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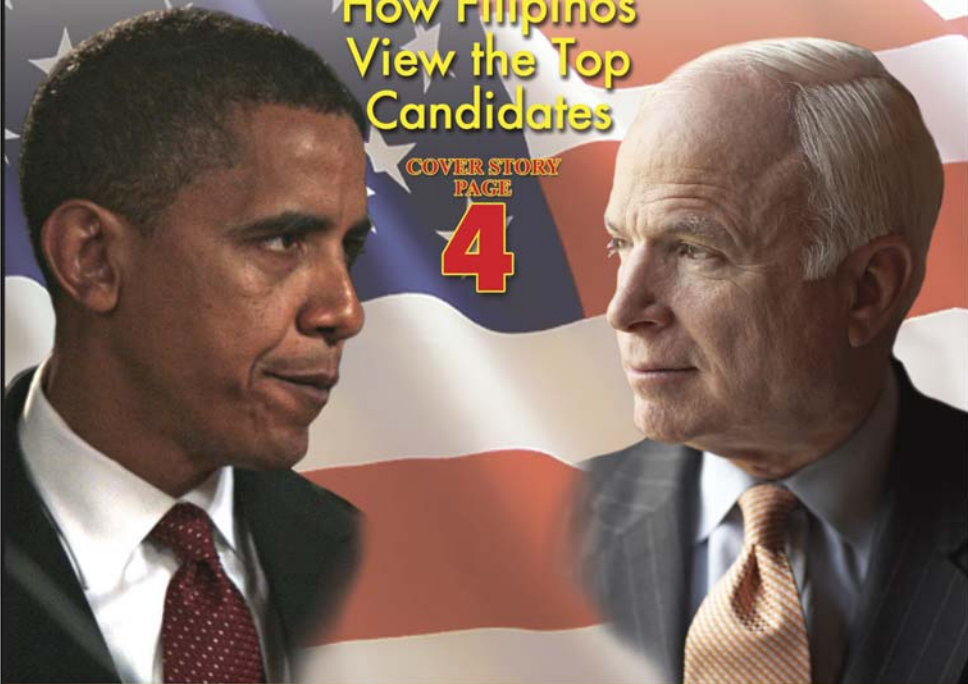
◆ WEEKLY ◆ OCTOBER 18, 2008 ◆

OBAMA VS. McCAIN

How Filipinos View the Top Candidates

COVER STORY PAGE

4



LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION

A FINAL PLEA FOR RAIL

3



IMMIGRATION UPDATE

HOW TO BRING YOUR ADOPTED CHILD TO AMERICA

8



PHILIPPINE NEWS

HENRY SY NOW RP'S RICHEST MAN

13

ELECTION COMMENTARY

7 ELECTION 2008: REFLECTIONS ON CHANGES

HAWAII FILIPINO CHRONICLE
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EDITORIAL

Obama or McCain?

History will be made, one way or the other, on November 4. We will either have the nation's first president of Afro-American descent, or the first female vice president. Filipino leaders nationwide hope that the roughly four million Filipinos who reside in the U.S. will come out in droves at the polls—providing solid evidence that they as an ethnic group are empowered enough to effect change in even the upper echelons of government.

Just who is the best candidate for Filipinos? The wildly popular Obama or McCain the former P.O.W. and self-branded maverick of his own party? Neither can truly understand what it means to be a Filipino or faced the unique experiences of being Filipino. But at least Obama, having lived in Hawaii and overseas, has been exposed to a myriad of cultures and knows first-hand what it like to be a minority. He has also done a bit more to support issues that matter to the Filipino community—including immigration reform and equity for Fil-Am World War II veterans. On the other hand, how could a voter not be swayed by McCain's patriotism and commitment to keeping American military strong? Some observers believe, however, that in the long run, prolonged, chronic defense actually hurts our economy by weakening the dollar and increasing our national debt.

As for the economy, both candidates have promised various reforms and tax credits. But righting the nation's economic ship will require greater bipartisan cooperation. Of the two candidates, who can best end the political bickering and provide the leadership necessary to move the nation past the current economic crisis? To their credit, both candidates have demonstrated an ability to do so.

While there are Filipinos supporting both sides, we expect Obama to win the Filipino vote, at least in Hawaii. His Hawaii roots and charisma have endeared him to locals who see him as one of their own—a poor local boy who beat the odds and is on the verge of making history—a history that Filipinos can be a part of by simply getting out to vote!

What to Do in Uncertain Economic Times

The wild fluctuations in recent weeks on Wall Street were enough to give even the most seasoned investors a queasy stomach. Investor confidence plummeted. Even seniors and retirees were shaken with news of the financial turmoil, wondering if their retirement nest eggs were still safe.

Which begs the question—is the worst over? Probably not. With \$1 trillion lost to bad debt, many financial experts expect the economy to remain flat for years.

With such giant losses accruing on an almost-daily basis, it is tempting to take whatever money you have left and run. But don't lose hope and don't panic. A financial panic causes people to lose their ability to reason. In fact, one of the worst things an investor can do is go on a massive selling spree. Resist the temptation to sell now, which will only turn paper losses into real losses. Instead, be prepared to take advantage of any further declines. Cash out when the market is at or near a bottom and you'll miss out on the market rebound.

Just as banker J. Pierpont Morgan could quell the Panic

FROM THE PUBLISHER

With the General Election less than three weeks away, have you made up your mind yet which candidate(s) you will vote for? If you're like most voters, you probably not yet made up your mind. In a poll of likely Asian American voters in California, roughly one-third are undecided. A closer look at that poll—the National Asian American Survey—which was released on October 15, 2008, shows that 43 percent of Filipino voters in California support Obama, 27 percent for McCain and 30 percent undecided.

Hopefully, by reading this issue, you will become more familiar with the presidential candidates, their personal backgrounds and their political platforms. Our cover story, written by our new contributing writer Danny De Gracia, begins on page 4. His well-written and well-researched article delves into Barack Obama's and John McCain's past and highlights their priorities if elected president. He also highlights both candidates' positions on issues that matter to Filipinos, particularly the economy, healthcare and immigration reform and benefits for World War II Filipino veterans. Please take time to familiarize yourself with both candidates and select the one whom you think will do the best job of leading our nation forward. For those needing additional information, we have included additional General Election coverage on pages 6-7, including commentaries from former Hawaii Gov. Ben Cayetano and former U.S. Rep. Ed Case.

Speaking of the General Election, Oahu's multi-billion dollar rail project continues to be on the mind of many voters. Mayoral candidate Ann Kobayashi recently unveiled her elevated highway and bus rapid transit plan, dubbed the "Ez Way," to the media. However, her opponent and others are questioning its viability and whether it qualifies for federal funding. On page 3, Sen. Will Espero has written an article entitled "A Final Plea For Rail" which sheds further light on the subject.

In other news, we hope you have had a chance to drop by the Hawaii State Library and browse through the new "Singgalot: Ties That Bind" photo exhibit there in honor of October, which is Filipino-American History month. Various events have been planned throughout October in honor of Filipino-American month. The latest event is a reading of poetry and other works by several up-and-coming Fil-Am poets on Saturday, October 25, 2008 at 2 pm. Dubbed "Filipino on Poetry," these talented writers will get a chance to share their works with the public. Please come out and show your support!

In closing, we hope that you will enjoy reading this timely and informative issue and as always, thank you for supporting our paper. Until next time, *aloha and mahalo!*

Chona A. Montesines-Sonido

of 1907 by walking onto the floor of the New York Stock Exchange and buying bank stocks, so too could decisive government action contain the Panic of 2008.

We may not know the outcome of this drama for weeks or months to come. Until we do, the best course of action might be ... to do nothing. Make no bones about it—the broader markets will recover. History has shown that over the long haul the stock market goes up, not down. And when it does, it will be the patient investors who stands to benefit the most.



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The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle is published weekly by The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle, Inc. It is mailed directly to subscribers and distributed at various outlets around Oahu and the neighbor islands. Editorial and advertising deadlines are three weeks prior to publication date. Subscriptions are available at \$75 per year for Oahu and the neighbor islands, continental U.S. \$90, foreign country \$90. Copyright 2008. The Hawaii Filipino Chronicle, Inc. is located at 94-356 Waipahu Depot, Waipahu, HI 96797. Telephone (808) 678-8930 Facsimile (808) 678-1629. E-mail: filipinochronicle@gmail.com. Website: www.thefilipinochronicle.com. Opinions expressed by the columnists and contributors do not necessarily reflect those of the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle management. Reproduction of the contents in whole or in part is prohibited without written permission from the management. All rights reserved. Printed in the U.S.A.

