly applying to intangibles as well as material things <*steal* jewels> <*stole* a look at the gifts>.

PILFER implies stealing repeatedly in small amounts <*pilfered* from his employer>. FILCH adds a suggestion of snatching quickly and surreptitiously <*filched* an apple from the tray>. PURLOIN stresses removing or carrying off for one's own use or purposes <*purloined* document>. © 1996 Zane Publishing, Inc. and Merriam-Webster, Incorporated. So, stealing is not a matter of degrees or amount. What is wrong is wrong, and the politicians cannot justify their actions in taking the moneys belonging to the people.

Politicians and bureaucrats will say, “*Just give me....*” Here, you don't have to give the first amount requested. A request for money is considered an offer to negotiate. Why should one negotiate for a service which is already paid for by permits, licenses, and salaries for these officials?

Rizal, over one hundred years ago, felt the same way regarding these corrupt practices by public officials. Politicians will create [*forge*] documents to confirm non-existent employees in their endeavors to accumulate vast wealth. Rizal, being of high intellect, was quick to perceive that the Church as well as the state were working to the detriment of the people, and for that cause he was condemned to death. Thomas Jefferson, one of the authors of the Declaration of Independence, had become too acknowledged by the early colonists for the zealot Christians to act upon as they did Rizal. The Filipino political messiah is executed and the people must wait and pray for another.

Politicians will surreptitiously create a system of bureaucratic paperwork to show a paper trail of moneys received for public projects, yet much of this money will end up in their secret accounts and private political financial coffers [See articles on the World Bank and IMF in this book]

Politicians will claim their rich life style is due to previous investments [*often from public moneys*] or from other business ventures [*when do they have the time?*] What we have is politicians stealing from the Filipino and not declaring his or her ill gotten gains, not paying taxes on this massive corrupt practice, and denying anything is wrong with what they are doing. A sort of spoils for holding office.

How long will the Filipino acquiesce to this fraudulent practice? Money is sequestered in hidden [*secret*] accounts, which Filipino banks deny, but the World Bank acknowledges their existence and



wants this practice to cease. After all it is the tax payers of developed countries that supply the financing supporting this institution. The banks deny complicity in hidden accounts and money laundering [*Who's lying now?*]

If the politicians took as good care of the people's money as they did their own the Philippines wouldn't be a third world country and poverty would be reduced significantly as more and more people would share in the fruits of their labor by completion of public roads, schools, and hospitals, on time and within budgets allocated for these projects. On going projects are merely a means of continually bleeding more money from the community to enrich a few.

**Taboo**-also tabu-challenging a public or elected official. It's similar to embarrassment if you dare defy them.

1. Forbidden to profane use or contact because of what are held to be dangerous supernatural powers
2. Banned on grounds of morality
3. Banned as constituting a challenge of authority, political correctness, disruptive to officials who are ignorant in the dispensation of their duties.

**Taxes**-As foreigners in this land, the editors of this book do this country wrong by not listing the benefits the Filipino receives from paying his or her taxes:

1. Electrical brownouts
2. Water outages
3. Poor roads
4. Inadequate medical facilities
5. High medical costs
6. High prescription costs
7. Public officials who receive the tax moneys and pay no taxes on the moneys re-appropriated for personal use

So, some Filipinos do receive benefits from the present tax structure. Wouldn't it be nice if more could share in this wealth?

**Threats**-favorite of the politicians and used in various forms to intimidate competitors as well as law abiding citizenry and foreigners who do not cater to the politicians.

1. Political persuasion.
2. Intimidation [family, friends, loss of job, etc.]
3. Public embarrassment via news media, which is paid for by the politician who is striving to maintain his or her '*untarnished image.*'

4. Death threats, extra-judicial executions, summary killings.
  5. Goon squad to beat you into submission or leaving.
  6. Planting of drugs or weapons on your property
  7. Elimination with extreme prejudice [*assassination*].
- Remember,
8. The politicians generally get elected using “*goons*,” “*guns*” and “*gold*.” Many will stop at nothing to gain the upper hand and protect their “*turf*.”

Politicians are not beyond using assassinations as a last resort to gain their political or financial objective, and seldom are these crimes solved.

Example of an actual death threat received by a foreigner:

*“To us you are stupid, inhuman as if you are the best, when you are the worst kind of people.”*

Verdict: elimination by a special liquidation squad

Date of Execution: anytime when possible

Place of execution: anywhere when unguarded.

Beware Americano, see you in hell.

Kind of quaint isn't it? Except when you are the recipient. Copies of the death threat were sent to various national governmental agencies, plus the American Embassy.

An investigation was conducted, without notifying the individual threatened, and a decision was rendered, again without notifying the threatened individual. Why? Because it involved a political figure. Needless to say there was no record at the local level, although a registered letter and personal visit had been conducted previously, until the American demanded the local police to note same in the police blotter [*months later*]. Many large city police agencies will maintain two police blotters. One for the rich and privileged, and the other for you, the poor, and I.

Remember, the Philippine Police is the number one agency in the country in denial of human and civil rights. Death threats are not something to be taken lightly. You have apolitical groups such as, New People's Army [NPA], National Democratic Front [NDF], Moro Islamic Liberation Front [MILF], Moro National Liberation Front [MNLF], and Abu Sayyaf's carrying out executions via:

1. Summary Executions
2. Liquidation Teams
3. Sparrow Teams
4. Hit Squads

## 5. Demolition Teams

The hunting down of the Abu Sayyafs has become an embarrassment now that witnesses are willing to come forward and testify that the Philippine Generals may have sold out the brave soldiers fighting on the front lines for a few pesos in order to let the terrorists escape. And, the list does not stop there, so long as members of the Philippine National Police [*as well as ex-members*] and corrupt military join in on the melee for extortion, graft, corruption, and ransom.

*“An army in a city can never be a conquering army... Peace by treaty is only a cessation of violence for a reformation of sentiment. It is a substitute for a principle that is wanting and ever will be wanting till the idea of national honor be rightly understood.”* –By Thomas Paine.

**Tourism**—the gracious Filipino citizen is used to entice foreigners who spend large sums in the Philippines, only to be abused by the politicians and public officials. If graft and corruption were cleaned up the tourist trade would probably increase tenfold, if not more. Complaints to the Tourism Board often go unheeded. Foreign governments also do not exert enough pressure to protect their citizenry. Witness the recent kidnappings in which the Abu Sayyafs continue to flaunt the law and the British Embassy issues a notice to their citizenry while the American Embassy sits idly by doing nothing.

More foreigners and Filipinos have been abused by the Philippines’ government officials than all the Abu Sayyaf’s, Communists, and NPA’s together. Corrupt judges, corrupt officials, dishonest police, and fraudulent... The real issue goes beyond the Abu’s, communists, and the NPA’s to a corrupt government which denies their own people of hope and aspirations to become someone. A system that denied the average man a chance to live a decent life and merely subsist on a day to day level.

Suggestion: Perhaps if more countries would restrict their citizenry in traveling to the Philippines, the government here would take a more active role in not only acknowledging the rights of foreigners but the rights of their own countrymen. If the Philippines wants to increase tourism, all they have to do is enforce the existing laws that protect everyone; rich and poor alike. Perhaps equality is a nasty word for the rich, privileged, and infamous! As of October 2001, eighty five individuals were kidnapped in Manila alone. Predominantly Chinese –Filipinos, which has this community in an uproar regarding the negligence and incompetence of the government officials.

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**Ugly American**-behavior offensive to the people of the land. Politicians in general do not like foreigners as they cannot control their financial income, and foreigners, usually like the laws applied equally to all, which is abominable to most politicians. Why run for office if the law is to be applied equally is their attitude.

**Vacation**-a time to enjoy, a respite from something. One doesn't need to have someone else's problems become theirs when attempting to relax and enjoy the sights. Check with your local Embassy before traveling to find out what areas are restricted.

**VFA**-Visiting Forces Agreement. A contractual arrangement agreed upon between the U.S. and the Philippine government. "*As a former member of the Senate that abrogated the R.P.-U.S. Military Bases Agreement in 1991, I find the VFA extremely insulting. For it is clearly one-sided, unequal and most burdensome...The pointed question is, where is the enemy, where is the war?*" Rep. Wigberto Tanada, July 22, 1998.

Human Rights and pro-democracy groups in the Philippines have opposed the agreement because it gives the US government primary jurisdiction over offences committed by US personnel in all cases except those covered by US military law. With a corrupt court system and the attitude that all Americans are rich, thereby ignoring the legal issues of who's right and who's wrong, focusing on who can afford to pay, can you blame them?

**Whistle Blowers**-Those who reveal fraud and tax evasion will be threatened, ostracized, and often terminated. Those patriotic individuals who reveal the graft and corruption within their respective agencies should be reward by giving them a percentage of the moneys saved by their brave acts.

**World Bank**-Write to the World Bank [*the address is in the back of this book* ] and ask them:

1. What is the interest rate your country must pay due to graft and corruption?
2. What are the names of the projects where moneys were dispersed?
3. What amounts of money are unaccounted for?

Then, ask your publicly elected officials if they are going to prosecute those dastardly villains who stole from the public coffers. You will be astounded at what they will say, and you will then have no doubt as to who truly represents the people.

**Wrong**- what you as a foreigner may do and not the locals.

1. Not according to the moral standard

2. Not right or proper according to a code, standard, or convention
3. Improper, not according to the prevailing norms and customs of the community.
4. Not according to truth or facts
5. Not satisfactory
6. Not necessarily in accordance with one's needs, intent, or expectations

The elected Filipino officials are capable of saying to themselves, as well as you or I, "*That is the custom*" or "*That is a good custom,*" but they think only of themselves in individual acts, not necessarily the law, as the law is what the local government unit is supposed to enforce, but often doesn't.

Called "*arbitrary enforcement.*" The elected officials act as if they:

1. Have no conscience
2. No conscience of law
3. Act as if their only source of stimulation appears to be greed.

What is "*right*" and what is "*wrong*" in this country? Apparently many elected officials, in this strongly Catholic nation, lack the moral conscience to care little about either, yet often call upon their God to defend them against those "*so-called*" infidels, such as you or I, who would dare challenge their authority, in their efforts to become more affluent, and dare demand justice and equality.

*"Men in a state of intoxication, ... forget that the rest of the world have eyes, and that the same stupidity which conceals you from yourselves exposes you to their satire and contempt."* –By Thomas Paine.

**Xenophobe**-*ˈze-nəˈfəʊb, ˈzɛ-* noun [ISV], 1922: one unduly fearful of what is foreign and especially of people of foreign origin. Congress has for years instilled in the common masses the fear of Americans taking possession of this country to such an extent that each year they argue over the entry of foreign forces [*military*] in their land.

The military is not the real issue but the justice system which has eroded to such an extent that the United States approves or ratifies agreements which do not force American troops to be held accountable for their actions in Philippine courts which is an embarrassment to the government. The Visiting Forces Agreement [VFA] causing much loss of face to public officials.

*"We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth, however bitter it may be."* Jose Rizal

This form of thinking also affects the foreign investors in that some government officials are quick to file claims against foreign companies, and the media is regretfully also swift in reporting same, when it comes to sickness or ill health claimed by the recipients to be from working in a factory which is wholly or partially foreign owned. Witness the claim by a local against the Mitsumi Plant in Danao City, Cebu, by an employee claiming chemical contamination from the work environment, which is believed to be related more to the '*deep pockets*' theory than xenophobia.

**Yard**-a system of measurement which is roughly equivalent to just under a meter. Land is sold here by the square meters [slightly larger than 9 sq. ft.]

**Zamboanga**-city & port in the Philippines on SW coast of Mindanao with a population of approx 200, 000.

## DOING BUSINESS IN THE PHILIPPINES

*"The economic reality of the Third World is that the countries haven't performed. This does not influence my feelings about donating money to starving people it has to do with my personal fear of doing business with people who don't have a track record, who aren't professional, or who are not work-orientated...Most developing countries have these days have chosen a path of bureaucracy, rather than productivity."* –From Jack Nadel's "Passport to Prosperity, Tales of a Yankee Trader." Pg. 43. Which is what we have been saying all along.

