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THE RISE AND FALL OF THE AGRAVA COMMISSION



By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

"It was our lowest point," remarked one member of the commission investigating the assassination of former Senator Benigno Aquino, Jr., in reference to the day First Lady Imelda Marcos appeared to testify.

It was the day the panel's chief, Justice Corazon Agrava, required everyone in the room—panelists, lawyers, journalists, and observers—to rise and sing "Happy Birthday" to the First Lady. Not once, but twice. "Louder this time," she demanded, fanning the air like Toscanini.

"From the start I gave the Agrava Board the benefit of the doubt," commented progressive lawyer Rene Saguisag. "Last week they blew it. They allowed themselves to be manipulated." Former Information Minister-turned-"oppositionist" Francisco Tatad couldn't agree more: "Justice Agrava reduced the whole thing to a farce."

It was back to square one for the five luckless individuals appointed by Ferdinand Marcos under PD 1886 to "determine all the facts and circumstances surrounding Aquino's death" at Gate 8 of the Manila International Airport last August 21.

They had been carefully walking a tightrope up to this point; appearing independent and at the same time not unduly ruffling the feathers of the prime suspects in Malacañang. The commission even managed to dispel the skepticism that greeted its formation by even-handedly entertaining witnesses who shyly but surely tore to pieces the government's version of the killing.

But now the jokes are back. Like the one that says there are only five people in the country who still don't know who really killed Aquino: Corazon Agrava, Luciano Salazar, Amado Dizon, Ernesto Herrera, and Dante Santos—the five members of the panel, "The Agravators," as one columnist calls them.

Meanwhile, the truth has risen close to the surface, just like a drowned boy. As the outrage signalled by continuous marches, rallies and demonstrations emboldened hitherto terrified eyewitnesses, a tale has emerged that leads irresistably to the conclusion that Aquino was shot on the steps by his military escorts. Not on the tarmac by the wretched Rolando Galman, the supposed Communist assassin.

Links have begun to show between the man in charge of the airport "welcome and security" Brig. Gen. Luther Custodio, his immediate superior, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian Ver, and Marcos' arch-crony and coconut king Eduardo Cojuangco. In spite of the commission's work, not because of it.

AN IMPOSSIBLE BEGINNING

The Agrava Commission arrived on the scene November 3, 1983, and was greeted with a heavy dose of skepticism inherited directly from the short-lived Fernando Commission which preceded it. It was an impossible beginning.

"At least Enrique Fernando ought to know Manila International Airport well enough," coffee house wags liked to say when the Chief Justice was appointed to head up the first investigating body. "He spends enough time there holding the First Lady's parasol during welcoming ceremonies for foreign dignitaries."

The Fernando Commission did little other than bring the government version out into the open, presented principally through an investigating team headed by Manila Police Chief Prospero Olivas.

The Chief Justice's role was immediately challenged by opposition lawyers on the principle of separation of powers and he resigned in less than a week. The remaining members of the body, by now known as the Fernando Omission, resigned October 10 to a standing ovation.

Clearly more was needed and Ferdinand Marcos appointed retired Appellate Court Justice Agrava to head up a new panel. Its members were Herrera, Secretary General of the government-dominated Trade Union congress of the Philippines; Santos, president of Pilacor Appliances and of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Dizon, Vice President of Manuel L. Quezon University; and Salazar, a corporate lawyer and head of five corporations.

The Aquino family immediately let it be known however, that it would have nothing to do with the new commission. "I don't expect to get any justice while Marcos is still head of government," declared the late senator's widow Cory.

No one put it more bluntly than Jose Maria Sison when he was called to testify. "It is unacceptable that the prime suspect (to use a gracious legal term) should be the one to form the body to investigate the crime of which it is suspected. . . " He was eventually silenced by the panel for refusing to admit his affiliation with the Communist Party of the Philippines.

UNINSPIRED TESTIMONY

The initial witnesses did little to dispel the prevailing

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The Rainbow Must Grow, Reagan Must Go

So what are progressives to do now that Walter Mondale is the only possible alternative to President Ronald Reagan in November? Jesse Jackson and the Rainbow Coalition did a commendable job at the Democratic National Convention. But while they effectively projected the demand for genuine peace abroad and justice at home, they were not yet strong enough to alter the rules that effectively block the disadvantaged and disenfranchised from the party's center stage.

How should progressives, including Filipinos who oppose the dictatorship in the Philippines and inequality here, relate to what looks like a contest between Tweedledee and Tweedledum? Is there life after the Democratic Party Convention? Progressives must first of all, grapple with what four more years of Reagan would mean.

Four more years of Reagan would spell the more arrogant and aggressive use of U.S. military might against peoples fighting for their liberation; four more years of plenty for the world's most repressive dictators who were ecstatic throughout his first term. If he can help it, Reagan would turn every Nicaragua into a Grenada. He has all but promised direct intervention in Central America in his next term. Reaganism, in its attempt to revive nuclear blackmail as its principal instrument of diplomacy, has dramatically brought the world closer to nuclear destruction. What would four more years of this be like?

Reagan, in his first term, presided over the most drastic slash in the standard of living of working people—cutting social services, busting trade unions, and deliberately prolonging the recession to accomplish it. But in order to win over the white sector of the population to its policies by not making everyone hurt equally, Reaganism opened up the floodgates to racism. Also, at no time has the neo-fascist voice of the New Right, gained such an ascendancy. Four more years of Reagan would mean more strident racism; more attacks on women's rights, gay rights, and civil liberties. Clearly, a Reagan victorious and free of worries about having to run again for re-election, would be like a fox let loose in a hen house.

BETTER A DEMOCRATIC VICTORY

His challenger, Walter Mondale, is hardly a genuine antithesis to Reaganism. The Carter vice president who arranged the payment of $500 million to Ferdinand Marcos for the continued presence of U.S. military bases is of course unwilling to attack Reagan's basic imperialist assumptions. For progressives, voting for this candidate would certainly leave a disagreeable aftertaste. But vote for Mondale they must.

Mondale does represent that sector of America's ruling circle that sees the need for more caution in handling global politics. It is afraid that Reagan overestimates the gains that can be made through the use of military force alone. As its representative, Mondale argues for a more liberal approach to social and economic issues (like vetoing the Simpson/Mazzoli bill) for the sake of preventing the radicalization of the governed.

A Mondale victory could make a real difference in relation to U.S. policy in Central America. His ruling class backers have serious doubts about the effectiveness of a massive U.S. military adventure in that region, particularly in Nicaragua. He has officially pledged to end U.S. aid to the *contras*. The Democrats have also made critical noises about U.S. aid to repressive regimes. It is of course hard to rely on Mondale's promises. But having made them, he is far more susceptible to popular demands for peace and non-intervention.

A Democratic victory is also likely to slow down the rapid erosion of civil and democratic rights that have been taking a beating from Reagan's Supreme Court justices and legislators. With the election also being in effect a referendum on Reaganism, a Mondale victory could put a damper on the New Right's ideological advances.

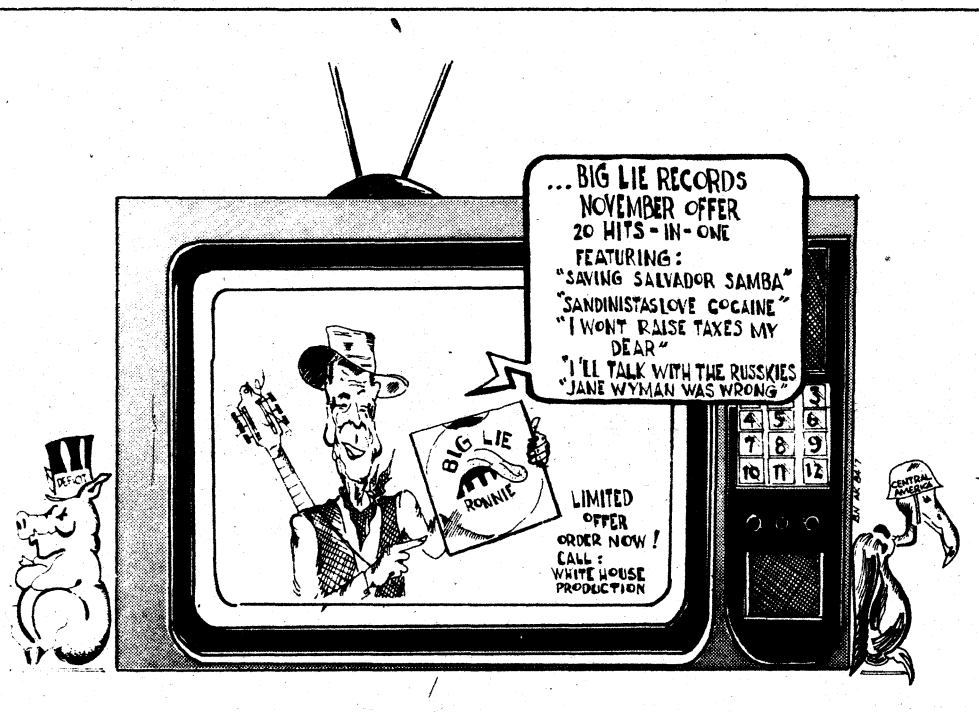
In other words, a Reagan defeat would put some degree of check to the intensification of war and intervention. For peoples' struggles in Central America and elsewhere, this is no small matter. A Reagan defeat would also check somewhat the intensification of racism and political repression. For people struggling in this country, this would be a welcome respite.

BUILD THE RAINBOW, DUMP REAGAN

Join the efforts to dump Reagan. That is the thing to do. Jackson's Rainbow Coalition has correctly decided that joining the Democratic anti-Reagan efforts is, *at this point,* the best way to contribute to the incumbent's ouster. An independent Jackson candidacy at this point would have been self-destructive. In addition, joining this alliance is the most effective way of deflecting attacks from the Rainbow's enemies among the Democrats while reaching large sections of the electorate with its progressive program.

Meanwhile, Jackson has indicated that the Rainbow is not about to surrender all initiative to the Mondale campaign. (He has even refused to ask Democratic Party assistance in paying off his campaign debts in order to preserve the coalition's independence.) Indeed expanding and building the Rainbow into an organized movement in the context of working for Reagan's defeat has long-range significance.

Ultimately, the political muscle of the disenfranchised must be made strong enough to destroy rules that have locked them out, and strong enough to mount an independent challenge to all ruling class agendas. For those who seek genuine peace and national liberation worldwide, and equality and social justice at home, this eventually is the only way to go. Progressives must help oust Reagan now, but while doing so they must build the Rainbow Coalition. They must pave the way for confronting, on their own terms, future expressions of Reaganism.□



Letters . . .

Loused It Up

Laurel's, Kalaw's, and Pimentel's participation in the election firmed-up the Marcos dictatorship, loused up the cause of the entire opposition and did mischief to the aspirations of the Filipinos. In effect, they have allied themselves with Marcos against the genuine opposition, against their own people. A new generation of Filipinos, imbued with a new spirit and dedication, will some day, rise to redeem the honor and dignity of their race, which their servile-natured forebears failed to uphold. They will have to debunk the fake theory—"Nothing can be gained by chaos"—of their predecessors, and avail themselves of the Rooseveltian precept, "Against naked force, the only defence is naked force." For he doesn't deserve "freedom" he who is unwilling to die for it. If the Filipinos can't get Marcos through the "*Santong Batasang Pambansa,*" they will get him through the "*Santong Paspasang Pambagsak.*"

Paul Sapuriada
San Diego, CA

Loused It Up Again

The results of the May 14 Philippine elections show that the compromisers have loused things up as usual in the Philippines. With not enough seats to make any meaningful changes, these traditional oppositionists will simply fall back to making loud noises thereby moving the frustrations from the streets to the tamer halls of the rubber stamp Parliament. These traditional oppositionists have always rationalized their own interests as the interests of the many.

Robert I. Antonio
Garden Grove, CA

Litter from Manila



Beat It

By INIDORO DELIHENCIA

Food Minister Jesus Tanchangco said there should be no fear of famine "Because the country's supply of rice is good for 70 days." There is really no cause for alarm. In fact, we should all breathe a sigh of relief. Insiders in the armed forces told me our supply of bullets is good for 60 days of straight fighting. This means Minister Tanchangco did such a good job that we can go to war right now with say, Malaysia, and still have 10 days supply of rice when it's over.

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Mrs. Marcos is not keeping a low profile because she's upset about her candidates' defeat, she's been busy working on another brilliant idea. According to the Philippine News Agency, the First Lady is organizing an "A-Team" in Leyte, inspired by the popular American TV show. "A-Team" will be composed of young scholars, ages 11 to 17. The initial "A" stands not only for excellence but also for "attack" as, according to Mrs. Marcos, "the children will be taught to fight ignorance, sickness and poverty." The children are really being trained for a tough battle. Ignorance, sickness, and poverty are reputed to be a mean and dangerous trio capable of limitless harm, but incapable of mercy. They say the first runs a secret syndicate that controls the finance, and information ministries. Sickness has been trying to subvert the President's kidneys for a number of years now. Poverty, they say, injects its victims with an irrepresible urge to become first ladies. It's about time an "A-Team" dealt with these criminals. I hope the First Lady bases this worthy project in Tacloban so the people can look up to her as the heroic "Mrs. T."

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There is another craze from America sweeping the land. Michael Jackson look-alikes are crowding the government-owned channel 4 hoping to become the Michael Jackson of the Philippines, and win about ₱8,000. On Channel 7, "Student Canteen" is searching for the Junior Michael Jackson of the Philippines offering P4,000 prize. Government officials like the phenomenon because it makes people temporarily forget the economic crunch and the whole Aquino business.

In fact, Gen. Fabian Ver seems to be wearing his gala military uniform more often and the other day, he only had one glove on. I asked him pressing questions such as, is he going to help his boys who are in deep trouble—like Lt. Arnulfo de Mesa, the Aquino escort now suspected of being the actual triggerman? "Why should I?" he replied. Then he gave me a nasty look sideways, jackknifed his leg, jerked his collar with both hands and sneered something like, "Uhh, the kid is not my son, uhh!"

He has a point there. Why should superior officers be blamed for all the deeds of their soldiers? If the escorts shot Ninoy why should their commanders be automatically guilty? That is why Ver sued *Panorama Magazine* for libel to the tune of P100 million. The article written my Mauro Avena "imputes and attributes to me the crime of murder, salvaging, obstructing justice, supressing evidence, intimidating witnesses and violations of human rights," Ver complained in a statement. These charges are really unfair to Ver. What do they think he is? A brutal Third World dictator? Mr. Avena: take my friendly advice now that you've slighted the general. It doesn't matter who's wrong or right, just beat it.

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Hopefully, faith healer Ramon "Jun" Labo, who lost as a KBL candidate last May, didn't lose his faith in America after he was summarily strip-searched by immigration officers at the San Francisco airport. Why the search? The puzzled Jun says he still can't put his finger on it. . . I don't like the KBL caucus' decision to adopt "Mambabatas Pambansa" or M.P. as the official title for the National Assembly members. "Mambabatas" sounds like our legislators are fond of patronage, as in "*Bata ko 'yan*" or "*Bata 'yan ni Ma'am.*" It also sounds a bit lecherous. M.P. can also be maliciously used by oppositionists to mean Marcos Puppet. I prefer the more neutral title National Assembler. . . The KBL also named its party whips—members who will enforce party discipline especially during voting on controversial issues. An important tip to neophytes who will play this role: KBL protocol and good taste require that your whips be no longer than the President's or the First Lady's. Chains and leathers optional.□

Next Issue::: born-again government critic Maximo Saliva will pinch hit as Inidoro Delihencia goes on long-awaited vacation.

New Batasan Hedges Out Opposition

By NENE OJEDA

"Let us suspend the petty political quarrels for today, the petty nitpicking and fault-finding and let us join hands to save the nation," implored President Ferdinand Marcos as he convened the first session of the new *Batasang Pambansa* July 23.

The presence of a large opposition bloc in the National Assembly—the first legislative body since Marcos dismantled the Philippine Congress in 1972—was already promising more than the petty quibbling that dominated the interim body over the last six years. With 65 seats won—much more than the predicted 20-30 seats—oppositionists are raring to flex their new found muscle.

Grumblings have also been heard within Marcos' *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan*. His continued reliance on technocrats in the cabinet has displeased a number of party loyalists. Marcos' re-appointment of his wife Imelda as Minister of Human Settlement in spite of her decision not to run for re-election has also been cause for dismay among U.S. observers.

But Marcos has already sufficiently hedged in the parliamentary opposition so as to make his call for unity to avoid a "gruesome future" unneccessary. Despite capturing 52 more seats than it had in the interim body, the opposition remains very much a minority. And Batasan house rules only serve to enforce this disadvantage.

STACKED RULES

House rules distinctly favor the KBL, giving it 60% control of committee membership. Only 30% is left to the coalition of oppositionist parties and 10% to the Nacionalista Party-Roy Wing and "independents."

Oppositionists' demand for a "privilege hour" during regular sessions was reduced to a "question hour" to be held once every Tuesday and Thursday. Marcos opposed this demand as "unneccesary and subject to abuse."

Agreement on impeachment proceedings has preoccupied most oppositionist MPs (*Mambabatas Pambansa*). They have accused the KBL caucus of setting more difficult rules for a legislative overthrow of the president than ever.

But nowhere is the opposition's minority position more apparent that in the cabinet. Not one oppositionist figures in Marcos' advisory body.

When Marcos announced the "new" cabinet June 30, only four new faces appeared. Imelda Marcos was re-instated. So were other ministers who did not participate in the elections.

TOLENTINO REPLACES ROMULO

Jaime Laya, removed from the Central Bank governorship following the discovery of a $600 million overstatement of the country's foreign reserves, stays on as Minister of Education. Jesus Azurin retains his post as Minister of Health; Roberto Ongpin, Trade and Industry; Jose Dans, Transportation; Sylvia Montes, Social Services; and Geronimo Velasco, Energy.

Three cabinet members who lost in the assembly seat race have been replaced with new appointees: Salvador Escudero III now heads the Ministry of Food and Agriculture following Arturo Tanco's defeat. Rodolfo del Rosario replaces Teodoro Peña of Natural Resources; and Solicitor General Estelito Mendoza succeeded Ricardo Puno as Minister of Justice.

The lone KBL winner in the Manila assembly seat race, Arturo Tolentino, was given the foreign affairs portfolio left vacant when 83-year-old Carlos P. Romulo retired in January. Tolentino's appointment over Manuel Collantes, a former



Aquilino Pimentel

cabinet member having acted as foreign minister in the last six months, created some dissent within Marcos' own camp.

