

CORY HITS A HOME RUN



Cory brings the House down. Opponents neutralized—for now.

By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

With remarkable poise and made-in-the-Philippines *delicadeza*, President Corazon C. Aquino brought a message to Washington September 15-19 never before heard from a president of the neo-colonial republic.

The Filipino people, now free from Ferdinand Marcos' clutches, expect to be treated as equals by the United States, their "principal ally," she told Ronald Reagan graciously.

It was hardly the declaration of independence from the imperialist grasp that people on the left would like to hear. In fact, Aquino very much intends to remain an ally of the United States; she simply hopes to alter the terms. Moreover, it was

accompanied by a distressing willingness to compromise on economic issues that has characterized the Aquino government from the very beginning.

The new President also proved to be too generous with ideological concessions, speaking effusively of American-style democracy which other nations "were reluctant to receive," and praising Reagan as a "great man," "a man it would be a pleasure to work with on issues of mutual concern."

But Aquino's nine-day September visit to the United States on balance represented nonetheless an overwhelming victory for her fledgling government, the progressive forces within it, and for Aquino herself—the widow-turned-President whose grace and composure mixed with steely determination have made her the darling of this

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A Storybook Welcome

Years from now, American political lore will recall how a visiting Corazon Aquino turned powerful Democratic princes into lovestruck toadies; how hardhearted Republicans were left staring blankly at handfuls of yellow flowers, their minds lost, at least until the next aid appropriations vote. It will be recalled that a good time was had by all and that the lords and ladies of the realm had nothing but goodwill for the new leader of a distant republic.

The American ruling circles had reason to cheer. Cory is, according to columnist Mary McRory, a Cinderella story, a political rags-to-riches tale. But really, what the movers and shakers of the empire were ecstatic about was their own good fortune.

They armed and fed a tyrant for two decades, for which millions of his victims were rightfully bitter. Yet, when the new leader came not only did she confirm her popularity and capacity to govern, she also seemed to be forgiving. She was slightly independent for their tastes but what the heck, there was no better Third Force at the moment. So, the powers-that-be heaved a collective sigh of relief and raised endless toasts to the Filipino people and to American devotion to democracy and freedom.

Filipinos should quickly shake themselves free from the hangover. Aquino came with very practical goals: to neutralize her detractors in Washington and their suitors in Manila and to get money for a ruined economy. Since these were important for the consolidation of the new democratic regime against the threat of neo-fascism, it was good Aquino did not come spoiling for a fight.

She was largely successful. The carping Reaganites who wish to run her government for her have been forced to shut up, at least temporarily. After all, it is hard for them to justify why they should be undermining a leader who has struck the American public as the

personification of the democratic ideal. In return for these victories, Aquino glossed over the U.S. hand in propping up the deposed dictatorship and uttered praises that irritated the informed ear.

But what matters most now is for Filipinos to remain clearheaded. In the dark days of dictatorship even proclaimed liberals in Washington qualified their love for Philippine freedom with their greater love for the U.S. bases. The Reaganites who are now toasting the Filipinos couldn't quite decide whether the people cheated in the last elections, too. (The *balimbing* fruit can also be encountered hereabouts.) They would not hesitate to turn Cory's carriage into a pumpkin should U.S. interests deem it necessary.

The Filipino people defeated the dictator all by themselves and in spite of democracy's inconstant friends. This is always a good reminder. Only the Filipinos can be the real protector of Filipino interests. They are their own best friends. The princes of Washington gave Corazon Aquino a storybook welcome. But no one really lives happily ever after. That is why Filipinos should insist on writing their own ending. □

No to 'English Only'

"You don't hear English spoken around here anymore," intolerant Americans like to say about the changing colors and sounds of their neighborhoods. Well, in the past few years a number of states have codified this xenophobia by passing English Only laws. Nevada, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Nebraska, and Virginia have declared English as their "official language." Now, conservatives in California want that state to follow suit with Proposition 63 which will be decided on by the electorate this November.

Essentially, Proposition 63 would make California's constitution prohibit the state from taking any action which would "diminish or ignore" the role of English. If this initiative wins, the door would be open for legal suits against bilingualism and the use of public funds in

transactions conducted in languages other than English.

Many services could be eliminated, such as interpreters for court, police, health, and emergency cases. School bilingual programs could be axed as well as public service instructional aids for immigrants.

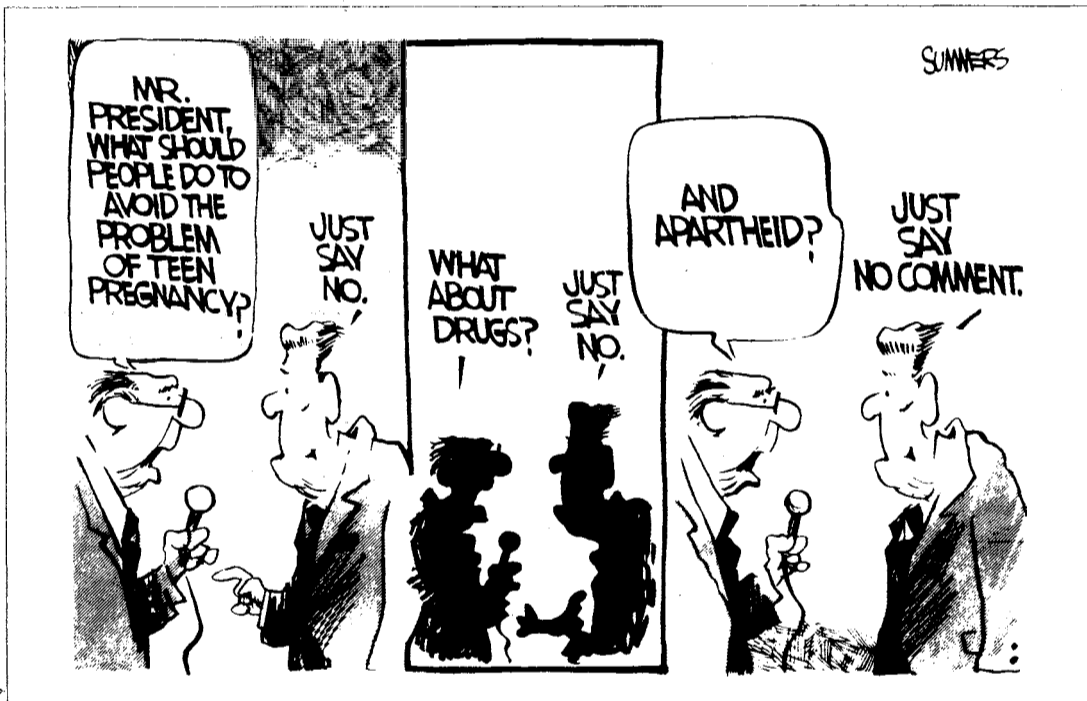
Even private business activities using languages other than English could be restricted. Proposition 63 is not an innocent effort to sanctify what is already a fact, that English is the dominant language in the state and in all of America. It is simply a mean-spirited attempt to keep non-English speaking immigrants "out of the neighborhood."

The English Only movement is backed by the same rightwingers who are pushing for repressive and restrictive immigration laws and more fascistic police actions by the Immigration and Naturalization Service.

Filipinos whose colonial history has made them at more at ease with English than other non-English speaking immigrants should not be misled by such English Only spokesmen as the Japanese-Canadian immigrant S.I. Hayakawa or Austrian immigrant and movie hero Arnold Schwarzenegger. Filipinos who believe they are better than other minorities at the bottom of the proverbial heap just because they know English are only causing a self-inflicted injury.

English Only is a thinly veiled assault on immigrants whose distinguishing characteristics often include skin colors other than white and languages other than English. This bigoted movement is not only after the bilingual services immigrants have a right to as taxpayers. It is afraid that the growing immigrant communities, particularly Latinos and Asians, might emerge as political power blocks that could influence the outcome of elections and policy debates. It is their goal to keep these communities down, disoriented, unassimilated and powerless.

So Filipinos who are looking forward to developing the community's muscle and coalescing with other minorities for empowerment purposes should cast aside colonial mentality. Proposition 63 is bad news. English Only is just another phrase for discrimination. □



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Litter from Manila



POLITICAL ANIMALS

By INIDORO DELIHENCIA

I'm not at all impressed by Corazon Aquino's allegedly triumphant visit to the U.S. It's just natural that if you have guests you must treat them well. But I must admit I'm a bit worried about President Reagan's statement after he met with Cory. "I'm bullish on the Philippines," he said. Now I've been to America many times, but I really don't know the meaning of that expression. It sounds ominous to me yet I can't figure it out.

My editor thinks Reagan is about to send shiploads of meat as emergency aid. Another colleague says it might have something to do with animal husbandry and Cory's agricultural development program. What does it mean to be bullish on something? Is it good or bad? Should I be happy or glad?

According to loyalist lawyer Raffy Recto, it depends on what end of the bull you happen to be at. If it's the rear end, "you may just get a hot load of bullish." Recto swears by this interpretation. That's why, he says, Americans like to say "Stop that bullish" or "Don't bullish me."

Cardinal Jaime Sin was no help at all, as usual. He

refused to enlighten me on this serious matter, claiming separation of church and state. Sin said the only bulls he was willing to discuss were papal and would I please leave him alone to tend to his sheep.

Many KBL leaders are puzzled by Reagan's remark. They are already getting depressed because it sounded like an endorsement of Aquino.

But macho loyalist actor Carlos Salazar, who has studied Reagan's film career very closely, has an optimistic view. Reagan's statement, he said, was actually a dramatic device, a loaded line used in American suspense or gangster movies as a form of implied warning.

"To deliver that line, Reagan I'm sure had to look at Cory this way," said Salazar, showing how to give dagger looks. "He was implying that if Cory allows Communism to breed, the U.S. will see red and come charging into the Philippines like a raging bull—something we are really waiting for."

However, former acting President-in-waiting Arturo Tolentino seemed to offer the most intelligent interpretation. After all, he said, he's had a lot of experience ending up at the wrong end of the bull.

"O.K., Reagan says he's bullish on Cory, but where's the beef? The House of Representatives passes a \$200 million emergency aid bill but that bill can't even corral enough votes in the Senate for final passage. Ha! Ha! Ha! The Americans have given our naive housewife a cock-and-bull story if you ask me."

