

ASSESSING PINOY:

ONE YEAR AND A BULK OF PROMISES

by Dexter Cabalza

After President Benigno Aquino III delivered his second State of the Nation Address (SONA), the UP Journalism Club puts his first SONA in scrutiny whether Aquino kept or broke his promises. Whether he leads the Philippines in the tuwid na daan (straight path) or not is the people's verdict.

1. Form the Truth Commission

On July 30, 2010, Aquino signed Executive Order No. 1 that created the Truth Commission to probe the alleged cases of graft and corruption under the Arroyo administration.

However, the Supreme Court declared the body unconstitutional on December 2010 because it duplicates the function of the Ombudsman and violates the equal protection clause of the Constitution.

STATUS: FAILED

2. Investigate the irregularities of GOCCs and GFIs

After the alleged excessive bonuses and cash incentives received by executives and employees of different government-owned and controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs) such as Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System and National Power Corporation, Aquino signed the GOCC Act of 2011 on June 6, 2011.

The law restructures the operations of GOCCs and GFIs and creates the GOCC Commission on Governance, an oversight body that will evaluate the performance of GOCCs.

The National Food Authority has also created an audit team to probe the unnecessary rice importations and the alleged misuse of the 2010 calamity fund.

STATUS: SUCCESS

3. Punish perpetrators of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances

According to KARAPATAN, an alliance of human rights advocates, extrajudicial killings (EJKs) reached 1190 and enforced disappearances, 205 from 2001 to 2010. In just a year, the Aquino administra-

tion has recorded 48 cases of EJKs.

Despite accounts by whistle blowers, no one was held accountable.

STATUS: FAILED

4. Penalize smugglers and tax evaders

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) has already filed a total of 54 tax evasion cases. Among the high-profile personalities filed with complaints are Ang Galing Pinoy party-list Rep. Juan Miguel Arroyo, dismissed Local Waterworks and Utilities Administration chair Prospero Pichay Jr. and ex-military comptroller Jacinto Ligot.

Meanwhile, Bureau of Customs Commissioner Angelito Alvarez, who was criticized for failing to intercept smuggled goods in Manila, has charged various smugglers including chemical importer Cleveland Industries. But it's too early to speak triumph. It must end being a precedent.

STATUS: DEFICIENT

5. Fund the CCT program

The conditional cash transfer (CCT) program grants a monthly stipend of up to P1, 400 to 2.3 million of the 4.6 million poorest families nationwide. It is part of Department of Social and Welfare Department's Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps).

The Congress approved the 21 billion budget for the program. However, Budget Secretary Florencio Abad said it would need an additional two billion funding, despite an unchanged number of beneficiaries.

President Aquino said 700,000 beneficiaries would be added to the existing two million members of the program by 2012.

STATUS: DEFICIENT

6. Implement K to 12 education

Starting this school year, kids 5 years old and below are encouraged to enroll in kindergarten in public schools, after the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented the universal kindergarten system.

The K to 12 Education will basically include the universal kindergarten, 6 years of elementary, 4 years of junior high school with an additional 2 years for senior high school. Thus "more time to consolidate acquired academic skills and competencies," according to the DepEd briefer.

The government committed to help bridge the classroom shortage sums up to over 12,500 classroom units in two years, according to the Official Gazette of the Office of the President of the Philippines.

STATUS: PENDING

7. Engage in PPPs to improve economy

The Aquino administration hailed public-private partnerships (PPPs) to create a fiscal space for government spending on social services including education, health and infrastructure.

However, critics of the program said it would only inflate debts and corporate takeovers of government corporations.

Initial projects include the operation and maintenance (O&M) contract for MRT 3 and LRT 1; the P1.6-billion Daang Hari-South Luzon Expressway (SLEX) Link Road Project; the P10.59-billion Ninoy Aquino International Airport (NAIA) Expressway Phase II Project; and the P21-billion North Luzon Expressway-SLEX Connector Project.

