

Carpio, Robredo and Golez make a fool of themselves over Chinese-bomber issue

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BY RIGOBERTO D. TIGLAO ON MAY 28, 2018 OPINION ON PAGE ONE

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A MUCH overused cliché certainly, but I can't resist quoting it: "Only in the Philippines." You'd agree with me after reading this piece.

Where else in the world would a nation's Vice President, Acting Chief Justice, a former national security adviser, and even a former senator be jumping up and down shrieking against an emerging superpower, demanding that their government do the same – all because of their gross ignorance, and bias against that nation?

After the state-owned China Daily reported that the People's Liberation Army landed its H-6K bomber aircraft on "an airport in the South China Sea...for landing and take-off drills," these officials rattled away:

Vice President Ma. Leonor Robredo: "The news about the landing of the Chinese bombers on our islands is extremely worrisome. Aside from this, the landing and take-off exercises of China in the West Philippine Sea using their long-range bombers is alarming,"

Acting Chief Justice Antonio Carpio: "Failure to formally protest against this means the Philippines is acquiescing or consenting to the militarization, and worse, to the claim of China that all the islands, waters and resources within the nine-dash line form part of Chinese territory. Any self-respecting sovereign state will immediately formally protest such encroachment on its sovereignty and sovereign rights. The Philippines must do no less."

Former national security adviser Roilo Golez: "This is a clear and present danger to the Philippines and our friends in the area. I strongly recommend for the Philippines finally to lodge a very strong diplomatic protest dahil masyadong matindi ang development na ito."

Former senator Rene Saguisag: "So, what do we call China's open militarization in our very own territory? The National Security Council should have been convened yesterday."



Check the map first before blabbering. down to give way to his own (Inset, Robredo and Carpio.)

These officials made a fool of themselves. They blabbed their mouths off to reveal either their gross ignorance of the geography of this part of the world, their sheer intellectual laziness to do a bit of research, or their US-molded bias against China.

Paracels, not Spratlys

The bombers landed on Woody Island (Yongxing to the Chinese), the largest of the Paracel islands, 350 kilometers from Hainan province – or about half the distance from Manila to Cebu. Only China and Vietnam

claim these islands. China had occupied these islands and fortified Yongxing since 1974, after a battle with the Vietnamese.

Carpio, whose hobby is collecting expensive old maps, in his book on the South China Sea issue presented over 100 medieval maps, which he claims prove our territorial claims. Yet he obviously can't distinguish between the Paracels and the Spratlys.

We have as much business in the Paracels as we do, say on Senkaku islands, 330 kms from China, claimed by that country, Taiwan, and Japan, or in the Kuril Islands, disputed over by Russia and Japan.

Robredo, Carpio, Golez, and Saguisag obviously thought the Chinese bombers landed on some island in our Kalayaan Group of islands in the Spratlys. They should learn to do a bit of fact-checking before they open their mouths. Yongxing is nearly a thousand kilometers from our Pag-Asa island. (We don't even have our own nomenclature for the island.)

Did any other country file a diplomatic protest against China that these ignoramuses are demanding the Duterte government to do?

No. Not even Vietnam, the only other claimant to the Paracels, which lost 60 soldiers and sailors when it fought China in 1974 over the area. A Vietnamese foreign ministry spokesman—not even its foreign minister—of course, claimed that China's moves "increase tensions, cause regional instabilities and are not good for maintaining a peaceful, stable and cooperative environment in the East Sea."

Only the Pentagon

Did the US, a superpower, which has vowed to defend the freedom of navigation in the South China Sea file a diplomatic protest against China on the issue?

Nope. Not the White House, not even its State Department bothered to comment on this development that pushed our acting chief justice and the vice president into paroxysms of protest against China. It was only a spokesman for the Pentagon, one Lt. Col. Christopher Logan, who commented on the episode, branding the exercise an act of "China's continued militarization of disputed features in the South China Sea." And even that spokesman didn't ask the US State Department to lodge a diplomatic protest against China, as the three stooges asked Duterte to do.

The US, of course, has done much worse things to independent nations' sovereignty, the most recent of which are its 100 missile strikes against Syria, an independent nation we have diplomatic ties with. The US claimed it was in retaliation for the Syrian government's chemical attack against its own citizens. This, however, was conclusively proven to have been faked by that nation's rebels.

Did Carpio, Robredo, and Golez demand that our government file a diplomatic protest against the US? Of course not. These Filipinos are American lackeys. Did you ever hear them say a single word against the US?

No nation, not the World Bank or the European Parliament, protested the landing of Chinese bombers in their own territory.

If Duterte had followed their demand for the Philippines to issue a diplomatic protest against China for its landing of bombers in its own territory—"a very strong one," Golez urged—we would have been the only nation to do so, and we would have become the laughingstock of the world.

This brouhaha only reveals the fact that Robredo, Carpio and Golez are essentially the mouthpieces of the US on the South China Sea territorial dispute, its proxies. They play a crucial role for the Americans as they really have totally no business in the area, even as they can't bear the thought that an Asian superpower is emerging there, which would dismantle their decades-old total hegemony in the region.

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