*"In an environment in which bureaucratic burden and delay are exogenous, an individual firm may find bribes helpful to reduce the effective red tape it faces. The efficient grease hypothesis asserts therefore that corruption can improve economic efficiency and that fighting bribery would be counter-productive. This need not be the case."*

*"In a general equilibrium in which regulatory burden and delay can be endogenously chosen by rent-seeking bureaucrats, the effective (not just nominal) red tape and bribery may be positively correlated across firms. Using data from three worldwide firm-level surveys, we examine the relationship between bribe payment, management time wasted with bureaucrats, and cost of capital."*

*"Contrary to the efficient grease theory, we find that firms that pay more bribes are also likely to spend more, not less, management time with bureaucrats negotiating regulations, and face higher, not lower, cost of capital. Some companies thrive in this type of environment. So*

*be it. But, unfortunately, the general rule is in the long run*

*corruption is bad for business.*” —As presented in the article, “Does ‘Grease Money’ Speed Up the Wheels of Commerce?” by D. Kaufmann and S. J. Wei, 1999

*Many soon fall by the wayside, unable to adjust to the “just give me “\$” mentality of corrupt officials. If you cannot establish a legitimate business, then shy away from doing anything corrupt in the Philippines. Public officials can get away with doing many things, illegal or otherwise, which you as a foreigner may end up in jail. You are looked upon as a vast source of unlimited money which they will endeavor to tap at a moment’s notice or indiscretion upon your part. You will be arrested if necessary, although they really don’t want you in jail. After all they only want your money.*

Accessing the Internet we have discovered a few businessmen who have had run ins with the system here and some are actually being held [restrained] by Immigration authorities in Manila although one in particular won his case, and yet his merchandise is still being held by Customs Agents.

Large international corporations settle here in the hopes of seeing decreased restrictive environmental issues as encountered in their respective countries. The government may make many promises, but remember, they do have environmental laws here, seldom enforced, but they do exist. After a short honey moon you may encounter local groups picketing your business in the hopes of receiving relocation moneys due to your “*alleged*” contamination of the immediate environment or alleged illnesses.

Public officials wanting money to let your indiscretions go unheeded or un-enforced will naturally stand in line like beggars in the streets of the major cities of the world. It would be far more economical, in the long run, to just obey the laws of the land. You will be offered many incentives from both public and private entities who may or may not be well connected within the present administration. All wanting your money.

‘*Caveat Emptor!*’ Buyer Beware is the same the world over. A high ranking official today may be out of a job tomorrow with the way things are run here, then your negotiations will start all over again with a new administration. Is there continuity in the Philippines between administrations? A definite yes! Things don’t change very rapidly. Generally speaking, corrupt officials are released from service in one agency to pop up again in another or merely transferred to another area or district.

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Hellman, Jones, Kaufmann, and Schankerman wrote a beautiful article entitled, “*Measuring Governance, Corruption, and State Capture,*” in which they delineated the effects of corruption in European countries. There is no difference worldwide in the effects of corruption.

1. The sale of court decisions.
2. Attempts to minimize corruption by:
  - a. Re-labeling:
    - i. Petty Corruption
    - ii. Bureaucratic accountability
    - iii. Institutional obstacle
    - iv. Degree of uncertainty
    - v. Isolated incidence
    - vi. Individual discretionary matter
    - vii. Inherent tendency to complain
    - viii. Chronic complainers
    - ix. Institutional constraint
    - x. Overall quality presumes efficiency
3. Payment of bribes
4. Licensing impediments
5. Contractual obstacles
6. Business Permit barriers
7. Protection moneys
8. Lack of implementation of laws
9. Threats of curtailing:
  - a. Electricity
  - b. Water
  - c. Protection
  - d. Fire safety

In the 23 May, 2001 issue of the Philippine Daily Inquirer [Pg. A-n11] is an article regarding money laundering in the Asian-Pacific. It is estimated that \$300-500 billion dollars [US] per year is being laundered worldwide. “*Since money laundering is an international problem, a collective international and regional response is necessary in the fight against it.*” Corrupt government officials in the Philippines invest in basketball teams, import-export businesses, and other legitimate ventures to hide their money in secret banking accounts. What chance of success would an honest businessman have if he has to contend with the deep pockets [virtual unlimited funds] of corrupt officials plus their accessibility to public officials in high places to obtain permits and favors conducive to a few? “*Laundered*



*cash enabled criminals to expand to expand their activities, could drive legitimate concerns out of business and could even threaten the economies of some countries,”* says Malaysian finance Minister Daim Zainuddin.

*"Society in every state is a blessing, but Government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state, an intolerable one." - Thomas Paine 1776*

## INTERNATIONAL LOANS

Headquartered in Washington D.C., The International Monetary Fund began operations in 1947. Its purpose is to promote international monetary cooperation to facilitate the expansion of international trade. The Government of the Philippines has notified the International Monetary Fund (IMF) that it has accepted the obligations of Article VIII, Sections 2, 3, and 4 of the IMF Articles of Agreement, with effect from September 8, 1995. IMF members accepting the obligations of Article VIII undertake to refrain from imposing restrictions on the making of payments and transfers for current international transactions or from engaging in discriminatory currency arrangements or multiple currency practices without IMF approval. A total of 106 countries have now assumed Article VIII status.

The Philippines joined the IMF on December 27, 1945; its quota is SDR 633.4 million [approximately \$942 million dollars] Jan. 23, 2001, IMF Deputy Managing Director Eduardo Aninat said in Washington, D.C. today: *“The IMF has followed developments in recent days in the Philippines closely. IMF Managing Director Mr. Horst Köhler has sent a letter congratulating the new President, Ms. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and the Filipino people on the peaceful transition, which offers much hope for the future...The IMF will closely collaborate with the economic authorities, particularly Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo and Central Bank President Rafael Buenaventura, through the existing post-program monitoring arrangement and the regular and ongoing economic policy dialogue... We continue to look forward to a sustained recovery of confidence that will allow the Philippine economy to grow rapidly and thus help in a determined effort to reduce poverty.”*

What is accepted practice in the Philippines is not necessarily accepted practice in the world banking institutions and the shaving of funds from loans intended for the poor and to build roads and other

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infrastructures is one of those practices which the IMF does not condone.

The Philippines' gains in growth and poverty reduction achieved over the last few years have been mitigated by the quadruple force of the regional financial crisis, revolutionary activists, continued non-performance of governmental bureaucracies, and cyclical weather shocks. Although the Philippines managed to survive the economic storm and at first appeared to fare better than many of its neighbors, the effects of the crisis are being felt throughout the country. Investors are being turned away by civil inaction and unwillingness of the administration to address the problems at hand by offering more rhetoric rather than action. How long will the charade continue? How many times can one play the same old tune without international recognition?

From [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org) we have:

% Change in Growth	1996	1997	1998p
Gross Domestic Product	5.8	5.2	-0.5
Private Consumption	6.2	3.0	3.3
Gross Investment	12.5	11.7	-17
Consumer Prices	8.4	5	9.7
Export Growth rate (\$terms)	17.7	22.8	16.9
Import Growth rate (\$terms)	20.6	14.0	-12.2
<i>Source:</i> Philippine Authorities, Bank Staff estimates; p = preliminary estimates			

The Philippines currency, the Peso, has dropped in value by approximately 46 percent, as of February 12, 1999, since July 1997. 1998 GDP is estimated to have contracted by 0.5 percent, the government claims this is largely due to a weather related slump in agricultural production. Inflation averaged 9.7 percent for the year, but increased to 11.6 percent year on year in January, and interest rates have been declining steadily since January. Government officials claim the key stock exchange index has rebounded since falling to a six-year low in September, yet it is still 32 percent lower than its value in July 1997. In January 1999, the Philippines re-entered the global bond market with a US \$1 billion issue.

However, concern remains over dampening domestic and external demand, continued weakness in the Japanese economy, continued

pilfering of public moneys by public officials, and the lingering effects of El Niño and La Niña on agriculture.

Non-performing loans [bad debt] among commercial banks, which hold 90 percent of banking system assets, have tripled to 12 percent as of November 1998. Reduced net private direct and portfolio investment flows [investors willing to take a chance by investing in the Philippines], combined with a tighter overall credit situation [banks unwilling to loan money in a tight market], has put pressure on firms, particularly smaller rural and urban enterprises.

In the meantime, declining revenues [the government's continual passage of tax relief benefits to large businesses] have driven the authorities to seek external public and private sources of funding, particularly to maintain basic social services and to address the rising unemployment rate. The economic contraction has very real effects on the sustainability of the people.

Preliminary World Bank assessments have found: lower real incomes of very poor households due to price increases and increasing unemployment; income change for the lower middle class as regular workers are being replaced by lower-paid and less secure contract workers; and reduced social services due to budget cuts [*as if life wasn't difficult enough for the poor, what little they now receive is being drastically cut even further, while politicians proclaim how they have increased their benefits from government*]. However, labor groups have shown commendable restraint in pursuing wage increases, resulting in fewer strikes and man-days lost in 1998 compared to 1997.

The path to recovery for the Philippines requires equal attention to the financial as well as the social crisis:

1. Measures are needed to stabilize the micro as well as the macro-economy [outside influences as well as inner pressures].
2. Maintain a strong fiscal position while protecting the poor and not catering to the rich.
3. Strengthen the banking system by legislating measures to provide more transparency.
4. Facilitate corporate restructuring so that large businesses which have for so long enjoyed the benefits of the Philippines now pay their fair share.
5. Boost long-term domestic savings by requiring governmental agencies to operate within their prescribed budgets or cut back, not expand, the incompetence of civil servants.

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6. Ensure continued financing for viable rural and urban enterprises, and not just projects that will enhance the coffers of the newly elected officials.

Through the implementation of these six steps, the Philippines will be able to achieve its goal of restoring growth while promoting greater equity and distribution of wealth to its constituents [taxpaying public].

Given the small gains of the decade long macro-economic and alleged structural reforms, and an economy that has weathered the effects of the Asian financial crisis better than most of the countries in the region, the Philippines' prospects for poverty reduction over the medium term can be promising. The World Bank is committed to helping the Philippines attain this goal through implementing an economic recovery program that removes barriers to economic growth and poverty reduction and restores investor confidence at home as well as abroad. It will involve measures to:

1. Sustain domestic demand in good times as well as bad.
2. Improve efficiency and transparency in government
3. Strengthen the banking system, while adhering to a macro-economic adjustment program which is endorsed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

To help the country simultaneously achieve the twin goals of economic recovery and poverty reduction, it is critical to:

1. Maintain macro-economic stability
2. Strengthen social safety nets
3. Promote environmentally sustainable growth.

The following priority areas can be identified:

1. Addressing Crisis Effects and Promoting Economic Recovery – To promote economic recovery, there is a need to:

a. Maintain macro-economic stability [regional]

Enhance investor confidence [implementation of laws and not arbitrary enforcement for the rich and privileged classes but all people]

b. Accelerate measures to strengthen the banking system and corporate sector [transparency and eliminating secret accounts]

c. Mobilize long-term savings and budgetary restraints.

2. Enhancing Human Development and Social Safety Nets for the Poor – To build a more caring and prosperous society, the economic recovery program should be accompanied by measures to strengthen the social safety net [helping those with catastrophic disease and unable to work due to grave injuries] and improving

poverty targeting and action plans to reduce poverty and income inequalities.

3. Accelerating Environmentally Sustainable Rural and Urban Development– There is a need to accelerate environmentally sustainable growth of agriculture by making it more competitive internationally and improving natural resource management [California can grow rice and ship it to the Philippines cheaper than it can be grown here]

4. Implementation Of A National Urban Development Agenda–A need for development and implementation of viable programs to address the flouting of urban service provision and threats to environmental health in urban areas [lack of implementation of existing laws by LGU’s]

5. Developing Infrastructure, Particularly in the Provinces – Development of infrastructure is essential to support stronger growth. Critical reforms need to be undertaken in the power and transport sectors.

6. Expansion of the Private Sector – Creating an enabling environment for private sector growth [rapid permit processing and clearing of merchandise at port facilities], which will be crucial to generating stronger growth and jobs for an expanding labor force.