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Penoy Ni Myra Cabujat

Penoy ang naging simbolo ng mga militanteng grupo sa unang taon ni Aquino sa pwesto. Isa sa mga pinakahayag na manipestasyon nito ay ang effigy ng Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (BAYAN).

Sa unang pagkakataon, inilagay si Aquino sa loob ng isang penoy na nakapatong sa military jeep ng Amerika. Sa likod ni Aquino ay mga karatula ng mga naging proyekto niya bilang pangulo, tulad ng public-private partnership (PPP), conditional cash transfer (CCT) at Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA). Kapansin-pansin ang mukha ni dating Pangulong Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo na nasa likod ni Aquino.

Ayon kay Crisanto de Leon ng Ugat Lahi, isang alyansa ng mga artista na gumawa ng effigy ng BAYAN, ginamit nila ang konsepto ng penoy bilang wordplay sa PNoy, ang pinaiksing pangalan ni Aquino.

Maliban dito, idinagdag ni de Leon na ipinahahayag nito ang zero score ng pangulo dahil “wala siyang nagawa para sa mga Pilipino.” Aniya, lalong naghirap ang bansa sa kanyang administrasyon.

Ipinapakita naman ng military jeep ang pagiging papet ng administrasyon ng Aquino sa Amerika.

Hit and Miss: What They Say on PNoy's SONA

By Alex Austria

Certain sectors of society were unsatisfied with President Aquino's State of the Nation Address (SONA) on July 25.

Norman Riego, chairperson of the UP-Diliman College of Mass Communication Council said there was still no apparent change under Aquino's year in office.

“Wala pa rin siyang naihapag na konkreto at materyal na mga solusyon,” he said.

This was supported by a separate statement by Edita A. Tan, Professor Emerita at the UP-Diliman School of Economics. She said that there were still no solutions towards economic development and poverty, and that Aquino's SONA kept on talking about small projects instead of ones that focus on national development.

“What is [allocating] four thousand lots for the police, when there are 20 percent of Filipinos living in the slums? We are doing all these little things that matter, but not on a national level. This upsets me,” she added.

Aquino's apparent lack of direction on issues such as the plight of Overseas Filipino Worker's abroad and the still-pending Freedom of Information bill prompted Rowena Paraan, Secretary-General of the National Union of Journalists of the Philippines and Gina Esguerra, Secre-

Kumpadre ni Uncle Sam

Sa effigy in Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), Ipinapakita nito si Aquino na kaakbay si Uncle Sam, at may karatula sa harapan na nagsasabing: “Siya ang boss ko.” Sa likod ay mga imahe ng isang magsasaka at isang manggagawa.

Recycled daw ang nasabing effigy, ayon kay Sheillette Untalan ng KMU. Ang mukha ni Aquino ay noong nakaraang taon pa ginawa, samantalang lima hanggang sampung taon nang ginagamit ng kanilang grupo ang ibang mga imahe.

Anak ng mabahong itlog

Itlog din ang naging simbolismo ng Bayan Muna National sa unang taon ni Aquino sa pwesto.

Suot ni Gerry Matagsico, artist ng nasabing grupo, ang costume na ipinapakita si Aquino na umaangat mula sa basag na itlog. Lutang din sa kaliwang bahagi ng mukha ni Aquino ang imahe ni Arroyo at ni Uncle Sam.

Ayon kay Matagsico, ang administrasyong Aquino ay tulad ng isang itlog na naging mabaho matapos hindi magamit sa matagal na panahon at halos bulok na.

Dagdag pa niya, sa sobrang baho raw ng “itlog” ay lumabas na ang mukha ni Aquino at lumutang ang mga imahe ni Arroyo at Uncle Sam.