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LEGISLATIVE CONNECTION

A Final Plea for Rail



By Senator Will Espero

This is my last opportunity before the November 4th vote and election to write about the elevated rail transit system for Oahu. It is a controversial issue, but I feel it will benefit our island in the long run. The adjusted cost when considering inflation could be \$5 billion, and some believe we cannot afford that amount. But one must spread that investment over 50 to 100 years. The subway system in New York, for example, is over 100 years old. Early leaders knew back then the value and need for a transit system, and New York today has multiple rail lines for its large population. In our state budget we spend over \$10 billion per year for our needs so the \$5 billion over

50 to 100 years is a reasonable expense for the greater society.

With over 7 million tourists each year visiting Hawaii, they are also contributing to the rail project through the general excise tax.

Thus we Oahu residents are not paying for the whole system, and

when completed, the rail line will be used by millions of visitors who will help us with the monthly operating costs.

I recently returned from a trip to Seattle where I attended college, and it was exciting to see their rail transit system being built. A system will soon connect the Seattle-Tacoma Airport to Seattle, and voters there are also voting this November on expanding the system another 34 miles.

The value of a rail system on Oahu for future generations will be priceless as our island population continues to grow. By 2030 it is projected that 250,000 new residents will live on Oahu. In the next 50 years, we could have 400,000 to 500,000 new residents here. Moreover, it is likely a large percentage of these new residents will live in West or Central Oahu.

We do not have room or land to build new freeways, and the idea of double-decking HI is worth discussion. However, double decking HI or building a toll road will just encourage more commuters to drive. In the future, we want to encourage residents to use transit, and a main rail line with feeder buses will be a safe, clean, convenient way to travel.

The idea of a toll road which some opponents of the rail are supporting is also controversial, and many commuters don't like the



idea of paying to use our highways. I've spoken with many West Oahu residents who are against with the idea of having to pay a toll when other areas of the island would not have tolls. Then there is the argument that the toll road would hurt low income commuters and be utilized more by wealthier drivers.

We had a chance to build a rail transit system in the 70s, but when Mayor Fasi lost his race to Eileen Anderson, she stopped the project. In 1992 the City Council by a 5-4 vote killed the project after the federal government had appropriated over \$500 million dollars. If we had built the project in the 1990s, we would be using it today and the cost to build the system would have been less expensive.

For the sake of future generations, we must support this rail project because if we do not,

traffic congestion will only get worse, and our children and grandchildren will ask why we did not act earlier.

If there are better ways to deal with traffic, I would support them. We have discussed and tried many options: carpools, vanpools, building more roads, widening existing roads, zipper lane, contra-flow, telecommuting, 4 day work week, more jobs in West Oahu, HOV lanes, bike lanes, the ferry and more buses. Yet traffic seems to be getting worse. A rail system will not eliminate the traffic problem, but it will give commuters another choice and relieve congestion by 10% in 2030. It will be an integral part of the solution, and over time, I believe many residents will become accustomed to riding an efficient, environmentally-friendly rail system.

An elevated rail system will not be affected by accidents or stalls on the highway, bad weather, slow drivers, or debris on the road. Bicycles and surfboards are expected to be allowed on the rail, however, restrictions during peak rush hour could be expected. Rail transit stations could have places to shop, have a meal or coffee, and be close to new affordable housing projects.

The concern of noise from the steel-on-steel system is really a non-issue. A recent experiment by an anti-rail group where they drove the route of the rail and exhibited the noise which would be emitted from the rail proved to be a flop. People barely noticed them, and the noise did not bother anyone according to a news report. The federal government will also review the rail transit project, and any noise issues they find will be corrected.

Many of the great metropolitan cities of the world have rail systems, and Hawaii must build the transportation infrastructure today to improve our quality of life for tomorrow. Thousands of jobs will be created to build the rail, and in these dire economic times, construction projects will play a pivotal role in keeping Hawaii afloat. November 4th is a chance to correct past mistakes regarding rail transit. Please vote YES for Oahu's rail transit system.

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COVER STORY

The American Presidency and The Filipinos: Electing The Next Leader Of The Free World

By Danny De Gracia

On November 4th, some four million Filipinos nationwide will cast their votes to elect the 44th President of the U.S. and leader of the free world as we know it. The 2008 Presidential Election is poised to be one of the most epic events in the history of American politics with unemployment, economic downturn, rising healthcare costs, the

on-going war on terrorism, and the prospect of having either the first African American as president or the first female as vice president.

With many voters still undecided, the often-overlooked Filipino minority may very well be a swing vote in determining our nation's future. One thing is clear: now is the time for Filipinos to vote and make a Mark American history.

The Candidates

Contrary to common knowledge, there are in fact 13 presi-

dential candidates, including Barack Obama/Joe Biden for the Democratic Party, John McCain/Sarah Palin for the Republican Party, and 11 independent and third party candidates.

In order to win, irrespective of popular votes, a presidential candidate and his running mate must win a minimum 270 of 538 Electoral College votes. Hawaii at present has four Electoral College votes.

In 2000, 1888, and 1876, the presidential elections were won by candidates who had the majority of Electoral College votes but did not win the popular vote. If no candidate wins a majority of Electoral College votes, the House of Representatives will elect the next president, while the Senate will select the vice president.

Barack Obama

Born Barack Hussein Obama, II to Kenyan father Barack Obama, Sr. and American mother Ann Dunham in Honolulu on August 4, 1961, Obama rose from obscurity as an orphan to a graduate of Occidental, Columbia and Harvard Universities, to election as a junior senator from Illinois to his present bid as the Democratic Party's first ever African-American presidential nominee.

Obama's breakout into the national public spotlight occurred in 2004 when he was a guest speaker at the Democratic National Convention in Boston, Massachusetts and delivered a riveting oratory in which he was remembered for saying: "There's not a liberal America and a conservative America; there's the United States of America. There's not a black America and white America and Latino Amer-

ica and Asian America; there's the United States of America. The pundits like to slice-and-dice our country into Red States and Blue States; Red States for Republicans, Blue States for Democrats, but I've got news for them too: we worship an awesome God in the Blue States, and we don't like federal agents poking around our libraries in the Red States. We coach Little League in the Blue States and have gay friends in the Red States. There are patriots who opposed the war in Iraq and patriots who supported it. We are one people, all of us pledging allegiance to the stars and stripes, all of us defending the United States of America."

So charismatic was Obama's speech that many speculated that he could possibly be president of a mid-twenty first century America. Few imagined that as early as 2008, Obama would be on the Democratic ticket, having defeated Hillary Clinton, the former First Lady who was believed by many to be a shoo-in for the Democratic nomination.

Obama's youthful vigor, eloquent charisma and novelty as a minority candidate have made him wildly popular. He has even been labeled by McCain campaign ads as being "the world's biggest celebrity."

Going from state to state to appear in stadium rallies overfilled with cheering crowds, Obama's popularity and public appeal have reached such stellar levels that some supporters have even begun to view his campaign with a kind of messianic reverence, using pseudoreligious terminology such as "The One" to describe Obama's place in history.

Among Hawaii residents, Obama carries an additional popularity boost for being born in Honolulu and having graduated

from Punahou School. For some Hawaii voters, electing Obama is not just about breaking a racial bubble surrounding the presidency but about giving Hawaii the opportunity to put "a native son" in the Oval Office.

Platform Highlights

If elected, Obama has promised a number of major initiatives and policy reforms, including eliminating income taxes for seniors who make less than \$50,000 and reducing income taxes for working class families via a "Making Work Pay Tax Credit" which gives tax credits of up to \$500 per person.

For persons earning over \$250,000 per year, Obama states that he will roll back the Bush tax cuts. For prospective and current small business owners, he has promised to eliminate all capital gains taxes on start-ups and SBOs, and to create a national network of public-private partnerships in the form of business incubators for disadvantaged communities in which Obama seeks to invest \$250 million per year.

In the area of affirmative action and equal opportunity, Obama has promised to pass the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act (H.R. 2831) to ensure that women receive equal pay for equal work, as well as the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (H.R. 2015) to prohibit employer discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. He has also pledged to end the practice of racial profiling by law enforcement agencies.

Regarding immigration reform, Obama has promised to rework the H-1B Visa Program and to provide a path for immigration for undocumented immigrants. Sources at the local Hawaii Obama Campaign say that Obama would prioritize keeping immigrant families together and formulate policies beneficial to "all immigrants, including those from the Philippines."

