

PRESS RELEASE



Member Since 1993



ONE MAN'S VIEW

By Nonoy Mendoza

Another blunder ... a \$50M for six months for US lobbyists - What do you say, RP Senators? Take it again with a grain of salt?

WASHINGTON, Dec. 21 (PGON) - What a joke! Our bunch of blunderers are really out to destroy the credibility of Philippine President Gloria Macagagal-Arroyo. The "*palpak*" blunderers are out in bunch and ganging up on *El Presidente*.

News reports stated that the Philippine government is hiring Covington & Burling, LLP, ranked among the US top 20 best corporate lawfirm, considering the services of Ambassador Stuart E. Eizenstat, Partner and Chair of the International Practice of Covington and Burling LLP of Washington, D.C.

The \$50 million contract for six months which is renewable is considered "*a done deal*". The one-page contract posted on the Philippine Embassy's premises and website was in accordance with R.A. 9184 that requires a 14-calendar day public notice regarding "Procurement, Activities of the Government and Other Purposes," with Philippine Ambassador to the US Willy C. Gaa as the signatory as "Head, Procuring Entity."

Unless this questionable and very expensive to the Filipino people -- \$50 million for a six months lobbying job -- is immediately checked by the Philippines' *powers-that-be*, the Filipino people, once again will be out with at least TWO BILLION, ONE HUNDRED MILLION PESOS of hard-earned money, undoubtedly hard-earned by the OFWs (Filipino Overseas Workers).

For almost a year, *PGON (Pinoy Global Online News)* has been in the forefront to rid the Arroyo Cabinet members of the usual bunch of blunderers starting with the Philippine Secretary of Foreign Affairs Alberto Romulo. There are more such "blunderers" in the Arroyo Administration that need immediate firing out. If and when Madam President really meant what she says of straightening her administration in the last remaining two years of her presidential term.

Yesterday, the ONE MAN'S VIEW column reads: "*\$50M for six months for US lobbyistonce again, the Filipinos are being made a laughing stock by US lobbying - thanks to GMA's bunch of blundering advisers.*" Obviously the man behind the \$50M deal cannot be any other secretaries of the President's Cabinet, but for sure, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs. Not the Defense Department which has been receiving measly US dollar military aid.... not the Secretary of Tourism.

"*Imagine \$50 million for six months! Only six months. Puede seguro \$500,000 per US Senator x 100 senators to to fast-track them and lobby for good, old "Pinas,"* observed a Fil-Am old-timer on condition of anonymity. "*Two Billion, One Hundred Millions Pesos can construct a lot of Gawad Kalinga homes. It can built not classrooms for the Feed the Hungry projects but schools.*"

It is high time for fellow journalists to work together and zero-in to get rid of the "corruptors" and the "corruptees" who are ones and the same. Our "*saviors*" (kuno) are the elected Philippine Senators. Journalists, let us watch all of them and call a spade, a spade. Let us report misdeeds. Questionable dealings. Let us, all of us journalists, be vigilant in time of crisis such as we face today in the Philippines. #