



## *The Betty Letters*

*My Dear Grandchild,*

*I do not understand the reason that so many people are continuing to criticise the actions of the President of the Philippines, Mrs Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, in pulling all of her fifty one troops out of Iraq in order to meet the demands of the kidnappers of a Philippine lorry driver, Mr Angelo de la Cruz. What is one to expect from Philippine nationals, who, over the years, have been programmed to wash floors, clean windows and clothes, look after elderly people, and perform other menial household chores where one does not have to think too much? The brain of a homo sapien, once programmed, tends to resist reprogramming, you know. It requires some time to enable it to accept new commands. If you don't believe me, try this little exercise: Rotate one hand, clockwise, and, simultaneously, try to rotate the other hand, anti-clockwise. You will have a great deal of trouble, accomplishing this task, until, eventually, you are able to reprogramme your brain. Of course, not everybody is able to reprogramme his or her brain and, it is very clear, by the actions of Mrs Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, that certain Philippine nationals find it especially difficult to accomplish. People are, to a great extent, robotic, and the Philippine people, to a great extent, have adopted robotic tendencies in the extreme. Perhaps, they even have a robotic gene, now, who knows: Natural selection, you understand. I recall that the last time that I visited Mindanao and stayed in a 5-star hotel, I noted that there were tens of opened bottles, full of water, displayed, very neatly, around the perimeter of a large field. I was told by an employee of the hotel that that was the way that many Philippine people believe in sterilising water, making it drinkable and full of the goodness of God. It was an old way of doing things in the wilds of the country, I was told by this employee, who kept looking up at the sky whenever he used the word, God, the Father, Jesus, the Trinity, the Pope, and so on. I was beginning to feel a little uneasy about this employee, wondering whether or not a bolt of lightning would come crashing down from the Heavens and strike me on my new, highlighted hairstyle. Grandpa observed my consternation and stopped me from saying anything else to this employee. He told me in Shanghainese that one must remember that the ability of most of the eighty one million human population of the Philippines is limited in respect of absorbing and assimilating new knowledge. Grandpa, of course, is quite correct, and the actions of Gloria Arroyo would tend to substantiate his statements, made to me in Mindanao, some years ago. Now that the terrorists of Iraq have won the day with regard to the Government of the Philippines, they will, naturally, expect to be able to employ the same tactics when kidnapping the nationals of other countries, making demands for countries to stop, being part of the US-led coalition in Iraq. When it comes to terrorists, one should never think of rewarding them for acts of ignominy. While I feel for anybody under the threat of having his head cut off by Muslim terrorists, at the same time, to cave in to their demands is akin to offering them a reward for perpetrating cowardly and inhumane acts. What shocked me greatly, too, was a statement of Angelo de la Cruz, made in Manila on his return. He, actually, thanked his former captors for feeding him and treating him well; and he thanked Gloria 'for giving value to my life'. The actions of Gloria and the Government of Philippines, which she, unfortunately, heads, is going to result in a great many more deaths of the ignorant and the innocent in Iraq because, now, the die has been cast, so to speak, and the terrorists will think that they will be able to get away with blackmailing any country or any company to do their terrible bidding. I cannot expect Gloria to understand all of this because, clearly, it is too difficult for her to comprehend. Should the US-led coalition, now trying to*

*assist the people of Iraq to establish a good and stable government, headed only by Iraqis, modify their modus operandi in order to accommodate the demands of the Muslim terrorists? Should the Muslim terrorists be rewarded for their acts of terror; the mutilation of innocent people, the chopping off of the heads of lorry drivers, and the many incidents of murder of people, who are trying to bring order out of chaos in the country? There are about one million five hundred thousand Filipinos in the Middle East, today, Gloria has confirmed. All of these maids and lorry drivers are sending about eighty percent of their money back to the Philippines, in accordance with the law. The exportation of maids from the Philippines is a huge industry, which is bringing in the bacon for the country. And it is a growing industry, too, because Filipinos beget, beget and beget. Unemployment in the country is more than fourteen percent, you know. Without the cash, collected from the Filipino maids and lorry drivers, working abroad, the economy of the Philippines, no doubt, would collapse. Gloria seems to think that the US Government will understand her actions and empathise with her plight, but I feel that she is a disgrace. We, the women of the world, are, emotionally and mentally, the strongest of our species. But Gloria is letting our side down, terribly! If I were the wife of US President George W. Bush, I would put the Philippines on the list of the very stupid empires of the world. Iran, Iraq and North Korea had been placed on the list of the evil empires of the world by the US Government, but the Philippines could never qualify for such a distinction – because Gloria is just too stupid to even rate such a qualification. I would agree that it would have been horrible to have had that Philippine lorry driver have his head cut off by those Muslim terrorists, and I am equally certain that the family of this man are delighted to have him home, again. But the saving of this one life is likely to cost tens of others to lose theirs. Finally, for what reason did the Philippines send troops to Iraq in the first instance: Nobody there can afford foreign maids, drivers and cleaners. I really must go, now, because I have to tell Maria, my Filipina maid, to wash my knickers: I had a little accident while reading about Gloria, last night.*

*Love you,*

*The Chief Lady of Hongkong*

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