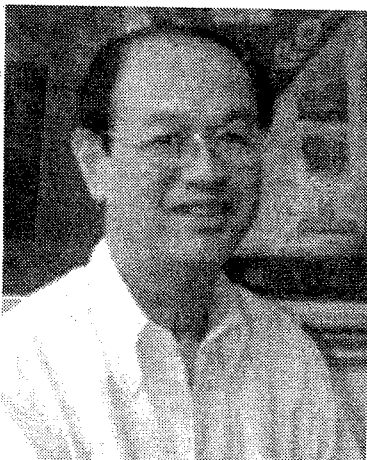


HAPPY HOUR

by **BOY F.**

Enrique Locsin arrested



Locsin

FORMER Philippine Communications Satellite Corp. executive **Enrique "ELL" Locsin** was arrested by operatives of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group on the strength of a warrant issued by the Sandiganbayan's Second Division. Locsin, brother of former Makati Congressman **Teddyboy Locsin**, was arrested at the lobby of the Tuscany Condominium in Ayala Avenue and brought to the CIDG office at the Fort Bonifacio Global City in Taguig, where he had to pose for the customary mug shot and perform the "fingerprint piano" routine. Bail was set at P30,000.

Locsin, along with **Manuel Andal**, were indicted for graft allegedly for collecting "grossly exorbitant salaries" of P300,000 a month both from Philcomsat and Philippine Overseas Telecommunications Corp., and other benefits and fees during their stint with the PCGG-sequestered corporation.

Locsin reportedly received P15 million between 2003 and 2005 in "unexplained reimbursements." Both Locsin and Andal, however, claimed that their actions were in keeping with their status as legitimate shareholders of the corporation, saying they were not government nominees/appointees to the Philcomsat board and, thus, could not have violated Memorandum Circular 40, which places a ceiling of P180,000 on the salaries of board members of sequestered companies. Besides which, the two argued, the expenses they incurred did not redound to their personal benefit but to the company's.

If one can recall, Senate President **Juan Ponce Enrile**, whose family owns substantial shares in Philcomsat, delivered a privilege speech in 2008 brazenly titled "Alibaba and the Forty Thieves," where he accused several individuals of "wanton and unjustifiable looting, pillaging and plundering" of P56 million worth of Philcomsat's resources.

Among the alleged 40 "relatives of Alibaba" named by Senator Enrile were Locsin and **Benito "Bomboy" Araneta**, cousin of former First Gentleman **Mike Arroyo**. The Senator accused Araneta of chairing the Executive Committee that approved, authorized and issued a check all on the same day a P125-million loan to a family corporation without any collateral and only on the basis of a promissory note—all without the ratification of the Philcomsat board. According to Enrile, Araneta failed to liquidate millions in advances and received compensation and allowances amounting to P5.2 million, including a \$10,000 travel allowance.

Last year, the Bureau of Internal Revenue filed a complaint before the Justice Department against Araneta for three counts of attempted tax evasion and failure to supply accurate information for tax years covering 2003, 2004 and 2005. Araneta was one of those named by a confidential informant as among several former Philcomsat executives and directors who allegedly did not report their benefits and compensations. Aside from the millions allegedly dissipated by Locsin—who at some point refused to vacate his position despite orders from then President **Gloria Arroyo**—what apparently got the ire of Enrile was the discovery that Locsin had reportedly charged the cost of a P180,000 hearing aid to Philcomsat, a laptop, leather case and a wallet—all of which prompted the Senator to remark that the company was being treated as a private "alkansiya" (piggy bank).