7. Improving Governance and Combating Corruption – The system for economic and political governance needs drastic improvement in order to create a more effective partnership between the national and local governments and enhance the peace and order situation throughout the country. Talk of improvement will not suffice.

The World Bank focus for Fiscal Year 1999-00 is on helping the Philippines respond to the crisis but not forgetting the long-term investments in people, rural development, infrastructure development in partnership with the private sector, environmental protection, and resumption of sustainable growth.

From June to December 1998, the Bank approved 4 loans for a total of US \$623.3 million to shore up the banking system, support private enterprise credit, bolster the rural finance systems to alleviate poverty and better serve rural areas, and improve small towns access to basic services. The Banking System Reform Loan (US \$300 million) supports the country's banking reform program, whose goal is to strengthen the banking system and enable it to better withstand current difficulties and future shocks. To assist private sector enterprises affected by the credit crunch and currency crisis, the

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Private Enterprise Credit Support Project (US \$150 million) is augmenting the long-term resources of the Development Bank of the Philippines.

The Third Rural Finance Project (US \$150 million) providing support to the rural economy to overcome the difficulties created by the regional financial crisis and the devaluation of the Peso. The Local Government Unit (LGU) Urban Water and Sanitation Project (US \$23.3 million) is providing safe water and improved sanitation services to small towns. This loan is the first of three to be disbursed through the World Bank's adaptable program loan (APL), which aims to fundamentally change the way small towns gain access to financing for basic municipal services.

In addition to its lending program, the Bank is providing technical assistance and analytical advice. A recent example is *A Review of Social Expenditures*. A review of the country's economic performance and medium-term prospects, and studies for poverty reduction, health, and education are also underway. The World Bank also manages special grants from Japan and the European Union. Recently approved grants aim to provide technical assistance to (a) the Central Bank, Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation and Securities Exchange Commission to strengthen capacity to supervise the banking system and handle corporate bankruptcy filings; (b) the National Statistics Office to help it carry out a program of annual poverty incidence survey; and (c) public banks to enhance audits and strengthen the financial sector. Other technical assistance grants are under discussion.

The World Bank chairs the Consultative Group (CG) on the Philippines, which serves as a forum for dialogue among the donor community and the government. The last CG Meeting in December 1997, resulted in donors pledging about US \$3 billion in assistance for the Philippines. The next CG Meeting took place in late March 1999, where donors pledged a total of approximately US \$4.5 billion for 1999 to support the Philippines' structural reforms to combat the repercussions of the regional crisis, restore and sustain economic growth, and spread the benefits of growth more widely. Interim meetings among the government and members of the donor community are routinely held in Manila.

The focus of International Financial Corporation's [IFC] activities has been on strengthening existing financial institutions, assisting companies restructure their balance sheets and helping complete the financial plan for on-going viable projects. In the last 12 months,

IFC's investment program remained strong with 5 approved projects (agribusiness, general manufacturing and capital markets projects) for a total investment of US \$126 million, of which US \$96 million for IFC's own account.

Looking ahead, IFC's activities in the Philippines will focus on strengthening of the financial sector, through institution building, micro lending (targeted at Mindanao), housing finance, and setting up a credit rating agency. In the corporate sector, IFC will assist the restructuring process by providing long-term capital. Other areas of priority are agribusiness investments in projects to further develop the poor regions of Visayas and Mindanao and supporting viable infrastructure projects especially in power distribution and transportation.

News Brief No. 99/41 July 22, 1999 Shigemitsu Sugisaki, Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), said: *"The Executive Board of the IMF today completed the fourth review under the stand-by arrangement of the Philippines. As a result, the Philippines will now be able to access SDR 158.27 million (about US\$213.5 million) from the IMF."* The difficulty lies not in the appropriation of moneys for the Philippines, but deterring politicians from draining the funds before they reach their designated objectives.

On March 1, 2001, the Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) concluded the Article IV consultation with the Philippines. However, the positive results were undermined by a decline in investor sentiment because of the government's failure to meet budget targets, governance problems [graft and corruption], and concerns about security [rebel insurgents in the countryside as well as in the cities].

Politicians heap self indulging platitudes upon themselves and their cronies so as to appear distinguished and prominent in the community so when one makes a charge against them they can cry, *"I'm a noble person in the eyes of my peers and constituency, how dare you slander me with these charges?"* Its' all hyperbole.

News Brief No. 00/65 August 1, 2000 *"Good progress has been made in recent months in advancing the structural reform agenda, and it is vital that this momentum be sustained. In particular, the recent enactment of several key reform laws, such as a new General Banking Act, the Securities Act, and a law liberalizing retail trade, is most welcome. While recent progress with power sector reform legislation is also encouraging, early final passage of the law is critical to enable the long-overdue restructuring of the sector,*

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*including privatization of the National Power Corporation. Banking reforms under the program have generally been successful in strengthening the system's capacity to withstand shocks; after some delay, rehabilitation and full privatization of the Philippine National Bank, an essential part of this program, is now underway. The authorities' latest initiatives to combat money laundering are most welcome, although Directors stressed the need to follow through with proposed legislation in this area," Mr. Sugisaki said.*

Many who watched the impeachment of Estrada proceedings on television will remember how the Philippine banks denied money laundering charges and secret bank accounts. In October 2000, a political crisis arising from allegations of corruption made against President Estrada further damaged investor confidence, triggering intensified downward pressure on the peso, a *400 basis point hike* [penalty for the past crimes of the Philippine legislators], in policy interest rates, and a significant slowdown of growth... While part of the continued revenue slippage was due to the concentration of growth in the lightly taxed electronics sector [*the IMF feels a higher tax base is appropriate*], failure to implement planned tax measures [talk, talk, talk, and no action from the government], and governance problems in the Bureau of Internal Revenue [where's the accounting for the money collected?], despite some progress on tax administration reform in 2000, are also responsible [show me the money?]

Spending exceeded the target by 0.4 percent of GNP because of higher interest payments and non-interest spending overruns [inability of government to work within budgetary constraints]. Following the passage of the new General Banking Law last year, Directors urged speedy completion of the legislative agenda in this area, including amendments to the BSP Act, a new Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation charter, and comprehensive anti-money laundering legislation [which the banks denied during the Estrada impeachment trial]...Directors noted that, while the banking sector remains relatively healthy, the Philippine National Bank (PNB) continues to be a concern, and the recent problems of another large bank point to the vulnerabilities that arise even for reportedly strong institutions in an environment of weak governance, excessive bank secrecy [who do you believe wants the banks to continue maintaining this secrecy?], and inadequate provisions against money laundering [politicians and corrupt businessmen pay a far less amount in taxes



than the poor, considering the moneys they do not claim, and that which they do claim is abrogated by politicians to the point of non-existence]..While a number of Directors encouraged the authorities to already aim for significant deficit reduction starting in the second half of this year, Directors also noted the importance of setting deficit reduction targets that can realistically be met [elected officials think they can suppress the truth and fake their way through].

*“With more taxes, there would be more benefits for the children of our soldiers and policemen and with more education, we would have a better run nation...the Philippines is still among the most corrupt nations in Asia.”* –Article, Pg. 34, 20 Mar. 2001, The Freeman.

News Brief No. 01/7-IMF-Jan. 23, 2001, IMF Deputy Managing Director Eduardo Aninat said in Washington, D.C. today: *“The IMF has followed developments in recent days in the Philippines closely. IMF Managing Director Mr. Horst Köhler has sent a letter congratulating the new President, Ms. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and the Filipino people on the peaceful transition, which offers much hope for the future...The IMF will closely collaborate with the economic authorities, particularly Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo and Central Bank President Rafael Buenaventura, through the existing post-program monitoring arrangement and the regular and ongoing economic policy dialogue... We continue to look forward to a sustained recovery of confidence that will allow the Philippine economy to grow rapidly and thus help in a determined effort to reduce poverty.”*

The Philippine government has already been penalized for the past indiscretions of previous incompetence in governance and the IMF now awaits the decisions of this new administration to ascertain if there is to be more rhetoric or actual implementation of policies agreed to with IMF officials. *“While tighter reporting and compliance rules for capital account transactions should improve monitoring and help close regulatory loopholes, some Directors cautioned that these measures should not signal the start of a tighter regime of controls. In this regard, they took note of the authorities' announcement that these measures were part of their efforts at transparency and combating money laundering... Directors welcomed the plan to comprehensively revamp the tax administration, in the context of a broad-based effort to stamp out corruption and poor governance. Given limitations on implementation capacity, they welcomed the authorities' request for*

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*technical assistance from the Fund in support of their tax reform plans. On expenditure management, Directors stressed the need for clearly identified cuts in low-priority spending, in order to make room for growth and poverty-reducing investments. The authorities' commitment to participate in a fiscal transparency module of the Report on the Observance of Standards and Codes later this year was welcomed."*

News Release No. 99/2289/EAP-WASHINGTON, D. C.- June 29, 1999—A special high-level anti-corruption advisory group is working with the World Bank to attack and prevent corruption in East Asia. The advisory group was formed to review the Bank's regional anti-corruption strategy and to assist the Bank in assessing and addressing corruption issues in its client countries in East Asia. *"This group, with its experience and breadth of views, is extremely important for us to move forward in our anti-corruption work,"* said Jean-Michel Severino, Vice-President for the World Bank's East Asia and Pacific Region. *"I am especially pleased that we have been able to attract members of such stature, who have the expertise and the standing for the job."*

The members, who met for the first time in mid-June, were selected because of their credentials and their perspectives - both on the countries themselves and on internationally proven ways to prevent corruption. World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn, who spoke of *"the cancer of corruption"* at the Bank-Fund Annual Meetings in Washington in 1996, said that corruption in all its forms is *"a crippling tax on the poor."* In order to credibly work with its clients to combat corruption, the Bank began looking inside the organization to make sure that its *"own house was in order."* An Oversight Committee on Fraud and Corruption was established in May 1998 to investigate charges of fraud and corruption in the Bank Group's work, and a corruption hotline was also established to allow anonymous reporting of suspected abuses. *"We are not just paying lip service to this task,"* Tunku Aziz said. *"We are very serious about making a difference and improving the way the Bank works."*

February 4, 1998 Published at 11:45 GMT, via the BBC News Online: World Analysis: The President of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, has acknowledged that the Bank did not anticipate the current economic crisis in East Asia. The World Bank is also facing extensive criticism for failing to deal with corruption [If government officials are taking a percentage of the loans off the top, then who pays for the higher interest rates mandated by the Directors?]

This is not the first time that the Bank has owned up to mistakes. Here's the BBC's Economics Analyst Andrew Walker, "*The Bank has something of a record for acknowledging its own past mistakes. One of the most extraordinary came in 1992, when the Bank decided to put poverty reduction as its central objective. Projects and policies have, since then, been subject to an assessment of their impacts on the poor. It rather raised the question, what on earth was the Bank doing in the previous 46 years of its existence?... The charges that it failed to deal with corruption reflect an intrinsic weakness of the Bank. Its powers for such political issues are limited; and even so Mr. Wolfensohn has made it something of a crusade to get corruption out of projects the Bank supports.*"

Chris Malazarte, an editorialist, in his Export Forum column, after reviewing the latest rating of Standard and Poor's evaluation of the Philippines states, "*A contentious remark insinuating that our assets didn't move an inch...And in fairness to S&P, I agree that the Arroyo government has so much to prove yet in terms of not only setting the right policy directions, but its capability of putting them into real and concrete terms.*"

The bottom line is credibility. The new administration must put accomplishments where there terminology has been. No more fancy words of what it [*the new administration*] is going to do. As they say in the vernacular, "*Money talks, the bull, it walks.*" Chris Malazarte also stated in a previous article, "*The truth will set you free, but first it will make you feel miserable.*"

The President of the World Bank, James Wolfensohn, has pledged a further \$1 Billion U.S. [British Pounds £600m] in loans for the Philippines this year [2001]. Speaking in Manila, Mr. Wolfensohn said the money would be targeted for improving the country's financial system and developing its infrastructure, employment, and private sector development. Mr. Wolfensohn said he was confident that the economy was "*fundamentally sound*" although "*not without risks.*" [Which is a mild way for bankers to refer to prevailing graft and corruption.