In healthcare, Obama seeks to establish a National Health Insurance Exchange to allow individuals and small businesses to buy health coverage; grant a tax credit for persons who need assistance in paying insurance premiums; import medicines from



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COVER STORY

developed countries to attempt to lower the cost of prescription medication; and to lower the overall cost of healthcare by addressing anti-competitive insurance practices.

Obama's most significant reforms, however, come in restructuring and modernizing the military. Advised and aided by former Air Force Chief of Staff and retired General Merrill McPeak, Obama has stated that he wishes to "preserve our unparalleled airpower capabilities to deter and defeat any conventional competitors, swiftly respond to crises around the globe, and support our ground forces. We need greater investment in advanced technology ranging from the revolutionary, like Unmanned Aerial vehicles and electronic warfare capabilities, to essential systems like the C-17 cargo and KC-X air refueling aircraft, which provide the backbone of our ability to extend global power."

Obama's decision to seek superative airpower capabilities comes at a time when three hostile nations are presently in the process of developing advanced, fifth generation fighter aircraft such as the People's Republic's J-14 stealth fighter, the Russian Federation's Sukhoi T-50 air dominance fighter and clone of the American F-22 Raptor, and India's I-21 derivative of the T-50.

Obama will seek to increase the size of the Army by 65,000 soldiers and the Marines by 27,000 to meet ground troop commitments and reduce deployment strain; invest in smaller, expeditionary warfare craft for the Navy; and to continue to support the establishment of a national missile defense system in a "way that is pragmatic and cost effective and most importantly, does not divert resources from other national security priorities until we are positive the technology will protect the American public."

John McCain

Born John Sidney McCain, III to Adm. John S. McCain, Jr. and Roberta McCain on August 29, 1936 in the American Panama Canal Zone, McCain comes from a proud military family in which both his father and grandfather were Navy admirals. Graduating 895th out of 899 cadets at the U.S. Navy Academy in 1958, McCain went on to complete flight school in 1960 where he earned his wings as an A-1 Skyraider attack pilot and an A-1 qualified for the jet-

powered A-4 Skyhawk. In 1967, McCain's combat experience began when his aircraft carrier, the USS Forrestal was deployed in support of Operation Rolling Thunder in Vietnam.

After a shipboard munitions accident which nearly claimed McCain's life, he transferred to the USS Oriskany. On his 23rd combat mission over North Vietnam, McCain was shot down by the NVA. He ejected from his aircraft, fell into captivity for five and a half years, during which time he was subjected to intense torture and humiliation, before being released on March 14, 1973.

After attaining the rank of Captain (O-6) in the Navy, McCain retired on April 1, 1981, heavily decorated with the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Distinguished Flying Cross, Legion of Merit, Navy Commendation Medal, and twelve other awards for gallantry and heroism.

He then sought office as a U.S. Congressman and served from 1983-1987 before being elected as senator, remaining in office for the next 2 decades. He ran for President in 2000 but the Republican nomination to George W. Bush. Yet he remained proactive in the Senate and was later named by Time Magazine in 2006 as one of America's "10 Best Senators" for his role in introducing the McCain Detainee Amendment to the 2005 Defense Appropriations Bill which prohibited U.S. forces from inhumanely treating prisoners and detainees.

During the 2004 Republican National Convention in New York City, McCain, speaking of America's terrorist adversaries,

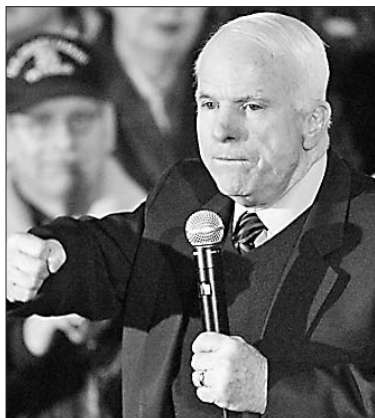
concluded his speech with a statement that would later become a patriotic rallying cry of his present day Presidential campaign: "We're Americans, we're Americans, and we'll never surrender, they will!"

Since then, McCain's campaign has revolved around his "Country First" vision of reform, prosperity, and peace. McCain's unique selection of Sarah Palin as his Vice Presidential running mate has drawn many people across party lines to support his campaign, as many people who were seeking to elect a female president under Hillary Clinton now perceive they have another chance to do so by voting for the McCain/Palin ticket. Within hours of the announcement of Palin as McCain's running mate, national polls indicated that Palin had skyrocketed to higher approval ratings than both Barack Obama and John McCain.

Palin continues to be a strong draw for both interest and support in the McCain campaign. The selection of Palin as McCain's running mate triggered the resignation of Perry Diaz, Chairman and Founder of the National Federation of Filipino American Republicans (NFFAR), citing in his resignation statement that "His selection of Sarah Palin as his running mate and his decision a few days ago to resort to personal attacks on Obama's character and integrity run counter to my personal beliefs and core values."

Platform Highlights

If elected, McCain has promised to reduce the Estate Tax to 15 percent and allow a \$10 million dollar exemption.



Each family would receive a \$2,500 tax credit for individuals and \$5,000 for families to offset the cost of health insurance.

For entrepreneurs and small businesses, McCain will keep the top tax rate at 35 percent, maintain the 15 percent rate on dividends and capital gains, and phase out the Alternative Minimum Tax. McCain will also cut the corporate tax rate to 25 percent and allow for permanent tax credits equal to 10 percent of wages for research and development costs.

In the area of immigration reform, McCain will require all undocumented individuals to enroll in a program to resolve their status which directs them to either seek a pathway to legal residence or leave, as well as learn English, pay back taxes and fines and pass a citizenship course. McCain also wishes to reform

caps for H-1B visas to rise and fall in response to market conditions, and extend the ability of H-1B holders to renew their status while waiting for a green card.

McCain's healthcare strategy involves promoting rapid deployment of 21st century information systems and technology that allows doctors to practice across state lines; bringing competition to the drug market through importation of drugs and faster introduction of generic drugs; passing medical liability reform laws; and promoting smoking cessation among others to lower costs.

As for national defense, McCain has stated that "The most important weapons in the U.S. arsenal are the men and women of the American armed forces" and wants to increase the size of the military to match our over-

(continued on page 12)

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ELECTION VOICE

Why I Support Barack Obama for U.S. President

By Gov. Ben Cayetano

Ot is an honor to support Barack Obama for president. His family story, like every immigrant family's story, is a lesson never to be forgotten.

Barack, or as my father and his fellow sakadas would say, "Barok," is a son of Hawai'i. His father and mother met and married as University of Hawai'i students. Being hapa, the son of a Kenyan, and a Caucasian woman from Kansas, Barack was born and raised in a non-traditional family life among Hawai'i's multicultural ethnic groups. Just as one in two marriages in Hawai'i end in divorce, their marriage did not withstand a long distance relationship. Barack's mother stayed in Hawai'i, while his father pursued higher education at Harvard, then returned to his homeland of Kenya to work. Like me, Barack was raised by a single parent and honed his values for social justice and intellectual acumen by questioning the privileges and hardships of the haves and have nots that he experienced and witnessed growing up in Hawai'i. It is the

colorful story of resiliency in the face of adversity, that is born of the aloha spirit, which comes from our Native Hawaiian host culture. It is the dream of families with humble beginnings everywhere.

In 1967, at the age of six, his mother remarried Lolo Soetoro, an Indonesian graduate student at UH. After political uprisings in Indonesia that year, they followed Lolo, who adopted Barack, to Indonesia, where his sister Maya Soetoro was born in 1970. Barack possesses formative childhood experiences that enable him to humbly appreciate and respect the complexities of countries like Indonesia that struggle for economic empowerment to create jobs for families in a poor country, rich in natural resources.

Barack returned to Hawai'i after 5 years in Indonesia and stayed with his grandparents. Mother and sister followed in 1974. Barack's mother balanced childcare, parenting, work, and graduate studies at the University of Hawai'i in Anthropology. Their limited family income was eased with food stamps assistance and a partial scholarship to Punahou School. When it was time for his mother to return to

Indonesia to conduct her graduate studies field work, Barack and his mother agreed that he could spend his high school years living with her parents in a nearby apartment in Makiki. He graduated from Punahou in 1978. Barack's sister Maya Soetoro Ng, who is hapa Indonesian, and his maternal grandmother, Madeline Dunham, still live in Honolulu.

