



“The pen is mightier than the sword.”

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FILIPINO-AMERICANS AND CRIMES

By: Ben Emata

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - - There is no doubt that a lot of Filipinos who came to the USA have made good in their quest for contentment and betterment in life. Everyone works hard to catch up with whatever loses in time they have in the Philippines due to deprivation and hardship. We have Filipinos in the medical profession who made it good and established names in their profession. We have lawyers, judges, military officers, engineers, journalists, accountants, economists, and others who made waves and formed part of successful individuals in this famous land of milk and honey.

So many hardworking Filipinos are enjoying the bounty of America and utterly putting in the world map our own identity. Some of them got nice jobs with the government or giant private firms while others made good in business. To them the sun is shining gold everyday even if they sweat it out every moment of their life.

In the field of politics, we have lots of our kind who made lightning and thunder and became congressmen, state governor, city mayors, council members, commissioners, trusted men and women in the American government system, etc. Amazingly, we excelled in many areas of endeavors. All these Filipinos have given us great honors over the years.

But I am extremely perplexed by the behavior of some Filipinos who commit crimes in the United States notwithstanding their good income and nice lifestyles. I cannot understand what is happening that it seems some psychological effects are running through the blood of these guys.

After years of luck and hard work, they realized their dreams by having beautiful homes, expensive cars, nice and comfortable living, and lots of money in banks and in investments. They can afford to travel anywhere in the world, eat the best food available to man and stay in luxurious hotels. They can afford to gamble as well as make loses in whatever amounts. Life is just beautiful for these people.

Sad to state, contentment in life seems empty and dry to the minds of some of our compatriots. They still crave for more. And as a result, many of them succumb to the black hands of evils and commit crimes. They opted the shortest way to riches via the road of crimes. Take the case of a family who engage in a juicy practice of

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tax preparation and each one of them are now in deep trouble because of plain fraud and stupidity. Recently also, another Filipino couple met the same fate and now in jail for nearly the same crime. It was not too long ago that a Filipino lady doctor practicing her lucrative profession in Florida was indicted and convicted after she was found dealing in illegal drugs. It was alleged she was prescribing an excessive number of narcotics to patients without appropriate indications. Some nurses were herded to prison for some crimes. In California, a few doctors were involved in bilking Medicaid and insurance scams. Some successful car mechanics were involved in insurance fraud through submission of imagined claims for inexistent car damage.

Not too long ago also was a Filipino woman in the east coast who was charged for laundering and allied crimes; a husband and wife, both doctors were charged for slavery and violations of immigration laws. Quite a lot of Filipino entrepreneurs engaged in the operation of care homes exploit their own *kababayans*, especially those without working documents, by giving them low pay, sub-standard accommodation and without any benefits whatsoever.

A couple of years ago a Filipino was thrown to jail after he was found guilty of murdering a relative; still another Filipino employed as a security guard was charged for having robbed the bank he was guarding; A member of the Philippine bar came here and practice law in downtown San Jose. His law firm was making good until some Filipino clients complained for some failures in service. The “lawyer” and his wife are now in jail.

About a year or two ago some Filipinos, who by good fortune, got employed in the White House were punished for spying; A Filipino celebrity tourist was caught in a California airport possessing an illegal drug. A Filipino-American who, for years, had been looked up as a leader, was once a TV anchorman prior to his appointment as director of a government-funded institution for senior citizens, is now facing serious crimes for a couple of violations. Priests too have been brought in the limelight for serious crimes.

So many of us were already sent to jail for various crimes that included the illegal gambling and cockfighting - - so many crimes you name it we have it.

Some smart Filipinos who are aware of their crimes hastily escaped back to the Philippines to avoid indictment and punishment. But the hands of justice in this great country are long enough to reach them wherever they are via the extradition treaty between the two countries. Nevertheless, the end up behind bars.



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Are these Filipinos Americans engaged in a tournament of the rich and the famous where whoever makes more money is the champion? Is it because of extreme lust and continued discontentment in life that lead them to commit such crimes? Or has our race been badly cultured by corruption back home that such a thing is in our blood? Or are Filipinos developing a dreadful disease in the minds that make them go wrong notwithstanding the contentment and luxuries in life?

Of course, I believe so much in general the honesty and integrity of Filipinos. They go overseas to earn. They travel to all directions even in places where their lives are endangered. They spread around the globe with honest intention to get rid from the clutches of poverty back home. They try hard to establish our racial identity and make the coming generation a better one. They help build the Philippine’s economy through regular remittances and investments back home. They engage in clean living and honest earning to survive with honor and dignity. But these few bastards who give us dishonor and crimes think crime is just one of the ways in life.

We have learned about Filipinos in the Middle East who are also in jail for committing various crimes too. I think some of them there have already been beheaded for conviction of capital offenses. In Europe, Singapore, Malaysia, China, Hongkong and other places where there are Filipinos, it seems there are commission of crimes too.

Of course, our conception is such that crime is just part of a healthy society. But excessive crimes committed in close interval are something definitely not acceptable in any human standard. What can we do? (ben_emata@yahoo.com)