The many newly elected congressmen, senators, governors, and mayors are now lining up for their lion's share of the fund] Projects in the rural development sector constitute about 33 percent of this portfolio, consistent with the World Bank's strategy to promote broad-based economic growth and poverty reduction. The energy sector accounts for about 25 percent, infrastructure 16 percent, human-development sectors about 9 percent and others [including

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adjustment loan] about 17 percent. A Country Portfolio

Performance Review (CPPR) with the Government of Philippines in December 1998 agreed on significant measures to restructure [this usually signifies an extension of the note with extra interest and fees tacked on] the existing portfolio in view of the crisis and performance issues [non-performance in some areas?]

As of December 31, 1998, the World Bank portfolio for the Philippines totaled U.S. \$2.8 billion for 28 ongoing projects. From June to December 1998, the Bank approved 4 loans for a total of U.S. \$623.3 million to shore up the banking system, support private enterprise credit, bolster the rural finance systems to alleviate poverty and better serve rural areas, and improve small towns access to basic services.

World Bank Releases Preliminary Recommendations for Combating Corruption in Philippines, Manila, November 30, 1999 – The World Bank today released its preliminary report on recommendations that were submitted to President Joseph Estrada, in response to the Government’s request, to help the Philippine Government strengthen its fight against corruption. These recommendations are based on an ongoing study being done by a team of experts from the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank in response to Government’s request to provide advice on this matter. The study is expected to be completed in early 2000 but the preliminary recommendations are being released with the Government’s agreement to encourage public discussion on this subject.

Vinay Bhargava, World Bank Country Director for the Philippines who is leading and coordinating the study team’s work, stated, *“While many studies confirm that corruption is a sizeable problem in the Philippines, there is also evidence of progress made in the last decade [unable to show progress in this last administration, the World Bank had to stretch progress in the last ten years] largely by reducing opportunities for corruption through policy and regulatory reforms and through the enhancements in the freedom of the press and increased effectiveness of the anti-corruption institutions. “*

*“Our analysis also indicates that the Philippines today meets many [but not all] preconditions that offer promise for a successful anti-corruption campaign.”*

*“Global experience also indicates that specific, tailor-made programs, firmly set in the country’s culture and history [stealing by high ranking public officials is accepted to a moderate degree by*

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*most Filipinos] and a sustained political will and leadership are the essential ingredients to success.”*

Mr. Bhargava added that since there is already plenty of publicly available information on the prevalence and profile of corruption in the Philippines, the focus of the World Bank’s study is on the measures that could be done or strengthened to intensify the fight against corruption. The basic strategy being recommended in the Report is that the *Government* should intensify its efforts to reduce opportunities and motivation for corruption and make corruption a high-risk, low-reward activity [incompetence as well as corruption is often rewarded and not punished].

More specifically, drawing from the Bank’s global experience and Philippine-specific analysis, so far, the World Bank’s preliminary Report identifies nine elements as essential in the approach to fight corruption in the Philippines: Reducing opportunities for corruption through policy reforms and deregulation, especially in the areas of: tax policy and administration; regulation of infrastructure services and public utilities such as power, telecommunications, water, aviation; corporate governance reforms, particularly in the financial services area; environmental and land use regulations and import and trade arrangements.

Reforming campaign financing to reduce the impediments to good governance inherent in the financial requirements to obtain and retain office and placate core constituencies. This is really a matter of political reforms which is beyond the expertise of the World Bank.

Increasing public oversight by increasing significantly the information made available to the general public to allow citizens to know what officials are accountable for and how to judge their performance against those standards and actions that could enhance transparency and public oversight.

Reforming budget processes by enhancing the integrity and effectiveness of government wide and agency-level financial management systems; improving program performance monitoring and evaluation; simplifying public procurement, eliminating noncompetitive aspects, actively rooting out cartels, and opening up tenders to international competition; limiting congressional discretion over detailed line-items and strictly enforcing public finance rules in remaining cases.

Improving meritocracy in the civil service by restructuring the civil service to reinforce merit and to provide adequate financial compensation and accountability for performance.

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Targeting selected departments and agencies based on the public's priority concerns and identifying areas for a few quick wins that would give momentum to further reforms.

Enhancing sanctions for corruption with the goal of changing the current perception of corruption in the Philippines, from a "low-risk, high-reward" activity to a "high-risk, low-reward activity," by strengthening government's capacity to detect corruption and impose sanctions against corrupt practices.

Developing partnerships with the private sector, particularly in designing anticorruption strategies in vulnerable departments such as customs, taxation, industrial policy, infrastructure, and investment; engaging in dialogues; encouraging higher standards of corporate governance; developing, implementing company codes of conduct and ensuring their effectiveness; and adopting accounting and auditing rules and standards to ensure transparency in business transactions.

Supporting judicial reforms. Global experience has shown lower levels of corruption in countries with predictable judiciaries (in the sense of adjudicating cases consistently and efficiently). In the Philippines, there is considerable room to enhance the judiciary's effectiveness and reducing perceptions of corruption within its ranks. Judicial reforms should address the issues of: perception and reality of judicial corruption; case overload and delays; poor working conditions; alternative dispute-resolution mechanisms; and judicial education.

Mr. Bhargava stressed that it is not enough to have a good anti-corruption strategy. *"A good anti-corruption strategy is necessary, but effectiveness in implementing the strategy will be a key determinant of success,"* he added. In this regard, the Bank is recommending six priority actions:

1. Appoint strong leadership and management.
2. Set up a multi-sectoral advisory group
3. Develop a sequenced action program chosen from the nine-point anticorruption strategy
4. Launch programs immediately in priority agencies
5. Upgrade capacity in anticorruption institutions
6. Launch joint inter-governmental and inter-institutional efforts involving judiciary and legislative branches and private sector

Why a Stronger Anticorruption Program Now? From an international perspective, a vigorous and credible program to combat corruption in the Philippines is vital for three reasons: The Philippines is cited with 150

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increasing frequency [by business surveys, the media, and anti-corruption watchdog agencies] as a country where corruption is a factor that inhibits foreign and domestic investment and which may be eroding the country's competitive position. Such investment is vital to both economic growth and social well being.

It is satirical that the standards imposed upon the contestants of a beauty contest are stricter than those imposed upon public officials:

1. High moral standards
2. Honesty
3. Upright citizen in the community

Or, for that matter in the Philippine basketball league where athletes must be:

1. Physically and mentally fit
2. Play to the best of their ability
3. Play to the best of their skills
4. Shall not do anything to jeopardize their fitness
5. Speak, dress, and behave in a manner that is beneficial to teamwork.
6. Not do anything to put his team to shame
7. And avoid public ridicule

Because corruption undeniably saps resources available for development, distorts access to services for poor communities, and undermines public confidence in the government's will and capacity to serve the poor, an anticorruption strategy is an essential complement to the Estrada administration's pro-poor and pro-growth stance. Many claim that the administration is in better condition after Estrada than after the Marcos regime, which some claim as a debilitating fatalism, a don't worry about it attitude. Perhaps so, but what good is a country with laws if no one enforces them?

Estrada definitely believes in helping his friends. His friend 'Atong' Ang is, among other things, consultant of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. (Pagcor) on *jai alai* operations. His company, Power Management and Consultancy, is paid P500,000 a day, excluding bonuses. Ang became chief executive officer of Fontana Resort and Country Club, a membership club that boasts of villas, a water park and a nine-hole golf course at Clark, Pampanga. According to Singson, Estrada is one of the owners of Fontana, as well as the now-defunct Fontainebleau, which Fontana bought out. The poor have to work twelve to fifteen hour days, counting their money in centavos, while the rich and powerful steal millions a day in pesos with sweetheart deals and kick backs.

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Estrada has also honored Lucio Tan, another crony, as the among country's biggest taxpayers, despite a P27-billion peso tax evasion case against Tan's Fortune Tobacco Firm. Taxes remain uncollected from political cronies while the people starve.

Estrada's friend, Luis 'Baby' Asistio, is now a congressman representing the 2nd district of Caloocan City. Last April, Asistio's son, Luis 'Peting' Asistio III, was charged with drug trafficking and direct assault when he was caught with 106.15 grams of shabu in a drug bust in Caloocan City. His brother Macario Asistio, meanwhile, was linked earlier last year to a syndicate of textbook publishers who attempted to corner a P200-million peso contract and sent one of its agents, Mary Ann Maslog, with a P3 million peso bribe to the Department of Budget and Management.

Mark Jimenez, another Estrada crony, is in hot water with the U.S. government, doing in the U.S. what he has been doing in the Philippines for years, except, in the U.S. his procedures are illegal. A businessman who is wanted in the United States for mail fraud, conspiracy, tax evasion, and illegal campaign contributions, Jimenez was hailed by Estrada as a "*corporate genius*," and even became a presidential adviser on Latin American affairs until the United States government sought his extradition.

Mark Jimenez is now the publisher of the Manila Times, the newspaper that earned Estrada's wrath last year for saying he was an "*unwitting ninong*" to an "*irregular*" deal struck by the National Power Corporation with an Argentinean firm. The Manila Times was then owned by the Gokongwei family, which, months later, was forced to sell the paper after the President pressured their advertisers to withdraw their business. Selling to people believed to be fronts for Jimenez, who unsurprisingly denied such an arrangement. Today, Jimenez also writes a column for his paper three times a week.

Jose Luis 'Sel' Yulo, a member of one of the country's wealthiest landowning families, was a Palace perennial during the first two years of the Estrada administration. In October of last year Yulo caused controversy after the President named him chair of the Presidential Commission on Mass Housing and Presidential Adviser on Housing, without the courtesy of first notifying Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council head Ms. Karina David that she was being replaced.

Yulo's appointment came just two weeks after his newly incorporated firm, St. Peter Holdings Corp., bought a 7,000-square-meter property at 100 11<sup>th</sup> Street in New Manila, Quezon City, from the Madrigals



on behalf of Estrada. But he could not last a month, even in a corrupt government, resigning after the Manila Times, which had by then been acquired by Mark Jimenez, reported that he was facing lawsuits for issuing bouncing checks and not paying his credit card bills.-From pcij.org

Corruption has emerged as a pivotal international criterion for allocating scarce development aid resources, and countries will increasingly be judged by their actions in combating corruption.

From the World Bank: A Bank Strategy for Tackling Corruption-Given the mounting evidence of the costs of corruption and the need for more coordinated approaches at both country and international levels, the Bank requires a broad framework to address the issue. The emerging strategy for the Bank, which has four channels: Preventing fraud and corruption within Bank-financed projects.

Helping countries that *request* Bank support in their efforts to reduce corruption.

Taking corruption more explicitly into account in country assistance strategies, country lending considerations, the policy dialogue, analytical work, and the choice and design of projects.

Adding voice and support to international efforts to reduce corruption.

The ultimate goal of a Bank strategy is to help countries address corruption and not to necessarily eliminate corruption completely, which is an unrealistic aim, but to help those countries move from systemic corruption to an environment of well-performing government that minimizes corruption's negative effect on development and treatment of the poor.

The World Bank's Legal Mandate:

Although corruption is a politically sensitive issue in many countries, the Articles of Agreement authorize the Bank to address corruption, within certain limits. In a recent paper on the subject, the General Counsel pointed out that the World Bank can hardly insulate itself from major issues of international development policy. Corruption has become such an issue. Its prevalence in a given country increasingly influences the flow of public and private funds for investment in that country. The Bank's lending programs and in particular its adjustment lending take into account factors which determine the size and pace of such flows. From a legal viewpoint, what matters is that the Bank's involvement must always be consistent with its Articles of Agreement.

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The Bank can, in my view, take many actions to help the fight against corruption. It can conduct research on the causes and effects of this worldwide phenomenon. It can provide assistance, by mutual agreement, to enable its borrowing countries to curb corruption. It may take up the level of corruption as a subject of discussion in the dialogue with its borrowing members. And, if the level of corruption is high so as to have an adverse impact on the effectiveness of Bank assistance, according to factual and objective analysis, and the government is not taking serious measures to combat it, the Bank can take this as a factor in its lending strategy towards the country.