After learning of his father's death from a car accident, Barack went to Kenya for the first time as a young man. There he met his grandmother, who lived without electricity in Kenya. His family's stories illuminated his understanding of what it means to be an American. Never in the history of America, do we have a presidential candidate who can more closely relate to all of America's families, including Filipino Americans.

As U.S. President, here is how Barack Obama will stand on Filipino America issues:

Economic Plan to Jumpstart the Economy

As U.S. President, Barack Obama will provide tax relief for middle class families and small business making less than \$250,000 a year; create 5

million good-paying and green jobs by investing in the manufacturing sector.

Equity for Filipino Veterans

Obama will push for the passage of Filipino Veterans Equity Act of 2007. Approximately 250,000 Filipino troops joined American forces in World War II. Our country has yet to recognize the sacrifices that Filipino veterans have made to successfully end the war, save lives, and begin the work of rebuilding America's economic strength.

Reform Immigration

Obama will bring comprehensive reform to our immigration system by providing a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, securing our borders, and fixing the broken immigration bureaucracy. He understands the need to change how immigration is viewed on Capitol Hill, and will make keeping families together a priority by improving the H1-B visa program.

Invest in Education

Obama will reform and adequately fund No Child Left Behind. He will hold schools accountable for teaching English-language learners, and will

continue his fight to increase and reform college financial aid.

Invest in Small Business

Obama will support federal programs that invest in minority-owned businesses, provide technical assistance to small business owners, and reduce discrimination in lending. Filipino Americans own more than 125,000 small businesses.

Provide Universal Health Care

Obama is committed to signing legislation by the end of his first term to ensure that all Americans have affordable, quality and portable health care coverage. Obama's plan will save a typical American family up to \$2,500 every year on medical expenses by modernizing the U.S. health care system and promoting disease prevention and strengthening public health. Approximately 14% of Filipino Americans are without health insurance.

In closing, as my father used to tell me, "Aganem ko, barok." Think deeply, like a mature adult to do the right thing. Vote for Sen. Barack Obama as our next U.S. President.

BEN CAYETANO is the former Governor of Hawaii and the first governor of Filipino ancestry in the United States.

John McCain: Courage and Character to Lead America

by Sarah Ann Hunt

On September 11, 2001, as terrorist controlled airplanes smashed into the World Trade Center and Pentagon, thousands fled from burning buildings and besieged cities, fearing for their lives. The sight of calamity registered but one word in the minds of those thousands: "Run." While some of the fleeing thousands were killed, most made it to safety. But there was also another group of people, numbering not in the thousands or even hundreds, but rather in small groups of people who saw the fire, smelled the smoke, and yet chose to run toward the burning buildings. These were the policemen and firemen and EMS crews at New York City, the soldiers, sailors, marines, and airmen at the Pentagon. These were the men of Flight 93, who chose to overpower their hijackers rather than allow the White

House to be destroyed and singed the pages of history with their courageous last words, "Let's roll." These courageous men and women who ran toward danger and not away from it represent a special breed of Americans who died that we might live, and they are an eternal testimony to the fact that America exists today because of those who were willing to answer a call greater than themselves.

The question we challenge every Filipino to ask before voting for the next President of the United States is not who looks best in a suit, neither who orates with words that bring tears to eyes, nor who makes us feel warm within, but rather: "Who is fit to be the Commander-in-Chief of a nation whose founding fathers fought relentlessly for it to be the land of the free and the home of the brave?" We believe that person is John McCain.

As a Vietnam War veteran, John McCain understands the meaning of commitment, sacrifice, and service before self. Senator McCain puts "Country

First," and will sacrifice any election to win a war that continues to threaten our very existence. As a former prisoner of war, John McCain knows all too well the burden of war and the cost of preserving freedom. The crucible of these experiences forged a steel-like character which reinforced and continues to reinforce his public service, first as a representative and later as a senator. Filipinos can trust John McCain not because of the promises he has made, but because of the sacrifices he has offered upon our American altar of freedom.

We must remember and agree upon what this country was molded from and founded upon. Through sacrifice, faith and want for equality, democracy and freedom prevailed. Both democracy and freedom go hand in hand. Both fail without the support of each other. The decline of freedom and democracy brings the invitation of secularism, tyranny and corruption. We must deny this assault on freedom and combat it with pure and unwavering courage.

Whether sought or unsought, we must beware of a dependence on government, for unwatched and unquestioned, it will slowly consume our liberties. This cyclical occurrence creates a backwards governing system, lusting and tempting the very thoughts of socialist idealism that will soon invite stirring despotic forces in today's world. We must prevent this occurrence that is happening before our very eyes. John McCain is the only candidate equipped to do just that for America.

The late Ronald Reagan observed, "Go back a few years to the origin of the terms and see where left or right would take us if we continued far enough in either direction. Stalin. Hitler. One would take us to Communist totalitarianism; the other to the totalitarianism of Hitler. Isn't our choice really not one of left or right, but of up or down? Down through the welfare state to statism, to more and more government largesse accompanied always by more individual authority, less government

liberty and, ultimately, totalitarianism, always advanced as for our own good. The alternative is the dream conceived by our Founding Fathers, up to the ultimate in individual freedom consistent with an orderly society. We don't celebrate dependence day on the Fourth of July. We celebrate Independence Day."

John Stuart Mill said, "The person who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself." As survivors of the courage, but the courageous few, our duty is to prevail both at home and abroad, and to appoint leaders who share that vision of America. On November 4th, make the courageous choice and vote for John McCain and Sarah Palin.

SARAH ANN HUNT is the Chief of Staff to State Rep. Kimberly Marcos Pine and holds a bachelor's degree in marketing from Chaminda University.

COMMENTARY



By Ed Case

ELECTION 2008: Reflections on Changes

about subprime mortgage abuse and whether it would lead to a broader economic crisis, which has now happened. But most just didn't want to deal with it then, when we could've solved it without so much damage to families and businesses and our federal treasury.

Now, of course, it's all caught up with us. We mostly now believe that our country is not ok, and we are ready for change and ready to vote for change.

What remains for us now is which candidate is credible and believable, in ability to both lead change and paint a realistic picture of that change. Because it's easy to talk change, far harder to take the risks, make the enemies and walk the walk to get there. And, although one can be a credible and believable agent of change, the end of one's road must be perceived as achievable and better than the start.

I believe we're all ready, willing and able to make those decisions for our country in our choice of President. In that, I look to our election and our new President with great hope and optimism for a better America.

But what about our Hawaii, our home that we love and cherish with the same passion? Why, if we're so ready to embrace constructive change for our nation, do we seemingly hesitate to demand a better way forward for our state?

Are the basics any differ-



ent? I think not. We are not insulated from the rest of our country and world. We've seen that most unfortunately in the last few months in our economy, with businesses closing and jobs lost and more fellow citizens needing government assistance and fewer getting good health care and all of us feeling far more uncertain financially. We were lulled during the boom times of the last years into feeling it would just go on automatically, and our government leaders put off hard decisions which are now far harder to make in far more difficult times. We have other

We can no longer avoid the obvious: the status quo is clearly not ok and we know our best, only, way forward is change. Our challenge now is to mold and achieve that change without losing the essence of our Hawaii.

The naysayers say that can't be done. I reject that view. We can fashion both a better way that is still Hawaii and a Hawaii that is better. In fact, I believe, without such change, at the rate we're going, we will lose our Hawaii.

Where do we start? First, vote yes to a Constitutional Convention for our Hawaii. A Con Con will allow us all to

conduct a people's audit on our government, on where we are, where we want to go, and how to get there. It will give us the opportunity to face our challenges and chart a better way forward together. Second, take a chance on some new candidates, those who believe in change.

We live in a time of change. Will we direct it, or will it direct us? It's your choice. Vote.

ED CASE, a Democrat, represented Hawaii's Second Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives from 2002-2006. Rather than run for another term, he challenged Sen. Daniel Akaka in the 2006 Democratic Primary but lost the election by 53-46 percent margin.

We exercise our fundamental right to vote in two weeks. Every ballot box choice is important, but two this year are crucial. One, for our country, is who will lead us as our President. The other, for our Hawai'i, is whether we voters will convene a Constitutional Convention.

These choices are crucial because they are far more about than the vote itself. They are about where we are as a country and state, where we want to go, and how we want to get there. They are about whether we believe there's a better way forward and whether we trust ourselves to get there. They are about our future, about change.

Every election is about issues, and '08 is and must be about our economy and jobs, national security, health care and many others. And every election is in some way a referendum on the status quo versus change. But only occasionally is change itself the issue.