Wait just a minute. He got me all confused now. How does the cock get in the picture at all?

"Can't you see Doroy? Cory and her cohorts are crowing over Reagan's being bullish. Now they are trying to milk it for what it's worth. Tell me, have you ever tried to milk a bull? Nya ah ha! ha! ha!"

Too bad, Tolentino was in a hurry to go (he has to

wash dishes at the Manila Hotel Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays for the next 25 years). He could have cleared up all this confusion once and for all.

Defense Minister Johnny Ponce Enrile didn't seem to be bothered by Reagan's bullishness. Apparently, Enrile has been studying the Americans' peculiar ways and now knows exactly what they are thinking. For example, he has learned that Americans love pets and are fond of using animals in their speech. Enrile is confident he can already talk politics American-style and tried it on me.

"Right now Doroy, the Democrats and even many Republicans think Cory is the cat's meow. They're all eager beavers who let themselves be henpecked by her. For now, Reagan, who's a lame duck, has to say he's bullish on Cory so he won't look like an ass. But I'm not cowed. I know that deep down, my RAM and I are still deer to his hart."

I must say Enrile seemed to be making progress with American political jargon but if anyone had a steak in Reagan's bullishness it had to be President Marcos. So, I called Honolulu. To my great sadness, the man I herd was already in despair.

"This is the end Doroy, and I'm sitting right under it. Reagan is bullish because he now thinks the grass is greener on Aquino's side. He has joined the stampede and decided to put me out to pasture. This is the loneliest birthday I've ever had. I'm definitely bluish in Hawaii."

Mrs. Marcos joined the long-distance bull session. She was beside herself with grief, and a box of chocolates. I would too if I were in her shoes. Mrs. Marcos only had one strong opinion. It seems Vice President Bush's sudden adherence to Aquino's principles really got her goat. "As far as I'm concerned," she sniffed, "that traitor George Bush is a pig." □

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'The Heckling Doesn't Bother Us'

Would President Aquino's Minister of Agriculture find a slot somewhere in his busy Washington schedule for an interview?

"Why not now?" replied the easy-going Ramon Mitra. "Let's go have coffee."

Mitra, one of the cabinet members accompanying Aquino to the U.S., is also one of three officials she appointed to negotiate a ceasefire with representatives of the National Democratic Front. The NDF is represented in the talks by Satur Ocampo and Antonio Zumel. Given the rumors and contradictory reports, the AK wanted to know from Mitra himself just how the government regarded the current state of the negotiations.

A former journalist and a senator when Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law, Mitra was one of the first to be rounded up and imprisoned. He was held in solitary confinement for three months.

Low-key and speaking in a slightly flat voice, Mitra comes across as a man not easily ruffled—the ideal negotiator. The distinguished look lent by his full-faced gray beard clashes nicely with his casual style.

The minister, AK's Nancy Rocamora and Ruben Cusipag of the Toronto-based *Balita* wended their way through the crowded lobby of the Madison Hotel where President Aquino's party was headquartered during their Washington stay. The interview was held at the hotel's posh coffee shop where the three managed to annoy the waitress by ordering only coffee and mineral water.

AK: Is the government deliberately trying to get things settled with the

MNLF and with Balweg first before settling with the NDF?

RM: No, there is nothing deliberate about it. The government is going about this in the hope of being able to settle everything, whichever comes first. You know, the President's gesture of releasing political prisoners was intended to invite all of the dissidents to abandon their protest and join the government.

How would the talks between Aquino and Reagan affect the peace talks with the NDF?

I don't know how it will affect them.

With the U.S. formally declaring support for Aquino's approach, will the talks make more progress?

You know before we left, Satur was very critical of the President's wish to have an immediate ceasefire and he was tying this up with the U.S. visit. Satur was saying that Mrs. Aquino probably wanted the ceasefire to be her "baon" when she comes to Washington. But the reason she was very specific about her wish for a ceasefire before anything else, was because without it any action by the armed forces could be interpreted as aggressive.

Why did she want a ceasefire before her trip to the U.S.?

She was concerned that if she orders a change in the government's position when she returns it would be misinterpreted as the result of U.S. pressure—even if the change had been contemplated before our trip.

How critical then was the NDF's rejection of the 30-day national ceasefire?

Was that a setback for you?

Yes, it was. They know how badly the government wants the ceasefire, to settle this before moving on to any other matter. We made Satur and Tony understand that if we cannot settle this matter, we cannot settle anything else. What the President wants is to stop brothers shooting at one another, to stop the killings immediately and then talk about the mechanics later on.

So what was the reasoning behind the NDF's rejection?

I did not understand it either. I know they were insisting that before hostilities stop, we should first talk about the conditions that should prevail during the ceasefire. But there were many other issues they brought in. These included, the setting up of their headquarters, the permanent conference, the transferability of the identification cards

Are these objectionable requests?

Well, some of these would indirectly afford them the status of belligerency.

What's the difference between a rebel and a belligerent?

A belligerent is entitled under international law to be treated like a prisoner of war, among other things, and not as the rebels that they are, not as a threat to the government.

But there's a state of war. Enrile has been saying there is war out there.

No. This is an internal matter. It's a police matter.

That's the government's position? That this is a police matter rather than a state



N. Rocamora

of war?

Yes. Yes.

So, what conditions would the government agree to?

The government wants an order from both sides to stop all the killings. Then let's talk about all the details. Even this position of the government is not firm, it is negotiable, and the definition of their status can be discussed.

Could the NPA continue to bear arms as long as they weren't shooting?

Yes. Surrendering arms was not among the conditions we asked. None of us in the government panel considered that.

I think that none of us ever brought this up because there are those who believe that the right to bear arms is a right of every citizen of a free country. Bearing arms is not the same as carrying your guns around. People who carry their guns around, get into trouble. But if it's for protection, you keep your guns. You go to the wealthy "villages" in Manila, there is not one house there that does not have a gun. I'm sure of that. But if they feel that the government is able to provide them protection, then they won't need those guns anymore. Obviously the people in those "villages" still believe that the government cannot provide them protection, that's why they keep guns. No, the surrender of NPA arms is not a pre-condition for negotiations.

This identification card transferability, is that the same issue as the safe conduct passes?

The safe conduct passes are not the same as the identification card of their staff members. They don't want their names in there. That gets to be very difficult, because you can just pass it on to anybody. But we just want to give protection to those who are involved in the negotiations, that's all. We don't want IDs passed around to anyone.

The NDF negotiators said the government wanted to disarm their bodyguards, that their security was in question. Therefore, without the guarantee of safety it's hard for them to on with the talks.

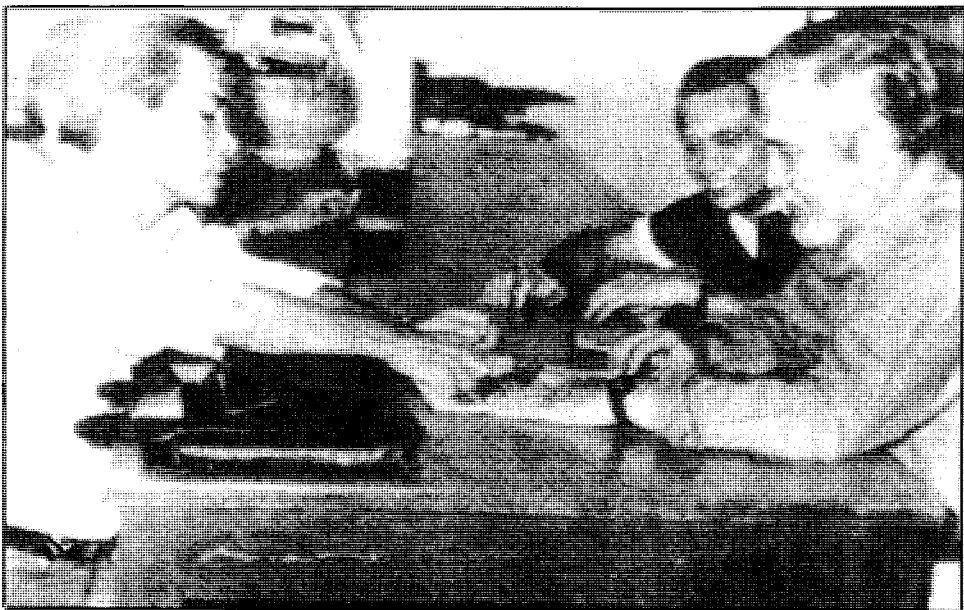
I already agreed that the bodyguards would not be bothered, they would not be searched or followed. So, whether they carry guns or not should not be discussed anymore. I only know that they would not be searched, and they have not been searched. They would not be followed, and they have not been followed.

The NDF side said the government broke the agreement on safe conduct passes. Is this true?

In the first meeting, I told them about our definition of a "safe conduct pass." This safe conduct pass would last for as long as we were talking, and that this will cover them wherever they are found. But then, they said in the press that General Ramos said it was only good for 30 days and that the NDF negotiators would have to state where they came from and where they are going. So I called up Ramos and said that's not the government position. The position is that this is to last until the end of the talks and that it will apply

Continued on page 14

NDF Offers Quick Truce



Negotiators from both sides: impasse could be broken.

New York Times

said: "The president has been drawn to rely on the military for support, and it seems the liberals in her government are losing by default. Such a drift does not work in favor of the prospects for achieving a comprehensive political settlement."

Ocampo said the military has portrayed the New People's Army as being on the offensive since March "while they have been in a defensive position."

"This is not true. I don't know how we can deliver that message to the president," Ocampo said in the wake of a Defense Ministry report alleging that the casualty ratio is now 1:1 compared to 2:1 favoring the military a few months ago. The military also alleges that the NPA has dramatically increased its territorial influence and membership.

Aquino had refused further negotiations if the rebels would not agree to the immediate 30-day ceasefire she asked for. The NDF balked at the offer and demanded the dismantling of the Civilian Home Defense Forces, the paramilitary units that have been responsible for a large number of abuses; the disarming of private armies; and the separation of local police forces from central military command.

The recent NDF counter-offer seemed to indicate a softening of its position. It had indicated that it could not accept a ceasefire short of a comprehensive political settlement with the government, an approach that would surely lead to an impasse and give militarists the moral ground for an offensive.