The only legal barrier in this respect is that in doing so the Bank and its staff must be concerned only with the economic causes and effects and should refrain from intervening in the country's political affairs. While the task may be difficult in borderline cases, its limits have been prescribed in detail in legal opinions endorsed by the Bank's Board.

According to one such legal opinion, the concept of governance in the sense of the overall management of a country's resources cannot be irrelevant to an international financial institution which at present not only finances projects but also is deeply involved in the process of economic reform carried out by its borrowing members.

Clearly, the concern here is not with the exercise of state powers in the broad sense but specifically with the appropriate management of the public sector and the creation of an enabling environment for the private sector. It is a concern for rules which are actually applied and institutions which ensure the appropriate application of these rules, to the extent that such rules and institutions are required for the economic development of the country and in particular for the sound management of its resources.

No doubt the Bank has to address issues of corruption in this context with great caution, acting on the basis of established facts and only to the extent that the issues clearly affect the economic development of the country. It cannot, however, ignore such issues at a time when they have become a major concern, not only to the sources of international financial flows but also to business organizations and indeed to the governments and peoples of most of its member countries.

Thus corruption can be addressed by Bank staff as an economic concern within the framework already approved by the Board for governance issues. This framework provides scope for the Bank to

help countries by advising on economic policy reform and strengthening institutional capacity. However, the Bank's mandate does not extend to the political aspects of controlling corruption. And though the engagement of civil society is crucial for the long-run control of corruption, there are obvious limits on the extent to which the Bank, as a lender to governments, can directly support civil society's efforts to control corruption.

So, while the Bank's mandate provides scope for the institution to help countries control corruption, it shapes the way in which the Bank may respond.

**The World Bank's Fiduciary Responsibility:**

The Bank has long recognized its fiduciary responsibility to ensure that fraud and corruption are minimized in the projects it finances. This is enshrined in the Bank's Articles, and was emphasized again by President James D. Wolfensohn in his speech at the Annual Meetings in October 1996. Procurement, disbursement, financial reporting, supervision, and auditing procedures have evolved to ensure that this responsibility is met, as discussed in chapter 4. The Bank's procurement guidelines were further amended in 1996 to make explicit what the Bank would do if it determined that fraud and corruption had occurred within a Bank-financed project.

The emphasis on controlling fraud and corruption within Bank-financed projects will continue to be a central part of the Bank's strategy.

However, the strategy needs to reconcile a tension that all external aid agencies confront to some extent. In the short run, fraud and corruption within an aid-funded project can be controlled by tightening project management systems. In the long run, sustained reduction will come about only if government (or agency) control systems are strengthened. A strategy for protecting Bank-financed projects from fraud and corruption needs to address this tension and try to ensure that whatever means are used, borrower accountability is enhanced.

**Helping Countries Combat Corruption:**

Experience with economic reform suggests that progress cannot be achieved merely through conditionality imposed by external actors like the Bank. Reform programs must be driven from within, and this is no less true for anticorruption ones. Furthermore, tackling corruption requires the engagement of those outside government—parliamentarians, civil society, households, the private sector, and the media. As a provider of development finance and policy advice to

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governments, the Bank is an important ally in the fight against corruption.

The main thrust of the Bank's support for countries' anticorruption efforts will be in helping to design and implement government programs. In some cases the Bank may be asked to help with specific anticorruption efforts, in areas within its mandate and expertise. It will respond to such requests in partnership with other international institutions and bilateral aid donors as appropriate. In other cases, the Bank may provide assistance in economic policy reform and institutional strengthening that, while aimed primarily at improving government performance, also helps reduce corruption. In addition, the Bank, and in particular the Economic Development Institute, can support government efforts by facilitating workshops for parliamentarians or journalists on these issues.

As a practical matter, the Bank's advice to a particular country will depend on that country's circumstances. In some countries, economic policy reform will be the priority. In others the immediate need may be targeted interventions in tax or customs agencies, or procurement reform. Circumstances will also determine whether the strategy should be comprehensive or incremental. Comprehensive strategies can be developed where national leadership is committed to change and the political will exists to undertake in-depth economic and institutional reforms.

Opportunities for in-depth reform may exist at the local level or in particular agencies or departments even if those opportunities are missing at the national level. What is lacking is the political will due to centuries of corruption inculcated by both political as well as religious perspectives.

In some cases there may be more political will for economic policy reform than for in-depth work at the institutional level. And even when the possibility for economic policy reform is limited, there may still be scope for activities, such as public education or dialogue with leaders in government and civil society, that can lay the foundation for more substantial action later.

Developing countries range from those in which dynamic forces are working for more transparent and accountable government to those caught in a vicious circle of systemic corruption and no growth. In some countries historical forces are helping to modernize the state, working in much the same way they did in industrial countries a century ago. In Latin America, the civil society is engaged, and policymakers see the control of corruption as an integral part of

public sector modernization. Privatization has been substantial, and economies are now much more open to market forces. In a number of East Asian countries the private sector is especially dynamic, and policymakers recognize the challenges and opportunities of the global economy and the need for a change in the role of the state. The Bank's role in such circumstances is to be ready to help governments improve performance by providing policy advice and assisting with institutional strengthening while at the same time ensuring that Bank-financed projects are free of corruption. Poorer countries, particularly some in Africa, cannot wait for historical processes, particularly if the preconditions for change are absent. Africa's modern private sector remains small and operates by informal rules in its relations with government. In some of these countries high levels of corruption may be a stable equilibrium, with political elites, bureaucratic functionaries, entrepreneurs, and ordinary people all bound by its rules. Although the context is quite different, similar forces exist in some transition economies, where the institutions of a command economy are no longer relevant and there is a vacuum in government capacity.

Efforts to combat systemic corruption and build strong institutions in such countries need to be more deliberate, focusing not just on building the various components of the "integrity system" but also on economic policy reform and on how policy reform and institution building can reinforce one another. Success will depend on the roles played by national leaders, public officials, and civil society; on the design and implementation of economic policies; and on the condition of public management systems. External agents like the Bank and bilateral donors also have an important role to play, both because significant external support is needed to help build capacity and because aid plays a major role in shaping and maintaining the state.

**Contributing to International Efforts:**

Finally, a central part of the Bank's strategy involves lending its voice and support to international efforts to control corruption. Corruption has important international dimensions, as many bribes flow across international boundaries. Governments in both capital-exporting and capital-importing countries have a responsibility to promote ethical and law-abiding behavior by companies and individuals within their jurisdictions. International initiatives to control corruption are growing, as outlined in chapter 8, and the Bank can play an active role.

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The following is an article by H. G. Broadman and F. Recanatini, 1999, *Seeds of Corruption: Do Market Institutions Matter?:* Economists in the field of industrial organization, antitrust, and regulation have long recognized certain factors as potent determinants of opportunistic behavior, corruption, and "capture" of government officials. Only now are these relationships becoming conventional wisdom among specialists in economies in transition. Ten years into the transition, corruption is so pervasive that it could jeopardize the best-intentioned reform efforts. Broadman and Recanatini present an analytical framework for examining the role market institutions play in rent-seeking and illicit behavior. Using recently available data on the incidence of corruption and on institutional development, they provide preliminary evidence on the link between the development of market institutions and incentives for corruption.

Virtually all of the indicators they examine appear to be important, but three are statistically significant:

1. The intensity of barriers to the entry of new business.
2. The effectiveness of the legal system.
3. The efficacy and competitiveness of services provided by infrastructure monopolies.

The main lesson emerging from their analysis: a well established system of market institutions—clear and transparent rules, fully functioning checks and balances (including strong enforcement mechanisms), and a robust competitive environment—reduces opportunities for rent-seeking and hence incentives for corruption.

Both the design and effective implementation of such measures are important if a market system is to be effective. It is not enough, for example, to enact first-rate laws if they are not enforced.

The local political economy greatly affects whether a given policy reform will curtail corruption. Especially important are the following factors in the political economy:

1. The credibility of the government's commitment to carrying out announced reforms.
2. The degree to which government officials are captured by the entities they regulate or oversee.
3. The stability of the government itself.
4. The political power of entrenched vested interests.

Economists in the field of industrial organization, antitrust, and regulation have long recognized these factors as potent determinants of opportunistic behavior, corruption, and "capture" of government

officials. Only now are they becoming conventional wisdom among specialists in economies in transition.

Maria Gonzalez de Asis, 2000, in her article, "*Coalition-Building to Fight Corruption*," believes that: *Building coalitions between civil society and government is an important step in fighting corruption. By opening channels through which civil society and government stakeholders can demand greater accountability from each other, this approach can generate and sustain a citizen-government dynamic that will substantially buttress reforms. Incorporating diagnostic tools and broad-based workshops into the coalition-building process, moreover, helps to identify the opportunities and priorities for reform efforts.*"

In his "*DAI Project Fights Graft and Corruption in the Philippines*," E. J. Nacpil, on January 21, 2001, states, "*Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo was sworn in as the new President of the Philippines after allegations of corruption and cronyism led to massive demonstrations that forced Joseph Estrada to step down from office. During her inauguration speech, President Arroyo declared that one of the core beliefs of her administration would be to improve moral standards in government and society. In doing so, she said, "We create fertile ground for good governance based on a sound moral foundation, a philosophy of transparency, and an ethic of effective implementation."*

Accelerating Growth, Investment, and Liberalization with Equity (AGILE), USAID, the Philippines' flagship economic policy project, has been able to benefit from the country's heightened attention to graft and corruption, stemming from the previous administration's scandal. In recent months, AGILE was able to assist the Department of Budget and Management (DBM), led by an interagency work group, introduced legislation and pushed through administrative measures that could eliminate the major sources of graft and corruption in government procurement.

Graft and corruption is rampant in government procurement at all levels in the Philippines. It is estimated that in fiscal year 2001, corruption consumed more than 25% or Philippine P 90 billion pesos, US \$2 billion dollars, of the total cost of procurement of Philippine P 372 billion, US \$8 billion dollars, if not for the procurement reforms introduced by AGILE. Corruption is far from gone, but efforts to eradicate it have been initiated.

The problem has been exacerbated by the fact that no single law outlines regulations on government procurement, a fact which appears to be legislatively ignored by one administration after

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another. Instead, the legal provisions that govern procurement are contained in numerous laws, executive orders, administrative orders, and circulars. The result has been bureaucratic incompetence and conflicting interpretations of procedures, as agencies and public officials endeavor to protect their supplementary sources of income.

The AGILE team also helped the DBM put in place administrative measures to address the problem of graft and corruption. AGILE helped DBM draft Executive Order 262 and its accompanying implementing rules and regulations (IRRs), which contain new rules on government procurement of goods and supplies. Working with the DBM, the AGILE team also helped amend the IRRs of Presidential Decree 1594, which govern infrastructure projects. The Economic Coordinating Council, the government's highest economic policy-making body, approved Executive Order 262 and the amended IRRs of Presidential Decree 1594.

Both Executive Order 262 and the amended IRRs of Presidential Decree 1594 establish a government procurement system that embodies:

1. Transparency
2. Accountability
3. Equity
4. Effectiveness
5. Efficiency
6. Economy

Some of the reforms provided for by the new procurement rules include streamlining the tedious pre-qualification process to a simple the "*eligibility check*" and focusing instead on a detailed post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid, to check for responsiveness. This removes a major source of major corruption and speeds up the procurement process, helping reduce the length of the process from 3 to 12 months to 2.5 to 4 months. The move to a lowest calculated responsive bid as the criterion for award removes discretion in re-computing the "cost" of bids, leads to greater transparency, and reduces the probability of protests from losing bidders. The new rules also remove floor prices on bids and replace these with a publicly announced maximum budget for the contract, thus increasing transparency and minimizing opportunities for collusion.

To increase the likelihood these reforms take root, AGILE spearheaded the creation of a civil society group to watch over government procurements. Incorporated in January, *Procurement*



*Watch Inc.* will monitor the implementation of reforms and initiate the training of government officials, NGOs, and other groups in an effort to professionalize all government procurements.