That's because we often get used to what is, even if we know it's just ok, rather than take a chance on trying to do better, even if we know we can do better. And our elected officials play it safe too, because,

as President Woodrow Wilson said: "If one wants to make enemies, try to change something."

That's just a recipe for delaying needed changes, because, as I've always believed, putting off solutions to our challenges just makes the challenges worse and the solutions harder. As a prime example, when I served Hawaii in Congress, many of us were increasingly concerned

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IMMIGRATION UPDATE

Ten Commandments on How to Bring Your Adopted Child to America



By Atty. Emmanuel Samonte Tipon



Why can Angelina Jolie go to a foreign country and bring home an adopted child while I cannot bring my adopted grandchild to America?" lamented a grandparent whose petition for her adopted grandchild prepared by an immigration herbolario was denied. "Because you are not Angelina Jolie, stupid."

If you had gone to an immigration lawyer who has a 100% success rate in helping people bring an adopted child to America, your petition would have been approved. Even if you are not Angelina Jolie, you can bring your adopted child to America if you faithfully comply with these 10 commandments plus the 11th commandment.

1. Read all the statutes, rules, regulations, precedent decisions, and instructions for filing a petition for an

adopted child and fill up USCIS Form I-130, Petition for Alien Relative.

- Adopting parent must be a US citizen or lawful permanent resident.
- Adopted child must be unmarried and under 21 years of age.
- Adopted child must be under 16 years of age when the adoption occurs or decision is finalized.
- Submit documents showing that adopted child resided with adopting parent for at least 2 years in a bona fide parent-child relationship, before or after the adoption is finalized.

Examples:

- Pictures of adopting parent and adopted child, stating where and when they were taken.
- Passport of adopting parent showing dates of trips to the foreign country to live with, and not merely to visit, adopted child.
- Immigration records of foreign country where child resides showing entry and de-

parture dates of adopting parent to such foreign country.

- Proof of ownership of adopting parent's home where adopting parent and adopted child lived together, with pictures of adopting parent and adopted child in the home.
- Income tax returns of adopting parent listing adopted child.
- Remittances of money to child.
- Joint bank account of adopting parent and adopted child.
- Gifts given by adopting parent to adopted child.
- Life insurance policy of adopting parent listing adopted child as beneficiary.
- Letters, telephone bills, emails, and other evidence of communications between adopting parent and adopted child.
- Affidavits of adopting parent, biological parents, adopted child, relatives, neighbors,

friends, school teachers, and medical doctor, containing detailed information about how the affiant knows of the adoption; family relationship prior to adoption between adopting parent and adopted child; address and period of time that adopted child and adopting parent resided together in a parent-child relationship; address of adopted child's biological parents when adopting parent and adopted child lived together and its distance from adopting parent's residence; residence of adopted child after adopting parent immigrated to U.S.; names and relationships of other persons who resided with adopted child and adopting parent before adopting parent immigrated; and names and relationships of other persons who resided with adopted child after adopting parent immigrated.

(f) Other evidence showing adopting parent and adopted child resided together as parent and child.

6. Submit documents showing that adopting parent had legal custody and control of adopted child for at least 2 years.

- Examples:
- Court decision awarding legal custody of child to adopting parent before adoption.
 - Documents showing adopting parent is responsible for important decisions in child's life.
 - School records of child showing adopting parent's name.
 - Medical records of child showing adopting parent's name.
 - Affidavit of biological parents custody and

control of child to adopting parent.

(f) Other evidence showing that adopting parent exercises primary parental control and day-to-day supervision over adopted child.

- Submit adoption records, including:
 - Final adoption decree.
 - Home study report.
 - Child study report.
- Submit child's birth certificate before adoption showing child's biological parents and after adoption showing adopting parents.
- Submit statement of reason or motive for adoption.
- File USCIS Form I-130 with the supporting documents properly organized, and the 177iling fee to the appropriate USCIS office.

Eleventh Commandment

If you really care about the child you wish to adopt and want to successfully petition for the child, you must first consult with an experienced immigration attorney with a 100% track record in adoption cases. This is especially applicable if you are related to the child, which is looked upon with suspicion by immigration authorities. The attorney should help you in preparing documents to establish that there is a petitionable relationship.

(ATTY. TIPON has won all deportation cases he handled and obtained approval of all visa petitions he filed. He is from Laog City. He has a Master of Laws degree from Yale Law School and a Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of the Philippines.

He served as an Immigration Officer. He is co-author of "Immigration Law Service," an 8-volume practice and procedure guide for immigration officers and lawyers. He specializes in immigration and criminal defense. Office at 905 Umi St. corner N. King, Suite 201, Honolulu, HI 96819. Tel. (808) 847 1601. Fax (808) 847 1624. E-Mail: filamlaw@yahoo.com. Website: www.ImmigrationServicesUSA.com. Listen to the most interesting and humorous radio program on Hawaii radio KN2I 1270 every Friday 7:30-8:00 AM. This article is a general overview of the subject matter discussed and is not intended as legal advice for any specific person or situation. Neither the writer nor publisher warrant the completeness or accuracy of the information provided herein at the time of publication.)

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

GILAS Project Receives \$1,000 Donation from Filipino-American Golf Tournament



The GILAS (Gearing Internet Access and Literacy to Students) program, an international project which has a chapter in Honolulu, has received a donation of \$1,000 from the proceeds of the first Filipino American Golf Tournament held on September 3, 2008 with a total of 144 players. The event was a huge success, with volunteers from Philippine Celebrations Coordinating Committee of Hawaii (PCCCH), the Philippine Consulate (Honolulu) staff, the Oahu Filipino Community Council (OFCC) and the United Filipino Community Council of Hawaii).

The ceremony at the Consulate was attended by Philippine Consul General Ariel Abadilla, Consul Paul Cortez, Larry Ramirez, Jean Jeremiah, Mary Jo Farina, Carlota Ader, and several representatives of Filipino organizations in Hawaii. Consul General Abadilla presented the donation to GILAS and it has been sent to the GILAS office in California.

The event was jointly sponsored by the Philippine Consulate and the Philippine Retirement Authority (RTA) based in Manila and headed by General Aglipay. It is intended to be an annual event with a designated benefactor, usually a humanitarian or educational organization, to receive some of its proceeds as donations.

Drs. Belinda A. Aquino and Teresita Bernales (see photo) GILAS core volunteers in Hawaii, attended the ceremony at the Consulate to receive the donation on behalf of Vicky Garchitorea, Ayala Foundation-USA, which conceptualized and oversees the GILAS project.

GILAS was first introduced in Cebu in 2005 to try to connect nearly 6,000 public high schools

Belinda Aquino and Teresita Bernales (center) receiving the \$1,000 donation from Philippine Consul General Ariel Abadilla at the Consulate office

in the Philippines to the Internet by the year 2010. Currently, more than half of these high schools already have Internet capability. Garchitorea, based in Manila, maintains an office in California part of the year.

In a related project, the Ilocos Surians of Hawaii (ISAH) under the leadership of Dr. Charles Sonido, former Rep. Jun Abinsay and Danny Villaruz has also pledged to donate \$22,000 to GILAS to finance three GILAS projects in Ilocos Sur.

To make donations, which are tax deductible, to GILAS, contact Lindy Aquino at 956-6086 or Terry Bernales at 256-8747.

2009 Filipino Fiesta Slated For May 9



The annual Filipino Fiesta, Hawaii's largest cultural event planned and sponsored by the Filipino community, has been scheduled for Saturday, May 9, 2009 at Kapiolani Park.

The 2009 Fiesta marks the 17th edition of a unique festival that showcases various aspects of Filipino history and culture. The theme "Kabataan: Pag-Asa ng Bayan" (Youth: Hope of the Fatherland) focuses on the role of our youth in nation building and the promise they bring to Hawaii's Filipino community.

Next year's Fiesta will again be a "three-in-one event." It will feature a historical-cultural parade from Fort DeRussy to Kapiolani Park in the morning and have marching bands, colorful floats, cultural groups, street dancers, and various business and community organizations.

The parade will be followed by an all-day Fiesta at Kapiolani Park and will have a bevy of local and Philippine entertainers, a cultural village

showcasing the various regions of the Philippines, food booths, a keiki village, and business and non-profit booths.

In the evening, a Santacruzian festival will be held at the park and feature Filipino beauty queens representing religious and historical personalities all marching under colorful, flower-bedecked "arcos" in a candle-lit parade.