Collantes stunned fellow KBL assemblymen by voting against the re-election of technocrat and Finance Minister Cesar Virata to the Prime Ministerial post. Virata was re-instated by a vote of 120-50.

MOVEMENT TO OPPOSE SPECIAL POWERS

Though progressive professionals and politicians regard him as a shaky opponent, Collantes' disappointment also led him to announce that he and 29 other pro-Marcos MPs—KBL members and independents—will join the opposition in challenging Marcos' legislative powers. His "Group of 30" has since joined the call for the repeal of Amendment No. 6 which gives Marcos decree-making powers in "times of emergency."

Established oppositionists, led by Cagayan de Oro City MP Aquilino Pimentel, put forth a resolution calling for the repeal of Marcos' special powers. "Amendment No. 6 poses a clear and present danger to life and democracy," Pimentel stated. Resolution No. 8 submitted by Pimentel and 11 other Philippine Democratic Party MPs proposes the repeal of the amendment and a plebiscite in accordance with constitutional provisions.

Three MPs, Cecilia Muñoz-Palma, Marcelo B. Bernan, and Neptali Gonzales submitted a separate resolution claiming, "Since the transition is over, political normalcy has been achieved, and the regular Batasang Pambansa has been elected, and discharging the mandate of the sovereign people, Amendment No. 6 is deemed *ipso facto* terminated."

But whether or not Amendment No. 6 is indeed terminated will require a united opposition in face of the very disadvantageous position.

A number of opposition assembly members were spotted listening to the counter-state-of-the-nation address delivered by outspoken Marcos critic, former senator Lorenzo Tañada on opening day.

Indeed the "parliament of the streets" may prove to be the only effective tool in pushing for change.

As to Marcos' call for unity at the opening ceremony, it rings a trifle hollow. Peaceful demonstrators hoping to express their opposition in the streets that day were brutally dispersed by tear-gas throwing and club-wielding police.□

Protest Steps Up, Marcos Cracks Down

By MADGE BELLO

"Marcos tried to dissolve the parliament of the street," cried Joe Castro, an organizer of the July 23 rally denouncing the opening of the new *Batasang Pambansa.*

The peaceful rally was violently dispersed by 2,000 riot police who used tear gas, truncheons and pillbox bombs to scatter over 25,000 demonstrators.

As participants tried to re-group, they were repeatedly attacked, each time more viciously. Dozens of police jeeps moved through the crowd.

People dispersed, choking and gasping through the haze of teargas, as a round of pistol shots was fired.

A few hundred feet away, angry cigarrette vendors drew cheers from bystanders as they put to flames a military jeep.

MORE OF THE SAME

A coalition of progressive organizations called the rally to denounce growing repression and worsening economic conditions, and to demand an end to Marcos' control of the country.

Former senator Lorenzo Tañada gave an address on the "true state of the nation."

Only three days later, police exploded 20 teargas canisters at demonstrators marching across a bridge into the crowded Quiapo district during the 5:00 rush hour.

Passengers in commuter jeeps and buses caught in the bumper-to-bumper traffic abandoned their vehicles to seek cover from clouds of stinging gas. At least seven were injured. Two women, hit by sharpnel from pillbox bombs, were treated at a near-



Police attack demonstrators in early July. (AP)

by hospital while an infant suffered tear gas inhalation.

Ironically, the group of 500 headed by Agapito Aquino, brother of the assassinated Senator Benigno Aquino, were on their way home from a peaceful rally denouncing the use of force against the July 23 demonstrators.

FACE-OFF AT MENDIOLA

The protests are part of a visible build-up toward August 21, the first anniversary of Aquino's murder.

Earlier, demonstrations have drawn impressive crowds. Some 50,000 turned out on July 13 to march to the historic Mendiola Bridge in Manila. (Eleven were killed at Mendiola last year during the height of the protest over Aquino's death and four were killed there in 1970 during the First Quarter Storm. The bridge leads to the Malacañang Palace.)

The marchers were blocked by a combined force of police, constabulary, army, navy, air force troopers, and marines. The soldiers, after much negotiating finally allowed the marchers to progress only 10 feet onto the bridge.

The regime's response to the July 23 and 26 activities is indicative of a trend—one toward increased violence and repression.

HARASSMENT AND INTIMIDATION

Little over a month ago, on June 26, 25 government soldiers descended on the headquarters of the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy in a pre-dawn raid. It reminded observers of the eve of martial law on September 21, 1972.

Troops seized documents they labelled as "underground, anti-government and subversive." They also charged the Alliance with having acted as nerve center of the boycott movement against the May 14 elections, a role it performed openly.

"This is classic harassment and intimidation," insisted Fr. Jose Dizon, the organization's executive secretary and one of six people detained following the raid. "It is an attempt to sow fear among the people." Dizon was subsequently released.

DEATH SQUADS REVIVED

Only a week prior to the raid on the Alliance office, Marcos resurrected a 1,000-strong squad of secret marshalls operating around the clock to "shoot to disable" anyone suspected of criminal activities.

The group was originally called into being in August 1982 allegedly to stem robberies and other illegal activities in Metro-Manila. Critics likened the marshalls to El Salvador's death squads.

By the time massive protest led by the Civil Liberties Union of the Philippines and 110 Catholic bishops forced Marcos to dissolve the squads July 27, these had already killed 50 people.

Observers are not altogether surprised at the trend toward mounting repression in the country's capitol. It is reflective of heightened militarization and quashing of dissent nationwide as evidenced by Marcos' July 16 visit to the Cordillera battlefield (*see story, page 4*).

The official death squads may be temporarily disbanded, but as August 21 draws closer, repression can only be expected to increase.□

Agrava . . .

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cynicism.

Rosendo Cawigan was crucial to the government version of the story for he alone, among nearly 200 witnesses attested to the Communist connection.

Cawigan, a former bodyguard of Aquino, claimed to be a member of the New People's Army. Communist Party Chairman Rodolfo Salas, he insisted, swore to him that Galman was a member of the NPA. His orders were allegedly to kill Aquino. But the government's star witness sent the audience into groans and guffaws as he contradicted himself more than a dozen times.

Medical reports on Aquino and Galman were as incredible as Cawigan. How did a shorter man send a bullet through the head of a taller man on a downward trajectory while standing on the same level? The Olivas report answered it by simply falsifying Aquino's and Galman's heights. A government medical examiner resolved it by insisting that Aquino looked up at that fateful moment.

The big shots were equally unconvincing. Aviation Security Command Chief Luther Custodio testified that the military did not know which flight Aquino was

'Justice Agrava's refusal to delve into a possible Cojuangco connection was awkward, at the very least.'

on or at which *gate* his plane would arrive. He insisted that his men met every single international flight on August 21 with the same security precautions.

Chief counsel Andres Narvasa pulled a *confidential sketch of Gate 8* from a file the general was holding in his own hand. A tongue-tied Custodio then insisted that he "did not fully notice" the sketch when he approved the plan prior to Aquino's arrival.

AGRAVA'S SECOND WIND

Then came the cracks in the dam. With them, the Agrava panel's stock rose.

On December 28, Philippine Air Lines Maintenance Engineer Ramon Balang appeared before the board. The witness was frightened because government agents had visited his house the night before inviting him for a military "interview." The board agreed to go to the witness, appearing in his lawyer's office for a nighttime hearing.

It was the first piece of contradictory testimony. Balang told the board that he saw alleged murderer Galman immediately before the killing. But he was not hunkering behind the stairs waiting to pounce on Aquino. He was surrounded by soldiers, laughing and talking to them. "I don't think he had an opportunity to fire a shot."

Others began to come forward. And while the majority of the witnesses claimed to have seen nothing, more and more contested the official view. "There was a shift in the public's attitude towards the commission to cautious though guarded optimism," noted opposition lawyer Fulgencio (Jun) Factoran. Some society women began taking the board more seriously and even issued a call to raise funds for witnesses who had lost their jobs."

Inspired by all this, the Agrava Board found a second wind. Justice Agrava in particular played her revitalized role to the hilt. She cajoled and castigated hesitant witnesses. She accused others of lying. "There is now evidence that puts into doubt that Galman was the killer," Agrava even announced on January 20.

AGRAVA PROTECTS COJUANGCO

But the problem was if Galman didn't shoot Aquino, who did? The closer the board got to the truth, the deeper its dilemma became. As the hearings drew toward a close, observers began to note a distinct shift in its behavior.

It began on May 23 when Augusto Floresca, marketing director of Dutch Boy Paints asked to testify *in secret*. Floresca, a passenger on the Air Brunei plane docked at Gate 7 at the time of the assassination, planned to confirm the military version of the killing—the first civilian to do so.

Many found it strange that he turned up so late—the more so when another witness later revealed that, after the shooting, Floresca told a number of people he had seen nothing.

Justice Agrava, however, *allowed* him to testify in private. Further, she refused to allow any questioning of his connections with Marcos crony Cojuangco who reportedly has a controlling interest in Dutch Boy. The incident so enraged attorney Raul Gonzalez that he resigned his position as counsel to the board.

The same tendency showed up a few weeks later during hearings in Los Angeles. Agrava, questioned by members of the U.S.-based opposition on Marcos' sincerity and determination to arrive at the truth, let loose a virtual tirade in defense of Marcos.

"We have a President and our President is as good as any as long as he is President," she insisted. "We believe that he will behave as a President should behave; so we have no fears or doubts that he will tamper with our report."

But on Imelda's birthday, all hope for the board's independence vanished. The First Lady was allowed to put on one of her classic performances. She wept as she discussed her great affection for Aquino, her attempts to save his life, the gold *anting-anting* (amulet) he gave her as a token of friendship. All in all, it was definitely Imelda's day in court and the board was thoroughly charmed.

CONSPIRACY IN HIGH PLACES

"My own estimate is that Justice Agrava was intent on sustaining the government theory that Galman was the killer," Gonzales told *Asiaweek*.

Gonzales was one of many lawyers who signed a one-page report produced by the Philippine Bar Association and the Catholic Lawyers Group of the Philippines. The two groups insisted that Galman could not have killed Aquino but that the late Senator was shot by one of his soldier-escorts in a "conspiracy of high but restricted nature."

The paper recommended that Aquino's escorts be "tried for criminal negligence if not murder." Those "willfully responsible for the cover-up and suppression of the actual facts concerning the killing," it added, should be tried as accessories for obstructing justice.

In spite of all the board's efforts, its facade of independence had crumbled. Perhaps not so coincidentally, the very day the PBA/CSGP report came out, Rosendo Cawigan died in a military hospital purportedly of a heart attack at age 44.

SHOT ON THE STAIRS

And what is the board to do with the damning information given by non-government witnesses? By now, everyone following the investigation has probably concluded that Aquino was shot by one of his military escorts—just by piecing together various witnesses' stories.

Japanese newsman Miyoshi Wakamiya insisted on having seen a guard shoot Aquino from the very beginning, but his was a lone voice and his story was at first brushed aside.

On March 8, however, two security guards from the Lanting Security Agency took the stand and confirmed the Japanese writer's story.

Neither Efren Ranas nor Olivia Reyes saw the actual shooting. But Ranas saw Aquino slumped over to one side with blood oozing out of a hole in his neck. He was wobbling on the last few steps. As he reached bottom, his escorts, no longer able to support the body, simply dropped him.

Reyes, stationed roughly 25 yards away from the steps looked toward the first shot when she heard it ring out. Aquino was standing roughly four steps up from the bottom.

ABC-TV, the Japanese T.V. station NHK and Sandra Burton of *Time* recorded the time that elapsed between Aquino's step onto the top of the stairway and the first shot. It was roughly 10 seconds. A board reenactment showed that would leave Aquino on the fourth or fifth step.

Other confirmation came from surprising places.

The chief of the boarding party, Lt. Jesus Castro, made his own calculations of the time necessary to descend the stairs. Aquino must have been on the fourth step, he told the board. Castro also reported that Arnulfo deMesa, widely believed to be the hit man, once complained that he and escort Claro Lat "had difficulty carrying Aquino because he was heavy."

GALMAN—DEAD OR ALIVE?

As to Rolando Galman, two separate and contradictory sets of information emerged. Neither has him playing the role of murderer.

In addition to Balang's testimony, Ruben Regalado, a Philippine Air Lines mechanic, saw Galman with a group of soldiers apparently being held right before the shooting.

The other group of witnesses claims that Galman was already dead at the time of the assassination, and that his body was simply tossed out of the AVSECOM van at the appropriate moment. Heraclides and Esperanza Morales, passengers on Aquino's flight, saw both bodies sprawled on the tarmac for several seconds before the doors of the AVSECOM van opened and soldiers emerged shooting.

Marilyn Galman, the dead man's sister, revealed that a doctor from the National Bureau of Investigation told her November 8 that NBI Director Jolly Bugarin ordered the time of death altered on her brother's autopsy report to make it correspond to that of Aquino's. Galman actually died long before, the NBI examiner told her.

Col. Arturo Custodio purportedly told lawyer Jose Espino "the assassin was long dead."

(The credibility of the government's Galman-is-the-assassin story has reached such a low point that a grisly joke has been making the rounds: "Why was Galman's body bruised all over?" Answer—"Because there were eight China Airlines flights that day and he had to be thrown out of the van each time.")

As to who actually did the rub-out, Arnulfo de Mesa, was properly positioned on the stairs and his hands were positive when tested for gunpowder burns on August 23.

NPA research reveals de Mesa to be the son of a former *labandera* of the First Lady.

THE VER/COJUANGCO CONNECTION

Justice Agrava's refusal to delve into a possible "Cojuangco connection" was awkward, at the very least. Everyone else outside her panel has been talking about it *for months*.

Shortly after the assassination, former Assemblyman Salvador Laurel received an anonymous tip-off that the planning group behind the killing included both Ver and Cojuangco.

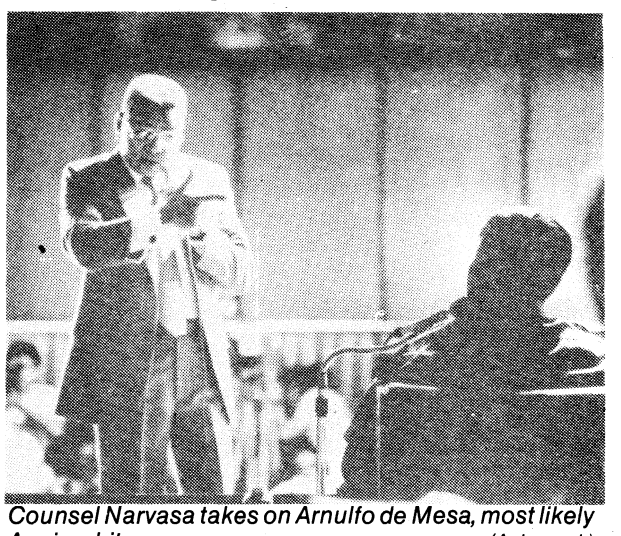
Evidence concerning the bigshots was predictably difficult to unearth. But some evidence pointing to the involvement of the Armed Forces Chief of Staff and the coconut king did emerge.

Reynaldo Galman, the alleged murderer's 11-year-old son, insisted that Col. Arturo Custodio, an attache to Gen. Ver and a good friend of his father, took Galman away on August 17.

According to the boy's stepsister, 16-year-old Roberta Masibay, their mother was forcibly taken on the orders of Gen. Ver on September 29. Galman's Manila-based girlfriend with whom he spent the last four nights of his life was kidnapped September 4 by military men as well.

The Ver/Cojuangco axis would hardly have shocked Aquino himself. The late Senator told *Newsweek* shortly before he died that there were only three people in the Philippine he feared: The First Lady, Ver and Cojuangco. Aquino also told the magazine of the First Lady's warnings of loyalists who "cannot be controlled" and who might do him in to please the first family. Such loyalists, he noted might include Cojuangco.

Galman family attorney, Lupino Lazaro, in a recent interview in *Panorama*, drew out the Ver/Cojuangco connection. He spoke of witnesses who claim that



Counsel Narvasa takes on Arnulfo de Mesa, most likely Aquino hitman. (Asiaweek)

Galman was brought to a resthouse on August 19 which belongs to Cojuangco. Other rumors report that Galman's kidnapped wife is being kept in Bacolod in a sugar plantation owned by the coconut mogul.

ALL ROADS LEAD TO MARCOS

Cojuangco responded by filing suit against Lazaro, *Panorama*, its editor and the writer responsible for the article for ₱120 million on libel charges. Ver followed with a suit for ₱100 million.

But the outrage of these two key Marcos operatives did little to convince anyone of their innocence. In fact, as the hearings drew to a close, all roads were once again leading to Marcos—precisely where they started.

"It's a no-win situation for the government," remarked a "reliable source," who turned out to be Labor Minister Blas Ople, when the Agrava board closed shop on July 6 and prepared to deliberate.

The commission has, according to the Labor Minister, only three options. It can support the military version and blame the entire killing on the late Galman; it can find the security forces criminally negligent while ignoring the issue of who actually killed Aquino; or it can cite a "military conspiracy" without pointing to Marcos or his close associates.

None of these three, he added, will satisfy the public. Meanwhile, "The Agravators" refuse to reveal their official findings before August 21—the one year anniversary of Aquino's assassination and for which angry demonstrations are already building up.□

Jose Ma. Sison:
Post Election Views

Reprinted from *NDF Update*
Utrecht, Holland

(In the following interview, the Philippines' leading political detainee Jose Ma. Sison, alleged head of the Communist Party of the Philippines, gives his views and assessment of the recent National Assembly elections. Some answers have been shortened due to space considerations.)

What is your general view of the conduct of the elections for the *Batasang Pambansa* (National Assembly)?

The elections were farcical as these were conducted within the parameters of a tyrannical regime. The cards were stacked against the opposition. There were over-registration of voters, massive vote-buying, fabrication of tally sheets, substitution or stuffing of ballot boxes and so many dirty tricks made possible through intimidation and terror by the regime.

Despite all these, however, the reformist opposition won a sizeable minority in the Batasang Pambansa. What is pleasantly surprising to many is that the number of seats exceed the 20 to 30 seats arrogantly predicted by the dictator.

What do you think were the factors that helped to elect this sizeable minority?

First, there is the regime's performance record of puppetry, tyranny, brutality, waste and profligacy, corruption, and chicanery. The people found this performance record utterly intolerable. Issues were in favor of the opposition candidates.

Second, the incessant unity of the boycott and participation sides of the opposition in condemning the U.S.-supported Marcos dictatorship, divided though they were on the issue of participation in the elections. The boycott movement served to stress the people's rejection of the evil of Marcos tyranny and gave steady covering fire to the participation side of the legal opposition. But, of course, the participation side of the legal opposition deserves full credit for campaigning well and getting the votes directly for its candidates. Quite a number of the winning opposition candidates are excellent personalities and attractive to voters.