Was it dissatisfaction with government and its crass corruption that caused the townspeople of the District of Zamboanga del Norte to reelect a convicted rapist of an eleven year old girl, who is presently imprisoned, and cannot attend Congressional meetings? With their representative not being able to attend Congressional hearings or vote, are the people any worse off than those districts which do have representation?

In an article, 23 March 2001, in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, pg. B-9, Reuters quotes Prime Minister Supachai of the World Trade Organization, "*We must be able to find out some other more effective means of encouraging higher labor standards...instead of penalizing poor countries for their labor practices, we should reward countries that improve working conditions by offering them more export opportunities.*"

In "*The Ties Still Bind*," by the PCIJ research team, Yvonne T. Chua and Vinia M. Datinguino, look at the family, business, and other interests of the 11th House of Representatives. The findings show that the 220 members of the current House represent a broader range of families, groups, social classes and political leanings than the previous two-post Marcos legislatures. Due to legislation, former congressmen who had been banned from seeking a third term in 1998 are now eligible for election to the House. At the same time, 48 members of the current House are barred from seeking re-election.

The 11th House of Representatives, is a millionaires' club, a bastion of the propertied elite, who through various means seek to protect the status quo with only 11 congressmen declaring a net worth of less than P1 million. This is less than the 16 representatives in the 9th House who declared they are not millionaires. The wealthiest is former Speaker Manuel B. Villar, who reports a net worth of P328 million. The richer representatives with net worth of P200 million or more include Manuel Andaya, Ralph Recto, Vicente Sandoval and Augusto Syjuco.

The poorest congressmen, on the other hand, include four of the 14 party-list representatives -Gorgonio Unde, Renato Magtubo, Diogenes Osabel and Ariel Zartiga. This shows a tendency that the electoral reform has helped the non-rich gain a foothold in the traditionally wealthy legislature. The preponderance of wealth in Congress, however, raises the issue of just how representative is the House?

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With only 2% of the Filipino families with annual incomes of more than P500,000 per year, or 331,000 households of the country's 14 million families.

211 congressmen or 95 percent declared ownership of real property when they were elected to office in 1998. Two of every three have at least three pieces of real property. The only representatives who did not declare ownership of real property are Alan Reter Cayetano, Carlos Cojuangco, Francis Joseph Escudero, Vida Espinosa, Jovito Plameras, Rodolfo San Luis, Ricardo Silverio and Rolex Suplico. Some of these, however, may not themselves own property but are part of land-holding families. Cojuangco's father Eduardo Jr., for example, runs a plantation in Negros Occidental that is among the biggest in the country.

Of the 211 representatives who own land, 92 legislators, or 42 percent, have agricultural landholdings that include rice farms, coffee plantations and orchards, making farmland still a significant source of income. In addition, 16 percent declared business interests in agricultural companies. These include Pacifico Fajardo of Nueva Ecija, Julio Ledesma IV of Negros Occidental, Amadeo Perez Jr. of Pangasinan and Marcial Punzalan Jr. of Quezon.

Significant sources of wealth for members of both the 9th and the 11th House are real estate development and construction; hotel, recreation and restaurants; travel and transportation; banking and financial services, trading and retailing. Some 18 percent of the present legislators are into property development and construction, including Villar who is known to have made his fortune in real estate. His declared interests include Fine Properties, Adelfa Properties, M.B. Villar Co. and Mooncrest Property Development Corp. Equally active in the real estate business are Maria. Amelita Villarosa who is treasurer and director in five realty firms; Celso Lobregat, a shareholder in also five such firms; Vicente Andaya, an investor in four; and Victor Sumulong, a stockholder in three.

Twenty representatives declared business interests in the communication sector. They include Speaker Feliciano Belmonte, whose family publishes the Philippine Star; James Gordon Jr. of Subic Broadcasting Corp., Joseph Felix Durano of Danao Telecoms and Prospero Pichay Jr. of Carlo Publishing House and DZME, while seven congressmen have shares in schools. Eduardo Gullas is chairman of the board of trustees of the University of Visayas. Hernani Bragazana, now agrarian reform secretary, is a shareholder in two schools in Alaminos, Pangasinan. Rodolfo Bacani owns the

Bacani Computer Training Center in Sampaloc, Manila, while Napoleon Beratio owns the Magallanes Western Cavite Institute.

The 12 representatives who declared interests in the power and energy sector include. Fajardo, who co-owns Blackgold Inc.; Rafael Nantes, an incorporator and partner in the National Battery Corp. and People's International Enterprises Co.; Federico Sandoval, president of Genesis Industrial Gases Corp. and a director of Gengas LPG Inc.; and Herminio Teves, owner of the HGT Power Plant.

Despite their wealth, several representatives have used the legislature as an employment agency for their relatives. Congress today employs 102 relatives of 64 congressmen. Most of whom are children of House members, closely followed by siblings and spouses. Enrique Garcia of Bataan employs six relatives in his office, including his wife, two brothers, a daughter, a nephew and a niece. The office of Allen Quimpo of Aklan has five, while Benjamin Cappleman of Ifugao and Rodolfo Tuazon of Samar each have four. Putting relatives in the legislative payroll is a common practice which introduces the aspirant to the mechanizations of the system and introduces them to who's who in the legislature and senate. At least 19 of the legislators were themselves employees of the House, mostly of their lawmaker-relatives, before their election to Congress.

111 or half of the members of the House today divide their time between their business concerns and their legislative duties. In the 9th House of Representatives, only 15 percent remained involved in various businesses, either as company officers or shareholders, after their election. Many congressmen also have spouses who are active in business (26 percent) or their own professions (11 percent).

Lawmakers are found often lobbying on various occasions for their sector's or industry's interests which poses a problem of conflict of interest which many don't seem too concerned about.

For example, Abdulla Mangotara, a landowner, filed the National Irrigation Fees Condonation Act. Emilio Macias, another landowner, introduced the Landowners Protection Act and Special Land Registration Act. Many elected officials take the position of former Rep. Mariano Yulo, chairman of the House Ethics Committee in the 9th House: That no conflicts of interest occur if the bills benefit not only the congressmen but their constituents as well. Would it not be simpler to abstain from voting instead of attempting to twist the law at every turn to benefit the few instead of the majority?

*"We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth, however bitter it may be."* Jose Rizal

Former Sen. Rene Saguisag, once chairman of the

Senate Ethics Committee, has taken a more Westernized approach in full transparency in all legislative voting, and has questioned the practice of legislators advocating measures that benefit themselves and prefers members of Congress who engage in a particular business to at least inform the House. A start, but still lacking in transparency and full disclosure. Saguisag was a principal author of Republic Act 6713, the Code of Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees that requires the annual filing of statements of assets and liabilities and carries provisions against conflict-of-interest situations, which we now know are seldom if ever enforced against their own.

Even if representatives disclose their assets and liabilities annually, it is still difficult to pinpoint the exact extent of their wealth, witness the declaration of former President Estrada. Although all of them routinely file the statements, many do not file them properly, often under-reporting the value of their property or totally omitting certain assets or business affiliations. *"Like the income tax law, the law has helped make this country a nation of liars. Anyone who files, especially high officials, grossly underreports,"* Saguisag said. having knowledge of this under-reporting, what has been done? Or should the the question be, *"What will be done to correct this outrageous practice?"* The law, for example, requires public officials to indicate in the statements the kind of land location (including house number and street name), and the assessed fair market values and acquisition cost. They are also supposed to identify the agencies to which they are indebted when they report their liabilities.

Many representatives, however, have the tendency not to tell the actual worth of their real estate holdings. Of the 211 congressmen who owned real property, 73 failed to give assessed value, 66 failed to reveal the current fair market values, and 82 failed to report the acquisition costs. There are also legislators who put down current market value and understate them. The current market value of Villar's real property, for example, is exactly the same as what he had declared six years ago despite the astronomical rise of real estate prices due to the de-valuation of the peso.

In addition, 26 congressmen refused to classify the types of property they own, 14 omitted to furnish the location, 19 were derelict in their indication of the year the properties were acquired, and 14 snubbed the mode of acquisition. The word *"various"* becomes a convenient way out for congressmen who chose not to dwell on details.

At least 71 congressmen failed to give details on the model and make of their vehicles. Fifty also left the public in the dark as to where their stock investments were. Only 20 bothered to write down in which companies they had bought shares, with one hundred congressmen [nearly a half of the House members] declaring they or their spouses have no business or other financial interests. Yet in many cases, they or their spouses do. Cebu's Clavel Martinez, for example, failed to disclose that her husband is president of the Martinez Group of Companies. Rarely do congressmen indicate the monetary value of their business interests. The shining exception is Congressman Teves. Antonio Roman and Rodolfo Tuazon, who also gave full details of their businesses.

The importance of filing proper statements of assets and liabilities cannot be overemphasized. The U.S.-based Center of Public Integrity, which has examined financial disclosure laws in the United States, has said these annual declarations are the only source of information about the representatives' sources of income, and are often a better indicator of motivation on the part of lawmakers than their campaign contributions. *"If legislators and other public officials fully disclose those activities and interests, others-their constituents, news organizations and their peers in legislature are at least armed with the information they need to decide whether a particular lawmaker's actions have been influenced by factors other than the public good,"* the Center of Public Integrity states.

With the elections over, many are wondering about the costs [in pesos] How much did the winning senators spend on political advertisements for TV, radio, and the newspapers?

---

Manuel B. Villar	22,998,441 *
Ralph Recto	17,357,735.60
Edgardo Angara	15,155,422
Sergio Osmeña III	14,603,894.10
Franklin Drilon	13,148,626.11
Panfilo Lacson	13,067,911
LuisaPimentel	11,505,864.66
Erjcito	
FrancisN. Panglininan	9,632,686
Ramon Magsaysay Jr.	7,952,834.67
Noli De Castro	7,887,119.71
Joker Arroyo	7,726,412.05

Source: Statements of Election Contributions and Expenditures, submitted to Comelec.

Senator Honasan's statement does *not* specify items for ad placements.

\* the amount, according to Villar's statement, groups expenses for "ads/production/research/others"

In the Philippines, the statements are supposed to be designed to help the public detect potential conflicts of interest, especially of officials who draft laws and make policies that affect their corporate and business affairs, and guard against nepotism or dispensing favors to relatives. Whenever officials fail to submit a full and accurate listing of their assets and relatives in public office, the intent of the law ordering the filing of such information is thwarted.

Saguisag said that education and publicity are possible ways to pressure government officials and employees to follow the assets law. -From the *Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism*.

The Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ) is an independent, nonprofit media agency that specializes in investigative reporting. It was founded in 1989 by nine Filipino journalists who realized, from their years on the beat and at the news desk, the need for newspapers and broadcast agencies to go beyond day-to-day reportage.

While the Philippine press is undoubtedly the liveliest and freest in Asia, deadline pressures, extreme competition, and budgetary constraints make it difficult for many journalists to delve into the causes and broader meanings of news events.

The Center believes that the media play a crucial role in scrutinizing and strengthening democratic institutions. The media could—and should—be a catalyst for social debate and consensus that would redound to the promotion of public welfare. To do so, the media must provide citizens with the bases for arriving at informed opinions and decisions.

The Center was set up to contribute to this end by promoting investigative reporting on current issues in Philippine society and on matters of large public interest. It does not intend to replace the work of individual newspapers or radio and television stations, but merely seeks to encourage the development of investigative journalism and to create a culture for it within the Philippine press.

The Center funds investigative projects for both the print and broadcast media. It puts out books on current issues and publishes in an investigative reporting magazine. In addition, PCIJ organizes training seminars for journalists and provides trainers for news organizations in the Philippines and Southeast Asia. It also conducts seminars and studies on issues involving the media and information access.

In the ten years, since its founding, PCIJ has published over 180 articles in major Philippine newspapers and magazines, produced five full-length documentaries, and launched over a dozen books. It has also won major awards, including nine National Book Awards, a Catholic Mass Media Award, and more than two dozen awards and citations from the Jaime V. Ongpin Awards for Investigative Journalism.

PCIJ stories make an impact. Well-researched and well-documented, these reports have contributed to a deeper understanding of raging issues, from politics to the environment, from health and business to women and the military. Some of these reports have prodded government action on issues like corruption, public accountability and environmental protection.