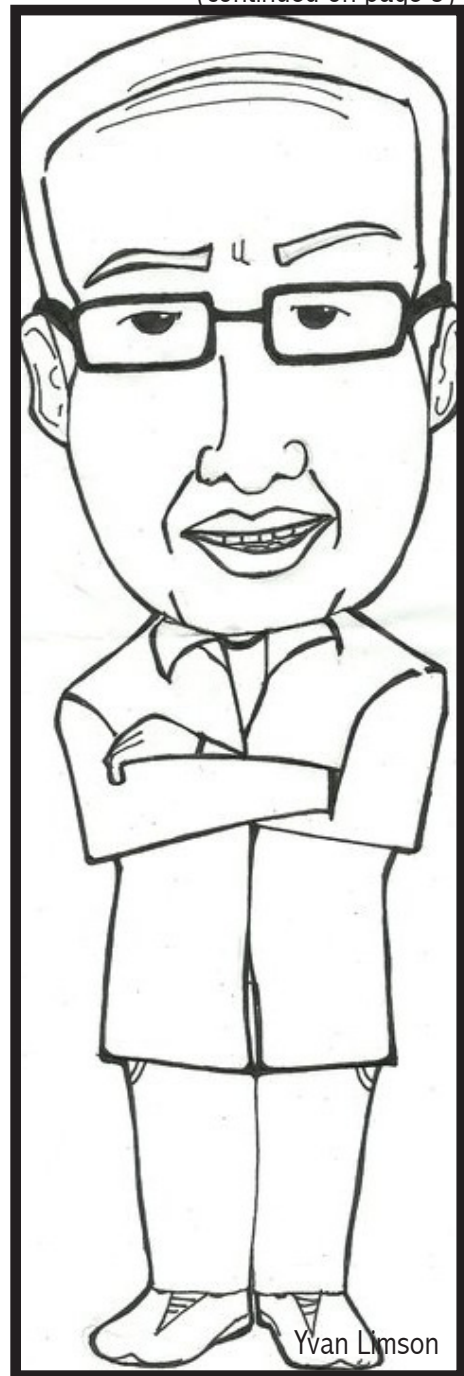
Pres. Aquino's massive miss

by Mikhail Flores

Access to information may still be beyond the reach of journalists and concerned citizens as President Aquino did not mention the administration's plan on the passage of a Freedom of Information Law that has been in Congress for more than a decade already.

While Aquino renewed his commitment with the people in combating corruption and making corrupt officials accountable for their sins, he did not say his

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(Pres. Aquino's...from page 2)

plan on this crucial piece of legislation that would allow any Filipino citizen to access government documents that are of public interest, except those which are matters of national security.

If the Aquino administration is really sincere in promoting good governance and transparency, he should have urged Congress a long time ago to pass an FOI bill. Having an FOI law allows journalists and concerned citizens alike in helping fight corruption by making their own investigations.

As the government bureaucracy is limited by short funds and lack of employees, the FOI law will put the fight on corruption in the hands of every Filipino citizen. Through an FOI bill, the Aquino administration will no longer have the monopoly of investigating irregularities and funds misuse.

An FOI law would also allow for more checks and balances, not just in the hands of the government, but of the people as well. Filipinos can readily see for themselves whether a project was above board or tainted with irregularities.

A Freedom of Information Law will further smoothen the road towards a clean and graft-free government.



A space for Gloria Arroyo

by Lindley Agustin

It might have been difficult for former President and now Pampanga representative Gloria-Macapagal Arroyo to totally shut her ears off while her successor was delivering the State of the Nation Address. She couldn't have turned off her car radio while on her way to Pampanga. She couldn't have kept herself from tuning into news sites and social networking sites while in the car as she had to keep herself updated from the fiesta about to happen in the district.

Few hours after the SONA ended, she was rushed to St. Luke's Medical Center in Taguig because of hypertension. Waiting for the drama to unfold and develop, the people kept their watch and now, a spine surgery awaits her. Whether she preferred it or not that now, she gets space and air-time both in print and broadcast media, it has been a tough challenge for the press how to arrange stories in their daily news days before the SONA.