How do you argue against the view that the boycott movement prejudiced the participation side of the legal opposition in the elections?

Long before the sham elections, I said categorically that the boycott campaign would indirectly help the opposition candidates. The unity of the two sides in denouncing the fascist dictatorship weighed far more than any disadvantage that may have been caused by the boycott to the participation side of the opposition.

The only real disadvantage caused by the boycott to the participation side were the narrowed range of high quality candidates to choose from on a nationwide scale and the initial difficulties of the opposition candidates in holding big rallies in some areas.

The boycott did not fragment the votes for the opposition candidates in favor of the KBL (New Society Movement of Marcos). Neither were pseudo-opposition candidates able to do so in favor of the KBL. The Marcos regime and the general run of its candidates were simply detested and rejected.

In so many families made typical by the Aquino family, boycotters advised their relatives to vote for the opposition candidates if they could not be persuaded to join the boycott movement. More than anything else, the boycott and participation sides of the opposition were complementary. This is proven by the outcome of the elections.

Don't you think that if the opposition had been united on the issue of participation in the elections it could have won the overwhelming majority of the Batasang Pambansa seats?

Notwithstanding the boycott movement, the opposition candidates actually won the overwhelming majority of seats through the number of legitimate votes cast. But this victory has been nullified by the fascist regime through massive fraud and intimidation in all phases of the electoral process—registration, voting, canvassing.

Marcos in his simplistic calculation overestimated as a factor in his favor the effect of the boycott movement in reducing votes for the opposition candidates. And so in quite a number of places, the extent of fraud committed by Marcos KBL henchmen could not offset or nullify the overwhelming number of votes actually cast for the opposition. The trick of delayed canvassing eventually had to be resorted to after the voting trend had been established so as to accommodate more fake tally sheets and further reduce the number of winning opposition candidates.

Had the opposition been united on the issue of participation in the sham elections, the regime would have been more vicious in the commission of fraud all over the country. The elections would have been more fraudulent than all the previous sham elections, plebiscites and referenda. It is a matter of principle that the boycott was conducted. The boycott movement would have nothing to do with rigged elections for a fake parliament under a fascist dictatorship.

Does not the heavy voter turnout prove that the boycott movement failed?

I do not agree that there was a heavy voter turnout. But I would agree that the overwhelming number of those who voted did vote for the opposition candidates. The votes that were credited to the KBL candidates were fake to the extent of 25% up to more than 100%, varying from place to place.

In so many places, the registrants and the voters exceeded the estimated number of qualified voters and even the population. Babies and unborn babies were made to vote for the KBL. There is one independent estimate that at least 60% of all persons of voting age did not vote. And of those who voted, at least 80% voted against KBL candidates. The KBL had to offset this through massive fraud.

The participation opposition at least won a sizeable minority bloc in the Batasang Pambansa. And so in relation to it, was not the boycott movement the loser?

The boycott movement and the participation opposition were both winners against the fascist regime. The boycott movement expanded the politically advanced section of the people. The participation opposition was able to draw a large number of votes from the middle section (in the political spectrum from left to right).

The politically backward section— that which is still hoodwinked, awed or cowed by the Marcos regime— has shrunk. Thus, the regime has been fabricating its votes all over the country.

It would be wrong to say that the participation opposition was a winner while the boycott movement was a loser in the sham elections. Being in the minority or even being in the majority of a body subordinate to an autocrat is not by itself something to rejoice about.

The successful candidates of the opposition can be proud of their election only if they continue to fight for national freedom and democracy in the Batasang Pambansa and deliver effective blows against the fascist puppet dictatorship. To be able to do so, they will need the support of the people and all the organized democratic forces. Whatever breach enlightened assemblymen can make on the fortress of tyranny will be helpful to the more important overall democratic process outside of the sham parliament.

As a member of the KOMPIL national council of leaders, are you aware of moves to regroup and strengthen both boycott and participation opposition in one united front?

There are several well known moves to coordinate the various democratic forces in a broad front. It would be easy to coordinate those who opted for boycott and those for participation because they have always been united on the need to dismantle the U.S.-supported Marcos dictatorship and to restore democracy. There is a rising determination to compel the removal or the resignation of Marcos and his entire clique before 1987. The struggle will be carried out on all fronts—in the cities and in the countryside, in halls and in the streets, in the country and abroad. There will have to be a broad united front to carry out this struggle.

Will the just concluded elections and the regular Batasang Pambansa defuse and stabilize the situation in our country or at least help to do so?

I do not think so. The political and economic crisis continues to worsen rapidly. In the main and in essence, the Batasang Pambansa is still a plaything of the U.S.-backed autocracy. The open rule of terror goes on under the despot who continues to be the superexecutive, superlegislator and supermagistrate. The exploited masses of workers and peasants are not represented in the sham parliament. They will continue to suffer increasing oppression and exploitation. The revolutionary forces and armed revolution will advance rapidly.

In our historical experience, so many sham parliaments created by the U.S. and its fascist puppet regimes have only served to aggravate the violent contradictions among reactionary factions and stimulate the growth of revolutionary forces.

Do the elections improve the international image of the Marcos regime?

The people abroad know that the elections have been conducted within the parameters of a fascist dictatorship. They know that the Batasang Pambansa is a sham parliament subordinate to the supreme legislative power of the dictator.

By now, the people abroad would know through the foreign correspondents the massive fraud perpetrated by the Marcos regime so as to have a comfortable majority in the fake legislature. I think that the elections have been contrived by the U.S. and its puppet regime to mislead the American people and the U.S. Congress about conditions in the Philippines. One of these days, U.S. President Reagan will praise Marcos for a job well done in the name of "democracy."

As a consequence of the elections, what do you suppose will be the tendency of President Marcos?

Marcos is aware of the deepgoing hatred of the people for all the injustices heaped on them by his regime. But he is determined to hold on to his ill-gotten power and wealth because he is in mortal fear of his victims. He likes to imagine and pose himself as a cunning master of counter-revolutionary dual tactics. But in fact, he will be torn apart by two contradictory tendencies due to the worsening crisis and the rapid rise of popular resistance.

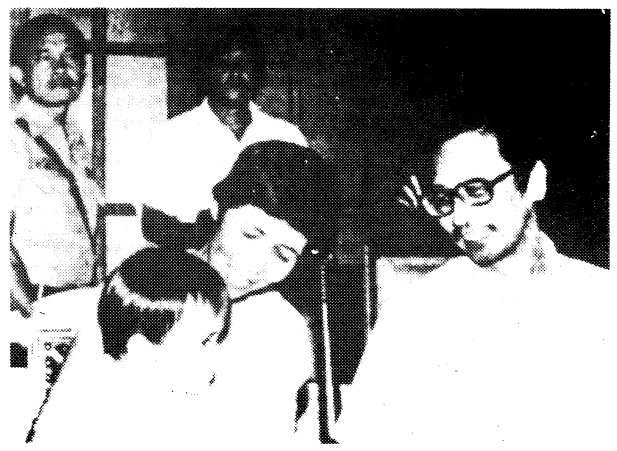
One tendency is for him to take the stance of "maximum tolerance" and call for "national reconciliation." He will try to bait the reformist opposition into a counter-revolutionary anti-communist alliance and into sharing the blame and discredit for the grave ills of the moribund ruling system.

The other tendency is for him to escalate campaigns of intimidation and violence against the people. But every act of terror by his regime will outrage the people and will be politically costly to him.

How would the movement to restore democracy fare under such circumstances?

This movement will continue to raise the level of its consciouslness and militance and will grow in number and strength. The legal democratic movement in the urban areas and the revolutionary armed struggle in the countryside will advance rapidly. Everyone knows the fatal weaknesses of the U.S.-Marcos regime. The

Continued on page 12



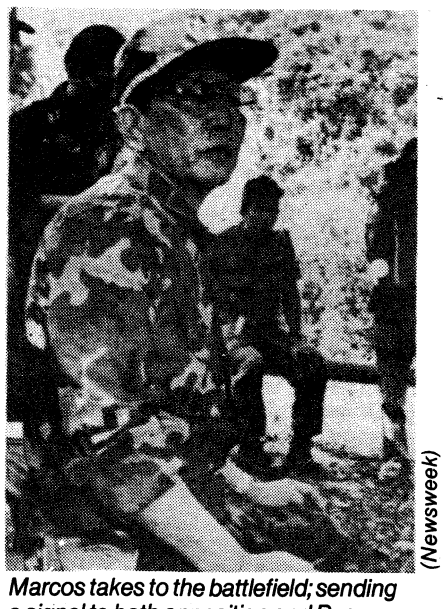
Jose Ma. Sison and family.

'I have always wished for the re-establishment of democracy . . . through a truly democratic coalition government . . . .'

'Long before the sham elections, I said categorically that the boycott campaign would indirectly help the opposition candidates.'

Big Gov't Offensive in Northern Luzon

By NANCY F. ROCAMORA



Marcos takes to the battlefield; sending a signal to both opposition and Reagan. (Newsweek)

It is war in the Cordillera.

The Marcos regime June 27 launched its largest offensive to date against the New People's Army aiming at the heart of the Cordillera, the border between Kalinga-Apayao and Mountain Province.

The regime believes the area to be under the command of priest-turned NPA commander Conrado Balweg who carries an $11,000 price on his head.

Two army battalions, one accompanied by an American adviser were dispatched to reinforce troops in the tribal area. This brought the regime's forces to a total of over 3,000 battling an estimated 600 to 700 NPA

Fighting peaked between June 27 and July 1. Villagers in barrios Bugnay and Betwagen reported that helicopters and World War II T-33's provided air cover to ground troops, bombing and strafing homes and terraced ricefields. Tinglayen residents reported the same treatment of suspected NPA positions again on July 4.

RAPE AND ARSON

But while operations reached their height during late June and early July, Kalinga-Apayao residents reported an insidious build-up beginning as early as April with the arrival of the 41st Infantry Battalion of the Philippine Army in Ngibat, Basao and Butbut. Repeated incidents of rape, arson, intimidation and military harassment immediately followed.

Another wave of troops arrived in the area beginning June 11. That very day a company of Philippine Constabulary arrested a busload of residents returning from Baguio for allegedly carrying underground letters. One was buried up to his neck while being interrogated and all were detained. Five days later, a PC trooper from the provincial command shot and seriously wounded a resident of Talubin, Bontoc for no apparent reason.

On June 21, a composite battalion of PC, Army and Marines launched search-and-destroy operations in Agaway, Basao and Aguid, Sagada, burning huts and raping women.

The battalion with the American adviser arrived June 24 and the stage was set for the regime's offensive.

FIREWORKS AND PROTEST

The real fireworks broke out in Basao, Boscalan and Bugnay on June 27 with AFP troops using mortars and helicopters against alleged NPA sites.

Terrified residents huddled indoors, afraid to work their fields and worrying about their scant food supplies. Fear intensified when a Basao resident was killed June 26 by elements of the 41st Battalion allegedly for supporting the NPA.

The Kalingas and Bontoc, through their Peace Pact association, immediately demanded withdrawal of all military detachments from their area.

"We, Kalinga and Bontocs, are known for being a warrior people," they noted in a press release. "If the AFP pursues its kind of war against the Kalinga-Bontoc people, we shall have no other recourse but to fight back in defense of our land or life and our well-being."

The troops were no more popular among the Igorots of Mountain Province where local officials protested the troop deployment.

"We are a peaceful people and we don't like to see soldiers carrying guns in the streets," commented one mayor. "We don't need soldiers even if there are NPA's. As far as I know, no NPA's are causing trouble."

Government sources announced July 11, that 53 rebels had been killed in the offensive, with only one casualty on the government side. Two weeks later, AFP Chief of Staff Fabian Ver upped the figure to 88.

But a student from one of the towns under siege spoke to newsmen in Baguio and contested the figure. Contrary to reports, he noted, a June 26 clash resulted in the death of five government troops. He asked not to be identified.

MARCOS IN THE FIELD

A team of newsmen visiting the area in early July was unable to confirm the government's casualty figures. Meanwhile, the area remains under tight security. Checkpoints dot all roads leading to the Cordillera and travellers are being searched.

The Philippine press has made it clear that the order to strike the Cordillera came directly from President Ferdinand E. Marcos.

Underscoring his personal interest in the offensive, the president himself showed up on the battlefront July 15, where Kalinga-Apayao and Mountain Province meet Abra. It was his first battlefield appearance in eight years.

Donning his camouflage garb and Commander-in-Chief's cap, he was shown on national television barking orders, demanding progress reports and pinning medals on 15 soldiers cited for bravery. "I assure you that the operations... have given a fresh new sense of encouragement to everybody, both in the military and the civilian sector," he intoned.

WAR RAGES IN MINDANAO

The aggressive posture was clearly meant as a signal both internally and abroad.

With the May 14 elections under his belt, the president now feels confident enough to break from the tentative posture of the months following the Aquino assassination and flex his military muscle. The offensive serves both as a warning to his opponents and a sign to President Ronald Reagan that he can be counted on.

AFP spokespersons proclaimed the Cordillera action its most successful operation in two years. But what the AFP did not mention is that 50% of its entire force remains tied up in Northern and eastern Mindanao fighting the NPA on 16 different fronts.

Military sources admit to the phenomenal spread of NPA influence throughout Mindanao to the point where it currently reaches the Muslim provinces of Lanao del Norte, North Cotabato, Sultan Kudarat and even the island of Basilan.

"Peace and order here is to be expected to be continually disturbed," Region 10 commander Brig. Gen. Madrino Munoz told *Far Eastern Economic Review*.

"While the MNLF campaign was carried out by fierce and well-equipped adversaries, the problem was not ideological," commented Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile. The NPA, he insisted, is another matter and "if we fail, we will not only lose our lives as fighting men, we will lose the support of our people."□

Buod ng mga Balita

METRO-MANILA POLICE ASSAULT ARTEX STRIKERS

It was like a civil war except that only one side—the military—was fully armed and prepared," said one witness of the police assault on the strike at Artex Development Corporation, a textile factory in Malabon, Rizal.

Armed with rifles, teargas, truncheons, and an injunction order issued by the Ministry of Labor and Employment to disperse the striking workers, some 1,000 PC-INP-Metrocom troopers, arrived on the morning of July 9 and positioned themselves around the Artex compound. They blockaded the entrances, established checkpoints and prevented groups of more than three workers from getting in.

Then at 9:30 a.m. 300 members of the assaulting team of the military broke into two gates with only 30 and 40 picketers and overcame their resistance. More reinforcement came and started attacking the strikers with truncheons. As armed goons engaged in a shooting spree, Metrocom snipers at the factory tower began shooting at workers resisting the police forces.

The workers and supporters scampered for safety but five of them were hit by snipers' fire and fell into a creek. Attempts to rescue the fallen workers and supporters failed as the military gave a stern warning that "Whoever gets the dead, dies too." The fallen bodies were later seen by witnesses floating in the creek. More indiscriminate firing was directed inside the factory and in the premises.

The burst of gunfire and the mopping up operation which lasted till evening left seven dead and 56 injured, 30 of whom were in serious condition. Among the casualties was a supporter from General Rubber (another strike-bound firm in Malabon). A housemaid was also hit while trying to close the windows of her master's house near the factory.

The bodies of the dead victims are still missing and the military continues to deny that there were any dead.

Reaction to the brutality was immediate. The Kilusang May Uno, or May 1st Movement, denounced the government terror campaign and condemned "military and police atrocities... being perpetrated against striking workers... as in Artex Development Corporation..." Indignation rallies were launched the following day to protest the brutal Artex assault.

Three thousand protest marchers were dispersed with teargas and truncheons near the presidential palace.

The United Nationalist Democratic Organization (UNIDO) denounced the use of "unnecessary force and violence" against the workers and student demonstrators who participated in this action."□

BANCO FILIPINO BAILOUT IRKS I.M.F.

Jose B. Fernandez, Governor of the Philippine Central Bank, just can't do anything right.

On July 30, Fernandez agreed to a major loan to an ailing savings and loan company. Banco Filipino Savings and Mortgage Bank was forced to suspend operations one week earlier because it could not meet withdrawals. Among the country's 15 largest local banks, Banco Filipino, along with three other banks, experienced a run on deposits in response to the closure of Filipino Savings.

Banco Filipino ranked as the 86th-largest corporation in the Philippines in terms of revenue in 1982. With 89 branches, the savings and loan held nearly $222 million in deposits. Its shutdown in turn triggered runs on other banks by private customers and had the big commercial finance institutions decidedly edgy.

Thus few were surprised when Fernandez came to the rescue and no one objected—except the International Monetary Fund.

After months of serious austerity policies to shrink the amount of money in circulation in order to satisfy IMF demands for a $650 million loan, the Central Bank increased the amount of money in circulation to 25% above the target in one fell swoop.

Roughly another billion dollars-worth of foreign loans hinges on the IMF approval. The Philippines has currently received its third three-month moratorium on paying the principal on its $25 million foreign debt and some bankers expect that the moratorium will have to extend into 1985. Particularly if the IMF continues to drag its feet on the decisive loan.

Fernandez announced last June that the IMF agreement was within "hailing distance." Most bankers agree that those hopes are now dashed.

"It became a very fundamental choice," commented J. P. Estanislao, president of Associated Bank. "Either to hit the [IMF] liquidity target or save the confidence of your banking system."□

Magsaysay...

Continued from page 7

in the campaign for tactical reasons), believing that his closeness with an American official would boost his chances. In addition, JUSMAG officers reportedly went as far down as company level in the Armed Forces of the Philippines to see to it that their guy would be elected.

The Magsaysay camp was, not surprisingly, highly optimistic. Nevertheless, Lansdale and the candidate developed a contingency plan in the event of a defeat.

Carlos P. Romulo wrote of the plan: "This strategy, now revealed for the first time, was simply this: If and when the election was held, the people were prevented from voting, Magsaysay and his colleagues were prepared for revolution. A skeleton command headquarters was set up in Zambales. Throughout Zambales and other provinces, thousands of weapons were cached at top secret dumps. Armored vehicles including tanks, were so placed that they could be brought into immediate action. Magsaysay planned, if the need came, to go immediately to the Zambales headquarters, direct operations from there, and announce to the nation that they had set up a provisional government and intended to advance on Malacanang to depose and imprison Quirino."

An array of U.S. navy battleships in Manila Bay on election day confirmed the rumor that the U.S. was a collaborator in the planned coup. Magsaysay was elected and did not have to resort to the elaborate adventure.

As president, Magsaysay was of course, an American boy. But he played the American boy from the barrio, not Romulo's sharkskin-suited version of the role. Magsaysay was always in *barong* or a plain working man's shirt. A common *tao* who knew his master's bidding.