There was no immediate official reply to the recent offer from the government. But Aquino's executive secretary Joker Arroyo said the rebel offer was "a welcome proposal" that "can save lives." □

Zumel, the front said its proposal "will ensure the prevention, or at least the reduction of violations and their bloody consequences."

The proposal came on the heels of intensified pressures from conservative cabinet officials for the President to take tougher action against the rebels.

Presidential spokesman Teodoro Benigno told reporters that notwithstanding the pressures, the President remained committed to exhausting all peaceful means to end the conflict.

The NDF offer appeared to be a last ditch effort on its part to rescue the flagging peace talks and regain the initiative after its refusal of the government's "take it or leave it" 30-day proposal was used as ammunition against the talks by military hard-liners and political rightwingers.

In an interview with the *New York Times*, NDF chief negotiator Ocampo

The National Democratic Front offered President Corazon Aquino shortly after she returned from the U.S., a "temporary nationwide ceasefire of 30 days or more" if her government is amenable to certain safeguards.

Earlier, on September 14, the front rejected Aquino's call for an immediate 30-day ceasefire for reasons it now describes as "dangerous because it could be so easily violated."

In its most recent proposal, the front suggested an immediate halt to the fighting with specific mechanisms and safeguards for the ceasefire's implementation. Among the safeguards it proposed are committees on national, regional and provincial levels to monitor and supervise the ceasefire and arbitrate disputes arising from violations.

In a statement signed by NDF negotiators Satur Ocampo and Antonio

Visit Had 'Plain Folks' Style

It wasn't just that President Corazon Aquino travelled with only two suitcases as opposed to Imelda Marcos' 200 during her husband's state visit of 1982. Or that Aquino spent a mere \$106.40 during her "shopping spree" in New York. Everywhere the contrasts between the Aquino and Marcos visits stood out in sharp relief.

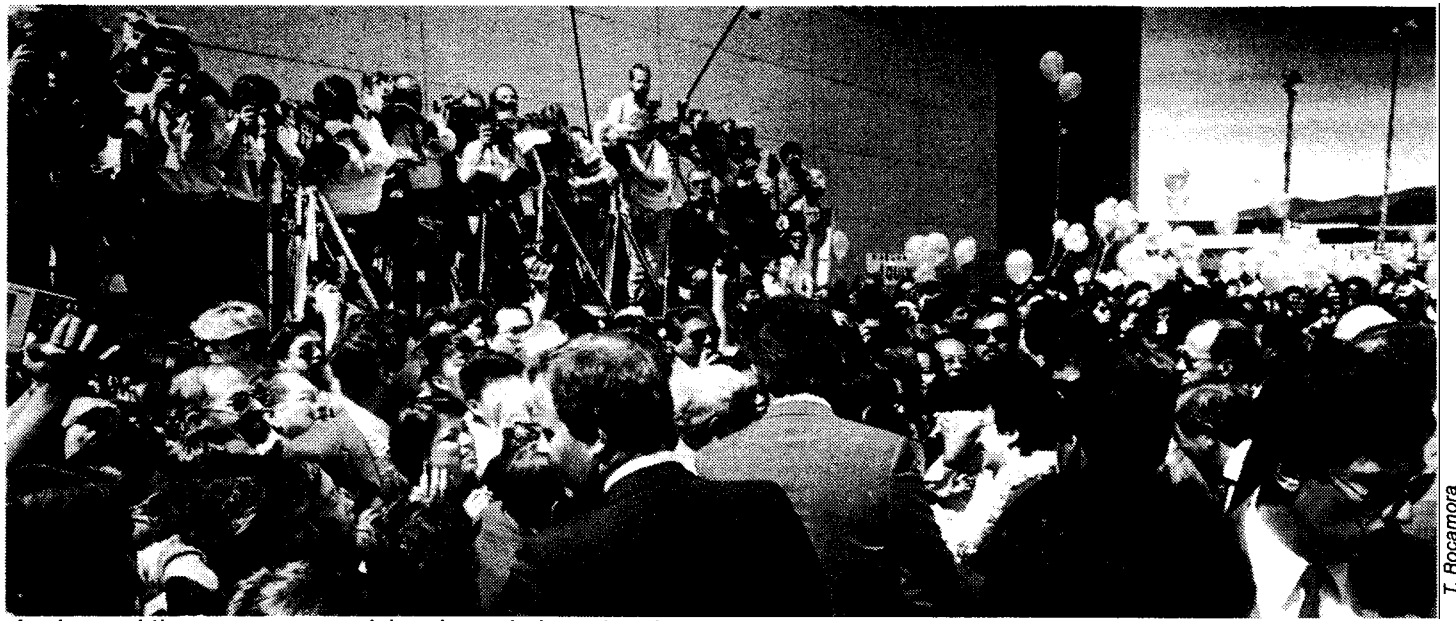
To be sure, Secret Service, Treasury Department agents and local police combined forces to form a security network for the new president "like the layers of an onion," as they put it in San Francisco. But refreshingly absent from the scene was the phalanx of plainclothes thugs, their hair clipped military style, their barong Tagalogs bulging at the hip, that accompanied Ferdinand Marcos everywhere in chauffeur-driven limousines.

Correspondingly, there was no effort made to shield the new president from an awareness of her opposition—what little there was. The Marcos agents had been bent not only on keeping the despot safe, but keeping him blithely unaware of the extent to which he was disliked. If this meant changing motorcade routes or—as in Marcos' 1980 visit to Honolulu when a Philippine plainclothesman took a flying leap into a well-positioned opposition banner to protect the dictator from seeing it—anything that would pass muster with the U.S. police, they did it.

REAL PRESS

Aquino, on the other hand, not only knew of the 100 or so virulent oppositionists outside her last stop in San Francisco, she referred to them in her speech. "Do not be misled or discouraged by the antics and importunings of a handful of malcontents in Manila," she warned. "Or those of their ilk demonstrating outside this hall tonight."

Meanwhile, the Philippine press that covered the Aquino visit consisted of real working scribes all the way. Gone was the gaggle of reporter-security assets who



Aquino and the press: no special perks and glossy handouts.

used their credentials as cover. The scores of men in the blue uniforms of the National Media Production Center that arrived with the Marcoses to make films and books on the visit were nowhere to be seen. The mere two accompanying the Aquino entourage reflected the drastic cut in the NMPC whose print function has been eliminated altogether.

COST-EFFICIENCY

Equally noticeable was the absence of sycophancy within the press corps. While some might have been ardent Cory fans, the majority came across as straightforward professionals interested in getting a story, not in making excuses for their president. There were critics, too. Some had a noticeable left perspective, but some were simple mavericks. Most noteworthy in this department was veteran Luis Beltran who grumbled, "The problem with the former regime was you couldn't get the officials to open their mouths; the problem with this one is you can't get them to shut up."

Cost-efficiency characterized the methods of the Aquino trip's organizers. The Washington Embassy and consulates in

the cities she visited were staffed by troops of volunteers, not foreign service officers flown in from as far away as Saudi Arabia and housed at government expense. Press rooms were equipped with borrowed typewriters, most of them manuals and some barely usable, rather than fancy rented electrics.

Information packets consisted of the President's speeches to date, her schedule and curriculum vitae, and several backgrounders on the Philippine economy—all xeroxed. A modest printed brochure reproducing articles about Aquino was included. It was a far cry from the packet of glossy color brochures churned out by the NMPC, printed in Hong Kong and liberally distributed, which extolled the virtues of the Marcos regime and individual family members.

ACCESSIBLE

Most telling of all was the overall openness and accessibility of the Aquino entourage. Without the bands of thugs, one could walk over to a cabinet minister and say, "Excuse me, sir (or ma'am), may I ask you a question?" and the answer was

inevitably, "Yes." Unlike the Marcos regime with its show of pomp and circumstance, members of the Aquino party from the President on down came across as dignified people with important jobs, but "just folks" nonetheless.

That point was illustrated most vividly when six members of the cabinet along with government Tanodbayan Raul Gonzales held an open forum with the Washington, D.C. Filipino community. "This is a somewhat unusual situation," joked Commerce and Industry Minister Jose Concepcion, "We don't hold open cabinet meetings back home, but here we are doing it in Washington."

Concepcion and Gonzales, together with National Economic and Development Authority chief Solita Monsod, Agriculture Minister Ramon Mitra, presidential spokesman Rene Saguisag, Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister Leticia Ramos Shahani and Audit Minister Teofisto Guingona then proceeded with a candid discussion of the most pressing issues confronting their ministries and their plans for the future.

"It makes you proud again to be a Filipino," said one observer. □ NFR

Reporter's Notebook

By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

Word has it around Washington that a couple of dignitaries are on the verge of falling in love with Philippine President Corazon Aquino if not hopelessly over the brink. Secretary of State George Shultz greeted her on the grounds of the Washington Monument by pulling a yellow handkerchief from his breast pocket.

"It's amazing to see the stolid and sphinxlike Shultz acting like a teenager," remarked one official involved in the planning of the visit. Apparently the Secretary of State insisted on arranging everything for the party he hosted for the Philippine President entirely by himself. This spilled over even to the flowers for her receptions and speaking engagements.

Speaking of flowers, House Majority Leader Jim Wright (D-Tex.) is reported to have something of a crush on the lady himself. At the last minute, Wright decided to order up 200 yellow roses from Texas to adorn Shultz' party for Aquino.

Chief of Protocol Selwa Roosevelt suggested to the Majority Leader that flowers from a local florist might do just as well—it's the thought that counts. Then too, aware of the Secretary of State's preoccupation with handling the details himself, she added the Shultz affair might not be the best place to hand them out.

At Roosevelt's suggestion, Wright thus passed out the flowers the next morning as boutonnières to his colleagues in Congress. Two hundred senators and congresspersons filed into the chamber with yellow roses pinned to their lapels in an expression of support for Aquino.

But if anybody is crazy about Corazon Aquino, it is Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar (R-Ind.). Lugar sat through her speech to the joint session of Congress with an unblinking look of adoration on his face. One might have thought he was in



AK's Nancy Rocamora getting answers from economic planning minister Solita Monsod (left).

church. This was all the more noticeable because just a few seats away sat the sour-faced Senate Majority leader Robert Dole (R-Kan.). While the audience interrupted the address 12 different times with enthusiastic applause, Dole gave his thigh a few perfunctory slaps each time and returned to his glower.

