

Palace: GMA to reappoint bypassed Cabinet members

By MARVIN SY

Malacañang officials confirmed yesterday that President Arroyo would reappoint the Cabinet members who were bypassed by the Commission on Appointments.

Secretary to the Cabinet Silvestre Bello III said that the reappointment papers for Energy Secretary Angelo Reyes, Environment Secretary Lito Atienza, Socio-economic Planning Secretary Ralph Recto and Civil Service Commission chairman Ricardo Saludo should be expected from the President anytime soon.

Bello said the officials who were bypassed by the CA continue to have the trust and confidence of the President.

Reyes in particular has been bypassed several times in the past and for different positions in the Cabinet.

"I don't think the President has any intention of letting Secretary Reyes go from the Department of Energy," Bello said.

"The fact that he has been reappointed as Secretary of Energy is a manifestation of the trust and confidence in the integrity, competence and work of Secretary Reyes," he added.

Bello said that the Palace respects the independence of the Commission on Appointments as a constitutional body.

However, he

emphasized that the President has the prerogative and power to appoint whoever she wants in her Cabinet.

Reyes was heavily criticized as energy secretary because of his lack of experience in this field.

The same was true when he was environment secretary, which he also served without the blessings of the CA.

In his current portfolio, Reyes was criticized for the fluctuating prices of oil in the country and the lack of supply of liquefied petroleum gas at one point.