In his brief reign, Magsaysay completed the destruction of the peasant insurgency in Luzon, encouraging Christian migration and landgrabbing in the Moro south but not resolving the problem of landlessness in the north. Instead of abrogating the infamous Bell Trade Act, he negotiated for its mere revision into the Laurel-Langley Agreement, the treaty that gave U.S. monopolies parity or equal rights with Filipinos in all kinds of businesses.

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A CIA Success Story

Magsaysay Was *Their* Guy

By CARLA MARIANO

A cathartic mass mourning capped the political "success story" that was President Ramon Magsaysay. On Friday, March 22, 1957, tens of thousands lined the route of his funeral cortege. Grieving men, women and children elbowed for a last glimpse of the leaden casket bearing the remains of "The Guy."

In other parts of the country millions solemnly followed the nationwide broadcasts of the burial rites. Everybody loved the "Man of the Masses" and was deeply saddened when his plane crashed. Even now, in the 1980s, pundits and politicians alike are fond of recalling the memory of the greatest-president-we-ever had. Which just goes to show that the Magsaysay Era remains one of the best public relations stunts the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency ever pulled off in its entire career.

What?! Are there no idols left that iconoclastic pens can't besmirch? Unfortunately, fact is more brutal than fiction. And the fact is, "*Pangulong* Ramon Magsaysay" would not have risen to the stature of a living god had the CIA not chosen him as *their* guy, in replacement of a president who had become too corrupt and unpopular to be effective against a threatening communist-led insurgency.

To be sure, Magsaysay had qualities that endeared him to both colleagues and common folk. He was known for "*pakikisama,*" for his simple ways and for his ability to dodge controversy from which, if it simply couldn't be avoided, he managed to emerge friendly to all sides. But the Americans were essential to his political career, even during its initial stages. To be fair, the Americans were essential to the political fortunes of most would-be politicians of the early post-war period.



(Ellis)

Magsaysay seeks advice from Lansdale, Central Luzon, 1951; psywar expert built living legend.

Magsaysay's political career began in earnest when, at the conclusion of WWII, he was appointed military governor of Zambales province and commanding officer of the Zambales Military District by Col. Gyles Merrill, commander of the Western Luzon Guerilla Forces.

Though his tenure as military governor lasted only five short weeks, the job proved auspicious. His main function was to distribute food, clothing and medicine to the towns of Zambales, on behalf of the provincial branch of the U.S. Army's Philippine Civil Affairs Unit. In little more than a month, Magsaysay was well-known around the whole province.

As commanding officer of the ZMD, he also sought recognition for Zambales guerillas as authorized elements of the Philippine Army that served with the U.S. Armed Forces. For former guerillas, recognition meant food, clothing and shelter. The position proved to be the fountainhead of his popularity and influence among his provincemates.

When the guerillas were recognized, talk of "Magsaysay for Congress" emerged fast and persistent. The verbal campaign was initiated and encouraged by Magsaysay's squadron commanders, most notable of whom was Capt. Hilario Hilario.

Magsaysay never hid his enthusiasm for such a prospect. So, Capt. Hilario and three other squadron commanders, with Magsaysay's blessings, solicited from the guerillas a written pledge of support for the latter's candidacy. Magsaysay ran and won the contest with 40% of the vote, 15% more than his closest rival.

Ramon Magsaysay was one of the more than 20 ex-guerilla freshmen elected to the lower house of Congress in the 1946 elections. They represented a group outside of the traditional politico elite. These upstarts' ascendance to public office was aided greatly by their war exploits and the subsequent recognition of their guerilla activities by their American superiors. Without a doubt, their pro-Americanism was intense.

Magsaysay's first two years were lackluster. His participation on the legislative floor was dismal. He delivered only seven sponsorship speeches, two of which were resolutions expressing condolence on the deaths of ex-representatives Gregorio Anonas and Valentin Afable, fellow Zambaleños.

Colleagues attributed Magsaysay's poor showing to his lack of a coherent concept of government. He himself acknowledged this shortcoming and made up for it by staying personally close to Speaker Eugenio Perez, to the Majority Floor Leader Raul Leuterio and to the Chairman of the Committee on National Defense Juan Borra.

The neophyte congressman went out of his way to impress upon party leaders his dependability as a supporter of any of the party's legislative measures. At every opportunity, he showed his willingness to subordinate himself to his political seniors.

Hence, when the chairmanship of the Committee on National Defense was vacated, Magsaysay was appointed Chairman with the explicit condition that all of his bills and draft speeches would be okayed by his predecessor. Such was the measure of Magsaysay's subservience to party leadership, and the leadership's estimate of his capabilities.

Soon after his appointment, Magsaysay and Leyte Congressman Atilano Cinco left for the U.S. in April 1948. The trip was a Philippine Veterans League Mission to seek congressional passage of the Rogers Bill which would provide Filipino USAFFE (United States Armed Forces in the Far East) veterans pension for service-connected disability and death, hospitalization, burial expenses, and limited educational benefits.

Though the U.S. Congress enacted a sharply watered-down law, Magsaysay and Cinco were welcomed as heroes upon their return to Manila.

This single accomplisment in his first term in office earned for Magsaysay a Congressional Press Club award as one of the "Ten Most Outstanding Congressmen" for 1946-1949. With this award under his belt, he handily won reelection in 1949.

When the 1950 Congress reconvened, Magsaysay not only retained his old chairmanship but was given membership in the powerful Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Internal Government and Privileges. His new committee assignments reflected his more prominent status in the party, acquired through loyalty to the right factions.

But by this time, Magsaysay had already cultivated influential connections outside his party circles. Because the U.S.-R.P. Military Assistance Pact of 1946 dictated close supervision by the U.S. military of the conduct of Philippine national defense, Magsaysay's work as defense committee chairman found him in constant consultations with U.S. military officials. These connections helped in no small way in establishing his credentials as the House specialist in national defense.

Thus, when the Huk insurgency continued to rage in 1950, exacerbating the already volatile relationship between President Elpidio Quirino and then Secretary of Defense Ruperto Kangleon, Magsaysay was the logical candidate for the latter's post. On August 31, 1950, Magsaysay was sworn in as the new Secretary of National Defense. From this point on, the Central Intelligence Agency would figure, in a big way, in his political career.

President Quirino never denied that Magsaysay's appointment was for expediency's sake. Magsaysay alone could fetch much-needed military assistance from the U.S. through his friends in the Joint U.S. Military Assistance Group (JUSMAG) particularly its chief, Major General Jonathan W. Anderson.

The U.S., on the other hand, knew that left to his own devices, Magsaysay could not do the job of liquidating the Huk threat. It was not coincidental, therefore, that within a month of Magsaysay's secretaryship, Washington sent its psywar expert, Col. Edward G. Lansdale, to the Philippines.

In his memoirs, Lansdale explained his assignment: "My orders were plain. The U.S. government wanted me to give all help feasible to the Philippine government in stopping the attempt of the... Huks to overthrow the government... As a military officer, I was being attached to the Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group... Although my advisory work wasn't necessarily to be limited to military affairs."

Lansdale immediately went to work. First, he asked Magsaysay to move in with him to his quarters inside the JUSMAG compound. Then, he created a psychological warfare division as part of Magsaysay's staff. It was called the Civil Affairs Office. Its task was to perform combat psywar to improve the masses' attitude towards government troops. Lansdale believed that the "loyalty of the masses is an imperative stake in a people's war as waged by the Huks." Each Battalion Combat Team in the field was assigned a psywar team.

An example of Lansdale's psywar technique was the "eye of God" ploy, used extensively in towns whose inhabitants were known Huk sympathizers. The military would warn those suspected that they were under surveillance. At night, a psywar team would creep into the sleeping town and paint an eye on a wall of each suspect's house. These peering eyes induced a climate of fear all over town the following morning. Other psywar tactics were more cold-blooded, but all contributed to the erosion of Huk influence.

Alongside the psywar campaign, the military's hardware was upgraded and military personnel were trained in modern combat and counter-insurgency methods. Combined with the political and ideological degeneration of the Huk leadership, this direct CIA intervention spelled the defeat of the *Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan.*

The CIA's counterinsurgency program, as Lansdale admitted, "was not necessarily limited to military affairs." It included the implementation of the U.S. plan to replace the decrepit and discredited Quirino administration. Magsaysay was to be groomed as successor. Thus, with every victory against the Huks, came publicity depicting Magsaysay as a man of action, honesty and integrity, courtesy of the ex-advertising man turned CIA psywar expert, Col. Lansdale.

The Magsaysay legend began to take shape with stories that came by word-of-mouth or in the morning papers: the surprise visit to a local constabulary headquarters in Nueva Ecija at 4:00 in the morning; the success of Magsaysay's Economic Development Corporation project; the stalled tank that he repaired in the middle of an infantry attack; the Moises Padilla story, etc.

Some stories were true, others exaggerated and others total fabrication. Take the case of Huk surrenderee Taciano Rizal. Magsaysay's bravery was the talk of the country for weeks when newspaper accounts told how alone and without bodyguards, he had rendezvouzed with an armed and dangerous Rizal in the Tondo slums. In reality, the two meetings he had with Rizal were both held at Magsaysay's Port Area office behind the Manila Hotel, with his aide-camp and several army generals hovering around.

In mid 1952, Magsaysay was already being talked about as a presidential hopeful in government circles. On November 20, 1952, he secretly bolted the Liberal party and signed a pact with Nacionalista Party leaders to be their standard bearer in the 1953 presidential elections. In March 1953, he resigned his post as defense secretary, then went on to win the NP nomination on April 21, 1953.

His electoral campaign was patterned after that of Dwight Eisenhower's the year before. Magsaysay for President Movement clubs sprouted all over the country. Its national coordinator, Raul Manglapus, even wrote a campaign song, the Magsaysay Mambo, which was played, sung, whistled and hummed from Batanes to Jolo.

Magsaysay's campaign coffers overflowed with contributions much of which—$3 million—rumored to have come from Lansdale and his home office. The American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines was reportedly another large contributor.

On the campaign trail, Magsaysay promoted and played on popular pro-American Cold War sentiments. He even had a mestizo aide Manuel Nieto impersonate Lansdale (who avoided publicly associating with him

Continued on page 6

TV, Movies Are Victims

Censors Busy With Scissors

By NENE OJEDA

The candid exchange between the guests and talk show hosts Elvira Manahan and Nestor U. Torre was heavily punctuated by "bleeps" and the comment "Portions Censored by the Board of Review" intermittently flashed.

In the days following, independent and pro-government newspapers alike, criticized the censors' interference with *Two for the Road*. Whether or not the talk show remains live now depends on the decision of the Board of Review of Motion Pictures and Television. The fate of other non-prerecorded programs also hangs in the balance.

Philippine censors seem as determined to delete "all portions which tend to incite subversion, insurrection and rebellion against the state" as they were when that task was first given to them during the martial law years.

The offending *Two for the Road* episode was first shown mid-March. Hosts Manahan and Torre had invited the "committed clergy" to talk about the upcoming *Batasang Pambansa* elections. The guests advocated the boycott of what they believed was another farcical exercise.

'BLEEPS' PROVOKE OUTRAGE

Requests for a replay of the show forced director-producer Maria V. Montelibano to submit a tape of the episode to the BRMPT, in accordance with established procedures. Two of the six reviewers disapproved of a replay.

But the remainder agreed provided Montelibano "removed all dialogue about the boycott." She was further asked to "edit out" the portions where guest Sister Mariani Dimaranan of the Task Force Detainees complains that anyone who criticizes the government is charged with subversion.



(Asiaweek)

Talk show hosts Manahan and Torre; battling a "form of pre-censorship."

The nun's comments on hunger and "injustice in the country" were also to be sliced out along with her call "*i-refuse natin itong gobyernong manloloko* (let us refuse this deceitful government)." Fr. Jose Dizon of the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy was also to be edited during his comments on exploitation and oppression.

Montelibano complied, adding the bleeps to insure that the audience would recognize the censorship. The resulting replay shown on April 30 brought cries of outrage from viewers. *Ang Pahayagang Malaya* devoted an entire page to the incident. Even the pro-government *Bulletin Today* described it in detail. The Marcos-controlled *Daily Express* printed host Torre's column on the act of censorship: "The important thing is to realize that local television *is* censored and that TV censorship affects *everybody.*" Torre ended his column with "The (*bleep*) is, what can (*bleep*) (*bleep*) about (*bleep*)?"

BATTLE AGAINST BLEEPS

All the media attention prompted an embarrased Board of Review to tell Channel 7 that "we henceforth require a preview of *Two for the Road* before we can give you the required permit." This raised some hackles since Channel 7 is known to be the most independent of the four privately-owned broadcasting stations—especially since Imee Marcos recently purchased Channels 2 and 9.

But consequent negotiations with the board resulted in a compromise: the show will be allowed to go on live until August provided Montelibano informs the board in advance of the topic of each telecast. The Board, however, still reserves the right to veto certain topics.

Two for the Road's producer and talk show hosts are determined to fight this "form of pre-censorship," and are awaiting certification from the Ministry of Justice or the presidential assistant for Legal Affairs, Manuel Lazaro, before they can resume live programming.

PHILIPPINE FILMS: RECOGNIZED ABROAD, CENSORED AT HOME

While the battle rages over TV talk shows, Philippine motion pictures—especially those depicting social reality—continue to be victims of government censorship.

Because of its very controversial theme, the latest film by internationally acclaimed director Lino Brocka, "*Bayan Ko,*" was refused local exhibition. This film on the recent developments in the Philippines focusing on government corruption and military abuses, had to be smuggled out of the country to be shown to a standing ovation during the Philippine Night at the Cannes Film Festival this year.

This, despite earlier instructions from Imelda Marcos to let it "be known that there are no Filipino entries in Cannes this year."

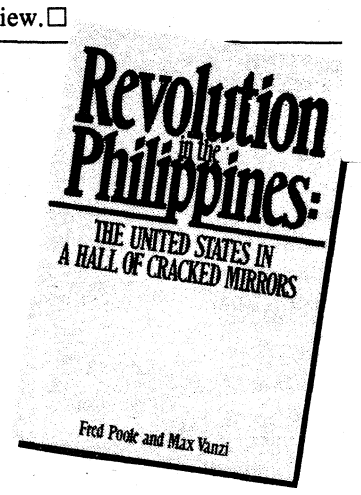
Director Mike de Leon's recent movie "*Sister Stella L.,*" the story of a young nun's political maturation, recently made the preview rounds to rave reviews. But it never passed the censors. *Stella L.* was pulled out of the Cannes festival due to an unfinished subtitling project. De Leon believes Imelda's earlier statement caused the delay.

Stella L., however, became part of a De Leon retrospective at the Paris Cinematheque last June.

Whether Filipinos will ever be able to view these internationally-acclaimed films at home remains in the hands of the Board of Review.□

Book Review

'Revolution in the Philippines': A Gripping Narrative of Terror and Decay



By JON MELEGRITO

The Philippines will be the site of the next U.S. foreign policy disaster, comparable to that of Vietnam and Iran. Although this argument has been made by political observers before, it takes on a compelling quality in the remarkable and timely book, "Revolution in the Philippines: The United States in a Hall of Cracked Mirrors," by two veteran American observers of the Philippine political scene.

Fred Poole, a novelist, and Max Vanzi, a UPI editor with experience in Southeast Asia, provide a gripping anecdotal narrative, from their many years of first-hand experience, of how the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship transformed a free country, once heralded as the showcase of U.S.-style democracy in Asia, to the "Orient's only Latin American style tyranny."

The ascension of Reagan in 1981, the authors maintain, was seen by Marcos as a "license to take off all restraints." As with the regimes of Central and South America that "ran wild in their excesses after Reagan's election, Marcos too interpreted the new spirit of Washington as meaning that he had a license to kill, that no matter what he did now his protectors would look the other way."

The book begins with a first-hand account of the Aquino assassination, "an ultimate act of terror," then goes on to provide well-documented evidence of the regime's fascist character, and the collusion of the Reagan administration in transforming "a numerous and once free people into a populace more akin to the lower orders in tiny Latin tyrannies."

Poole and Vanzi also plumb the depths of vice and prostitution, of a lumpen underbelly that has become so extensive during the Marcos years. The authors depict a moral decay so advanced it could make even the most hardboiled libertine-traveller's stomach churn.

Yet, the two treat these difficult sections with delicate care, without the sneering chauvinism that has become the trademark of cosmopolitan news correspondents. They consider Manila a second home.

"Revolution in the Philippines" is particularly commendable in its fairminded treatment of the communist-led resistance movement. The authors do not feel compelled to bash the left just to establish credibility. In a way the authors are critical of how the Western media have largely ignored the real opposition in the Philippines. Even after the Aquino assassination when the question of succession has become a dilemma for Washington, the Western press continues to view "actual armed insurrection in the islands as what it had been in Iran—a mere annoyance rather than a central fact of life."

Based on their extensive contacts with the left and continuing ties with both the legal and underground opposition, Poole and Vanzi "became convinced that it was the men and women of the underground who would ultimately triumph." But, they hasten to add, "we also came to believe that there would be at least one stage of government, and probably two stages, before that happened."

The authors also attest to the effective political work of the opposition movement in the U.S. The book utilizes sensitive government documents to trace the beginnings of Philippine military intelligence surveillance of the U.S.-based opposition in its attempt to silence any threat to the regime. The collusion among Philippine and U.S. intelligence agents was encouraged by Reagan's open war against "terrorism," leading to more emboldened operations against anti-Marcos activists. The murders of Gene Viernes and Silme Domingo, the authors note, were clearly part of that plan.

But even more chilling is the overkill. "That the FBI should be brought in on the pro-dictatorship side, and moves made to either tamper with the American justice system, as in the Reagan extradition treaty, or turn it against Filipinos who believed in democracy, as in the Grand Jury proceedings, was surely much more than was needed to back up the dictatorship."

A particularly important chapter deals with the Philippine American War of 1898. Aptly titled "America's forgotten war: Intervention the first time around," this section reveals largely unknown aspects of that period in U.S. colonial history where an estimated 100,000 Filipinos were killed. Against this backdrop, the authors highlight the continuing struggle for Philippine national independence, first against the American colonizers and now against the U.S.-backed Marcos dictatorship.

The spectre of another Vietnam looms ominously indeed. Yet, as the authors point out, the outside world before the Aquino assassination had only a hazy perception of what the Philippines is. Some dismissed the dictatorship's excesses as merely "frivolous, while failing to grasp how sinister was the tyranny in the most Americanized part of Asia, the most Americanized country in the world."

