

### Remembering a Friend

Necrological Services for

NBI Director and

Former Police Deputy Director General

Reynaldo Wycoco

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I would like to celebrate a friend and give thanks to the Almighty for having blessed us with the gift of Reynaldo Wycoco, no matter how short the time he touched our lives.

I would like to recall the lighter side of the person, sensing as to how serious and sublime much of the eulogizing has been and is likely to be.

The first time I met Wykes was in connection with one of the areas of work I was doing with the PNP. He was a senior colonel then and acted it. He struck me as definitely military rather than police, but personified what we of the old school call “an officer and a gentleman”. The meeting was short and cordial, the usual how-do-you-dos and fine-thanks-yous but not engaged.

Much, much later, I met him in a Kennedy School Alumni Association affair where we promptly elected him vice president partly because very few of the elder ones wanted an officer’s post but mostly because he demonstrated the ability to bridge the paradoxical desire for fun and camaraderie of most of the elder alumni including myself, with the need for serious and socially significant activities of most of the younger alumni and alumnae. He was fantastic at this.

He was always dapper, suave and gentlemanly in public. It was easy to think that he was emotionally repressed and an obsessive-compulsive like many in the Kennedy School Alumni.

But Lito Lorenzana, Willy Villarama and I can attest that in less public moments, with people he could let his emotional hair down – did you notice how always in place his hair was? – Wykes was a riot. He was loco-loco and ma-loco, capable of the sordid and the profane (sa Tagalog, bastos) in several languages as much as any trooper.

As with any handsome, properly proportioned man in uniform, Wykes attracted the ladies, hence the belief that he was “ma-Chicks”. To that I can attest. I saw him at work – with the cooing matrons of the Soroptimists and other women’s clubs of the Philippines that surrounded him because of the Children’s and Women’s Desk of the PNP which he helped create. Pero mga kasama, hindi naman “chicks” sila. Inahin na!

Later, when he moved to the NBI, I saw a facet of Wykes that told me he was the man for the job. Deeply steeped into the culture and deep loyalties of the Constabulary and the PNP, he nonetheless refocused his loyalty to his new mission – giving the NBI a much needed organizational boost and renewed national significance. He initiated a re-strategizing of the Bureau and a redefinition of its vision and mission. He was about to launch into a major remake of the bureau.

Of course, there was that mirthful interlude of the “Cory Quirino Story” which Vic Corpuz said should really be titled “The Rey Wycoco Saga, Part 3.” That movie and a subsequent TV series with Angie Reyes proved to many that Wykes could have been a movie star and who knows, President of the Republic as a result. But it proved without doubt that Wykes is a better actor than Angie Reyes.

And Wykes was, I believe, waiting for the right time to suggest to the DOJ and the DILG for a collaborative rethinking of the roles of the PNP and the NBI to avoid a simmering turf war.

The Almighty seems to take some people away from us a tad too early. Wykes was one of them. Yet, his passing is both a message and a challenge to us his friends, associates and colleagues.

The message is, **Life is short for each of us and our time on Earth is uncertain.** The challenge of the life of Reynaldo Wycoco is, for us his friends, to live our lives, whatever is left of it, in ways that, like Wykes’, made a positive difference for others and ultimately, for the nation.

If we do so, we will have told Wykes that his effect on us was neither skin deep nor fleeting. I think that is as he would have wanted, very much.

Mario Antonio G. Lopez  
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