Meanwhile, Shultz has a couple of apologies to make over the handout prepared by the State Department on the various members of the Aquino party. The Philippine press corps was in an uproar when it discovered that the concluding paragraph about the President noted, "Aquino, 53, enjoys knitting, cooking and gardening."

Ace wisecracker-columnist Luis Beltran got off one of his best while reporters were being briefed by a State

Department official on the meeting between Reagan and Aquino. Finance Minister Jaime Ongpin and Treasury Secretary James Baker had earlier signed an agreement for \$150 million in U.S. aid to be transmitted to the Philippines. But it was money that had been promised under the Marcos regime, which most of the press corps knew.

Officials, however, continued to spout figures on the amount of aid to the Aquino government being sent this year. Reporters in turn kept asking just what, if anything, was new. They pointed repeatedly that the only addition above what had been promised to Marcos was the \$10 million in medical aid to the military announced that day in the Rose Garden.

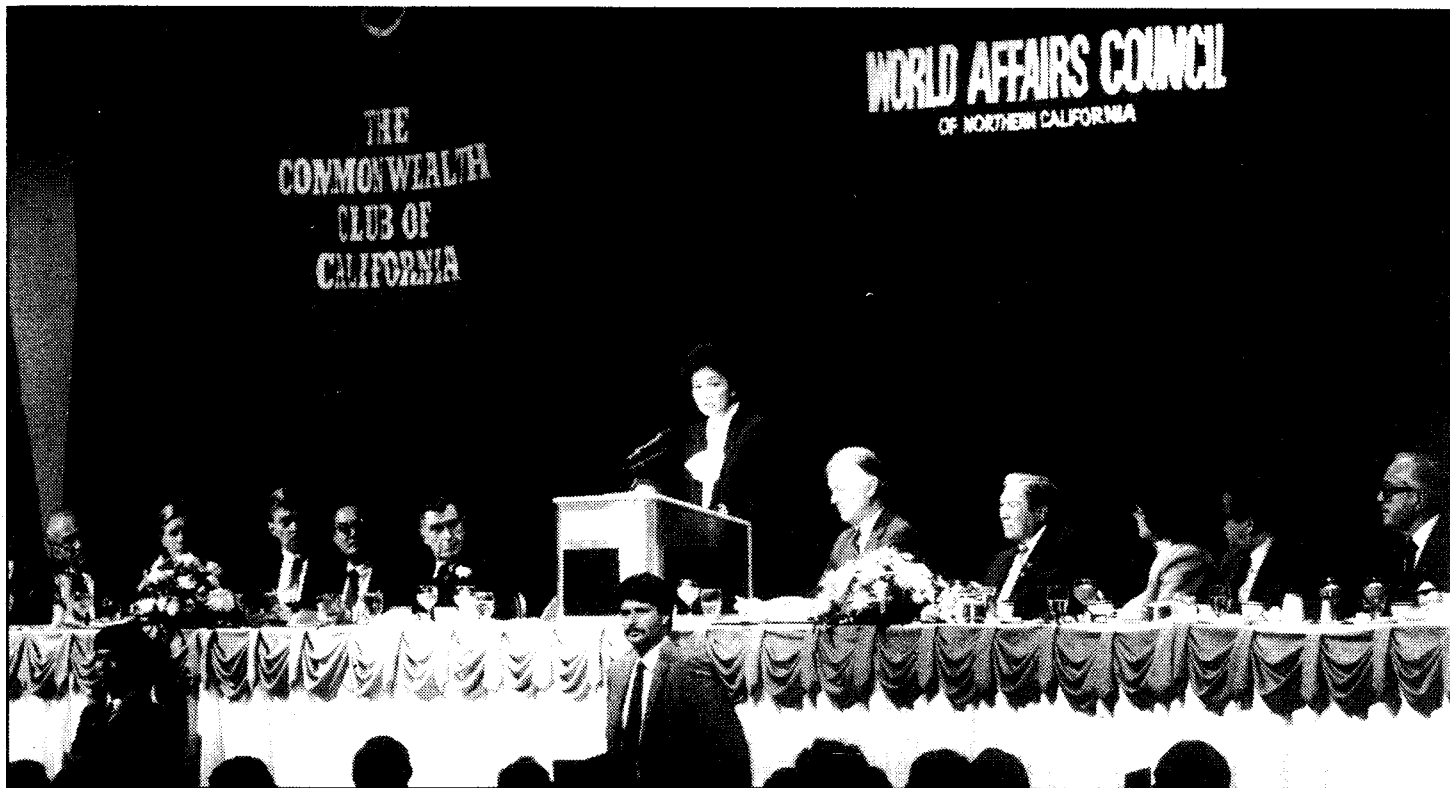
But the officials didn't stop. Finally the bulky Beltran interjected, "Excuse me sir, but I am not familiar with the American idiom. Is this what the President means when he says he is 'bullish on the Philippines?'" The press roared.

What exactly does one eat while sitting around on the White House lawn waiting for the big shots to end their lunch and make their statements? Cuisine MacDonald, of course. Given the importance of food to Filipinos, it should come as no surprise that the Embassy officials in charge of the visiting press would not let their charges go hungry while covering a lunchtime story.

So there the reporters were, amidst the impeccably tailored lawns, surrounded by secret service agents with their distinctive earphones, choosing between hamburgers and cheeseburgers from America's premier culinary institution.

Slip of the trip: credit goes to Agriculture Minister Ramon "Monching" Mitra. Addressing the cabinet-community forum in Washington the evening of September 16, he began, "You all know that agriculture is the centerfold of the government's plan for economic developmentOops!" □

Trip's Economic Gains Still Iffy



Aquino at a luncheon with potential investors in San Francisco.

By WICKS GEAGA

There is little doubt that President Corason Aquino's first official visit to the U.S. produced an enormous amount of political support. But whether the funds and investments she needs to give the Philippine economy a badly needed fix would follow is still open to question.

Before her departure, Aquino made it clear she would not come begging for badly needed support, but would present her country's case with dignity.

Aquino executed her game plan flawlessly, drawing standing ovation after standing ovation from her awestruck audiences.

But while she succeeded in getting a promise of debt relief from a committee of bankers representing the financial institutions that hold over half of the Philippines' \$26 billion foreign debt, the \$200 million emergency aid bill passed by an enthused U.S. House of Representatives, was in trouble even before she departed for Manila. By most accounts, the investors who cheered her speeches are still hesitant to put their money where their mouths were.

Aquino received pledges of a recommendation from the International Monetary Fund to its board for a \$508 million credit; a tentative World Bank loan of \$300 million and a promise by the bank to seek \$300 million more from private investors.

The agreements were important to Aquino as they serve as a vote of confidence that could encourage private lenders and investors to be bullish on the Philippines. Aquino's economic ministers are to tie things up with these institutions during meetings set for October 6.

TEN LOST YEARS

If the creditor banks yield no concessions, the current debt will continue to devour an estimated 50% of the country's export earnings. Under these stifling conditions, the Philippine economy will have zero chance to recover and even less opportunity to experience growth. With barely any money left over for development, the Philippines will sink deeper into the morass dug by the previous regime.

After consecutive years of dramatic decline in the Gross National Product during the last two years of Marcos, the real per capita income at the end of 1985 had sunk to the 1975 levels. During the same ten year period, the external debt had ballooned from \$4 billion to \$26 billion.

Aquino told representatives of the creditor banks, "We lost ten years in our growth process and had nothing to show for it but the dubious distinction of being the country

with the fifth largest debt in the developing world."

What allowed this to happen, according to Economic Planning Minister Solita C. Monsod, was the management of the debt strictly from the point of view of the creditors; the servicing and payment of the debt was given priority and whatever was left over went to recovery.

Adding a potent argument for the Aquino government's case, a leaked draft report of the World Bank practically admitted the utter failure of the debt restructuring scheme during Marcos' final two years.

Acting under the direction of the International Monetary Fund during the 1983-1985 period, the Marcos regime sought to stabilize its budget deficits and trade and debt payments, while cutting inflation drastically from the 1984 level of 50%.

GROWTH TARGET

Although the government largely achieved the IMF targets, the result nonetheless was a precipitous decline in the country's growth rate.

Pointing to the failure of the previous attempt at debt control, Aquino proposed to the creditors a different framework: debt management based on a growth-oriented strategy.

In capsule form, her proposal calls for a 6-1/2% average growth rate in the medium term (or the next six years). This target was chosen, according to Aquino, because "we would like by 1991 to regain our 1981 real per capita levels of income."

The second reason she cited was the prediction by independent international studies that the average growth rate for Asia in the next five years will be approximately 6-7%.

Given these reasons, the proposed growth target, Aquino said, "is, at the very least, eminently reasonable."

Monsod feels that the bankers may initially scoff at such a proposal. The debt restructuring program involved requires the postponement of payments on principal. More objectionable to the bankers' codes are the deferment or even possibly the forfeiture of interest payments.

Monsod, however, believes that this obstacle can be hurdled by "innovative and imaginative" means. One example she cites to illustrate her point, was the replacement of "selective repudiation"—a term feared and hated by bankers—with the more gentle "case to case disengagement."

"It is not what you say, but how you say it," says Monsod, injecting the cliché with new meaning.

Monsod predicts that through a convincing presentation of one's case and sound reasoning, the creditor bankers can be won over to the Philippine proposal. At the minimum, she said, they can be convinced to "share" or absorb the "illegiti-

mate portions" of the debt.

In the final analysis, Monsod argues, a Philippines relieved from a major portion of its present debt burden—largely ill-gotten and unjust anyway—will give rise to an economically healthy country.

While the Philippine proposal may appear new and radical to some, Monsod recalls two similar precedents during the last 20 years: Indonesia in the late '60s and Turkey in the late '70s. In both cases, unusually generous debt relief was granted because of their strategic importance to the West.

Monsod argues that the Philippines' chances of securing similar terms are greater because "it is even more strategic."

Clinching the argument before the creditors, Aquino stressed that "ensuring our economic recovery in the short-term, and sustainable growth in the long run, also ensures that your own ultimate self-interest will be served by enhancing our ability to service our future obligations in full."