It was not until "streets of Marcos' capital in flames" appeared on American TV, that the outside world began to realize the extent of fascist tyranny and naked terror. Suddenly, "it seemed urgent to find out what had been going on during the dark years of the dictatorship. And the question was no longer just the behaviour and fate of Marcos himself but rather what would come after him."

Poole and Vanzi's well-researched work is a substantial contribution to a more enlightened understanding of what those dark years were as well as of the "dark side of official Washington" and its collusion with fascist ideology.

The book ends with a liberal assessment of the chances for the Philippines at this juncture in its history. "That the far left should emerge as the most potent opposition force in the country, that the Philippines of the 1980s should be the only nation in Asia with a growing Communist guerilla rebellion, were the direct results of the degradation brought about by the dictatorship. And aside from the terror, the fact that this dictatorship was the only strongman regime in all of Asia that was increasing the level of poverty made the true nature of the New Society and the New Republic impossible to ignore."

But with Washington still openly supporting the dictatorship because of strategic military bases, the authors conclude that "it was not just Filipinos who could lose their lives if the wrong decisions were made now. It was not hard to visualize grieving families in America too."□

Filipino Vietnam Vets

'I Believed in John Wayne'



Melvin Escueta

Filipino Vietnam vet Escueta; (r) scene from his play "Honeybucket."

By VINCE REYES

On the long black granite walls of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., are etched 58,007 names of Americans who died during the Vietnam War. The list includes names of Filipinos, often indistinguishable from the names of Latinos who also died.

It is not known exactly how many youth of Filipino descent or nationality were drafted or enlisted; were killed, missing in action or wounded. In those days Filipinos were categorized under "Spanish Surnames" or "others."

What is known is that the long arm of the military also reached out for second generation Fil-Ams; naturalized citizens or permanent residents alike; youth of draftable age, who may not have been old enough (or legally eligible) to vote but were old enough to kill or be killed.

Gary Padilla of Sacramento was just out of high school when he entered the service. The next time his friends heard about him was in the newspapers—"Local Man Killed In Vietnam." Cesar Pagaliwagan and Frank Sampson of San Francisco also never came back. How long is the list?

Today, a tense international situation reminiscent of the Cold War has brought the spectre of new Vietnams. As talk of war thickens, experts say the Reagan Administration inevitably has to expand the armed forces. More men will be needed, they predict, to operate highly sophisticated weapons that are now being deployed worldwide and to bolster the ranks of expeditionary forces. The peacetime draft, they conclude, should not be considered a dead letter. It may have to reinstituted by the late '80s—if not sooner.

Again, young Filipinos will be among the thousands who might find themselves fighting a war in Central America, the Middle East. . . or even the Philippines. Unfortunately, the Vietnam War is only a dim memory for the young, and is rarely discussed in schools.

Bobby Muller, president of the Vietnam Veterans of America told the *Washington Post* recently that when he spoke at 38 colleges last year he was constantly asked—"What side did we fight on, the North or the South?"

But despite a general ignorance about the war which only ended ten years ago, there are people who will never forget 'Nam for the pain, the sense of betrayal, the fear, or the guilt that it brought.

Melvin Escueta, a Filipino-American Vietnam vet, is 40 years old now. He was in the U.S. Marine Corp as a combat squad leader from 1966 to '67. Now he works as a counselor for veterans.

Escueta grew up in the racially mixed Fillmore and Haight/Ashbury districts of San Francisco. He joined the Marines to prove "he was a man."

"I couldn't go out for sports because doctors thought I had tuberculosis," Escueta recalls. "I had low self-esteem. So I enlisted."

For Escueta, Vietnam meant the loss of his political innocence. "I joined because I believed in God, the flag, John Wayne and stopping communism. I was ready to give my life for the U.S. as payment for how they helped Filipinos," he says.

"I found out I was a fool in every sense," Escueta laments. "When I got out, I didn't believe in God—no god would approve of such destruction of life. I didn't believe in my country—it used us in a war for business."

Fighting against guerillas was nothing like it was described in their basic training. "I never saw the enemy," says Escueta, "only the dead or captured—and they were mostly innocents."

The tension created by combat still takes its toll on many veterans. Many suffer from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. In World War I it was known as "shell shock," in WWII it was called "battle fatigue." Escueta defines the condition as "trauma which has not been properly grieved."

He explains that essentially, the mind still grieves because you couldn't do it then. "In combat, your squad leaders is telling you to GO! GO! GO! You can negate it for a while."

But anywhere from three weeks to ten years later it comes "screaming back at you." It has to work its way out, Escueta says. Unfortunately, it sometimes takes the form of wife or child abuse, ulcers, inability to keep a job, drug abuse of even death.

"In just a few seconds, someone could have gone back to 'Nam in their mind and relived whole experiences–hours, days, weeks—and then suddenly come back again. Sometimes reactions can be in the form of crying, screaming, lashing out—even violently."

Rudy Reate, now an interior designer living in Carmel, California was in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970. He also never saw who he was shooting at.

Reate appears to be unscathed by his experience and says that his positive attitude kept him going. He found himself in the middle of some of the fiercest fighting when he was assigned to the 1st Calvary. The movie "Apocalypse Now" was based on the experiences of his unit.

"I grew up having to have a positive attitude about myself," he explains. "Like most Filipinos, I was real short. My white classmates were bigger than me so I had to think positive to keep up with them."

Reate graduated from high school in 1966 and got drafted out of college. He was ignorant of the issues behind the war. "But then it became heavy," Reate says, "and I signed up for a deferment." After being denied, he was drafted.

"I never wanted to go to 'Nam, in fact, when I received my draft notice I enlisted instead. It meant being in one more year but I thought by enlisting I could avoid going to 'Nam."

David did learn a trade but his first job was not exactly what he had in mind.

"After my basic training, my whole class was sent to 'Nam. I got to practice my new vocation as an aircraft mechanic—in combat aboard a Huey helicopter," he says sarcastically.

"I was a crew chief on a helicopter that flew combat troops in and out of war zones," David says. "I worked with the 173rd Airborne Rangers and the 4th Division. But flight engineers don't just tune up the engines. When we were airborne—we became door gunners.

"I flew directly into combat. I had over 5,000 hours of flying time—sometimes I flew 13 hours a day. I can only remember one time when a Viet Cong actually came out and started shooting at the helicopter. I don't know if he ever got hit."

David still gets nervous when he hears loud pops like car backfires.

"When I hear loud noises, my first instinct is not to duck but to feel my body to see if I got hit."

David says the aluminum hulled helicopters did not offer any protection. "I was lucky—once when I got out of the helicopter I counted 52 bullet holes in my area."

David also views his experience in Vietnam as a catalyst to his later political involvement. He has been a long-time member of the Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP) and as the Chair of the Labor Task Force of the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship, he recently visited the Philippines as part of an international labor delegation invited by the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (May First Movement).

"Flying into the Philippines reminded me of Vietnam—it's also a country fighting for its independence. Except this time," he smiles, "I'm on the right side—the resistance."

David "can understand imperialism now" because of Vietnam. "But for a lot of G.I.'s, the war didn't make any sense—certainly not in those terms. To die for imperialism wasn't even the point. The war was just crazy—you didn't even know why you were there.

"What really had a big influence on me was the Black Panther Party chapter in my company. There was a whole Black power movement that penetrated the service. The reason I have progressive politics today is because of my experience with racism in the service."

He was called "gook," the name for the enemy. But at the time, he says, that was the least of his problems.

"I didn't even take it as something to rebel against. But one thing, you could never call someone a 'nigger' and get away with it—remember, people were armed to the teeth." David recalls that most of the fights between servicemen were racially motivated.

When David returned to the U.S., he became active in community affairs, working with Filipino youth. "I became involved not simply because I fought for the wrong side in a wrong war—my awareness came from my experience as a minority in the service and seeing and feeling the treatment that Blacks got, and the death and destruction of a people and their country."

It was therefore easy for David to understand "the need for liberation in the Philippines and the need to fight discrimination in the U.S.."

Homecoming for many veterans was often a confusing mix of heartbreak and bewilderment. No hero's welcomes or ticker-tape parades. Instead, some overzealous but politically inexperienced anti-war activists often equated veterans with the Johnson and Nixon administrations.

"I was spit at," Escueta sadly remembers. "I came home on Easter Sunday. My parents wanted me to wear my uniform to church. A car came around the corner. The people gave me an obscene gesture and spat. I felt myself shrinking. I started asking myself—why are my friends dying if all that happens is we get spit on when we get back?"

'When I got out, I didn't believe in God—no god would approve of such destruction of life.'

"I could have left and gone to Canada—a friend of mine could have set us up there with relatives—but I didn't go," he said. "I eventually made the decision to go—I believed I had a patriotic duty—my father was in the navy."

Reate says he took the advice of his drill sergeant: "Enjoy yourself—don't get close to anybody. If you do, when they get it you'll feel negative—think positive." Think positive. Just what he needed to hear.

Amado David, 33, now a labor organizer for a San Francisco union was then a Philippine national living in Guam, an American territory. As a permanent resident, he was draftable.

"The main reason I went in was for economic survival. I didn't have much choice. I wasn't doing good in high school. The army was a way out of a rut—I thought I could get a trade," David recalls.

Escueta eventually suffered from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. His reactions were explosive.

"I reacted violently—I threw my girlfriend against the wall and choked her—then I got amnesia, I couldn't remember doing it. I'm usually a gentle guy."

His second reaction led to the discovery that he could write creatively. He recorded his attacks in a diary.

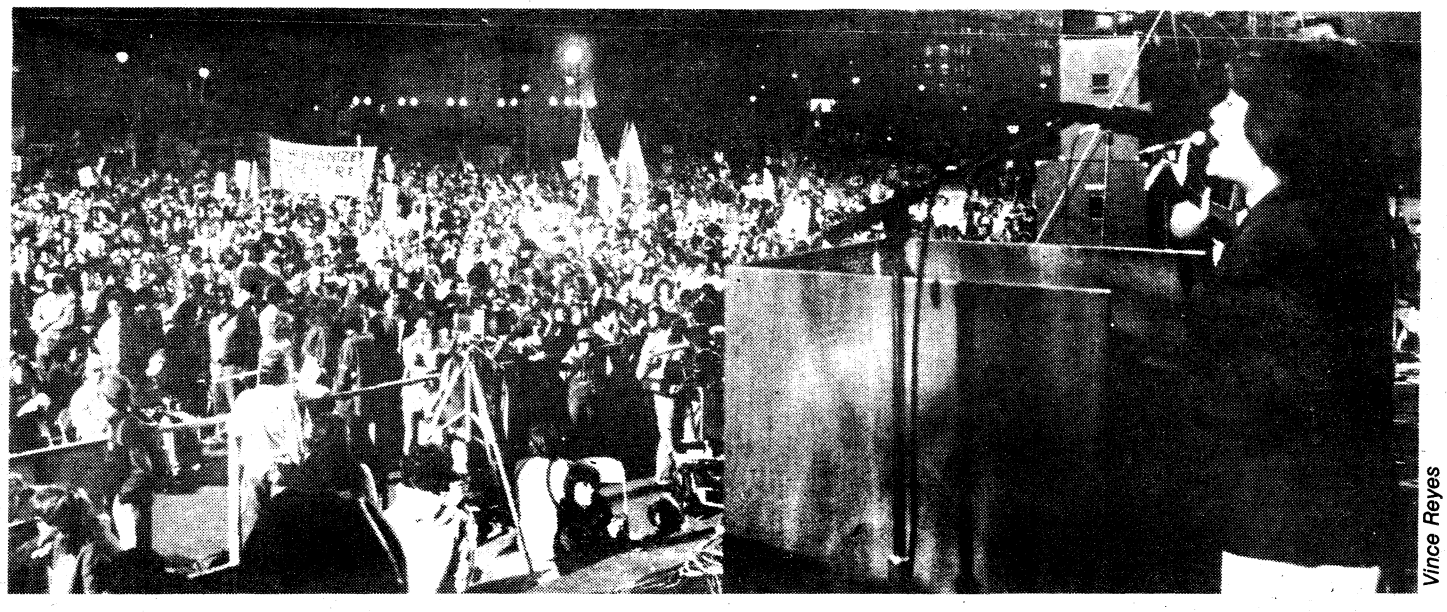
"What came out was a diary of trauma." He began to write poetry and short stories about Vietnam.

Escueta's attempts at a summation led to a literally dramatic public statement: a play entitled "Honeybucket." In it, Escueta captures the physical and psychological atrocities of war. He describes the play as "the war seen through a Filipino-American's eyes—how we were just used and what innocent people went

Continued on page 10

KDP's Geline Avila, National Coordinator of the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship addresses "Vote for Peace in '84" rally on July 16 outside the Democratic Party Convention at the Moscone Center in San Francisco. "We must tell the Democrats again and again that we want genuine peace and real justice... We want no more aid to Marcos and we want an end to discrimination here."

The Filipino opposition in San Francisco mobilized a contingent to the rally composed of members from the Movement for a Free Philippines, New Aquino Movement, Philippine Education Support Committee, International Movement for a Democratic Philippines, Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP), CAMD-PSN, League of Filipino Students-USA, and Philippine Support Committee.



Vince Reyes

Opposition Gears Up for August 21 Protests Here

One year has passed since the assassination of opposition leader Benigno Aquino, Jr. and we still have to see justice for Aquino and all victims of the Marcos dictatorship's repression. Join the protest activities in your local area. Contact your Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Support Network chapter for information about the different protest actions on August 21.

SAN FRANCISCO — Call 415-826-4287
A protest vigil is being planned for August 24. On August 21, a mass will be held at St. Andrew's Church in Daly City at 6:30 p.m., followed by a program featuring Sen. Alan Cranston and Philippine opposition leader Senator Jose Diokno. The San Francisco chapter of the Ninoy Aquino Movement is the sponsoring organization for the mass and program.

LOS ANGELES — Call 213-250-0602
Protest activities begin with a picket at the Philippine Consulate at 4:00 p.m., followed by a Freedom March to the FACLA Building beginning at 5:30 p.m. A mass will be said at the FACLA Hall at 6:30 p.m., followed by a short program.

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Call 202-396-8242 for information on local activities. Plans are being made for a mass and a protest vigil.

NEW YORK — Call 212-592-7517 for information on local activities. A protest vigil is being planned.

SEATTLE — Call 206-323-2215 for information on the planned protest vigil.

SACRAMENTO — Call 916-428-4415
Bannerholding in front of the Federal Building is the activity for August 21. Plans are being made for a program on August 24.

HAWAII — Call 808-847-6614 for information about local activities. A picket in front of the Philippine Consulate is being planned on August 21 tobe followed by a mass.

TORONTO — Call 416-535-8550
On August 20, the Aquino Movement, Inc. will hold a mass. A protest rally on August 21 will be held in front of the Toronto City Hall. The rally is being sponsored by the AMI and the Movement for a Free Philippine in coordination with the CAMD/PSN.

MONTREAL — Call 514-935-6611
Picket in front of the U.S. Consulate on August 21 at 4:30 p.m.

Review

'Green Card': A Brave Musicale

By RICK POLINTAN

"Green Card," a musicale depicting real life experiences of Filipinos in the U.S. opened at the Wilshire Ebell Theatre in Los Angeles last July 20.

The play mixes comedy and drama to follow the life of a young Filipino nationalist active in the protests against the Marcos regime in the Philippines.

Although not typical of every individual immigrant's experience, the entertaining musicale presents a believable composite of the life of newcomers in America.

Carding, played by Dandin Ranillo, is an activist who is first seen demonstrating against the Philippine government. During the course of his involvement he meets and falls in love with a student activist, Luzviminda, played by Girlie Pascual. Although they clash on the best way to make social change, they fall in love while being held as political prisoners.

[illegible] two agree to temporarily move to the U.S. after [illegible]re released, on the condition that they will marry [illegible]e. Carding leaves first while Luzviminda stays on [illegible] finish her remaining college courses.

Upon his arrival in the U.S., Carding is faced with a multitude of cultural contradictions.

First, he is comically brought through a maze of bureaucratic paperwork and institutions. Then the fast-pace of American life befuddles his every move.

The new immigrant is amazed at the way some Filipinos have assimmilated into U.S. society and acquired a new set of cultural values.

Carding is also exposed to the frailties of the Filipino community by his encounters with an amiable old-timer whose kindness endears him to everyone.

He meets Edita, played by Rachel Gomez, whose main ambition is to become an American citizen even to the point of trying to forget her Filipino heritage. Carding also runs into an unscrupulous Filipino restaurant owner who exploits undocumented Filipinos by assuring them green cards if they work for her—at starvation wages. Carding also meets a stereotypical Filipino professional, who as a social climber opportunistically insists that his picture appear in the souvenir program of every community event. And finally, Carding witnesses the corruption and cheating that characterize elections in a Filipino community organization called "FACUSO" (a play on FACLA and CONPUSO).

Carding eventually falls in love with Edita, despite his disdain for her "white coconut" desire to blend into the American mainstream.

Carding's life is constantly torn between his new life in America with its seductive materialism, and his desire to go back home and rejoin the resistance.

He is enraged by the assassination of Aquino and crushed upon receiving news that Luzviminda was salvaged by government troops.

In a strong scene, Carding dreams that Luzviminda pays a visit to Edita. Their meeting is meant to symbolize Carding's inner conflict. Is he going to accept U.S. society or hold the banner of Philippine nationalism?

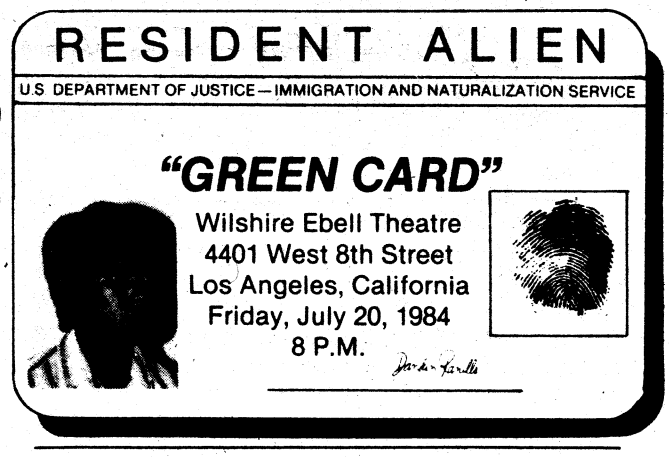
To top it off, Carding gets victimized by a fake green card scheme and is threatened with deportation. But when he hears of the movement's activity after the Aquino assassination and that surprisingly, Luzviminda is alive, he comes to the realization that his love for her and his homeland is worth the risks of returning.