11 March 1996. Te PCIJ reported that Health Secretary Hilarion Ramiro was responsible for large-scale anomalies in the Department of Health and was skimming off as much as 40 percent from government contracts. Two weeks later, Ramiro was forced to resign.

4-6 December 1995. PCIJ wrote about how jueteng continues to thrive in Pangasinan, the home province of then President Fidel V. Ramos. A few days later, Ramos ordered an investigation into the allegations and asked local police and government officials to put a stop to jueteng in the province.

10 July 1995. PCIJ exposed how the then Presidential Anti-Crime Commission (PACC) tortured two 12-year-old boys suspected of involvement in a kidnapping. Two days later, the Commission on Human Rights ordered a probe of the incident. Later, lawyers filed charges against the PACC.

11 October 1993. PCIJ wrote about Rose Marie "Baby" Arenas, alleged presidential paramour, and her supposed influence on the affairs of state. Three days later, the Securities and Exchange Commission took over a disputed one-third of the shares of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, the only paper that ran the story.

17 August 1993. PCIJ reported that the House Speaker, Jose de Venecia, left a trail of unpaid debts amounting to P5 billion, when he

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however bitter it may be."* Jose Rizal

was head of the Landoil conglomerate in the 1980s.

One week later, the Senate began an investigation of Landoil Resources Corporation.

28 January 1993. PCIJ reported that the most senior Supreme Court justice faked authorship of a decision upholding the PLDT's (telecommunications giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company) right to block the operation of an international gateway by its rival, Eastern Telecoms. After four days, Justice Hugo Gutierrez resigned from the Court.

14 December 1992. PCIJ exposed how dolphins are being slaughtered and eaten by fishermen. Two weeks later, the environment department issued an order banning the killing of these marine mammals.

4 April 1990. PCIJ began a series on how a seaweed farm was threatening Tubbataha reef, a national marine park in the Sulu Sea. Seven weeks later, a Philippine Navy team demolished the farm, enforcing an eviction order by the environment department. PCIJ Board and Staff

The Center is run by a 13-person staff headed by the executive director who administers the Center's day-to-day affairs. The staff includes five journalists who write investigative reports and oversee the various components of the Center's work. An office manager supervises the Center's administrative work and a marketing coordinator is in charge of selling PCIJ productions. The Center also employs a researcher and a librarian.

A board of editors, composed mostly of PCIJ's founders, meets every month to guide and assess the Center's operations. A board of advisers, composed of men and women chosen for their probity, independence, and integrity, helps determine the broad directions of the Center. PCIJ receives foundation support for its work. It earns a modest income from its publications, which is plowed back into the Center's operations.

*"No man can boast upon the wisdom of his laws for his laws are imperfect. But let no man disregard the counsel of truth for truth is absolute wisdom in itself."* -Chris Malazarte

## **CONCLUSION:**

Speaking on the solidarity of the people against tyranny, *"I join in your reprobation of our merchants, priests, and lawyers, for their adherence to England and monarchy, in preference to their own country and its Constitution. But merchants have no country. The*

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*mere spot they stand on does not constitute so strong an attachment as that from which they draw their gains.*"-Thomas Jefferson.

The final consensus is the Philippine government has the final say as to whether or not it wishes to clean up corruption. The international community can only make recommendations and in many cases withhold the funding sought by the respective country.

A growth in the awareness of the costs of corruption at the grass roots level is necessary as there is a growing demand for Bank funding and support for national projects such as infra-structures [*bridges, highways, public schools*] as well as hospitals, and government buildings.

Anti-corruption programs are best thought of not as plans conceptualized to hinder the politician, but to help rather than hinder progress and to assist all parties concerned.

If sustainable progress is to be seen, it must come from the government officials who wish to see progress in their country, instead of raping the treasury so they may retire in America [*or some other foreign country which will protect them*] in their old age with total disregard of their impoverished countryman. The Philippines needs to make a concerted effort to eliminate graft and corruption and not merely attempt to create another paper trail to protect those in power to portray them as saviors of their country. The time for rhetoric is over.

The world can clearly see what is or is not happening here on the home front. Poverty is increasing to an intolerable level. The Poor, deprived of hope, join Revolutionary groups and are now too willing to die for a cause because they know they have been deprived of a future and hope not only for themselves, but for their posterity.

The enemy of the Philippine people in the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be government and Muslim terrorists. The government having killed Unable to share in the wealth of their country the people now challenge their so called representatives who have done nothing but fill their pockets at the public coffers.

Neither can the World Bank cannot ignore the call to eliminate corruption. Various international groups want an accounting of their money. Developed countries can dictate who receives funding and curtail if not eliminate those nations who use moneys intended for the poor and development for personal enrichment.

In that light the Bank may have to learn by trial and error as to what will work and what won't, according to cultural differences to help impoverished nations. The World Bank is in an early learning phase

*"We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth, however bitter it may be."* Jose Rizal

in addressing of corruption, suggesting broad based frameworks in order to concentrate on more countries, and this new knowledge management systems will be crucial in gathering and disseminating the information necessary to help those concerned.

While corruption has been shown to have clear economic costs, it is also a dimension of the way power is exercised in the respective countries, and it is thus a sensitive issue of governance. Change will not occur overnight, however, with the advent of new technology and the world progressing at a far more rapid pace than in the past, it will not take long for under-developed nations to fall further into the abyss of poverty.

The Filipino elected officials and civil servants have become rather rapacious in their pursuit of wealth, with all citizens and non-citizens being potential victims as they believe they possess unassailable attributes, which makes them virtually untouchable.

Many governments are more open to discussing corruption than they were several years ago, although, the subject of corruption still requires a delicate approach. Crooks and thieves do not like to be called such. While this approach may be appropriate for some areas, it is by no means the choice to be taken by all. Speaking openly of corruption is no longer a taboo subject in the Banking industry and the World Bank in particular, and it will be dealt with in its operational workings in ways that support borrowers' development objectives.

Obtaining the proper economic policy, enforcing national laws, maintaining financial management systems, and practicing sound procurement across the public sector requires well-functioning institutions. The World Bank needs to deepen its understanding of how the cultural differences influence the financial institutions and of what external agencies can do to help countries develop strong institutions. It needs to place more emphasis on high-quality public and private sector management and governance work.

The Bank should not think of itself as working alone in this area as many civil rights and human rights organizations are available to assist as it is through financial independence that poverty will be exterminated in third world countries. If countries are to make progress in combating corruption, it will come about only through national efforts of their elected representatives that external agents such as the World Bank can support with policy advice and financial resources.

What is lacking in government is a disciplined approach due to a system which rewards those in power without consideration to the short or long term affects these decisions will have on the country and its populace. High ranking officials preferring the public to grovel at their feet for the small crumbs which they then issue forthwith.

*"I have been told I was on the road to hell, but I had no idea it was just a mile down the road with a Dome on it."* – Abraham Lincoln, 16<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, referring to the Capitol Building in Washington DC.

*" In schools and universities information of all sorts is ladled out, but no one is taught to reason, or to consider what is evidence for what. To any person with even the vaguest idea of the nature of scientific evidence, such beliefs as those of astrologers are of course impossible. But so are most of the beliefs upon which governments are based, such as the peculiar merit of persons living in a certain area, or of persons whose income exceeds a certain sum."*

With an ever increasing number of third world countries asking for ever increasing amounts of funding, the World Bank will be hard pressed to continue loaning moneys to those countries which deplete the funds before they are actually dispersed into the field. The Philippines will soon find itself competing for limited funds with other Asian countries. Those who have the better track records will more likely receive more money. And the politicians will cry discrimination and cultural differences. Who's going to change, ...the world, or the Philippines? Remember, the '*Golden Rule,*' he who has the gold makes the rules!

A continuing pace along the present track will some day lead to selective anarchy. Will the Philippines some day have United Nations forces dispersed in isolated areas to keep the peace between the various cultural groups? No one will force the Filipino to adopt. No one will force them to assimilate. No one will force them to do anything. Continued corruption and deprival of human and civil rights will affect their tourism, foreign investment, and trade. Then who will the government blame? Everyone but themselves!

Americans back on the home front will now start looking at their retired foreign aficionados and begin wondering if they helped their neighbors retire in a lifestyle even few Americans can afford.

The Catholic Pope, on the other hand, should rethink his policy in forgiveness of indebtedness of third world countries. Too many Americans and developed country citizens work too hard for their

*"We can only serve our country by telling the naked truth, however bitter it may be."* Jose Rizal

money to just give it up to corrupt officials to enjoy the tranquil good life at someone else's expense.

What we have in the Philippines are the '*Obstructionists*,' political appointees and civil servants who dedicate their lives to maintaining the status quo, giving only '*lip service*' to the masses while they issue forth band-aid solutions to an ever failing economy. These bureaucrats emasculate the very programs which are intended to help the masses.

When one cleans house, does one clean only one room? Replacing the President is negligible unless one cleans up the bureaucratic atmosphere which perpetuates the incompetence so prevalent at all levels in government. Are these people above the law? Not hardly. But many bureaucrats feel safe in knowing that stealing in government office is a lucrative venture and the option of incarceration is at most, remote. Often times it is an '*open secret*' as to who is doing the most stealing.

The '*recall*' vote is available, but not used for fear of embarrassment to the public official [*delicadeza*] So, the people continue to suffer for not wanting to embarrass those who would deprive their children of hope, a decent future, and respectable education. The people will suffer for not wanting to embarrass those who would deny them basic medication and medical facilities. The people will suffer because for centuries they have been inculcated with '*turn the other cheek*,' at all costs by a religious group that has benefited the most from their poverty and continues to reap the harvests of their toil.

Unless the Philippines resolves to re-institute a civil society, if ever there was one, it will continue to plummet in the eyes of the world. Lacking *institutional integrity*, it cannot merely establish with words, with what it lacks in reality. The superfluous words of political rhetoric and pontification have flowed like beer at sporting events. The time has now arrived to put into action what politicians have said, for years, what they are going to do. Or perhaps the people, being a predominantly Catholic country, should adopt Saint Jude, the Saint of lost causes, Saint of the impossible, as their national hero, a saint to be summoned during especially difficult circumstances if politicians don't start representing the people and stop representing themselves. -Read Matthews 7:5, 23:28, and 1 Timothy 4:2.

The '*Bad Boys*' of the Philippines are not all in jail. Only the ones who use a gun or a knife. For those who use a pen, they are exempt.

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1. Will this democratic facade wake up in time to save itself? Or will its leaders continue to milk this superficial democracy into financial oblivion?
2. Can this government continue to harass foreigners and cajole them into paying for the privilege of coming to the Philippines or suffer threats, persecution, and deportation for living by rules that even the public officials ignore?
3. Can this government continue to criticize others yet deport those who criticize them?
4. Can this government continue to live by a double standard at the expense of the poor and tourism?
5. Can this government continue to demand blind obedience from its military personnel while continuing to deny them and their families civil and human rights?
6. Must the tourist forfeit his human and civil rights to visit this beautiful land?
7. Must the tourist be continually abused by Immigration officials who continue to extort money and beat tourists at will?
8. Must the tourist be exposed to a corrupt system which seeks only to conceal its lies and incompetence with bureaucratic red tape?
9. Must the tourist be abandoned by his [or her] government and be compelled to forfeit large amounts of money for private counsel [attorneys] to protect what is supposed to his or her God given right?
10. How many more tourists will be welcomed this year...*Filipino Style*?

Write to your congressman, senator, or elected official and ask what is being done to protect you and your loved ones from those unscrupulous individuals who feel we are a source of unlimited wealth to exploit at their whim or face deportation by an Immigration Bureau which acts as political lackeys to corrupt officials.

*"It would not do to teach people to reason correctly, since the result would be to undermine these beliefs. If these beliefs were to fade, mankind might escape disaster, but politicians could not. At all costs, therefore, we must be kept stupid."* -On Astrologers (1932).

How the indigenous peoples of this land reclaim their stolen past remains to be seen, as the politicians have given the people only token support in their endeavors.