\$200M AID IN TROUBLE

Meanwhile in the U.S. Congress, the \$200 million relief aid bill passed by the House only hours after Aquino's stirring speech has run into some snags.

Instead of sending the bill on a fast track to the Senate floor, Republican Senate majority leader Robert Dole sent it through the slower appropriations committee route.

Aquino supporters like Sen. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.) are trying to bring the bill to a floor vote or else it will die unless it passes before Congress adjourns on October 3.

There are growing suspicions that the Reagan White House while mouthing support for Aquino is not enthusiastically pushing the bill in the Senate. Also, conservatives in Congress are worried about Aquino's non-committal stance on the U.S. bases and want to tie future aid to a commitment to retain the bases after 1991.

FREE ENTERPRISE

The other major component of the Aquino visit's economic agenda was to lure American investors. The sales pitch was designed not merely to attract investors but also to remind U.S. policymakers of the Philippines' strategic importance as a bastion of capitalist "free enterprise."

The government has committed itself to using private enterprise as the leading edge of economic development. Aquino repeatedly stated that "crony capitalism" engendered under Marcos has been wiped out.

She even likened some of her goals to that of the Reagan administration. Aquino promised to "leave business to the businessman" and limit government's role in the economy.

As part of her program to make the

private sector the "main engine of development," Aquino announced the sale of over two-thirds of the 250 government-owned enterprises inherited from the previous regime. The government has \$7 billion worth of public assets it wants to privatize.

The offering was made both to foreign and domestic investors along with the announcement of a greatly improved climate for investment. Invariably highlighted were the stabilized exchange rate, lowered interest rates, an inflation rate under control, the growth of the country's international reserves, and a revived and vigorous stock market.

WAIT AND SEE

Aquino emphasized to her American business audiences the political stability and democratic atmosphere ushered in by her new administration.

She cited the liberalization of the labor laws as ultimately contributing to an enhanced investment climate. While more strikes were recorded in the last six months as compared to the same period the year before, according to Aquino, "the strikes were resolved more quickly, with less man-hours lost, and in a more lasting fashion."

As part of its short-term recovery efforts, the government has launched a labor-intensive infrastructure program in the rural areas, Aquino announced.

The plan is designed to improve the purchasing power of rural communities and consequently to create a viable and energetic domestic market for the country's agricultural and industrial products. The program is also aimed at alleviating the staggering unemployment problem in the rural areas.

Despite the initial enthusiasm over Aquino's sales pitch, business is not exactly falling in line to buy into the Philippine economy.

"Wait-and-see is the bottom line," Philippine-American Chamber of Commerce president Joseph Suggese told the *San Francisco Examiner*. "But it's one with a horizon that appears to be cloudy rather than sunny."

Arthur Stromberg, an official of the Pacific Basin Economic Council's Committee for Business in the Philippines was impressed by the message of Aquino, her ministers and the 25 Filipino businessmen who came with her.

"The fact that they were singing from the same hymn sheet was a good thing," said Stromberg. "If they can get their political act together," and get government off business' back, "they're going to have a boomlet."

TROUBLING QUESTIONS

While Aquino's economic agenda for development drew praise from the U.S. business community, other observers are less optimistic.

University of California-Berkeley professor Robert Reed, citing the Philippines' enormous problems, said "Even if you've got the most booming economy in the world, it's hard to do more than tread water. The problems that were there 10 years ago, 20 years ago, are still there today."

Aquino's economic plan also raises troubling questions.

While it may be necessary in short term to transfer the majority of government owned corporations to private enterprise, to what extent will the government maintain national control and ownership of strategic industries? Will it develop the public sector at all?

While the government claims adherence to an enlightened and liberalized labor policy, to what extent will it attempt to maintain prevailing wages at their present cost efficient levels in order to attract and maintain new investment? To what extent will it guarantee labor rights while attracting foreign investors who are mostly seeking cheap labor?

What political price is the government prepared to pay to secure the level of debt relief it is seeking? Can it hold its present ground against the IMF's harsh austerity programs? Are independent foreign policy initiative such as moves toward non-alignment and trade diversification including trade with socialist countries seriously on its economic agenda? □

BUOD NG MGA BALITA

CONCOM BANS NUCLEAR ARMS

The constitutional commission appointed by President Corazon Aquino placed the Philippines in the anti-nuclear ranks of New Zealand and a group of Pacific island nations by approving on September 2, a provision banning all nuclear weapons from Philippine soil.

Although unspecific, the provision no doubt comes as a response to widely-held suspicions that the U.S. is storing nuclear warheads in its two huge military bases.

The U.S. has maintained a strict policy of silence on the reported nuclear stockpile, claiming any information would compromise its military maneuverability.

If approved by the voters in a referendum 60 days after the ConCom closes up shop next month, the constitution will add the Philippines to a growing list of countries opposing U.S. nuclear weapons in the Pacific.

Early this year, New Zealand banned U.S. and any other nuclear warships from its territory. More recently, eight small island nations signed a treaty declaring the South Pacific nuclear-free. In a dramatic act of independence, a court in tiny Palau issued an order barring American nuclear vessels from that U.S.-supervised island territory.

The provision approved by the ConCom, states that the Philippines "consistent with the national interest, adopts and pursues a policy of freedom from nuclear weapons in its territory." However, it stopped short of declaring the country "nuclear-free" thereby permitting nuclear-powered ships to still enter its waters.

Twenty-one commissioners who opposed the provision on this ground, deliberately missed the vote to register protest while allowing at the same time a higher margin of approval for a relatively progressive proposition. The 26 ConCom members present unanimously passed the provision.

Just a day earlier, the ConCom capped an intense, long-running debate over the future of U.S. bases by voting to require a formal treaty instead of mere executive agreements when the leases expire in 1991. Primarily representing a victory for ConCom "moderates," the call was a compromise between those calling for the removal of the bases and commissioners who want to place the issue out of constitutional bounds.

The compromise provision, if passed, would require both the Philippine legislature and the U.S. Senate to approve a new bases treaty. It would allow the Philippine legislature to submit the treaty to the Filipino public for approval.

U.S. policymakers are of course, alarmed by the potential loss of their strategic outposts. Already, some lawmakers are hinting that the ConCom's action might erase the euphoria over Pres. Aquino's recent appearance before the U.S. Congress. The \$200 million emergency aid bill that narrowly won a House vote faces an uncertain fate in the Republican-controlled Senate. □

SC RULES: RETRY AQUINO CASE

In a decision reached September 12, the Philippine Supreme Court voided the "innocent" verdict on 26 people charged with the 1983 assassination of former

senator Benigno Aquino. Shortly after, Judge Francisco Garchitorrena, head of a special court assigned to retry the case, issued arrest warrants for all 26. Of the principal defendants, 19 were brought into custody. However, two defendants, former Armed Forces chief of Staff Fabian Ver and Air Force captain Felipe Valerio, are both in the U.S..

In its brief, the Supreme Court said the verdict of the three-judge Sandiganbayan in December last year was "dictated, coerced and scripted." The Supreme Court said it cannot permit "such a sham trial and verdict and travesty of justice to stand unrectified." Reacting to the ruling, Ver counsel Antonio Coronel said that the reversal violates his client's right against double-jeopardy. But the ruling elaborated that the double-jeopardy defense did not apply because the accused were at no time in real danger of conviction.

President Aquino, asked during her U.S. visit about her reaction to the ruling, said she was leaving it to the judiciary to arrive at a just verdict on the case. □

SOME N.J. ASSETS RETURNED, 'CIA ASSET' SOUGHT

U.S. Superior Court Judge Paul Levy ordered the turnover to the Philippines of \$1.3 million of Marcos' New Jersey real estate assets and bank deposits. Judge Levy ruled that "There is hard evidence that the assets were purchased by Marcos who siphoned from the national treasury."

Morton Stavis, coordinator of the various U.S. suits brought by the Philippine Commission on Good Government said, "The precedent established here in New Jersey will bear heavily on other litigation."

The favorable ruling followed an important September 2 action by U.S. District Court Judge Mariana Pfaelzer who ruled that Marcos must give a deposition to Filipino and American lawyers acting as counsel for the Philippine government. A \$54.6 billion damage suit against the Marcoses and their associates was filed by the Philippine government before the Los Angeles district court, alleging Marcos' violation of the Racketeer Influenced Corrupt Organization Act (RICO), the same statute currently faced by Mafia mobsters. Philippine government lawyers and American lawyer-volunteers are scheduled to question Marcos on Sept. 30.

In another development, an "asset" of a different kind, is being contested by Philippine officials. Manila is seeking the deportation of Orlando Dulay, former governor of Quirino province who is wanted in the Philippines for a variety of election-related murder charges. Meanwhile, Reynaldo Bagatsing, a human rights lawyer, has asked the U.S. State Department to facilitate Dulay's deportation and to explain the U.S. CIA role in spiriting him out of the country.

Dulay was arrested shortly after Marcos fled the country, for the murder of UNIDO election workers. He disappeared mysteriously after being moved by military plane to another detention center. Bagatsing alleges that the CIA assisted in his escape and flew him out of the country via a U.S. military transport plane. Dulay, it is alleged, is valued by the CIA as an "asset" and purportedly ranks second only to the late Col. Napoleon Valeriano as a counter-insurgency expert. Dulay was chanced upon by a Lawrenceville, New Jersey sheriff's deputy, as he was taking out garbage from the mansion of Imee Marcos. □

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ME

Former President Marcos' birthday on September 11 is no longer a national holiday, the Philippine government said in a briefly worded directive—on September 10. Under Marcos, schoolchildren, workers, and government employees were obligated to observe the presidential birthday as "Barangay Day" and the martial law declaration on September 21 as "National Thanksgiving Day."

Despite the directive, some 10,000 diehard Marcos supporters recalled their days of wanton merriment with a mass and a rally. The hard-core loyalists wanted to party so bad, they strung up a banner saying "Welcome Home President Marcos!" Evidently, the make-believe welcome was spurred by another wishful rumour that Marcos would land in the Philippines on his natal day. The loyalists dubbed the auspicious event "The Miracle of September." An irritated Defense Ministry official said: "It's all in their heads." Miraculously, Marcos remained in Honolulu. Speaking before a gathering of 400 well-wishers who converged on his house for a barbeque, the birthday boy tearfully lamented: "This is the loneliest birthday of my life." It's his party, he'll cry if he wants to.