The play was evidently produced to address the political apathy prevalent in the Filipino community. As Ernie Delfin, the producer said, "Producing Green Card is [like] lighting one candle in the darkness of apathy toward the Philippine struggle in our growing Filipino commu[illegible]. I believe that the vast majority of the Filipinos here in America can still feel the fervor of Lapu-Lapu-like patriotism."

Ben Aniceto, the script-writer and director added, "We should feel greatly rewarded if a few Filipinos in the audience will start to give a damn about their homeland after seeing the show."

Apparently, the play was postponed once because some of the actors feared political reprisals. Obviously, the fear has been banished.

"Green Card's" producers deserve congratulations for presenting a cultural program with socially significant content. This is a welcome change from the usual movie star extravaganzas and beauty pageants which have come to define Filipino community entertainment.□



Viet Vets . . .

Continued from page 9

through because of war. It is also a play that calls for peace and understanding as an alternative to war."

"Honeybucket" has been shown extensively in the San Francisco Bay Area. It is often used as an educational tool to make youth understand the draft, the dangers and the horrors of war.

But despite the efforts of vets like Escueta, the fact is the armed services remain an attractive economic option for thousands of poor and minority youth.

"My own brother just enlisted against my advice," says David regretfully.

"His situation was similar to mine. He really can't afford to go to college. He tried but couldn't get into a trade school. He had no options.

"I think a lot of youth face this situation—you're up against the wall. You don't want to go in but its better than running loose in the streets."

David says he really tried hard with his brother. "I told him the prospects of war. He can understand all that. But what could I offer him instead of the service? I can't support him.

"He knows he doesn't have a stake in laying down his life for a country where he can't even have a decent future. But in the end, it boiled down to a real economic decision. Before he left he said to me 'I don't want to work in an auto parts store for the rest of my life—I want to be a mechanic.'"□

Canadians, Immigrants Fear New Spy Agency

By GARY SHAW
CAMD/PSN – Toronto Chapter

Canada's civil libertarians are in an uproar over the Parliament's creation of a new intelligence agency whose discretionary powers could erode the country's democratic institutions. The vague political definitions of the law creating the super spy agency, and its impact on immigration procedures are also causing apprehension among foreign-born communities.

Using "national security" as a catchphrase, Liberals led by then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau last year gave a determined push for Bill C-9 (formerly Bill C-157) which called for the creation of the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS). They were supported by the opposition Conservative Party.

Their combined efforts reached a high pitch in June as the Liberals tried to beat the summer recess and fall elections. On June 28, the bill became law despite the procedural wranglings put up by the social democratic New Democratic Party opposition which tried to stall until the recess by introducing dozens of unsuccessful amendments.

NDP's Svend Robinson, who led the filibuster, called June 28 "a black day in the history of this country in terms of fundamental civil liberties." The CSIS officially opened for business on July 16.

The new intelligence agency comes after more than a decade of revelations of illegalities committed by Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), Canada's federal police force. A report issued by the MacDonald Commission, (one of several studies made of the RCMP) recommended that security duties be handled by a civilian agency, leaving the RCMP to handle criminal activities.

Some of the most publicized illegal RCMP activities included break-ins and the stealing of documents and membership lists from the l'Agence Press Libre du Quebec news bureau in October 1972, and the Praxis Corp. anti-poverty group in Toronto in 1970.

In the early 1970's, RCMP agents burned down a barn because they were unable to install listening devices prior to an alleged meeting of Quebec nationalists and U.S. Black nationalists. The RCMP also snooped on the New Democratic Party, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and other organizations to determine the extent of "communist influence."

A membership list of the Parti Quebecois which contained 100,000 names was filched by the "Mounties" in 1973. There was also "Operation Checkmate," a phony letterwriting campaign designed to discredit the now defunct Trotskyist League for Socialist Action in 1972. Between 1970 and 1977 there were 865 recorded cases of illegal mail openings.

The RCMP provided the Government's cabinet with at least 20 blacklists which included civil servants and residents labelled as "political enemies." It turned out that the RCMP also worked closely with the FBI whose spying on U.S. Maoist groups led to its illegal infiltration of the Communist Party of Canada, Marxist-Leninist.

LOOSE DEFINITIONS

While these incidents all occurred in the 1970's, it is public knowledge that the RCMP continues to spy on the union movement, peace groups, solidarity groups and socialist organizations. However, in the past few years, revelations of wrongdoings have been few and far between.

With the creation of the CSIS, it is clear that the government's solution, rather than safeguard the civil liberties of Canadians and residents, merely legalizes the very activities condemned by the MacDonald Commission.

Opposition to the creation of the CSIS



'The CSIS will investigate immigrants to see if they should be deported or denied entry for security reasons.'

echoed across Canada from many quarters. Protests came from the Canadian Civil Liberties Union, the Canadian Council of Churches, the New Democratic Party, key individuals from the Progressive Conservative Party and at one point, from all ten provincial attorneys-general.

The sharpest and most common criticism of the bill focused on the definitions section, particularly the loose definition of what constitutes a "threat to the security of Canada." While the national security definition includes threats of sabotage and espionage, it also includes "foreign influenced activities. . . detrimental to the interests of Canada" and "activities. . . directed toward or in support of the threat of use of acts of violence against persons or property for the purpose of achieving a political objective within Canada or a foreign state."

Many of these definitions will be left to the discretion of the CSIS itself. They are so vague as to give the CSIS a free hand to probe and infiltrate just about anyone it pleases. Critics further charge that the probes themselves would most likely be discriminatory. For example, according to New Democratic Party Member of Parliament Dan Heap, "violence for the



Member of Parliament Dan Heap

purpose of achieving a political objective in a foreign state" could include both Candian bankers backing for the fascist South African government and the South African solidarity movement's support for the African National Congress. Of course, the bankers would *never* be investigated, he said.

JUSTIFYING INFILTRATION

Other critics maintain that "violence against property" could include throwing a rotten tomato at a politician or attaching a poster to a telephone pole advertising a meeting on a controversial issue. "Foreign influenced activity" could include subscriptions to foreign newspapers or membership in an international organization.

Protecting the "Interests of Canada" could mean shielding corporate or government trade relations with fascist governments abroad—relations which are clearly not in the interests of the majority of the Canadian people—from public criticisms.

While "lawful advocacy, protest or dissent," is supposedly protected by the new law, it is not clear how much of activities such as educational work, fundraising, speaking tours or visits from foreign officials would be considered lawful.

In other words, the vague definitions could provide justification for intelligence gathering through wiretaps, mail tampering, and examination of tax records, doctor's medical records and lawyers' legal files—activities deemed illegal in the past.

In addition, the infiltration and disruption techniques criticized by the MacDonald Commision, are not mentioned in the law, leaving no doubt that the Government intends to continue the use of these anti-democratic techniques. In fact, the law provides for penalties of up to five years in prison for revealing the identity of any past or present CSIS agent or informer.

LOYALTY TO CANADA

While the CSIS will have an impact on Canadian society as a whole, this impact would be felt most strongly within the immigrant communites—especially by people active in movements opposed to repressive regimes abroad, or in associations fighting unjust or discriminatory Canadian laws and practices.

Two particularly frightening parts of the new law are found in Sections 13(3) and 17(1)(b). In Section 13(3), the CSIS, with the approval of the Solicitor General of Canada, may "enter into an arrangement with the government of a foreign state or an institution thereof or an international organization or states or an institution thereof authorizing the Service (CSIS) to provide the government, institution or organization with security assessments."

In the definitions section, security assessment means "an appraisal of the loyalty to Canada and, so far as it relates thereto, the reliability of an individual." "Loyalty to Canada" is again open to interpretation by the CSIS.

In countries under dictatorships such as the Philippines, criticism of Marcos or his government policies is interpreted as disloyalty to the country and all opponents are labelled subversive. While Canada is not ruled by a dictator, "loyalty" can have a silencing effect on immigrants who have come from repressive countries.

In addition, "security assessments" cannot be seen by the individuals under investigation, leaving the door open to unconfirmed and false reports, innuendos and hearsay evidence by either the CSIS agents and their informers or their foreign partners.

In Section 17(1)(b), the CSIS can enter into agreements with foreign parties "for the purpose of performing its duties and functions." The CSIS can use information from foreign states and their agencies, (the governments may not even acknowledge the existence of such agencies) in "performing its duties and functions." This means, for example, that the CSIS could receive information from the Philippine government about Filipino immigrants for security assessments which could be used in reviewing applications for certain government and private sector jobs in Canada.

In addition, Section 17 could include working together with foreign intelligence agents from repressive countries to spy on and possibly disrupt legal activities such as the exposure of human rights abuses in the Philippines or Central America. These exposures could be deemed harmful to the interests of Canada. (In the case of the Philippines, it would be in Canada's interests to support the Marcos dictatorship for the sake of trade relations and the U.S. military bases there which also protect Canadian economic interests in the Pacific Rim.)

IMMIGRANTS THREATENED

Meanwhile, important amendments are being written into the Immigration Act, Citizenship Act and Canadian Human Rights Act. While the effects of these changes cannot be fully predicted until they are in practice and interpreted by the courts, certain investigative responsibilities will soon be shifted to the CSIS.

For example, the CSIS will be responsible for investigating permanent residents and visitors to see if, according to the Immigration Act, they should be deported or denied entry for "security reasons," or for being "engaged in instigating subversion by force of any government."

In other words, with the CSIS cooperating with foreign governments, opponents of repressive regimes could be denied visitors visas, citizenship or be deported altogether. While these provisions have existed for many years, the process could become more secretive and more difficult for immigrants to counter now that the CSIS is on top of the investigations.

Permanent residents who are ordered deported for "security" reasons will no longer be told the reasons, but only that it is for "national security." This will leave them with little information for appeals. Long-term residents who have not taken out citizenship are also affected since they are no longer protected by the status of "domicile," as they were previous to 1976 when residents of five or more years could not be deported.

Says Toronto immigration lawyer and activist Charles Roach, "Immigrants are always more affected by laws such as Bill C-9. If anyone is accused of anything, the particulars of the case should be made known and they should have an opportunity to defend themselves and clear their names. Bill C-9 is a continuance of unfair practices."

Filipinos in Canada joined the broad opposition to Bill C-9 and the CSIS. The issue was raised as a concern of the Filipino community at the First Filipino Provincial Conference held in Toronto last November. In response, the Kababayan Community Centre held a forum on the issue in January with lawyers Charles Roach and Bob Kellerman.

In this year's Philippine National Day, opposition to the creation of the CSIS was one of the three points of unity. A Bill C-9 sub-committee was formed within the core of the PND in order to conduct research and project the issue as widely as possible within the community. PND subcommittee member Bert Montemayor gave a short presentation to hundreds of celebrants. The sub-committee produced newspaper articles for *Balita*, a community newspaper.□

Domingo/Viernes Murders

Judge Denies Plea to Drop Suit

SEATTLE—U.S. District Court Judge Donald Voorhees July 17 denied the government of the Philippines' motion to dismiss the civil rights lawsuit brought by the estates of Gene Viernes and Silme Domingo, Local 37 Cannery Union officials and anti-Marcos activists.

The lawsuit charges that the murders of Domingo and Viernes on June 1, 1981, were ordered by the Philippine government and carried out by its agent, former Local 37 union president Constantine "Tony" Baruso.

The suit further alleges that the murders were part of a Philippine Infiltration Plan by which Marcos agents, with the full complicity of U.S. intelligence agencies, have "monitored and operated against" the anti-Marcos movement in the United States for the past ten years.

Two months prior to the murders, Viernes had travelled to the Philippines and met with the leadership of the anti-Marcos trade union movement—the Kilusang Mayo Uno (May 1st Movement). He brought back evidence of Marcos' repression against the trade union movement to the Convention of the ILWU in Hawaii in late April 1981. There Viernes and Domingo engineered the passage of an unprecedented ILWU resolution critical of Marcos' treatment of the labor union movement in the Philippines, and authorizing an ILWU investigative team to travel to the Philippines and report back on conditions there.

The Philippine government sought the dismissal of the lawsuit, arguing that the Philippines enjoys immunity from suit in the United States for all acts except routine civil wrongs such as traffic accidents, etc..

Judge Voorhees ruled that the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, passed by Congress in 1976, was not so limited, but applied "to every tort action for money damages" unless the action falls within some express exception to the FSIA.

The government of the Philippines also argued that one of the FSIA's exceptions did apply, that "discretionary" decisions which cause injury in the United States made at the planning level of foreign governments (i.e., involving policy level decisions) are immune to lawsuits.

But Judge Voorhees ruled that the decisions of high officials of the Philippines to order the murders of Domingo and Viernes were undoubtedly at a "planning rather than operational level." The judge declared: "the clear and unquestionable illegality of the alleged conducts makes the distinction between planning and operational inapplicable."

He also quoted from a decision in the *Letelier* case (involving the assassination of the former Chilean ambassador to the U.S., Orlando Letelier), to the effect: Whatever policy options may exist for a foreign country it has no 'discretion' to perpetrate conduct designed to result in the assassination of an individual or individuals, action that is clearly contrary to the precepts of humanity as recognized in both national and international law.

Cindy Domingo, speaking for the Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes, hailed Judge Voorhees' decision as a key victory in the long quest for full justice in this case. She stated: "Even though it's been almost two years since our lawsuit was first filed, it is reassuring to us that the federal courts have refused to grant immunity to the Philippine government. We realize that it will still be a long road until full and final justice is accomplished in this case." Judge Voorhees has yet to rule on the United States' motion to dismiss the lawsuit.

In a related development, Magistrate Sweigert's decision in the Freedom of Information Act case brought by the Estate of Silme Domingo to get FBI intelligence files of their surveillance of Domingo, as well as their main investigative file in the murders, is still pending.□



T. Rocamora

Macy's/Capwell Strike

Department Store Workers Buck Take-Aways

"Don't shop at Macy's!" shout salesclerks, stockroom workers and other personnel belonging to Local 1100 of the Department Store Employees Union at their daily pickets outside the department store in San Francisco.

Their strike began July 7 when negotiations with Macy's over the contract expiring May 31 broke down. About 2,000 employees struck Macy's at Union Square, reportedly the most profitable and only organized shop in the 22-store chain, in response to what union officials say are take-aways.

Management wants the elimination of premium pay for night and weekend work, cuts in health and other benefits, reductions in sales commissions and changes in grievance procedures and wages.

The dispute heightened July 12 when Emporium-Capwell, another store, told employees covered under the same contract not to report to work.

Filipinos have been very visible at the picket lines. "We're fighting to keep the union as our representative," said Victoria Alba. "If the company wins, the union's right to exist is in jeopardy. As minorities without a lot of financial means, we need to struggle against what the companies are doing."

She said the take-aways will really hurt the workers. Filipino employees are especially concerned that health benefits would be reduced. "We have families that depend on them."

As of yet, no agreement has been negotiated.□

Simpson/Mazzoli Not Quite Dead Yet

When it was announced last July 26 that the Reagan administration would reject the House version of the controversial Simpson/Mazzoli immigration bill, immigrant rights groups, instead of breathing a sigh of relief, were quick to warn that the bill may come roaring back in some other form as early as next year.

After passing the House last June by a narrow 211-216 margin, the bill was scheduled for a House-Senate Conference Committee to reconcile it with the Senate version passed earlier. The combined version would then be presented to President Reagan for its final passage into law.

However, White House press aide Larry Speakes declared that "The House version is unacceptable, the Senate version is what we want."

Conservatives oppose the House version because it is "too liberal" in its amnesty provision, allowing undocumented workers who have been living in the U.S. for two years the chance to apply for permanent resident status.

The version produced by the conference committee would have to be approved again by both the House and the Senate. Since it is doubtful the House will accept the Senate version at this time, it appears Congress will kill any action on the bill for the rest of the year.

However, according to Bill Tamayo, co-chair of the Bay Area Coalition Against Simpson/Mazzoli, the House-Senate conference committee may yet force the preparation of a more palatable bill for Reagan and that Sen. Alan Simpson (R-WY) may try to introduce legislation again before the end of the year.

"It's clear the Reagan administration is sticking to its position of demanding some type of immigration control," Tamayo pointed out. "But they are opposed to the supposed 'liberal' amnesty provision of the House version. No doubt they want an even more repressive bill," said Tamayo.

Hispanics loudly signalled their displeasure at the Democratic National Convention when the League of United Latin American Citizens called for a boycott of the nomination ballot in protest of Simpson/Mazzoli.

Up to the Democratic National Convention, Jesse Jackson had been the only candidate firmly opposed to Simpson/Mazzoli. Now, Walter Mondale and running mate Geraldine Ferraro, have vowed to more firmly support the bill's defeat.

"Simpson/Mazzoli may be dead this year," noted Tamayo, "but that doesn't let the Democrats off the hook. Pressure must be put on the Democrats to live up to their words," he said. "They hold the cards to defeat the next piece of repressive immigration legislation."

With immigration issues proving to be a major testing ground for civil rights in the 1980s, Simpson/Mazzoli will not be on the backburner for very long.□

Sison . . .

Continued from page 5

people see its corruption and rottenness behind its campaigns of violence and deception. This regime and the entire ruling system are being destroyed by a series of contradictions.

What are these contradictions?

The U.S. wants the Marcos puppet clique to put up a "democratic" façade and blames Marcos for his crude tactics. But the same imperialist power dictates economic policies and supplies the regime with arms that both result in intolerable suffering among the people who in turn increasingly put up resistance.

With the dwindling of foreign exchange in an import-dependent semi-feudal economy, the rest of the ruling classes are mad at the Marcos clique for its extreme greed. The most astute politicians of the reformist parties gain the support of the anti-Marcos groups of big compradors and landlords even as they seek support from the exploited masses of the people.

The worsening political and economic crisis of the ruling system is bound to weaken Marcos' grip on the Armed Forces of the Philippines and the politicians of the KBL. The results of the elections have demonstrated that Marcos is already a losing proposition.

The toiling masses of workers and peasants as well as the members of the middle strata of our society who are increasingly suffering the ravages of massive unemployment, depressed incomes, soaring inflation, drastic devaluations, shortages and so on, have increasingly rallied to the legal democratic mass movement as well as the armed struggle.

The armed mass movement led by the revolutionary party of the proletariat and based in the countryside among the peasants continue to expand and intensify. As the big landlords and big compradors try to extract more profit from agriculture, they exacerbate the land problem and push the peasants further towards armed struggle.

President Marcos made a call for national reconciliation a few days before the elections. Do you welcome such a call?

I welcome any serious move towards national reconciliation on the basis of advancing national liberation and democracy. I have always wished for the reestablishment of democracy and the realization of formal democratic principles through a truly democratic coalition government with adequate representation of the workers, peasants and the middle strata of society.