We want to give her space here. Since 2004, five plunder cases have been filed against Arroyo including billions of agriculture funds used in her 2004 campaign, and the alleged misuse of Overseas Workers Welfare Administration funds, and misuse of Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) funds. Not to mention the claims Arroyo was behind the

(Assessing...from page 1)

STATUS: PENDING

8. Initiate peace talks with MILF, NDF

The government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) met in Kuala Lumpur last month for the last round of peace negotiations and the recognition of the Bangsamoro Juridical Entity. Formal talks with the group will resume in August.

The MILF, however, is wary of the government to "preempt and supplant" the ongoing peace process, according to an article on its website. Meanwhile, formal talks with the National Democratic Front (NDF) resumed in Norway on February 2011 but were postponed after the government denied the request of NDF to release its two peace consultants.

STATUS: PENDING

9. Increase employment

According to the Social Weather Stations (SWS), unemployment affects a total of 14 million Filipinos, or 27.2 percent of the country's population.

2004 and 2007 poll fraud.

All these bombarded the public days before the Aquino's SONA that the tradition of reviewing a president's previous year before delivering his/her speech has been covered up. Though we do not go with Arroyo's men who say the news were made for propaganda to divert the public's attention from evaluating Aquino's first term, it still appeared coincidental.

After the floating the characters of Lintang Bedol (the martyr) and Zaldy Ampatuan (the enemy-turned-hero), the story went out with the creatively-crafted speech of Aquino. The plot escalates back to Arroyo in bed rest. At least, everything was balanced when senators and congressmen got heads turned to them with their stunning SONA fashion.

The question remains: why only now? Did the whistleblowers need a year to contemplate before telling the "truth"? Well then, one year cost a lot. Many people, including journalists, have already shed blood, toils, and tears. It was a delayed reaction. While the focus ought to be at building a road map for the tuwid na daan, it had been diverted to repairing old roads.

And now that the Truth Commission has been decided to be unconstitutional, we have just lost our torch.

Press Secretary Cerge Remonde dismissed the results of the poll, stressing that the actual unemployment rate was only 7.2 percent according to the April 2011 Labor Force Survey of the National Statistics Office.

STATUS: FAILED

10. Develop land and agrarian reform

On June 29, 2011, the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) installed 68 farmers in hacienda Bacan in Negros Occidental. Meanwhile, land distribution in the Cojuangco-owned Hacienda Luisita Inc. (HLI), is still in dispute due to the Supreme Court (SC) ruling, ordering the DAR to hold another referendum. Under the deal, farmers were given the option to receive land or HLI stocks. Alyansa ng mga Manggagawang Bukid sa Hacienda Luisita, however, asked the SC to order land distribution.

PNoy, a Cojuangco heir, refrained from taking action, saying he cannot do anything to distribute the land since he is not a major stockholder.

STATUS: DEFICIENT



Mga kalampag sa Facebook at Twitter

Ni Suzette Dalumpines

“Buhay na buhay na ang Pilipinas at ang Pilipino.”

Ito ang naging panghuling pahayag ni Pangulong Benigno “Noynoy” Simeon Aquino sa kaniyang muling pagharap sa kaniyang ikalawang State of the Nation Address (SONA) sa kaniyang mga... boss, ang taumbayan.

At gaya ng inaasahan, ipinagmalaki ng pangulo ang mga pagtatagumpay ng kaniyang administrasyon na tuparin ang kaniyang mga ipinangako.

Kung hindi sa lansangan ay sinabayan din ang SONA ng pangulo ng mga pambabatikos, reaksyon sa konteksto at paraan ng pagsulat ng talumpati, at pagpuri sa Twitter at Facebook, ang pinakapatok na social networking sites (SNS) sa mga Pilipino.