Meanwhile, former Sen. Arturo Tolentino September 8 gave a new twist to the threat of Manila Hotel officials to sue him and other Marcos loyalists for damages arising from the aborted July 6 coup attempt.

Tolentino claimed that whatever damage may have been done to the hotel was more than made up by the "multi-million-dollar free advertising" that the hotel got from international coverage of the coup attempt. In a press statement, he and other defendants also threatened to file multi-million peso counter-claims against the hotel. □

TO THE MANOR BORN

Mrs. Imelda Marcos told "60 Minutes" TV sleuth Diane Sawyer she has a natural right to be wealthy. Still denying she owns 3,000 pairs of shoes, Mrs. Marcos now claims that some of the footwear belonged to her daughters, maids and nurses.

"Besides, I was size 7-1/2 a few years ago," she told the sharp-shooting, shoe-counting Sawyer who bluntly asked if all the female help were size 8.

As to her shopping splurges, Mrs. Marcos for the first time candidly admitted the pathological origins of her acquisitive habits: "I was a poor relation of a prosperous family and to be a poor relation is to know deprivation. . . I was not born to nobility, but I had every right to reach for nobility."

Then, attacking media's fascination with her heavy spending as double-standard nonsense, she said: "You see 'Dallas,' you see 'Dynasty,' and you see all of these beautiful women and beautiful people and if it is for the white [people] it is correct, but if it is someone who came from the Third World like me, who has skin colored brown, [it does] does not seem right." Alexis cannot be reached for comment.

Meanwhile, health department officials in Leyte recently discovered a half-built hospital in Tacloban City which cost taxpayers an estimated ₱17 million. The hospital was commissioned by the former First Lady in memory of her uncle, ex-speaker of the House Daniel Romualdez. The edifice was abandoned after funds ran out. Not far from the site is another hospital, named after the same person. □

Aquino Chides the UN

President Corazon Aquino made her debut as a world class leader by chastising the United Nations for tolerating the abuse of human rights by some of its members.

Aquino addressed the 41st session of the UN General Assembly on September 22, 1986, in a speech which drew rounds of applause and a standing ovation.

Riding a wave of diplomatic successes, Aquino highlighted South African apartheid as "the great moral issue" facing the Assembly in an apparent bid to stake out a position different from that of the U.S. whose posture on South Africa is

highly unpopular in the UN.

By contrast, President Ronald Reagan who spoke to the assembly the same day ignored the South Africa issue altogether.

Aquino chided the UN for espousing a charter which sanctifies basic human rights and yet ignoring the repression used by some of its members.

She recalled that scarcely a year ago, her predecessor's wife came to the UN to piously call for a new human order "when thousands of Filipinos were political prisoners."

The Filipinos, she said, took power "to implement the ideals that the UN

stands for" but that she was obliged to say "we did this by ourselves."

Aquino proposed that the UN be guided by both realism and concern: "Realism in that we should not promise more than we can deliver," and that nations should stay out of each other's internal affairs.

But there should be concern, she said, "about allowing this chamber to be abused by those who claim one standard of behavior and behave according to another back home."

Aquino turned to "the great moral issue" of South Africa.

Urging South Africans opposed to apartheid to unify, Aquino also urged the UN member states to "play our part in creating the environment for change in South Africa."

"The lesson in my country and so many other places such as Argentina, whose President Alfonsin visited Manila, is that every act of repression reaps its final return. In the end, human values cannot be held down. They couldn't be in Argentina; they couldn't be in the Philippines. They won't be in South Africa," Aquino said to an Assembly which roared its approval.

Aquino served notice that she would ardently work for "peace, freedom and dignity" in world affairs, ideals which her predecessor could only preach but never practice. □ CA

'We Want An Independent Policy'

A flustered secretary hurried into the lobby of the Philippine Embassy with a message. Deputy Foreign Minister Leticia Ramos Shahani had been held up due to her busy schedule, but did not want to deny the interview she had promised. Would the reporter mind riding in her limousine to the National Shrine where a mass was being held in honor of President Corazon Aquino?

In the car, Shahani asked, "Why do you want to interview me? I am not a big shot." But the AK was extremely interested in finding out more about this woman who had spent years in the foreign service, the United Nations and various international organizations and commissions. She is full of confidence and has a driving energy that is quite infectious.

Shahani, 57 and sister of Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos, has a Ph.D in Comparative Literature and Sociology from the University of Paris. She wears many hats. Journalist, feature writer, teacher, mother, ambassador, she holds a unique position in the Aquino government as perhaps most familiar with international political currents, and economic issues among developing countries.

Shahani's first ambassadorial assignment was to Romania in 1975 where she acted as the Philippines' first ambassador to a socialist country. This was followed by her post as Ambassador to Australia from 1978 to 1980. From 1981 to 1986

she served as Assistant Secretary General of the UN for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs and chaired the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women.

The Deputy Minister was one of the first prominent officials to declare her support for Aquino during the election campaign against the dictator Ferdinand Marcos. This caused something of a stir in Manila.

When it comes to Philippine foreign policy, Shahani is apparently to the left of her superior, Vice President and Foreign Minister Salvador Laurel.

You will be going to the Soviet Union next month. What is the significance of that visit?

How did you know that? I'm going there on the invitation of the Soviet government—at my level as a Deputy Foreign Minister—to review our relations. We have a new ambassador there now—Alejandro Melchor, a very able one.

We've had relations with the Soviet Union for the past 10 years. I opened the first Philippine Embassy in any communist country—in Romania. Eastern Europe is part of our foreign policy and it's only the people in the U.S. who think that the only relation we have in the world is Philippine-American relations.

Actually, we have practically opened up to the entire world—Latin America, Asia, ASEAN, Middle East, Africa, and the Soviet Union. Our relations with the Soviet Union are important. It is a superpower. I mean the U.S. is not the only superpower in the world. The USSR is not only a European superpower, it is an Asian superpower.

We have not really taken advantage of our relations with the Soviet Union in terms of trade. We sell coconut oil to it but we really have not studied what are the products we could sell and I'm sure we have many. Since we must export or die, we have to look for other markets. Then of course we do have tensions in the area. The aftermath of the Vietnamese war brought the Soviets into the region, specifically into Cam Rahn Bay in Danang; there's Afghanistan, Pakistan and the Soviet presence, so they are very much part of the Pacific.

Soviet Secretary General Mikhail Gorbachev made a fascinating comment last July in reference to Southeast Asia suggesting that if the U.S. were willing to cut back its military presence in the region, the USSR might reciprocate by lessening its use of the Cam Rahn facilities. What do you think of this?

I don't know if you have read that statement. You should read it. It's not enough just to hear about it; you should



Leticia Ramos Shahani

study and try to interpret it. That I think is an important document. Part of it you might call propaganda, part of it I think is important insofar as the Soviet Union is presently concerned. We are studying it.

My going to the Soviet Union is partly a clarification of what is exactly the Gorbachev intention, if we can fathom it. It's also a review of relations, of possibilities of cooperation in trade, exchange, sports, sciences, culture. We really have not developed a relationship despite the fact that it has been established for a whole decade. That's why I'm being sent.

Our foreign minister [Vice President Salvador Laurel] and also Mrs. Aquino has said we would like to have an independent foreign policy. I think that you will see that in the Aquino government the nationalist forces are stronger than in previous governments. In other words, we are growing up. We do not want to be also

Continued on page 14

While the Cat Was Away

By CHRISTINE ARANETA

Before she enplaned for the U.S. September 15, President Aquino ordered a stop to the bickering in her fractious cabinet. During a closed-door cabinet meeting, Aquino reportedly imposed discipline on her charges.

A solemn Juan Ponce Enrile emerged from the meeting with nothing to say to the press, a behavior uncharacteristic of the garrulous defense minister. (Enrile had begged off from an invitation to join the presidential party in the U.S. because "it would conflict with a wedding anniversary observance." He'd rather stay home, he said, and "help mind the store.")

Local governments czar Aquilino Pimentel, who had chided Enrile for contradicting the president's policy on handling the insurgency and asked him to resign was subdued but no less sardonic: "My reaction will depend on his pronouncements."

With a commitment from her cabinet to restrain themselves from public skirmishes, Aquino put to rest rumors of impending power grabs, and reminded Filipinos that "democracy is propped up not only by me but by the power of the people."

AT IT AGAIN

But only five days after her departure, Enrile was at it again, working the crowds like a pro, giving unsolicited comments to the press; and marking his 29th wedding anniversary with a guest list only a candidate for office would put together.

His message was more of the same: the insurgency has to be met with military force, the military is losing the war, the communists are exploiting the ceasefire offer to gain ground, the Cory government is a wimp.

On September 21, before a crowd of 10,000 in Bacolod City, Enrile promised rich sugar planters that "the entire armed forces will fight for you."

The audience lapped it up and held signs that read "A Good Commie is a Dead Commie," and "The Queen of the



Laurel: Left out

Philippines [the Virgin Mary], Save Us From Communism."

Sponsored by the Negros Foundation for Freedom and Democracy, an organization backed by the local chamber of commerce and the mostly conservative landlords who formed Ferdinand Marcos' political base, the event was supposed to have been a "peace rally."

But important members of the clergy were conspicuously absent, having been blacklisted by the organization as "communists."

When asked by a reporter if he was bothered by the rightwing backing of the group, Enrile replied, "If the radical left has their front organizations, why should they begrudge others from doing the same?"

His Deputy Minister, Wilson Gamboa, was more uneasy: "They want the old ways to continue, I guess as long as they have money, they can keep having rallies."

'I'M LIKE RAMBO'

Earlier, a few days before Aquino left, Enrile railed at his critics and told a luncheon crowd, "When I lose my temper I am like Rambo."

Then, before thousands of army troops during a traditional flag-raising ceremony at Fort Bonifacio, Enrile said: "I am saddened that those in government are not



Enrile: Ramboesque threats

saying anything [against the communists]."

He told the soldiers not to be intimidated "by the criticisms of other people," and asked them, "How many of you want to kill the communists?"