The Fiesta is sponsored by the Filipino Community Center in collaboration with the Congress of Visayan Organizations, the Honolulu Filipino Junior Chamber of Commerce, the Oahu Filipino Community Council, and the United Filipino Council of Hawaii. Chairing the event is Jun Colmenares.

Please contact the Filipino Community Center at 680-0451 for more information.

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HAWAII-FILIPINO NEWS

Filipino Poetry Reading at the Hawaii State Library

Six emerging Fil-Am poets will be reading their work to the public at "Flippin' on Poetry" at the Hawaii State Public Library at 2 pm on Saturday, October 25, 2008.

The free event is sponsored by The Filipino-American Historical Society of Hawaii and the Friends of the Library, in celebration of October as Filipino-American History Month.

2008 marks the first year that State of Hawaii is officially celebrating Filipino-American History Month via landmark legislation passed by the 2008 Legislature. State Rep. Joey Manahan introduced House Bill 3343, designating October as Filipino-American History Month.

"Flippin' on Poetry" highlights the work of a diverse group of individuals who are immigrant, local, and part-Filipino poets. A question-and-answer session and reception

will follow the reading.

"Because of American colonization, there is a rich history of Filipinos writing in English, many of whom have attained national and international recognition—from Carlos Bulosan to Jose Garcia Villa, to Jessica Hagedorn and Zack Limnarck," says Dr. Pat Brown, president of the Filipino-American Historical Society of Hawaii. "Hawaii has its own crop of emerging poets whom we are pleased to feature."

The poets include the following:

- Amalia Bueno—Her work has been published by Bamboo Ridge, Our Own Voice, Meritage Press, Katipunan, Mutual Publishing, and Spinsters Ink-Press. Her award-winning short story, "The Chicharon Widows," most recently appeared in "We Go Eat: A Mixed Plate from Hawaii's Food Culture."



- Bernadette "Gigi" Miranda—A television producer, director, and street poet, Miranda has read her work at GiRLFeST Hawaii at Studio One, Wordstew in the Treehaus, Words@WardRafters, re:VERSES at Arts at Mark's Garage, and StudioBe's Rant and Rave. Her poetry has also been published in Maganda magazine.
- ChristyAnne Passion—She has won the American Academy of Poetry Award, the University of Hawaii's Hawaiian Poetry Award,

the James Vaughn Award, and an International Merit Award from the Atlanta Review. Her work has been published in Bamboo Ridge, Hawaii Review, Hawaii Pacific Review and in the anthology "Honolulu Stories."

• Elmer Omar Pizo—His poems have been published by Bamboo Ridge, Hawaii Review, the anthology "Honolulu Stories," Our Own Voice, Philippine American Writers and Artists, the University of the Philippines Diliman Creative Writing Center, and other magazines in the Philippines. Elmer was a Writing Fellow at the Vermont Studio Cen-

ter and in the Silliman National Writers Workshop in the Philippines.

- Darlene Rodrigues—A poet, writer and performer, Rodrigues' work has appeared in Amerasia, disOrient, Katipunan and in the anthologies, Babayan: Writings by Filipina and Filipina American Writers" and "Words Matter: Conversations with Asian American Writers." She has read her poetry at the Honolulu Academy of the Arts, StudioBe's Rant and Rave, and re:VERSES at Arts at Mark's Garage.
- Normie Salvador—His poems, essays, and short stories have appeared in Bamboo Ridge, Hawaii Review, Hybolic, Kaimana, Tinfish and in the anthology "Honolulu Stories." His poetry collection, Philiter, was published by Tinfish Press in 2003. He is an editor at UH Hawaii-Manoa's Outreach College.

Center For Philippine Studies Announces Two Guest Speakers

The Center For Philippine Studies at UH-Manoa has announced the next two speakers for its Fall 2008 Colloquium Series.

The first speaker is R. Zamora Linmark, a Filipino poet, novelist and playwright who will host a reading on October 20, 2008 at 7:30 pm at the Art Building Auditorium. Linmark is a two-time Fulbright Scholar who also received grants and fellowships from the U.S.-Japan Friendship Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, San

Francisco Arts Commission, and twice from the Fulbright Foundation, in 1998, and as a Senior Scholar in 2005. He is the author of "Rolling The R's," "Prime Time Apparitions," "The Evolution of a Sigh" and "Leche."

The second speaker is Oscar V. Campomanes, who will deliver a lecture on October 21, 2008 at Moore Hall Room 323 at 1:30 pm. His lecture is entitled "Filipino-American: Naming the Shift from Imperial Sovereignty to Permanent War in Ethnic Subject

Constitution." Campomanes is an associate professor of English at Ateneo de Manila University in the Philippines.

Both events are free and co-sponsored by the UH American Studies Department, Center for Biological Studies, Center for Biographical Research, Diversity and Equity Initiative, English Department, Filipino & Philippine Literature Program, Kumu Kahua Theatre, LGBTI Student Services, Theatre & Dance Department and Women's Studies Department.

Butterflies & Kisses on Lanai

The hit musical "Butterflies & Kisses (It Takes More Than a Village to Raise a Child)" by Doctors-on-Stage will be making an encore performance on the Pineapple Island on October 25, 2008 at the Lanai Recreation Center from 6:30 pm to 8 pm.

The entire cast is comprised of volunteer physicians, families, friends and office staff. The musical is about the growing pains that come with raising kids, from the viewpoints of both parents and children.

The following day, a community health fair will be held for Lanai residents. Volunteer



physicians and other medical professionals will be on-hand to provide free flu shots, blood pressure screenings, and tests for bone density, blood sugar and diabetes, and other medical conditions.

The free event is co-sponsored by Bayanihan Clinic

Without Walls, the United Filipino Council of Hawaii-Lanai Council, Clinical Laboratories of Hawaii, the Duke Bainum Foundation and the Hawaii Filipino Chronicle.

Please call JP Oras at 387-8297 or Jaughn Degamo at 559-0789 for more information.

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COVER STORY (cont.)

(from page 5, *The American...*)

seas commitments. He also has promised to modernize the military by "procuring advanced weapon systems that will help rapidly and decisively defeat any adversary and protect American lives."

The Best Candidate For Filipinos?

Both Obama/Biden and McCain/Palin have campaign platforms that would be beneficial to Hawaii's Filipinos in various ways, both short term and long. Both candidates have their own "Filipinos For..." subcommittees, both candidates seek to win the Filipino vote, yet arguably, Filipinos must beware because neither candidate can claim to be "the definitive Filipino candidate" as neither Obama nor McCain can truly know what it means to be a Filipino or the unique experiences that Filipinos face.

For example, Obama's plan to roll back the Bush tax cuts for persons who make in excess of \$250,000 to pay for social programs that favor the working class might, at face value, be immediately appealing to working class Filipinos, but according to the most recent census, the average Asian-American family-owned small business—Filipinos included—earns \$295,560, making them vulnerable to the proposed tax increase, and minimizing the benefit attained from his efforts to stimulate small business operators.

McCain's plan to continue military commitments overseas will enable continued power projection of American interests abroad and will serve to protect our shores, but the inflationary effects of prolonged, chronic defense spending in the billions also hurts our economy in the long term, weakening the power of the dollar and increasing our national debt—two factors which make it hard for immigrant Filipinos who are struggling as it is to make ends meet in an already weak economy.

Since Filipinos span the entire socioeconomic spectrum from extremely wealthy to extremely poor, politically influential to politically disinterested, Filipinos have competing interests and varying needs which do not perfectly align to anoint one particular candidate over the other as the definitive choice for the Filipino community, and make the Filipinos a true swing vote.

Divided Filipino Interests

There are Filipinos who support Obama, others for McCain, some who will vote for third party candidates, and many who are undecided. In an interview, former Gov. Ben Cayetano, the first Filipino-American elected governor in the U.S., said that Barack Obama has "the judgment, temperament and intelligence to become an outstanding President. Filipino Americans should vote because a victory for Obama is an important step forward not only for black Americans, but for Filipino Americans and all other minorities who call America their home."

Waipahu resident and retiree Bel Santa Elena holds a different view. Proactively sharing articles and telling her family members to vote for McCain, she won several undecided Filipinos over to vote Republi-

can in the election.

"I would not vote for anyone on the basis of their race," Santa Elena says, "but for what they stand! I hope that you will stand on principle and not succumb to political pressures."

Sarah Hunt, chief of staff to Rep. Kymberly Marcos Pine says, "There are systems in place that are designed to insulate the government. We need a leader who will put the country first, and that means putting the people first. We need John McCain."