All patriotic and progressive classes, parties, groups, and individuals must continue to unite in order to dismantle the system of puppetry and fascist dictatorship. They should not be misled by any call for national reconciliation that is merely calculated to endorse an electoral farce and, worse, the entire regime of tyranny.

If Marcos wants his call to be believed, why does he not show good faith for a start by renouncing Amendment 6 of his constitution, restoring the writ of habeas corpus, repealing all his repressive decrees and other issuances, releasing all political prisoners, and rectifying the worst of his policies?□

ESSAYS POEMS ESSAYS POEMS ESSAYS POEMS ESSAYS POEMS
SHORT STORIES SHORT STORIES SHORT STORIES SHORT STORIES

Voices

Joey Maliga Sings About the 'Pinoy sa Amerika'

By Vicky Perez

So little of the Filipino immigrant experience has been expressed in music, that folksinger, student and poet Joey Maliga surely must be breaking new ground.

The friendly and unassuming Maliga has been winning over audiences around the San Francisco Bay Area with songs about the dilemmas, tribulations and ordinary aspirations of immigrants.

Maliga's style is distinctly contemporary Pinoy folk, fashioned after Freddie Aguilar, Jess Santiago and Florante de Leon, popular minstrels of the downtrodden in the Philippines. Like them, an acoustic guitar is his only accompaniment.

"Social commentary is the main focus of my music," Maliga explains. "Whenever I sit down to write a song, it's always to address an issue. I always think of something I've felt or observed that's going on. I find that songs are a good way of touching people."

One of the first songs he wrote, "Pinoy Sa Amerika" ("Filipino in America"), was recorded by Vicor Music Corporation in the Philippines.

"When I was in the Philippines, I'd hear all these flowery things about what the U.S. is like, you get the impression that once you get to America, all your problems are solved. It's like this heaven-on-earth type thing. I also bought it," Maliga said.

"Ngunit sila'y nagsinungaling
Pagka't hirap at gutom din
Mali pa raw ang aking kulay
At wala akong kadamay."
("But they lied to me
Tired and hungry I was to be
I've even got the wrong color
And there's no one to ease my pain.")

UNWELCOME IN LA

The son of an agriculturalist, Maliga has lived in many parts of the Philippines, from as far north as Ilagan, Isabela to as far south as Cotabato, Mindanao. Experiencing and observing his people's social conditions began to shape his views.

One of his songs, "*Tahimik Ang Bayan*" recalls the placid life he knew in the barrio but then asks, "*Tahimik nga ba ang bayan*?" ("Does peace really reign?")

In 1975, his family moved to Nigeria, where his father had been contracted. In Nigeria, Maliga was exposed to a variety of local and international singers, artists who encouraged him to write his own songs portraying the Filipino experience.

"The atmosphere in Nigeria was very friendly and warm. I really appreciated being part of the third world while I was there."

From Nigeria, Maliga eventually made his way to Los Angeles in 1979. For the first time, he said, he did not feel welcome.

"The constant fear that I could be stopped for some minor violations—making a wrong turn or something—by the police was very scary for me.

"I didn't have the right to vote, which is something very important to me, and I felt very alienated from individuals in this country. I have always been curious to learn about them, but they were basically apathetic to learning about anyone else, especially if you are Filipino.

"I just assumed that they [whites] would be friendly if I was friendly. It hurt to experience the rejection. Even with my singing, they liked the American songs, then I would sing Tagalog songs, and they don't want to hear them.

"That's when I figured I'd better back off and be more aware of their notions about minorities."

'BUHAY TNT'

In Los Angeles, it was a stint at L.A. City College, followed by odd jobs, one time as a dockworker, another time as a messenger.

As a nurse's aide in Santa Cruz, California, he was aghast at the treatment of the elderly in this country. But his special sympathies went to the undocumented worker.

His "*Buhay TNT* (*Tago ng Tago*)" is a tragicomic tale of an undocumented Filipino trying to find a way to remain in the U.S.

"In the Philippines, there is a lot of talk about 'Buhay TNT.' Because there is so much poverty, people are willing to take chances in the U.S."

"Buhay TNT/Tago nang tago palagi;
Hindi ako mapakali/ Baka mahuli ka,
Makakaraos ba/ Hanggang umaga?"
("The life of a TNT/As restless as can be,
Always in hiding/hope they don't get me,
Wonder if I can/Make it til the morning.")

"The nursing home I worked in was owned by a Filipina and she offered me room and board, which was deducted from my pay. I thought 'Great! I don't have to worry about a job, a place to stay.'

"Then she started working me double shifts, without being paid extra. When I asked about it, she said that's what she pays, that if I didn't like it, I could move out.

"I felt bad because there are a lot of Filipinos who can't go out and look for other jobs because of fear, so they are stuck with people like that."



T. Rocamora

'NEW SONG'

Once, Maliga visited a farming camp in Davenport, a big housing camp "with all these small rooms and one common bathroom." He found men in their 60s and 70s. "They told me they had been working for this one company since they'd been in the U.S. They came in the 20s and 30s.

"When I visited them, it immediately struck me, it was just like being in a little barrio in the Philippines, all these wise men sitting around smoking their tobacco, telling all these stories.

"And it really made me feel sad, because these people have been in the U.S. all these years, and have never really assimilated. At the same time, they have lost their ties to the Philippines. They were alone and to themselves."

Maliga has made contact with a number of progressive American and international artists. Right now, he is working on a "New Song" album, as a way of "linking up Filipinos with the international community."

"New Song" or "La Nueva Cancion" is the product of a dynamic cultural movement sweeping Central and Latin America. Identified with the likes of martyred Chilean Victor Jara and Cuba's Silvio Rodriguez, "New Song" highlights the plight and struggles of the poor. It is a movement Joey Maliga is more than happy to be part of. □

Buhay TNT
(Tago nang Tago)

I

Dumating sa Amerika
Ang bisa niya'y panturista
Mamamasyal lang daw siya
Nakapormang pangnegosyante pa
Ayaw niya ang mabisto
Pero trabaho pala ang gusto
Maari bang tulungan mo ako
Kahit ano lang diyan payag ako

II

Tagaligpit ng kinainan
Sa isang McDonald na restawran
nasa Salinas kung anihan
Minsan nama'y baby-sitter lang
Hanggang Alaska'y lumuluwas
Sa pagawaan ng sardinas
Kaunti ang kanyang kinikita
Kaya't ng makausap ko'y malungkot siya
At sabi niya . . .

Refrain:
Buhay TNT
Tago ng tagong palagi
Araw man o gabi
Hindi ako mapakali
Baka mahuli ka
Makakaraos ba
Hanggang umaga,
Hanggang umaga

III

Naghahanap ng isang syota
Sitisen ang kanyang puntirya
Ngunit nang makatagpo siya
Isa palang katulad niya
Sana'y mayroong mababayaran
baka naman matakbuhan
Ano nga bang mabuting paraan
Upang mabago ang kanyang kalagayan
At di nalang . . .
(repeat Refrain)

IV

Kung minsan naiisip niyang
Umuwi nalang sa kanyang bayan
Ngunit papaano mababuhay
Ang mga kamag-anak na naghihintay
Sa pinadadalhang dulyar
Kapag nahinto ng lubusan
Gutom uli ang aabutan
Dito na muna raw siya maninirahan
At kahit pa . . .
(repeat Refrain)

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Pinoy sa Amerika

I

Iniwan ko ang Pinas
Sa hirap na aking dinanas
Sabi niya ay magbabago
Hindi naman ako kasalo

II

Sa ibang lugar ako tumungo
Ibang lahi ng tao
Wala akong makilala
Kahit pangalan ng kalsada

Refrain:
Ako'y Pinoy sa Amerika
Hindi mo ba ako makilala
Ang dilim ng kulay ko
Ay di ko pinagbabalatkayo
Pinoy akong tutuo

III

Sabi nila ay langit dito
Marami daw ang trabaho
Hindi ka raw gugutumin
Dito'y wala kang alalahanin

IV

Ngunit sila'y nagsinungaling
Pagkat hirap at gutom din
Mali pa raw ang aking kulay
At wala akong kadamay

V

Mabuti pa'y umuwi sa atin
Kung ganito din lang ang aabutin
Kahit tuyo na lang ang ulam
Di na ako magdaramdam

(repeat REFRAIN)

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Voices

Kundiman

I will sing no lullabyes tonight
Not with funeral marches playing
While the smell of smoke still lingers
Stilled prayers, bruised, can't fly.

Through the scent of burnt rice, I watched
TV's flickering lights
Past mountains and valleys of artificial moons,
Pained girl-scout smiles and cruel hands
launching mad dogs with truncheons and guns,
I saw my son's faces and arms and feet —
Thousands of them
The miles of unsung lullabyes between us
Fenced by the wings of the steel butterfly.
Dust-covered centipedes flying, weeping,
weaving red field over blue,
the sun and the stars screaming,
wild eyes glaring, questioning,
"Haven't we had enough?"

Oh, to comfort little hungry mouths, to stop
the terrible thud of iron on bones,
the throbbing throats of thundering
silence.

With a song, a dance, a kiss, a smile?

No, I will sing no lullabyes tonight
Not while babies roam the streets
of Manila,
ready to die.
I'll just sit here
And cry.

Marie C. Pruden
San Francisco, 1983



Marie C. Pruden is a mother of two teen-aged children in the Philippines, whom she has not seen for years. When the demonstrations flared up in Manila after the Aquino assassination in August 1983, she wrote these poems which mirrored the feeling of Filipino residents in the U.S. in those days.

Eve of September 21st

Sixteen hours below
ten-thousand miles above

We still the night before
the virgin-scales cusp
clasping the same hot-spirit sun.

Listening, aching, longing to touch
the darkened seeds of angry life
falling,
drenched by stagnant blood
eleven years ago.

Now a river rushing reversing
its currents of lava and fire
raging across islands
from Mactan to Mendiola.

Now under, now over, now flooding,
now burning
the bridge in the mind's eye
where your older brothers fell.

(Not now.
Not again.
Oh, God . . .)

- - -

We shudder as stupid beasts
before an earthquake:

Someone, sometwo, somethrees
somehundreds will die

Tonight.

Marie C. Pruden

RED AND YELLOW

By Eli Angeles

In the Philippines today, there are two colors of protest—red and yellow.

This is manifested clearly by the fact that red and yellow are the official colors of JAJA and CORD.

Red, the universal color of blood, has been since time immemorial a badge of courage and the color of protest. For protest requires courage. And only the brave deserve to be free.

Historically, red has been associated with the Communists, those masters of protest.

In contrast, yellow has been the color of cowardice, among other negative connotations.

But, in present-day Philippines, yellow is a color of protest because "Tie a Yellow Ribbon" was the theme song of Ninoy Aquino's fateful return.

But while both red and yellow are now colors of protest, they have different connotations of protest.

Red connotes the toiling masses of workers and peasants. Yellow connotes the middle-class, particularly professionals and businessmen.

Red connotes KMU, LFS, ACT, ACLF, NAJFD, etc. Yellow connotes ATOM, ABA, MAD, SAPAK, AMA, etc.

Red connotes Ka. Bert Olalia. Yellow connotes Ninoy Aquino.

Red connotes the slogan "Dismantle the U.S.-Marcos Dictatorship!" Yellow connotes the slogan "Marcos Resign."

It must be noted that the difference here is not a matter of semantics but nothing less than a matter of perception of the problem and the solution.

Red connotes the clenched-fist salute. Yellow connotes the L (Laban)-sign.

Another aside. The L-sign (and yellow) seems to pale in comparison with the clenched-fist salute (and red). The latter impresses one as more solid while the former impresses one as more fragile. This seems to be reflected in the fact that those associated with the latter were solidly for boycott while those associated with the former were fragmented between boycott and participation.

The participating opposition had adopted the L-sign. Among the more prominent flashers of the L-sign were ex-Senator Salvador Laurel and ex-Vice President Fernando Lopez. Perhaps to them L does not stand for Laban anymore but for Laurel and Lopez.

Red connotes Liwasang Bonifacio. Yellow connotes Ugarte field.

Red connotes *Philippine Signs*. Yellow connotes *Mr. & Ms.* Series for Justice and National Reconciliation.

Red connotes Jose F. Lacaba's articles. Yellow connotes Maximo V. Soliven's column.

We can go on and on but we think we have made our point.

Red and yellow make quite a color combination. Sometimes the colors blend; sometimes they clash. We believe that while in combination, blending is primary and clashing is secondary.

Among the various forces in the protest movement or alliance, there is both unity and struggle where unity is primary and struggle is secondary.

Allies should treat each other as — allies.

It must also be pointed out that the "Red forces" and the "Yellow forces" have much to learn from each other, particularly from each other's strong points.

Red and yellow can indeed be complementary. The proper combination of these two colors of protest can only redound to the benefit of the protest itself.

Eli Angeles lives in Seattle, Washington.

Keep informed of developments . . .

- **in the Philippines**
- **in the U.S. Filipino community**
- **in the U.S. and around the world.**



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U.S./International: **Wicks Geaga, Eddie Escultura**

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Media Bashes Jackson

Excerpted from Alexander Coburn's 'Beat the Devil,' The Nation, July 21-28, 1984

[N]ot since K.A.L. has there been a media mobilization like the one against [Jesse] Jackson. If Louis Farrakhan was condemned to be burned alive at the stake and Jackson was the volunteer who stepped smartly forward to set him alight, reporters would hasten to note that Jackson had not made the specific gesture of first cutting out the condemned man's tongue. Hatred of Jackson has reached critical mass in the media.

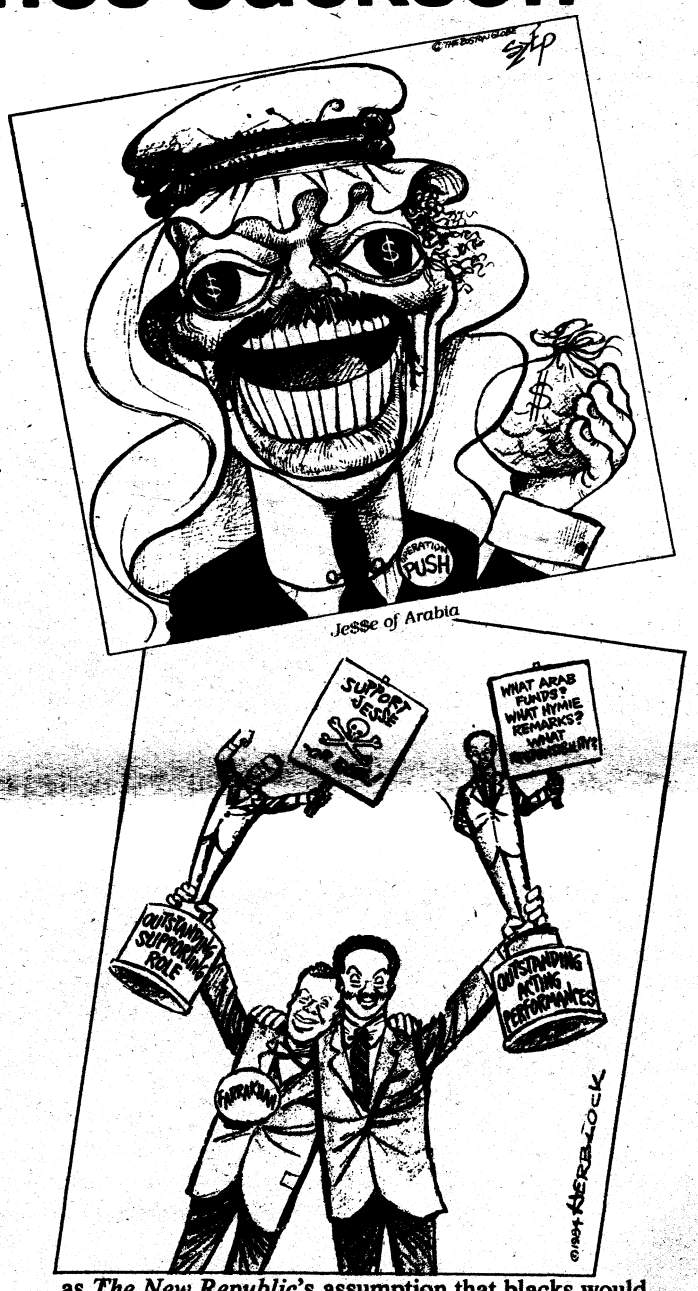
When Jackson denounced Farrakhan's attack on Judaism, *New York Times* reporter Fay Joyce took care to remark that Jackson had not "directly" addressed himself to Farrakhan's characterization of that religion as "dirty" or from "the gutter" or whatever Farrakhan actually said. Thus Joyce gave the impression that Jackson's denunciation was somehow qualified. Her misrepresentation was repeated by *Times* reporter E.R. Shipp the following day, as well as by a *CBS Evening News* reporter the following night. Jackson did address himself directly to Farrakhan's remarks and was probably glad to, since Farrakhan had transgressed in an area in which Jackson was happy to hit back.

Watching George Will and Sam Donaldson interrogating Jackson on David Brinkley's show the Sunday after his return from Cuba, I was—even this late in the campaign—amazed at their bullying arrogance and unconcealed dislike. With white politicians Donaldson is a master at deploying a "bad boy" cocksure braggadocio that is fundamentally deferential. But with Jackson his face had the hardness and his voice the sneer of a jackboot inquisitor.

'WE TREATED HIM NICE'

The final joke is the way reporters and columnists—from James Reston sideways—insist that they have been decent enough to hold Jackson to standards less rigorous than those that normally apply. Now, I don't recall Walter Mondale being grilled when he reported a 1983 income in excess of $300,000, even though it would be an easy business for any columnist or reporter to loose off some ironies at the expense of this supposed spokesman for the poor and needy raking in all those fat attorney's fees. But when Jackson reported an income somewhere just over $100,000, a CBS correspondent (who probably earns the same, if not more) accosted him and announced that he had little in common with the poor whose spokesman he professes to be.

On Jackson's return from Cuba *The New York Times* ran a story about him below one about Roberto d'Aubuisson, linking the items with a headline referring to both men as "wild cards" in this electoral season. So here we have a man who has devoted his life to civil rights, to the cause of peace and the vindication of the oppressed yoked to a fanatical reactionary who has been described by a former U.S. ambassador as a "psychopathic killer" and demonstrated by well-informed reporters to be the sponsor of assassinations and bestial violence. On July 11, when Jackson got the right hand lead on *The Times*'s front page, the adjacent photograph was of (mostly black) prisoners awaiting arraignment. White man's unconscious speak with plain tongue. This was the day after a carefully conceived *New York Times*-CBS News poll proclaimed with relief that the blacks were safe and would vote for Mondale, whatever Jackson did. That is almost as silly



as *The New Republic*'s assumption that blacks would be happy with anyone, even a former Los Angeles policeman named Bradley. All blacks look alike.