Hindi lang sila midyum sa paghatid ng sariwang pagbabalita kundi nagsilbing score sheet din ng mga Pilipinong nakinig sa talumpati ng pangulo.

Marami ang pumuri kay Aquino sa ulat ng pagbabago sa ilalim ng kaniyang administrasyon subalit tinapatan naman ito ng mga nakapuna sa kaniyang patuloy na patutsada kay dating pangulong Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Nagsilbing tulay rin ang makabagong midyum na ito upang ipaalala sa pangulo ang mga bagay na dapat sana ay nabanggit sa kaniyang talumpati. Sa pamamagitan ng mga SNS, nailabas ng mga miyembro ng online community ang kanilang pagkadismaya sa mga bagay ng ito.

Habang ibinibida ni Aquino ang patuloy na pagtaas sa ekonomiya sa ilalim ng kaniyang pamamahala, ang pagbaba ng bilang ng mga Pilipinong nagugutom, at ang pagtigil ng wang-wang sa iba't ibang ahensiya ng gobyerno, naghahanap naman ang mga Pilipino ng malinaw na tugon ng pangulo sa mga pangunahing isyung kinakaharap ng bansa gaya ng patuloy na pagpatay sa mga mamamahayag, usapin ng Reproductive Health at Divorce Bill, at ang naghihikahos na estado ng sektor ng edukasyon.

Kung susumahin ang mga naging reaksyon ng mga Pilipino sa mga SNS na ito, marami pang kailangang gawin ang administrasyong Aquino upang mapatunayan na ang bayang ito'y makararating sa tuwid

twitter

FakeNoynoy Fake Noynoy Aquino
Sex Appeal ✓ | Killer Smile ✓ | Yellow Underwear ✓ | Teleprompter ✓ | Marlboro Menthol ✓ | I guess I'm ready for my #SONA this afternoon. GV

patevangelista Patricia Evangelista
I think the President may have jacked out the juice out of that wangwang metaphor. That must be the tenth. #Sona

FakeNoynoy Fake Noynoy Aquino
My #SONA: Paragraph 1 - #blamegloria, Paragraph 2 - #blamethemuslims, Paragraph 3 - #blamekris, Footnote - My Accomplishments

PresidentNoy P-Noy
Sa lahat ng mga kasama natin sa tuwid na daan: Kayo ang lumikha ng pagkakataong baguhin ang dinatnan,
25 Jul

itsmekrisaquino Kris Aquino
Yes, magkatabi kami ni Mayor Jun Binay. Ate asked him gusto ba nyang magtabi kami para peace na? Friends na kami. Peace on earth.

carlosceldran carlosceldran
was wondering how long it would take to take a potshot at past administration. I'll take a shot of bourbon each time he blames GMA.

PresidentNoy P-Noy
Totoo po: Personal talaga sa akin ang paggawa ng tama, at ang pagpapanagot sa mga gumagawa ng mali—sino man sila.

senmiriam Miriam Santiago
On scale of 1-10, I give the ff. grades for PNOY's first year: general administration – 6.5; anticorruption – 7; family behavior – 8.

Lindley Agustin

na daan na ipinangako ng pangulo.

Ang kanilang naging aktibong pakikilahok ay patunay na ang mamamayan ay hindi makukuntento sa magagandang pangakong binitawan ng sinuman at tapos na ang mga panahon ng kawalan ng pakialam. At sa panahon ng makabagong teknolohiya kung saan halos lahat ay online, mas nagkaroon ng kapangyarihan ang mamamayan makialam ukol sa mga isyu ng

lipunan.

At bilang kaniyang boss, ang mga taumbayan ay patuloy na babantayan si Aquino at ang kaniyang pamahalaan at aasang sa kaniyang muling pag-uulat sa bayan, mapatunayan niyang may tunay na pagbabago sa ilalim ng kaniyang pamumuno sa mundo man ng realidad o sa mundo ng social media.



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