Shamon Abney, a former Hawaii resident and successful Filipina model now residing in Los Angeles, is among the undecided voters. She says, "I think that this is one of the most difficult elections for everyone, but as for myself, being traditionally Republican, it may even be tougher."

Retired James Campbell High School vice principal and lifelong Waipahu resident Ilalo Parayno didn't rule out a third party solution. He says, "I would most likely vote for [Ralph] Nader if I do not have much of a choice between the two main candidates. At least Nader has his heart in the right place."

A number of aging Filipino WWII veterans who presently reside in Hawaii and are seeking equity after decades of waiting for justice have decided to support McCain. Art Caloda, President of the Hawaii Chapter of Filipino American Veterans Chapter and several of his members expressed their strong support for McCain, due largely in part to their sense of brotherhood to him as a fellow veteran. Even among the younger generation of veterans, the sentiment also holds true. Jess Losa, a 20-year old Filipino and an active duty Marine, hopes McCain would be elected because he believed a McCain victory would ensure that the American military continues to be strong.

Regardless of choice, Filipinos should view the November election as an important opportunity to effectuate change that should not be overlooked.

Dr. Steven Swisher, an executive with Kenneth Copeland Ministries who has strong family ties to the Philippines and Hawaii says, "Our dedication to God and this nation is demonstrated when we stand up for what we believe in as Republicans, Democrats, or independents and make our voices heard." He says that Filipinos who vote are investing in their future and in our nation's future.

Dr. Amy Agbayani, director of the University of Hawaii's Student Equity, Excellence & Diversity program agreed that more Filipinos must vote.

"Voting in any country is a special privilege," Agbayani says. "For many of us who were born in the Philippines and are now U.S. citizens, we should accept this responsibility and right seriously and vote for qualified candidates who share our aspirations."

"There is no acceptable reason not to vote. There is mail-in absentee voting and walk-in voting, and there are ballots in various languages and poll workers are available to render assistance when needed. Each vote counts and your vote is important."

LEGAL NOTES

Proving Employer's Ability to Pay



By Reuben S. Seguritan

An employer who seeks to file an employment-based immigrant petition on behalf of an alien worker needs to demonstrate his/her ability to pay the proffered wage of the prospective employee as stated in the underlying labor certification.

When the I-140 immigrant petition for alien worker is filed, it must be accompanied by documentary proof that the employer can pay the wage of the employee. This initial evidence of ability to pay includes the employer's annual reports, federal tax returns, or audited financial statements.

In case the petitioner employs 100 or more workers, a

statement from a financial officer of the organization showing the company's financial information and ability to pay the wage of its employees may be acceptable.

The ability to pay the employee's wage must be shown from the time of the established priority date of the petition for alien worker up to the time the beneficiary worker obtains the green card.

The United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) will make a positive determination of the employer's ability to pay when the initial evidence shows that the petitioning employer's net income or net asset is equal to or greater than the proffered wage and when the record contains credible and verifiable evidence that the beneficiary is employed by the petitioner and has been paid the proffered wage.

When the petitioner does not meet the income/assets requirements or does not employ the

beneficiary, additional evidence such as profit/loss statements, bank account records, or personnel records may be submitted.

If the initial evidence is missing or incomplete, the USCIS may issue a Request for Further Evidence (RFE) to prove the employer's ability to pay.

There are occasions when the petitioning employer is unable to provide the above documentation and proof of ability to pay such as when the employee did not earn the prevailing wage, or when the employer's income tax returns did not reflect any net income. Sometimes, the petitioner's business is operated as a sole proprietorship and the net income is considered as personal income of the individual petitioning employer's income tax return.

In such instances, additional documentation may be submitted to show availability of funds to pay the proffered wage. These additional proofs may include: extension of a line of credit to the

employer's business; existence of a reserve fund account; a line by line analysis of the employer's bank statement showing that it was paying the beneficiary employee's wage; statement by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA) showing net current assets such as cash, inventories and receivables; profit and loss statement; or a statement outlining depreciation deductions to be added in the actual income of the employer.

Other proofs may include documentation showing that hiring the beneficiary will augment the revenues of the employer; recovery from a temporary business downturn; and business losses due to reinvestment of funds for expansion of the business or purchase of new equipment.

When faced with such complicated scenarios, it is advisable to engage the services of a CPA to assist the lawyer in reviewing the company's financial records.

If the petition is denied due

to insufficiency of proof of ability to pay, the case may be appealed to the Administrative Appeals Office which shall review the case applying the "totality of circumstances" test.

Some petitioners choose to refile a second I-140 petition instead of appealing the denial. However, this must be done while the underlying labor certification is still valid and has not yet expired. Under the current regulations, the I-140 must be filed within six months of the approval of the labor certification.

To prevent difficulties and possible denial, it is important to review the financial documents of the prospective employer/petitioner at the onset, before filing the labor certification, particularly when the company is small and is not currently employing the beneficiary.

REUBEN S. SEGURITAN has been practicing law for over 30 years. For further information, you may call him at (212) 695 5281 or log on to his website at www.seguritan.com

PHILIPPINE NEWS

Henry Sy Now RP's Richest Man

The Philippines' biggest mall operator and his family have increased their wealth by \$1.4 billion despite the global financial turmoil, making them the wealthiest Filipinos this year, Forbes Asia magazine said yesterday.

The fortune that 83-year-old Henry Sy made was the "biggest gain in absolute terms" of the country's 40 wealthiest families, who say their collective wealth plunged 18 percent to \$14 billion from \$17 billion in 2007 amid the world credit turmoil, Forbes said in a statement.

Forbes said Sy and his family are worth \$3.1 billion. They

rose from No. 2 position last year on the back of their holding company SM Investments Corp., which has interests in a dozen companies, including the country's second largest bank, Banco de Oro Unibank.

Tobacco tycoon Lucio Tan and his family, who own national carrier Philippine Airlines and have interests in beer brewing and mining, came in second with a net worth of \$1.5 billion.

Jaime Zobel de Ayala and his family, last year's richest, dropped to third place after losing \$800 million, Forbes said. The stock of their conglomerate Ayala Corp. has been down 46

percent since last year, partly due to the economic slowdown and waning profits in banking and electronics, the magazine said.

It said 25 of the 40 Filipino tycoons, including some in real estate and banking, "are poorer" this year because the Philippine stock exchange had fallen 35 percent in the last 12 months.

The country's richest politician, Senate President Manuel Villar, who is the largest shareholder in high-end homebuilder Vista Land & Lifescapes Inc., fell outside the top 10 list from No. 5 to No. 11 after his net worth plunged 55 percent to \$425 million.

Also hit hard is property tycoon Andrew Gotianun of Filinvest Land, who fell 10 places to 17th after losing \$625 million to give him a net worth of \$235 million.

Placing fourth in the Forbes list is another property kingpin, Andrew Tan, who however saw his net worth plunge by \$400 million to \$700 million.

Of the 40 richest Filipinos this year, 11 tycoons eked out gains but almost all of those increases were because of reporting on new assets or shareholdings or the combination of relatives' stakes, including Sy.

The Philippines had three billionaires this year compared

with four last year as Andrew Tan lost this elite status.

Lourdes Montinola seemed to buck the trend as shares of her Far Eastern University increased \$38 million to vault her to number 31 with a net worth of \$68 million.

There was only one newcomer, Alfredo Ramos of Atlas Consolidated Mining, who debuted at number 23 with a net worth \$126 million.

A net worth of \$30 million is required to make the Philippines rich list, unchanged from last year. Fourteen tycoons had net worth of less than \$100 million and four of last year's members failed to make the cut. (www.philstar.com)

Sulpicio Files P5.5-M Suit vs Logistics Firm

By Sandy Araneta

Sulpicio Lines Inc. (SLI) has filed an amended complaint that includes a P5.5-million damage suit against the firm that placed the toxic endosulfan shipment of Del Monte Philippines Inc. aboard the ill-fated M/V Princess of the Stars.

In filing the case, SLI lawyer Arthur Lim said Ceva Logistics Inc. did not inform the shipping firm of the toxic nature of the Del Monte shipment bound for Cagayan de Oro City.

However, Clerk of Court

Raul dela Cruz said the Manila Regional Trial Court will hear on Monday whether SLI can amend its complaint to include Ceva.

"If it denies the motion, then Ceva will not be included in the complaint anymore," he said.