The press, it's true, does distinguish between Jackson and d'Aubuisson. When Jackson gives a press conference the reporters are tigers. When he appeared with Castro before hundreds of reporters in Havana to announce the prisoners deal, the first question addressed to him concerned Louis Farrakhan. But when d'Aubuisson gave a press conference in Washington, those tigers were mild as milk, and the chipper little killer was asked in most deferential tones about his views on El Salvador's economic future.

DOUBLE YOUR STANDARD

As the media had been portraying things, it's Jackson and not decent Fritz Mondale who has been reluctant or "tardy" in distancing himself from the ravings of politico-religious fanatics. This, at least, is what the righteous Jackson bashers would have us believe. It all depends on whom you care to call a politico-religious fanatic. For my money Mondale has warm relations with just such fanatics and so far from "distancing" himself, positively basks in their endorsements.

Consider the case of a newspaper that endorsed Mondale right before the New York primary: *The Jewish Press*. Mondale visited its offices, and shortly thereafter the paper printed a photograph of him in the company of *The Jewish Press*'s publisher, Rabbi Sholom Klass, and Brooklyn Borough President Howard Golden, along with an editorial urging readers to vote for Mondale in the primary. Since that endorsement, *The Jewish Press*—as no one who has studied its pages will be surprised to hear—has published editorials and articles expressing toward Palestinians attitudes no more benign than those voiced by Farrakhan toward Jews.

More substantively, the newspaper has stoutly supported the Israelis recently charged with membership in the terror network that maimed two Palestinian mayors, machine-gunned to death students at the Islamic College in Hebron, booby-trapped Palestinian-owned buses with bombs discovered by Israeli authorities shortly before they were timed to explode and plotted to demolish the Dome of the Rock, one of Islam's holiest shrines.

An editorial on the arrests declared, "If [the detainees] are guilty of anything they are guilty of doing what the government should have done in the first place," and added, "We must thank those who are willing to risk their lives to make Israel safe for everyone." Rabbi Klass defined support for the accused as a virtual religious duty, and the paper printed large advertisements appealing for funds for their legal defense.

The members of the settler underground are not the only people to have been celebrated amid *The Jewish Press*'s glorification of violence against Arabs. The paper's editorial on the beating to death of two Palestinian bus-hijackers by their Israeli captors ended with the paean, "Honor to you, noble soldier."

The Mondale campaign, had it been interested (which I'm quite sure it wasn't), could have easily surmised the paper's endorsement of racist terror by the fact of its association with Rabbi Meir Kahane. Kahane, who is a leader of the anti-Arab Kach movement, has been featured in the paper as a columnist—offering his views on the desirability of an Arab exodus, engineered by forcible expulsion if necessary; his assessment that the Sabra and Shatila massacres were the work of the "vengeance of the G-d of Israel"; and his proposal for the criminalization of marriage or sexual relations between Jews and Arabs in Israel. Just in case anyone thinks *The Jewish Press* merely prints Kahane as a columnist, I should add that it has also employed him as a correspondent. At one time Kahane, his reserve unit mobilized to suppress Palestinian demonstrations on the West Bank, became the paper's Ramallah correspondent. His dispatch included broad and approving hints that his unit had physically abused Palestinian detainees. Kahane also reported from a Jesse Jackson rally which, he acknowledged in his article, he had attended in order to disrupt.

The Jewish Press is not an obscure hate sheet but a widely circulated one. Its advertising department states a circulation of 200,000—the largest, it claims, of any paper in the Anglo-Jewish world. Before local and national elections the paper is invariably filled with advertisements for major-party candidates. After the 1980 Presidential election its front page boasted of the gratitude of President-elect Ronald Reagan, whom the paper had endorsed and who was quoted as saying that *The Jewish Press* was one of the "most powerful" newspapers among American Jews.

So Farrakhan is execrated, but *The Jewish Press* remains unscathed. Jackson abjures Farrakhan, but no one dreams of challenging Mondale on his acceptance of an endorsement from *The Jewish Press*. And if, as is almost unthinkable, Mondale were in some manner to "dissociate himself formally" from certain positions adopted by the publication, are we seriously to imagine that reporters and editorialists such as Fay Joyce would chide Mondale for failing to address himself directly to discrete items in its ledger of hate? All of which leads to the obvious conclusion that while the official culture will not accept black or white people slurring Jews, it is entirely undisturbed when the victims are Arabs . . . . □

Magsaysay . . .

Continued from page 6

Under the guise of import substitution, American companies and their local partners circumvented foreign exchange rules and tariff laws by disassembling finished goods before bringing them into the country and then reassembling or reconstituting them in assembly and packaging plants. With encouragement from the U.S., Magsaysay made an agreement—the Ohno-Garcia reparation's pact—with Japan, setting the ground for the eventual Japanese re-penetration of the Philippine economy.

Magsaysay toed the U.S. line in foreign policy, hosting a conference in Manila that led to the Washington-dominated Southeast Asian Treaty Organization—the counterinsurgency front for the region. He was quick to recognize the puppet South Vietnam republic, allowed the free use of the U.S. bases for intervention in Indochina, and blessed the deployment of Filipino CIA agents there under the auspices of the CIA-inspired Operations Brotherhood.

His pro-Americanism was not limited to fundamental economic and foreign policy matters. Magsaysay flaunted it even in dealing with matters seemingly minor but pregnant with symbolism.

The case of Enrique Santamaria and nine of his workers at the Philippine Base Metal Mines, Inc., was an example. They were arrested by American base authorities for alleged "trespass on American property." A truckload of manganese ore which they were hauling from their mine on Bueno Hill, Tarlac was impounded.

Recto and Tanada, counsels for Santamaria, argued that the mine was outside American base territory and that Santamaria needed no U.S. consent to exploit his mining claim. They contended that Filipino citizens had the right to extract minerals without getting the prior consent of base authorities even if the mining land involved was within base territory.

Magsaysay took the American view that consent was necessary and asked for it. The U.S. readily gave consent with the emphasized addendum that the decision was in response to Magsaysay's "direct intervention in the case," and announced that other applications for mining in the area were under consideration by Washington. Magsaysay was given the credit for resolving the conflict.

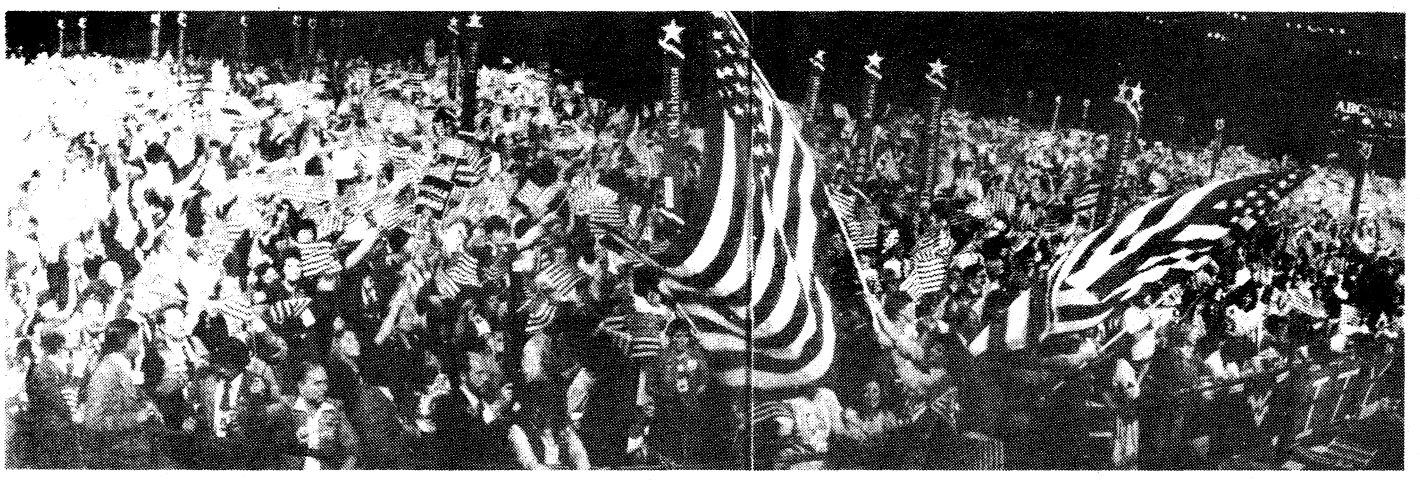
The president was no fool, or at least his CIA backers were not. They recognized that while Magsaysay was unabashedly pro-American, he couldn't be all-American. He had to do something nationalistic. Thus, he allowed the enactment of the Noli-Fili Laws requiring the study of Jose Rizal's works. With his other hand, however, he started preparing the Anti-Subversion Law, and deliberately fomented an atmosphere of Cold War anti-communism, just in case anyone learned anything from Rizal's anti-colonial tracts.

But all good things must end, even if they were created by the CIA. When Mt. Pinatubo, the presidential plane carrying Magsaysay and his party crashed on that fateful night in 1957 there was rumor of an impending economic collapse. His unlucky successors would have to be the ones blamed for some of his follies. Low dollar reserves, decontrol, floating peso, renewed peasant unrest, the Moro conflict—these would come later. In popular mythology, Magsaysay had nothing at all to do with these problems. Death saved the god from baring his feet of clay.

Meanwhile, mamas and papas still wistfully tell their children that Magsaysay was their guy. Which goes to show that while you can't fool all of the people all of the time, you can fool a good many of them some of the time. Which is what the CIA is in business for. □

Democrats Get Ready for Reagan

Convention Drums Up Unity



By WICKS GEAGA

Until the climax of the recent Democratic National Convention in San Francisco, many people wondered whether the Democrats—still licking their wounds from 1980—would be able to muster enough strength just to stay in the ring with Ronald Reagan and the Republicans.

Unquestionably, the convention lifted the Democrats out of their election year torpor and delivered Mondale the nomination with much less resistance than expected.

For the party's power-brokers, however, the key ingredient for winning in November is not simply restored Party pride but the Democrats' ability to show that Reagan and the Republicans—despite their unquestioned contributions in making America "strong again"—have finally overplayed their hand.

"In a second term, President Reagan would proceed even faster with an arms race that could end the human race," said Senator Edward Kennedy, one of the foremost representatives of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, as he proceeded to list the various concerns of his like-minded ruling class colleagues.

For the Mondale strategists, the price for their spectacle of Democratic unity, flashed nationwide on prime time television, was unreasonably cheap—a couple of minor concessions to the Hart and Jackson planks. Three Jackson proposals were quashed: the proposal to eliminate discriminatory run-off primaries, the pledge of no first use of nuclear weapons, and a substantial reduction in military spending.

The Mondale forces maneuvered compromises on Jackson's affirmative action position as well as on Hart's proposal to ban the use of American military forces abroad.

As a result, the possibility of drawn-out floor battles was averted. Mondale walked off with the nomination on the first ballot, with barely a scratch and with a fairly undisturbed platform on hand.

The threat of a first ballot boycott coming from a divided Latino caucus did force Mondale to appear before the group and pledge that he would veto the Simpson Mazzoli bill if it were passed under his administration.

NEW IMAGE

There were no walkouts, as Mondale—by choosing Ferraro as his running mate—nullified the threat issued by the National Organization of Women to stage one if the running mate chosen was male.

The Democrats were, of course, more than pleased by their decision to recruit Ferraro into the ticket. Most agreed that her presence has so far infused much of the fire into an otherwise lackluster Mondale candidacy.

Privately, party stalwarts were especially pleased that the excitement over her precedent-breaking selection took the spotlight away from Jesse Jackson and diffused his appeal to the convention delegates.

Furthermore, Ferraro's liberal democratic and middle-class credentials fused perfectly with the Party's effort to project an image of renewed patriotism and unwavering adherence to the traditional values of love of country, pride in work, and obedience to the law.

By its own estimations, the party leadership succeeded in sounding the main themes for the campaign. New York Governor Mario Cuomo, was dispatched to deliver a keynote address that set the overall tone for the convention.

Cuomo praised "the heart of the Democrats constituency, "the middle class—the people not rich enough to be worry free, but not poor enough to be on welfare. Those who work for a living because they have to. White collar and blue collar. Young professionals. Men and women in small business desperate for the capital and contracts they need to prove their worth."

TAKING THE FLAG FOR REAGAN

While registering concern for women's rights and urging "compassion" for "the minorities who have not yet entered the mainstream," the bulk of Cuomo's rhetoric was aimed at "middle Americans," many of whom defected to Reagan in 1980.

Hammering away on the same theme, Geraldine Ferraro, in her acceptance speech, proclaimed, "The promise of our country is that the rules are fair, and if you work hard and play by the rules you can earn your share of America's blessings."

These words did not create much excitement among the "disenfranchised and rejected" aligned with Jesse Jackson's Rainbow Coalition, for whom the rules have never been fair.

Sounding the law-and-order theme, Ferraro cited her credentials as a former assistant district attorney and boasted that she had "put my share of criminals behind bars because—if you break the law, you should pay for your crime."

By repeatedly underscoring her proud adherence to patriotic, middle class values of family, religion and flag, Ferraro was not merely echoing the official party line introduced by Cuomo.

Her fiery flag-waving was also meant to allay the fear prevalent among the Party's conservative southern hotshots that she would not be able to pull the South in November.

The rest of the convention saw more of the same. When all the party luminaries had taken their turn at the rostrum, House Speaker Tip O'Neill declared that the Democrats have "taken the flag back from the GOP," affirming their strategy of outdoing the enemy in what he does best.

In staging the convention proceedings behind the scenes, the Mondale forces appeared well-rehearsed and fully staffed. The command post was located in a ring of five trailers just off the convention floor. Inside, a squad of 14 "trackers" kept constant contact with the whips on the floor through walkie-talkies. Pro-Mondale figures were deployed and assigned to keep wavering delegations in line.

But with all their preparation and tight maneuvering, the Mondale forces already realized even before the convention that completely suppressing the Jesse Jackson insurgency would be beyond their capacity.

JACKSON ELECTRIFIES

Determined to use whatever limited channels were made available to him, Jesse Jackson assertively registered the Rainbow Coalition's agenda throughout the convention—from the intense platform negotiations to his own momentous speech before the whole gathering.

The party hierarchy had to allow Jackson his moment on center stage. Up until the convention, pressure mounted on Mondale, from the party's conservative sectors and particularly its pro-Zionist constituency, to distance himself from Jackson.

Accommodating this pressure, however, had to be balanced with the need to secure Jackson's independent political base which had already proven itself in the primaries:

'The efforts to discredit Jackson began as soon as delegates started packing for San Francisco.'

80% of the votes in the Black community and over 20% of the total Democratic vote.

Significant as this base was, Jackson was purposely given the floor only after the platform had been approved, thus preventing him from unduly extending his political influence into the platform debate.

Jackson masterfully used the occasion to legitimize and solidify his standing in the Party, thereby effectively undercutting on-going efforts to discredit him. And with his electrifying oratory, Jackson led the delegates as well as an audience of millions on national TV, through the main contours of the Rainbow Coalition's progressive political program.

'DON'T LOSE THE AGENDA'

He did not mince words about the Rainbow's counter-position to Reagan's foreign policy: the cut-off of U.S. military support to the Salvadoran junta and the *contras* in Nicaragua, negotiations between Duarte and the revolutionary forces, diplomatic relations with Cuba and the recognition of both Palestinian and Israeli concerns in the Middle East.

Jackson also condemned the U.S. invasion of Grenada, its on-going friendly ties with racist South Africa, and its attempts to regain nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union. He went on to unmask the devastating effects of Reaganomics on the domestic scene, especially on the country's poor and minorities, declaring that his constituency was "the dispossessed, and the damned."

Reaffirming that the ouster of Reagan in November is also the prime concern of the Rainbow Coalition, Jackson pledged to support the party's nominee.

The Jackson speech, while conciliatory in tone, never departed from its progressive theme. That such a radical political statement could get so central and broad an airing on the party's convention floor was not only an historic first. It also demonstrated the extent to which the Rainbow Coalition had established a foothold in the party as its left wing.

Despite the setbacks in the platform battles and the lack of decision-making and power-sharing concessons from the party leadership, Jackson was not altogether unhappy. He himself repeatedly pointed out before the convention, "It's better to lose the vote and raise the agenda than to win the vote and lose the agenda."

'GET JACKSON'

Indeed, the coalition not only raised its agenda, it succeeded in pushing the convention—and the whole campaign—significantly to the left. From the selection of the first woman running mate by the Democrats, the opposition to the Simpson-Mazzoli bill to strong anti-interventionist statements emanating from the generally moderate party leadership, the Rainbow Coalition has directly and indirectly exercised its role as catalyst.

Not coincidentally therefore, the efforts to discredit Jackson and replace him as the Black electorate's principal spokesperson were begun as soon as delegates started packing up for San Francisco.

Mondale deliberately brought to the limelight more politically tame and accommodating leaders from the Black community as he went through the motions of choosing his running mate.

At the convention itself, Julian Bond was made to present Mondale's proposal for establishing a Democratic Party Fairness Commission. Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young was deployed to counter Jackson's demand for an end to dual primaries, drawing a chorus of boos for the effort. Los Angeles Mayor Tom Bradley was given the honor of presenting the main nominating speech for Mondale.

The party establishment is painfully aware, however, that attempts to dislodge Jackson from the helm may very well backfire. The Black electorate has already demonstrated at the polls its preference for Jackson's leadership. (Coretta King, widow of Martin Luther King, Jr., was herself jeered by Black delegates for defending Young.) For this reason, a full-scale "get Jackson" offensive may have to wait until after the November elections.

PAVED WITH UNCERTAINTIES

While the Mondale strategists are basking in the afterglow of the Democratic National Convention, the road to November is paved with many uncertainties.

The convention undoubtedly provided the badly-needed boost for the party. But whether the Mondale-Ferraro ticket will generate the needed voter turnout among the Party's disparate constituencies remains very much an unsettled and unsettling question.

The greatest source of worry for party strategists are still the white, blue-collar "ethnics" who crossed over to the Republicans in 1980 and for whom the convention's patriotic fervour was orchestrated.

Signs of a continued economic upswing are hardly encouraging for the Democrats, and unless there emerges an unexpected political crisis or an economic reversal, Reagan's chances for re-election remain brighter than ever.

Already, Jackson has resumed his intense, nationwide voter-registration efforts, with particular emphasis in the South. In conjunction with efforts to run Rainbow candidates in local and state races, Jackson aims to expand and consolidate the Coalition's electoral as well as political power base—towards the goal of ousting Reaganism in November, or beyond.□