Then, Enrile dared his critics in the administration: "If they say they don't want me, we'll say we don't want them either. I'm losing my patience, too."

Despite his role in the overthrow of Marcos, Enrile has become the hero of rightwing loyalists. He offers no apologies for their admiration. "I'm quite flattered," Enrile had said of the moves of the loyalists to draft him for the presidential office.

At the defense minister's wedding anniversary bash at the Intercontinental Hotel, former officials of Marcos' KBL party including his solicitor general, were among the honored guests.

While officially mum on Enrile's provocative comments, Cabinet member Ramon Mitra has conceded that the revived Nacionalista Party, with Enrile functioning as its "underground" leader, is frenziedly organizing for the local and congressional elections next year.

PRESIDENTIAL AMBITIONS

As for his presidential ambitions, Enrile is trying hard not to be subtle.

"If I'm pushed or provoked, I'll put my bet on the table and run for president,"

Enrile once told reporters pounding the Defense Ministry beat. He later backed off and said he was only joking.

With presidential elections six years away, and the President having every intention of serving out her term, Enrile has even boldly suggested that a sort of "snap" presidential election be held next year.

ALLIANCE WITH LAUREL

A fellow "odd man out" in the person of Vice President Salvador Laurel has apparently found common cause with Aquino's defense minister. Laurel has been quick to jump to the defense of Enrile, saying the latter was entitled to express his views.

Laurel, bitter that he has not received his and UNIDO's due in the power sharing with Aquino, declared an "open door policy" for the KBL remnants.

"A post-Marcos realignment is to be expected," Laurel says, alluding to an expected alliance between his UNIDO party and the newly formed Nacionalista Party headed by Rene Cayetano, Enrile's former law partner.

The two have apparently become regular golfing partners and Laurel has added his voice to the criticism of Aquino's negotiations approach in dealing with the National Democratic Front.

AQUINO'S NEW PARTY

When queried repeatedly during her U.S. trip about what she thought of her defense minister's maneuverings, Aquino had a stock reply: "I think he himself said that I had been elected by the people as their president."

Despite a calm facade, she has reportedly approved a plan to form a political party that would protect her position within the unruly governing coalition.

The new party, led by her brother Jose Cojuangco, will run candidates in the local elections next year.

"Cory will have a hand in selecting the new party's candidates and will endorse them," Mitra told *San Francisco Examiner's* Phil Bronstein. □

U.S. Filipinos Give Co



A 'People's Welcome' outside San Francisco's Moscone Center.

By VINCE REYES

The Filipino community is not likely to forget Cory Aquino's visit to the U.S. for some time to come. Filipinos came in droves at her every stop to cheer the personification of the People's Power revolution that won the world's admiration and injected a new sense of pride and social awareness among them.

Aquino began her nine-day visit to the cheers of hundreds of people at the San Francisco International Airport. Shortly after, she was whisked off to Washington, D.C. where she was greeted by 500 people at the Andrews Air Force Base.

As the President disembarked from her

airplane, 60 Filipino children joyously sang to her. Cory detoured her Secret Service guards in order to personally shake hands with the children. "This is precious," she proclaimed.

At the Washington Monument grounds, 3,000 people gathered at the Reflecting Pool to get a glimpse of Cory who landed by helicopter. She was greeted by the fantastic sight of 500 people waving glowsticks spelling out the words "WELCOME CORY." The Ad Hoc Committee to Welcome President Aquino had assigned the formation of each letter to members of numerous Filipino community organizations which included a number of former opposition groups.

The jubilant crowd had travelled from all parts of the East Coast including Delaware, Baltimore, Florida, and Canada. The mass chanted "Cory Defend Democracy!" in unison as the helicopters carrying



the President and her entourage landed some 500 yards away.

To the disappointment of many, it was difficult to distinguish Aquino from the numerous figures getting off the helicopters. But the huge crowd kept up its fiesta spirit. When the thousands of people were leaving the area, people were asking "Did you see her, was that her?" But the event was really over when one gentleman was heard bellowing "Say, where's my wife?"

CORY! CORY! CORY!

The next time Aquino would come into contact with the Filipino community in Washington, D.C., was at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception at a mass officiated by no less than 30 priests. Cory supporters began lining the streets at one o'clock for the four o'clock event.

While waiting for the mass, the crowd spontaneously began singing Filipino songs. Some 2,700 people, mainly Filipinos attended the mass while another 1,000 listened from outside.

Thelma Garcia Bucholdt, who worked for the Alaskan state government in the mid-70s remarked that "It was exciting to see a capable woman in leadership."

The solemnity of the traditional Catholic mass was broken when Ambassador Emmanuel Pelaez introduced the President. All at once, the church thundered with the roar of "Cory! Cory! Cory!"



Flags and glow sticks from 3,000 welcomers in Washington, D.C.

Cory a Proud Welcome



AK Photo



T. Rocamora

Proud to be Filipino.

government and then fielded questions from an apparently politically well-informed public. Every minister was warmly received, but Shahani, with her nationalistic message, got the loudest applause.

BIG APPLE WELCOME

Then Cory hit the Big Apple. Over 500 Cory supporters ringed the New York City Hall entrance as a reception hosted by Mayor Ed Koch took place inside.

"It's the *balimbings* [Marcos turncoats] who all of a sudden want to draw attention to themselves who are inside," remarked a supporter outside of City Hall.

The event was festive though somewhat subdued compared to Aquino's previous welcomes, partly because of Consul-General Francisco "King" Rodrigo's controversial move to minimize the political character of the welcome events. None of the usual bullhorns and eager chorus of chants found at other rallies greeted the President.

Fueling further divisions, Philippine columnist Luis D. Beltran charged in the *Filipino Reporter* that "'volunteers' previously identified with the Jose Ma. Sison-Bernabe Buscayno ideological fringe, [are] trying to oust [Rodrigo]" and that they

had "taken over the press center, while other 'volunteers' are in charge of other aspects of the visit."

Dampened spirits notwithstanding, Cory supporters still gave the President an impressive welcome.

In the evening, 5,000 people gathered at Fordham University in the Bronx, lining up for several hours to get through the familiar metal detectors that accompanied Aquino's appearances.

The event was reminiscent of New York's large Philippine National Day celebrations with many people toting picnic baskets and blankets to the University's Edwards Parade Field. When the President took the podium, the familiar shouts of "Cory! Cory! Cory!" resounded in the open air.

Aquino was awarded the honorary degree of Doctorate of Law. "What can we do?" Cory asked the large gathering, "Continue to be the Filipino we can be proud of!"

FREE AIR CONDITIONING

From there she returned to the San Francisco-Bay Area on September 23 for another breakneck-paced schedule.

Continued on page 15

During the mass, the Ad Hoc Committee presented Aquino with an appropriate gift from the community: a picture diary of the Washington, D.C. Marcos opposition from 1972 to the February Revolution.

On September 17, the much-awaited meeting between Aquino and President Ronald Reagan took place between 11:30 and 2:00. Cory supporter numbering 500 gathered at Lafayette Park across from the White House and loudly chanted for Aquino to "Protect Philippine Sovereignty" and to "Defend Democracy." Consul Ric Marasigan noted that the chanting could be heard from inside the Rose Garden.

A motley group of 20 odd loyalists demonstrated on the opposite side of the White House. A number of people, including elderly Filipinos, went out of their way to curse the Marcos supporters.

Later that evening, the Filipino community was treated to a most unusual event—a forum with the Philippine Cabinet Ministers at the Catholic University's Hartke Theater. Eight cabinet ministers were present including Solita Monsod, Economic Planning Commissioner; Jose Concepcion, Trade and Industry Minister; Rene Saguisag, Presidential Spokesperson; Leticia Ramos Shahani, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs; Ramon Mitra, Minister of Agriculture; Teofisto Guingona, Minister of Audit; and Tanodbayan Commissioner Raul Gonzales.

Each gave a presentation on the state of affairs of the Philippines from their position in



Ten thousand admirers cheer at the UC-Berkeley Greek Theatre.

T. Rocamora

Seeing Red

By VINCE REYES

They promised to make a strong political statement by demonstrating against Cory Aquino in the thousands. But the handfuls of Marcos loyalists who did show up provided only comic relief, mainly unintended.

What's their issue?

Outside the Moscone Convention Center in San Francisco, "Florante" answered: "The Philippines is turning communist because of Aquino's policies. She let Jose Ma. Sison and Bernabe Buscayno, communists, out of jail."

Bernie Giba who came early from Stockton said, "We are concerned about the growth of communism."

Claro Ramirez from Burbank, California, marching outside the White House while Cory was meeting with Ronald Reagan said, "We are afraid that with Cory Aquino, the Philippines will soon be turned into a communist country."

Also in Washington, D.C., one red-shirted loyalist asserted authoritatively that "Forty percent of her [Aquino's] body-

guards in Malacañang Palace are communists. They're not becoming communists, they are already communists.

When asked who exactly were the communists in Aquino's cabinet, the small group demonstrating near the White House chimed together: "Rene Saguisag," "Joker Arroyo," "Diokno," "Mitra," and "Sanchez, the Secretary of Labor." It did not seem to matter that former Senator Jose Diokno was not a member of the cabinet.

The loyalist leadership in the U.S. has a more articulate assessment of Aquino. "We feel the Aquino government has gone bananas," Dr. Leonilo Malabed told the *Oakland Tribune* recently.

Malabed was the recent target of investigations because of the alleged illegal channelling of Marcos funds into the campaigns of U.S. candidates running for political office. He is still a target of investigation related to a suit alleging his connection to a Marcos security slush fund which may have funnelled money into the assassinations of anti-Marcos activists

Gene Viernes and Silme Domingo.

Dr. Tony Saqueton, a familiar figure in Stockton community politics does a little better than Malabed: "People will realize after all that President Marcos is a better president than President Aquino."

But what motivates the loyalist?

One Aquino supporter who happened to be wearing a red dress accidentally found herself in the middle of the loyalist picket across from the New York City Hall. Realizing she was in the wrong place she headed across the street. But one of the loyalists told her: "Stick around, you'll get something for it."

Were loyalists paid to come to demonstrations against Aquino?

