

THE MANILA TIMES

The Yellows have missed the bus indeed, but with some qualifiers

By [MARLEN V. RONQUILLO](#) on December 14, 2016 [Analysis](#)



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A FRIEND recently e-mailed a solidly grounded analysis headlined “The Yellows have missed the bus”. It was about the failure of the anti-Duterte groups, which he lumped into the category of “Yellows” to rattle, then end, the Duterte administration. He cited five reasons why:

- Mr. Duterte’s foreign policy is gaining traction
- People are now beginning to see an administration that walks the talk
- The protest has fizzled
- The efforts to involve international human rights organizations in indicting alleged human rights violations “ are slowly falling on deaf ears and losing steam”
- Mr. Trump would be more receptive of Mr. Duterte’s war on drugs than a Democratic president

The sense of the man on the street, the sense of the Filipino Everyman agrees with the general thesis of the e-mail. The popular support for Mr. Duterte is beyond dispute. The polling work says Mr. Duterte has both excellent approval ratings and popular support.

The point of dispute I have with the e-mail was the opening statement, which described the “ beast mode” fury of the Yellows in carrying out the opposition to Mr. Duterte. I cannot imagine Mr. Aquino, the leader of the “Yellows,” assuming a state of purple rage,

waging, like Andres Bonifacio, the symbolic bolo of resistance. Inspiring the troops and plotting the victorious end game. That is giving too much credit to the clueless Mr. Aquino.

Mr. Aquino truly leading with deep conviction and unwavering courage. Are you kidding? My assessment is this: This guy can't even tie his shoelaces properly without help.

I think it is time for the nation to bury the fiction that Mr. Aquino is a leader—or was once a true leader. Try to review, try to take a look back, into contemporary history.

Mr. Aquino was a legacy politician

Mr. Aquino entered politics with nothing in terms of tangible assets except for two famous surnames. If you were looking for a resume that read like that of his father, a war correspondent at the age of 17 and a mayor at 21 years, you will be frustrated. Unlike his father, Mr. Aquino was not a self-made man but a man made by his surnames.

At the House, very few remember what he did. That was because he did very little. Or probably did nothing at all.

Those who were expecting a late-bloomer in Mr. Aquino—a higher ambition could really lead to that—were also frustrated. The late Joker Arroyo had offered a vivid description of Mr. Aquino as senator and it was not favorable. Coming from one who defended Ninoy and served Cory Aquino, Joker's comments spoke volumes about Mr. Aquino's non-existent leadership potential.

A death made Mr. Aquino president

It was the emotional outpouring after the death of Cory Aquino that triggered the events that led to the victory of Mr. Aquino in the presidential elections of 2010. He would not have been viewed as a viable candidate—even with his surnames—had not death intervened. Mar Roxas was all set to run for president and Mr. Aquino was supposed to be a lightweight spectator in 2010. Mrs. Aquino's death changed all that.

Overnight perceptions could change. From a slacker at the two chambers of Congress, Mr. Aquino was suddenly vested with unbelievable gravitas. He ran and won on what seemed to be a great promise to usher in an era of unprecedented greatness.

I was suckered into believing that. And I started expressing that voter's remorse very early in his term as president.

A government of the 1 percent, for the 1 percent and by the 1 percent

President Aquino's term as president was a classic cacique rule. He just checked in the box what the 21st century hacenderos needed and designed his administration to meet their policy requirements. His administration was about the following:

- The rise of dollar billionaires that the wealth-tracking magazines have described as “those-who-can-buy-a-small-country” rich
- Sixty percent or more of the income/GDP gains went to the top 1 percent and Mr. Aquino basked in that singular achievement of social darwinism
- Many communities in the Vis-Min area languished in the 80 or 70 percent poverty rates and Mr. Aquino just shrugged it off and said his version of “ traffic is progress “
- Mr. Aquino vetoed each and every token legislation for the vulnerable and the underclass, reveling in that singular act of brutality against us, the vulnerable

My friend, Mr. Aquino and his spoiled “ Yellows” cannot adopt a “ beast mode” fighting stance. They are just pampered, legacy brats who have fought for nothing in their lives. Ms Robredo has to be fully aware of that as she takes over the leadership of the pile of rubble. Mr. Aquino and his clique should stand down and let Ms Robredo lead.