**OTHER RESOURCES**

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2. *"Man's Search for Spirituality: A Chronological Presentation"* by E. Christopher Reyes., Dimiao, Bohol 6305, RP [This book contains the truth and may, at a future date, be placed on the Forbidden Index List]
3. Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia, historical research
4. International Monetary Fund  
700 19<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20431 USA  
IMF EXTERNAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT  
Telephone: 202-623-7300 — Fax: 202-623-6278
5. For more information, visit the World Bank's website at:  
[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org).  
Manila External Affairs Office:  
The World Bank Resident Mission in the Philippines  
Leonora Gonzales, External Relations Officer  
Tel: (63-2) 637-5855 or (63-2) 917-3003  
Fax: (63-2) 637-5870.  
E-mail: [lgonzales@worldbank.org](mailto:lgonzales@worldbank.org)  
External Affairs Office:  
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Tel: (202) 473-1967/ (202) 458-2559  
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E-mail: [mfossberg@worldbank.org](mailto:mfossberg@worldbank.org) or [lsalazar@worldbank.org](mailto:lsalazar@worldbank.org)
6. *"The First Filipino," A Bibliography of Jose Rizal,* by Leon Ma. Guerrero, Printon Press, 40 Natividad St., SFDM Quezon City, Philippines.
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8. See *"Issues of Governance in Borrowing Members—The Extent of Their Relevance under the Bank's Articles of Agreement, Legal Memorandum of the General Counsel,"* December 21, 1990 (SecM91-131, February 5, 1991); *"Prohibition of Political Activities in the Bank's Work, Legal Opinion of the General Counsel,"* July 11, 1995 (SecM95-707, July 12, 1995).
9. See *"Issues of Governance in Borrowing Members"* (Sec M91-131, February 5, 1991).
10. See Ibrahim Shihata, *"The World Bank in a Changing World,"* 1991, 1, 53-96.

11. See Ibrahim Shihata, "*Corruption—A General Review with an Emphasis on the Role of the World Bank.*" A paper based on a keynote address delivered at the International Symposium on International Crime, Jesus College, Cambridge, England, dated September 9, 1996.
12. [www.kyw.com/now/story](http://www.kyw.com/now/story) [*CBS News*]
13. [www.home.pacific.net.ph/~philpages](http://www.home.pacific.net.ph/~philpages) Office of the Ombudsman, Crime Prevention Unit [new agency, from the Arroyo administration]
14. [www.atimes.com](http://www.atimes.com) [*Asia Times*]
15. [www1.chinadaily.com.cn](http://www1.chinadaily.com.cn) [*China Daily*]
16. [www.usaid.gov/democracy/anticorruption](http://www.usaid.gov/democracy/anticorruption) [Michael Henning, US AID In the Philippines]
17. [www.codewan.com.ph](http://www.codewan.com.ph) [*Corruption in the Philippines*]
18. [gilsan99@hotmail.com](mailto:gilsan99@hotmail.com)
19. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism, Lorna Kalaw-Tirol, Sheila S. Coronel, Marites Danguilan-Vitug, Malou Mangahas, Howie G. Severino, David Celdran, Ma. Ceres P. Doyo, Jose V. Abueva, Jose V. Abueva, Doreen Fernandez, Jose F. Lacaba, Cecilia Lazaro, Tina Monzon-Palma, Sixto K. Roxas, Jose M. Galang, Yvonne T. Chua, Luz Rimban, Alecks P. Pabico, Malou Maestro, Vinia M. Datinguino, Ruth S. Cruz, Esther Acosta, Perpy C. Tio, Edgar Abugan, Liezel Dungo, Jane Continente, and Yolanda Nicolas.
20. [www.pldt.com](http://www.pldt.com)

*"Government is not reason, it is not eloquence. It is force, and like fire, it is a dangerous servant and a fearful master."* - George Washington, First President of the United States.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
**BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION**  
MAGALLANES DRIVE, INTRAMUROS  
1002 MANILA

10 May 1999

EDWARD C. REYES  
Taongon Can-andam  
Dimiao, Bohol  
6305

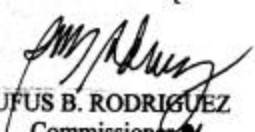
Dear Mr. Reyes:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 19 April 1999 informing this office regarding your complaint against AVSEC Officer Cristio Dayrit and Immigration Officer Bathan.

Please be advised that there are two (2) similar sounding names – Bathan – in the Bureau, and we need you to furnish us the first name of the Immigration Officer concerned, before we can take any action on your complaint and start an investigation regarding the matter. This is to avoid any mistake in sending notice to the wrong person.

We hope to hear from you again.

Very truly yours,

  
RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ  
Commissioner

EMPLOYEE: RAMON B. BATHAN, JR.  
Immigration Officer  
Ninoy Aquino International Airport  
Pasay City

OC-TS/cmc

1041





Republic of the Philippines  
PROVINCE OF BOHOL  
City of Tagbilaran

**OFFICE OF THE SANGGUNIANG PANLALAWIGAN**

*Hon. Tomas D. Abapo, Jr.*  
Provincial Board Member

January 25, 2001

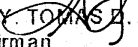
MR. EDWARD REYES  
Taongon, Can-andam  
Dimiao, Bohol

Dear Sir,

This has reference to the Administrative Case filed by you against Mayor Sylvia Adame, et al. While the respondents have submitted their verified answer to your complaints, it has however, come to the attention of the Committee that there is a pending Deportation Proceedings with the Bureau of Immigration, Manila filed against you. The Committee would wish to know the status and outcome of said deportation proceeding so that we will be enlightened on the course of action we would take.

In view thereof, The Committee would like to require from you to inform the Sangguniang Panlalawigan on the status and/or outcome of the proceedings so that we will be enlightened on our course of action.

Respectfully yours,

  
ATTY. TOMAS D. ABAPO, JR.  
Chairman  
Comm. on Good Government

1. For filing charges against Mayor Adame deportation charges were filed against Mr. Reyes
2. If Mr. Reyes can be deported, then the charges are all null and void as a foreigner MUST be in the Philippines to implement same.
3. Mr. Reyes could NOT be deported as he had committed no crimes, hence, the Committee on Good Government sat on the case until after elections. Mr. Reyes then lost via the Aguinaldo Decision. (All the crimes of an elected official are forgiven if re-elected)



*Embassy of the United States of America*

*Manila, Philippines*

December 15, 2000

Mr. Edward C. Reyes  
Taongon Can-andam  
Dimiao, Bohol 6305

Dear Mr. Reyes:

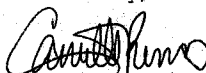
I refer to your letter dated November 27, 2000 regarding your complaint against Attorney Rommel J. De Leon of the Philippine Bureau of Immigration and Deportation (BID).

Please note that all individuals residing in this country are under the jurisdiction of the Philippine government. The U.S. Embassy does not have any police power to investigate possible violations of local laws committed against, or by, its citizens. Also, U.S. diplomatic officers are prohibited under Philippine and U.S. laws from involvement in private matters. The appropriate course of action for your case would be to present your complaint to the local judicial authorities. You may, therefore, wish to consult an attorney regarding your best legal recourse. Enclosed is a list of attorneys compiled by the Embassy.

Please note that the Embassy assumes no responsibility for the integrity or professional ability of the persons or firms whose names appear in this list. Also, to prevent possible misunderstanding, please ascertain the fees prior to retaining the services of an attorney.

I trust you will find this information helpful in responding to your letter. Please do not hesitate to contact us again if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

  
Camille C. Purvis  
Vice Consul

Embassy of the United States of America

No record of this correspondence has been made. If you should write again concerning this matter, please return the original of your correspondence.

Republic of the Philippines  
PROVINCE OF BOHOL  
Municipality of Dumiao  
-0-0-

AMOX 1-2  
FEB 29 2000  
RECEIVED

Office of the Municipal Assessor



February 28, 2000

Atty. Sylvia V. Adame  
Municipal Mayor  
Dumiao, Bohol

A n d a L :

This refers to the alleged inaction filed by Mr. Edward C. Reyes on his several letters sent to the Municipal Assessor which is not true. In fact he is ~~always~~ <sup>immediately</sup> given the attention regarding his request being a foreigner because a public servant, I'm doing my duties and responsibilities to please everybody, but he is causing the delay of his request.

Since, he is stupid and very hard to understand, he doesn't agree with my appraisal and assessment being the municipal assessor of Dumiao, So, I sent a letter request to the Office of the Provincial Assessor requesting for their technical assistance in the appraisal and assessment of his residential house just to make him contented with the assessment.

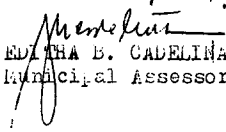
Immediately after my request last October 1, 1999 the Provincial Assessor sent her personnel ~~xxxxxx~~ they are: Mr. ~~xxxxxx~~ Felisic, Taxpayer IV, Antonio B. Manding Jr. Local Assessment Operation Officer II, assisted by me and my personnel in the Municipal Assessor's Office.

Attached herewith is the result of our finding on the ocular inspection and appraisal of the residential building declared together with the sketch plan and detailed computation of the adjusted market value including improvements therein.

In addition to the above-mentioned, being a municipal assessor the tax declaration of the property assessed had long been prepared in the name of his wife Enriqueta Keot but since she is prevented by her husband to sign the jurat portion of the tax declaration, she refuses to sign. This is the cause of the delay of the assessment and appraisal of his residential house. It's not the fault of the Municipal Assessor doing the assessment as it's the fault of the owner for his refusal to sign the jurat portion of the prepared tax declaration which causes the delay of the appraisal in the office of the Provincial Assessor.

I hope that this explanation could give enough satisfaction. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

  
EDITHA B. CADELINA  
Municipal Assessor

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES  
DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
**BUREAU OF IMMIGRATION**  
MAGALLANES DRIVE, INTRAMUROS  
1002 MANILA

10 May 1999

EDWARD C. REYES  
Taongon Can-andam  
Dimiao, Bohol  
6305

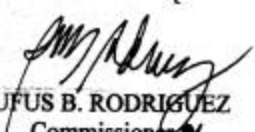
Dear Mr. Reyes:

This is to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 19 April 1999 informing this office regarding your complaint against AVSEC Officer Cristio Dayrit and Immigration Officer Bathan.

Please be advised that there are two (2) similar sounding names – Bathan – in the Bureau, and we need you to furnish us the first name of the Immigration Officer concerned, before we can take any action on your complaint and start an investigation regarding the matter. This is to avoid any mistake in sending notice to the wrong person.

We hope to hear from you again.

Very truly yours,



RUFUS B. RODRIGUEZ  
Commissioner

EMPLOYEE: RAMON B. BATHAN, JR.  
Immigration Officer  
Ninoy Aquino International Airport  
Pasay City

OC-TS/cmc

1041

Recreation of Death Threat received for challenging public officials in Dimiao, Bohol:

**New Peoples Court  
Rizal Rebolunsaryo Brigade  
Taongon – Bita-ug Command  
Moving Address**

**New Peoples Army versus Eduardo Reyes**

ORDER

This Court has conducted self-impose trial of undesirable alien like you, and after continuous discussions, we have ground you guilty of the case of causing so much trouble instead of peace and cooperation among the poor residents in our barangay.

Kaming pobrang taga-Dimiao dili moangay ug mga tawo nga samokan or reklamador pareho nimo, ang mga americano diri sa Dimiao mga bu-otan, very friendly, not like you who is arrogant and treating us like un-educated people. Wala kana ay laing buhat ug dili reklamo sa among barangay ug municipal offisyals, so much waste of time for very small matters. To us you are stupid, inhuman as if you are the best, when you are the worst kind of people.

After discussing your case, we have decided this:

Verdict – elimination by a special liquidation squad.

Date of execution – anytime when possible

Place of execution – anywhere when unguarded

Our decision is final and be executed anytime now, and because of your stupidity, totodasin namo and tibu-ok familia nimo.

Beware americano see you in hell. Labihan ka nga panamastamason sa mga pobrang meimbro sa masang pilipino.

Liquidation is the only solution to erase you from the face of the earth. Period. Ba-bye.

Condolence,