In the amended complaint, SLI claimed Ceva and Del Monte failed to comply with its contractual and legal obligation to fully disclose the toxic character of its shipment.

The SLI said Del Monte filled up a bill of lading on June 18 for the shipment, which was

said to contain "400 Box Endosulfan Technical 94 percent Min."

The SLI said they were not aware endosulfan was toxic, and was only informed by Del Monte when it received a letter from the food firm on June 25.

The SLI said the two firms' "deceit and non-disclosure" led the plaintiff to believe the endosulfan shipment was a regular cargo. They said had the cargo been properly declared, the SLI would have loaded it in one of its cargo vessels.

SLI filed last July 7 before the Manila RTC a case for dam-

ages against Del Monte for allegedly not disclosing the toxic nature of the endosulfan shipment. (www.philstar.com)

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Investor Confidence in RP Remains High – Tetangco

By Des Ferriols

Banko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the balance sheets of Philippine banks remain strong enough to absorb external shocks as foreign investors continue to recognize the country's relative strength.

Returning from critical meetings with global monetary and finance authorities in Washington, Tetangco said there was a "general sense of hope" following the concerted actions taken by the world's central banks in the last two weeks.

Tetangco met with investors while in the US and based on their feedback, he said investor confidence on the Philippines has not faltered despite the general pessimism over the global economy.

"Those with whom we met recognize Asia's relative strength," Tetangco said. "Nevertheless, their view is that how Asia's strength would hold up depends on how deep and protracted the slowdown in the major economies would be."

Tetangco said the assessment of the country's prospects depends on the depth and duration of the global economic

slowdown.

It would take time before investors start making the individual differentiation between markets but the concerted action and rescue plans announced by the world's biggest economies are expected to restore some confidence to the market.

"There was a general sense of hope that the recent concerted action would spark the turning point in sentiment," Tetangco said. "This is critical for markets to lend again and thus spur economic activity."

But Tetangco argued that the Philippines has been "fairly insulated", with minimal bank exposure that have already been provisioned for by the affected banks.

"Our own stress tests show that our banks' balance sheets have room to absorb shocks," he said, pointing out that the industry's capital base was well above the BSP's prudential requirement.

Tetangco said remittances from overseas Filipinos are also expected to be steady due primarily to the diversification in skills and deployment of workers in offshore labor markets.

"The demand for our workers in certain sectors in affected



Governor Amando Tetangco Jr.

economies may be affected but other sectors like medical and health care are generally inelastic," he said.

However, the BSP official said bank lending would slow down this year as banks take a cautious stance in the wake of the global crisis that have stalled credit worldwide.

Bank regulators said the Philippine situation was not as bad as elsewhere but said they fully expected lending to be not as robust as last year as banks try to hold on to their liquidity until the dust has settled in the financial market.

The BSP said lending might not be as strong as last year because banks were waiting to see how the situation would evolve especially since the country's exports were tied up to the troubled markets in the US and Europe. (www.philstar.com)

Global Economic Crisis to Leave More Filipinos Unemployed

By Ma. Elisa P. Osorio

The slowdown in the world economy may leave more Filipinos out of work because the country may not be able to meet its target of sending one million workers overseas and its goal of hiring one million workers for the outsourcing industry, the Free Trade Alliance (FTA) said.

"The country will not be able to meet its medium term goal of deploying one million OFWs (overseas Filipino workers)," Rene E. Ofreneo FTA executive director said in an interview.

According to Ofreneo, the global economic crunch will have an adverse effect on the country's six major growth areas. He identified these areas as OFW, remittance, business process outsourcing, electronics, overseas development assistance (ODA) and agricultural export.

For OFW, Ofreneo said this is the first time the country will experience problems with regards to all OFWs. In the past, he said problems are concentrated in particular regions that is why the over all contribution was not affected.

However, he said majority of the Filipino workers in the 120 countries will feel the effects of the recession.

Aside from not being able to send more workers, Ofreneo said the government must deal with the problem of OFWs coming home without jobs here.

"The impact of OFWs coming home will be felt during the first quarter of next year," he explained.

Ofreneo said this is the first time the country will not meet its goal of sending one million workers overseas but said there may still be some Filipinos getting offers in other countries but these would be skilled workers. "Most low skilled OFWs may be laid off because they are

easier to replace. Now that the global economy is slowing down, locals of the host countries where OFWs are will be willing to do the dangerous, dirty and difficult jobs, something these people used to avoid," he said further.

The second growth area that will be affected is related to OFWs. The remittance being received will be greatly affected.

In the past, the government has credited the economic growth to consumption fueled by contributions from OFWs.

"The service industry and even the real estate industry will suffer. Malls like SM and Gaisano mushroomed because of the consumer spending," he noted.

The third growth area of the country which will be affected is the BPO industry. Ofreneo said many call centers have already stopped hiring because most of the accounts are financial institutions like Manulife and banks.

"The goal of the BPO industry is to employ one million by 2010. I do not think they will meet this," he said. "There is even a danger that some accounts will pull out."

The fourth sector is the electronics assembly. This industry has been slowing down since last year when news of a US economic recession surfaced.

Last month, Fujitsu announced it is closing. Intel has already said they will close early this year. "The demand for electronics is going down."

The fifth sector is ODA because the aid is primarily from the United States, Japan, Germany, Canada, Australia and China.

The last is agricultural export. The country is exporting mango, pineapple and banana to Japan. "The Japanese would surely be reducing their consumption now." (www.philstar.com)

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Mayor Hannemann has accomplished a lot for the Filipino Community.

Mayor Hannemann has shown great commitment to enriching and showcasing Filipino culture in Honolulu.

Mayor Hannemann was very involved in the 2006 Hawaii Filipino Centennial, that was co-sponsored by the City. Mayor Hannemann gave strong support to the Filipino community in celebrating this important benchmark in their history in Hawaii and presented a \$100,000 grant to the Hawaii Filipino Centennial Celebration Commission. As Honorary Chair of the Commission's Advisory Committee, he helped develop year-long celebrations including a kickoff reception at Honolulu Hale, Filipino Trade Centennial Exposition at the Honolulu Convention Center, and an International Summit of Filipino Chambers.



Left to right: Annie Corpuz, Baybee Hufana-Ablan, Joyce Oliveira, Mayor Hannemann, President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, William Caliedo, Mito Ablan and Hawaii State Representative Joey Manahan



Mayor Hannemann has served as Grand Marshall for the Annual Filipino Fiesta & Parade and played a leadership role in making possible the Filipino Community Center, now open in Waipahu. Mayor Hannemann also gave his full support during the 2008 legislative session to make October the official Filipino-American History month. The 2007 Kalihl Economic Summit, organized by Mayor Hannemann, brought residents, businesses, community leaders, private organizations and the City together to work in partnership on the community's ideas for making Kalihi a better place to live, work and raise our families.

Mayor Hannemann traveled to the Philippines with a large Hawaii delegation of local Filipino business and community leaders to strengthen cultural and historical ties, promote trade and goodwill, and enhance continued friendships and understanding.



Mayor Hannemann has appointed many Filipinos to top City positions in his Cabinet, Boards & Commissions.

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Danny Agsalog - Executive Officer, Oahu Workforce Investment Board
Lee Agsalud - Deputy Corporation Counsel/Dept of Corporation Counsel
Amy Alejo - Secretary, Office of the Mayor
Edna Alikpala - Secretary, Dept of Parks & Recreation
Maureen Andrade - Program Aide, Mayor's Office of Culture & Arts
Romeo Garcia - Senior Clerk, Neighborhood Commission
Baybee Hufana-Ablan - Senior Advisor, Dept of Emergency Services
Vergel Jepas - Public Relations Asst, Mayor's Office of Culture & Arts
Tina Kaneshiro - Receptionist, Office of the Mayor
Helene Kiyono - Secretary to the Director/Dept of Environmental Services
Joyce Oliveira - Executive Assistant, Office of the Mayor
Dymian Racoma - Program Admin., Mayor's Office of Culture & Arts
Lynette Stoeck - Secretary to Director, Dept of Transportation Services

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Gregg Hammer - Liquor Commission
Orlando Matias - Building Board of Appeals
Gary Pacarro - Board of Parks and Recreation
James Pacopac - Charter Commission & Planning Commission
Benjamin Saguib - Police Commission
Ted Saribay - Honolulu Centennial Commission

Our Mayor believes in & lives the same values we Filipinos hold so dear: Faith, Family, Hard Work, Education, Public Service and Community.

Re-elect Mayor



Making Our Home
A Better Place.