

Noy Aquino on withdrawal of amnesty proclamation: We never said we're perfect

Written by Special to the Filipino Reporter
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□ □ □ SEN. TRILLANES

CALAMBA, Laguna — President Benigno Aquino III acknowledged the mistake his legal team committed in drafting the amnesty proclamation for detained Sen. Antonio Trillanes IV and other soldiers that mutinied against then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo seven years ago.

Speaking to reporters at the Regional Tripartite Industrial Peace Council at Yazaki-Torres manufacturing plant, Mr. Aquino said the requirement that Trillanes and the others seeking amnesty should admit guilt could be integrated into the implementing rules and regulations of the amnesty proclamation.

“We recognize the fact that we’re all human beings and things made by human beings can be improved,” he said.

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Mr. Aquino said he is open to amendments to the amnesty proclamation.

"Hindi naman po kami nagsabi ni minsan na kami po'y kaisa-isang anak ng Diyos na kami lang ang may dunong (We never said that we had a monopoly on wisdom)," he said.

Mr. Aquino said the idea to grant amnesty to Trillanes originally came from the Senate, not from him.

"Number one, we want to close that chapter," he said.

"Number two, *hindi naman nagmula sa amin ang amnesty. Nagmula ho sa Senado. Inaasa-han po natin nasa paguusap naman po iyan*

We have three branches of government. *Iyung inputs ng Congress ay atin pong pakikikingan* (The idea of amnesty did not come from us; it came from the Senate. We're listening to inputs from Congress; this can be discussed)," he added.

Mr. Aquino issued the statement after his political ally and former Ateneo classmate Sen. Teofisto Guingona III expressed disappointment over reported flaws in Proclamation 50.

Guingona said section 5 of Proclamation 50 was the same as the one contained in Proclamation 80 issued by President Corazon Aquino in February 1987.

"But you must remember that when President Cory made that proclamation...it was a revolutionary government so that's why it took effect immediately. But now it's a different regime, we have a functioning legislature, we have a functioning Senate and Congress."

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He had to withdraw the report after Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr. informed him that Proclamation 50 will be amended, Guingona said.

The Senate was supposed to approve it the other day.

Guingona heads the Senate committee on peace, unification and reconciliation.

He was supposed to present before the plenary the committee report that was to pave the way for a vote on the amnesty proclamation.

The Senate would now wait for the new proclamation, which is expected to come out this week, before conducting a new hearing.

Mr. Aquino signed Proclamation 50 last October, which granted amnesty to military personnel accused of trying to oust Arroyo.

The amnesty would cover more than 300 officers and enlisted men, including Trillanes, a former Navy lieutenant who led the mutiny at Oakwood Premiere residences in 2003.