"No, I've never heard of any finance at all," said Danny Coriaga of Los Angeles. "I myself, I came here, spent my own money. And I spent my own money for everything for coming here. And nobody give me money or I never see anybody or talk anybody that she gets . . . or who he got . . . anybody . . . somebody . . . nobody

gave her or him money, especially from Mr. Marcos. No, no, no!"

Do they still expect Marcos to return? What about with his poor health?

Coriaga was optimistic: "There's change. We know there's something wrong with him but he's trying to be healthy now. He's rested now since the problems in February."

Some loyalists do not even want to treat Marcos' return as the key issue. "Florante" said: "[In the Philippines] we have 7-11, MacDonald's, Dunkin' Donuts, Kentucky Fried Chicken . . . we are Americanized . . . not communists. We want the Americans there."

Now how come so few of the loyalists showed up?

Outside Moscone Center, one loyalist wearing a red 49ers baseball cap said as many as 600 to 1,200 people were expected to appear for his cause that night.

But as the evening wore on he said, "They'll be coming later, it takes a while." He may still be there waiting. □

Pinoys Try to Build Power Bloc

By MADGE BELLO

"People's Power" and the new political atmosphere created by the democratic government of Cory Aquino are propelling Filipinos in the United States to greater political action. But as the results of a much-publicized "unity conference" in San Francisco indicate, the community still has a long row to hoe.

Over 300 Filipinos from across the country came to the San Francisco Airport Hilton September 12-14 in response to *Philippine News* publisher Alex Esclamado's call for a unified leadership in the Filipino community. Some came from as far as New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., Hawaii, and even sparsely Filipino-populated states of Tennessee, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Nebraska, and Ohio. The organizers had predicted a turnout of 1,000 people.

Heavily represented were small business entrepreneurs, professionals, private and government executives and elected officials. At the end of the three-day meeting, the conferees organized the Filipino-American Council.

Conference organizer Esclamado sought to smooth over the division that the issue of the Marcos dictatorship created in the community in the last 14 years.

"Now is the time to heal the wounds cut deep during the Marcos era and start protecting ourselves in American society," he said.

A PIECE OF THE PIE

More than just unifying the community, the need to build a Filipino political power block dominated the proceedings. Esclamado called for an institution that will have political, economic and social clout.

"The time has come," asserted Larry Asera, "for Filipinos to unite and elect our officials, so we too can have a piece of the American pie." Asera, a former official from Sonoma County in California almost won a seat in the California Assembly a few years ago.

Numbering less than one million in the official 1980 Census, Filipinos are projected to lead all Asian groups in size by the year 2000. In California, Filipinos are already the third largest minority group, next to Latinos and Blacks. In Hawaii, their ratio to the local population is getting larger.

"Filipinos are what you would call a sleeping giant," said Tessie Paredes, a

member of the board of the directors of the Filipinos for Affirmative Action and a member of the Contra Costa Commission on Human Rights.

NO MORE BUSBOY IMAGE

"Filipinos have come a long way from the busboy image," said Monty Manibog, mayor of Monterey Park near Los Angeles. Manibog cited his situation in a city of 60,000 where there are only a dozen or so Filipinos, and that of Ed Portugal, who was elected mayor of Rouses Point, New York, where there are only three Filipinos out of 3,000 residents.

"But we will never have a fair share unless we provide genuine political leadership," cautioned Manibog.

"As you raise the flag of the Filipino-American community, I think we should close ranks and show not only a propensity for putting together associations but a propensity for networking and working as a whole," Ambassador to the U.S. Emmanuel Pelaez told the group. "Your potential is great."

Pelaez assured the audience that Filipinos here will have a special place in the Philippines and pledged that they will be given preferential treatment in their homeland. He also extolled Filipino "virtues" such as filial loyalty and compassion and urged conference participants not to forget them "as you sink into U.S. society."

"Keep your Filipino values," he said. Sometimes, in competing for success you will forget friends and relatives.

Dennis Normandy, who was appointed vice-president of the Council said that with the new sense of power as a community there "must come an even greater sense of responsibility."

True leadership, he said, includes values such as being open to new ideas and allowing disagreements within the organization for debates and discussions.

Dr. Cece Fontanoza, who heads up the California Department of Health, said that while Filipinos should participate fully in U.S. society without losing their Filipino identity, they should not, she urged, "forget the racial prejudice suffered by the first generation Filipinos."

LACK OF PREPARATIONS

The newly-organized Filipino-American Council hopes to parallel the stature of the powerful National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples and the Japanese American Citizens League. Both



Esclamado: bullish on Filipino power.

institutions have come to symbolize the protection of the political interests and civil rights of the Black and Japanese communities, respectively.

But the conference focused mainly on organizational structure with workshops organized around "nine spokes of the wheel of unity": Politics, Youth, Business, Professionals, Seniors, Women, Religion, Social and Cultural, and Education.

"We need a framework," Esclamado said, a framework that he claimed could consolidate the structure being built by the conference.

"We need to adopt a machinery of unity for city, county, state and national level," said Esclamado as he tried to win support for a 19-page constitution and by-laws that reportedly consumed the organizers' preparation time.

Describing the constitution as having the "mandate of Filipinos" in the nation, he said it will be easier to sell the idea to the rest of the community and "recalcitrant families" as well.

Except for the "Women" and "Education" workshops, discussion leaders admitted that they had overlooked weaving the issue of discrimination and racism into the workshops. Pressing issues such as the English-Only proposition came up in the workshops mainly through spontaneous

discussions.

The apparent weakness in political groundwork posed some difficulty for several workshop leaders and almost dampened the enthusiasm of a number of conference attendees.

"There was obviously a lack of preparation," remarked Amado Cabezas, an assistant professor at the Asian American Studies at UC Berkeley, who attended the workshop on professionals. "Maybe we still have a long way to go."

A retired civil service worker from Vallejo, who preferred not to be identified, said that although the conference required attendees to be a leader of an organization or owner of a business, she came anyway because she wanted to see unity achieved. "But it's very disorganized," she lamented. "I am still hopeful, it will come together soon."

But Esclamado, the principal organizer who was also elected president of the new council was full of optimism.

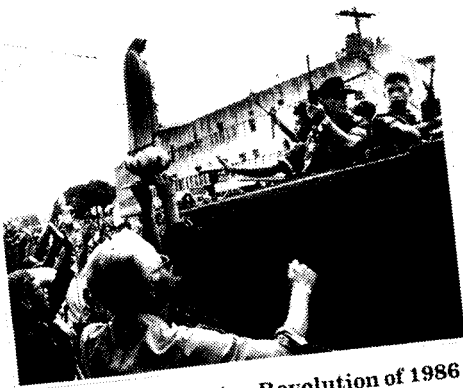
"I have no doubts about the outcome of this conference, because the beginning is already a success."

It will be another year until the group meets again in Los Angeles. The months in between will test how a fledgling organizational structure, loosely glued together by the need for political empowerment, can reach the elusive goal of ethnic unity. □

The Greatest Democracy Ever Told

PEOPLE POWER

An Eyewitness History



The Philippine Revolution of 1986

The Greatest Democracy Ever Told
PEOPLE POWER: AN EYEWITNESS HISTORY
The Philippine Revolution of 1986

The James B. Reuter, S.J. Foundation, Manila
320 pages, 247 photos. \$29.95

By MARIE C. PRUDEN

Writing down the title of this book for this review is in itself a laborious job, let alone coming up with standards by which to review this monumental undertaking. It is a book that has set down its own rules.

Like another James B. Reuter project that was inspired by the 1986 Philippine Revolution (a play with a long name recently staged in various parts of San Francisco), the title of this coffee-table book is enough to knock one out. Likewise, its introductions (foreword, preface, dedication, whatever), the various appendices, some parts of the text, production and sponsors' credit lines (acknowledgement, etc.), and epilogue have also been beaten down to a pulp.

But the eyes of love overlook such drumbeating and this book is embraced as a legacy that should go down to future generations as an account of a people's most shining moments.

Thus, it was with the eyes of love that we leafed through its pages and relived the various incidents that led to the successful "People Power" revolution that we love to share with the rest of the world. There was no way a Filipino could look at this book without relishing its content. It is, after all, our family album.

To enjoy this book, a reader should not be so much concerned with the prose, which is purplish in parts, as to WHO wrote them and WHAT they wrote. One should not look into the quality of the photos, but rather, WHO took them, WHO are in it, and WHERE were they taken.

The photographs themselves are generally good, some even excellent. Some could stand better editing. A number of really good ones are begging for color (all are black-and-white). Surely, we have seen better looking pictures of the revolution in the *National Geographic Magazine* (colored) and in the *San Francisco Examiner* (which were more impressively cropped). But there are much more photos in this book than in the *Geographic* and *Examiner* combined.

At least for our own purpose, it's the quantity that counts.

The important thing is that this book is ours. It was written by our own people and the photographs are by our own photographers. Even the individual names of those involved conjure up memories that cannot be translated to outsiders without losing their flavor. As a book of history, its message is public property. But as a family album, the book—like it or not—is very personal.

You would think, for instance, that no Filipino who lived through the repressive Marcos regime could read the scenarios without being conscious that they were written by Marcos' own martial law press secretary, Francisco S. Tatad. Tatad's reportage is objective (devoid of personal feelings) and reflective of his training as a reporter, first with Agence France Press and later, with the *Manila Daily Bulletin*.

But reportage as they were, I could not help reading a lot of meaning into Tatad's scenarios because I knew him as a friend and we had grown up part of the way together. I had rejoiced at his appointment as press secretary at age 29. Then, on September 22, 1972, we, the displaced reporters, huddled in front of the TV at the National Press Club, watching him read the numerous Presidential Proclamations that Marcos issued following the declaration of martial law. I was broken-hearted. I had called him "Dr. Goebbels."

In 1975, upon learning that I had offended Imelda Marcos' brand of women's liberation, it was Kit who

Book Review:

A People's Family Album

warned me to stay out of the country. I listened to his warning then because he was my friend. I read him in this book now for the same reason.

Fortunately, this book was written not just by Tatad for friends like me, but also by a cross-section of the Filipino people who participated in the revolution for other Filipinos to read. The list of *dramatis personae* itself will strike you in a familiar way (and I am not saying that you knew that Kit's college sweetheart was that loyal Marcos news anchorperson, Rita Gadi-Baltazar . . . what—you mean you didn't know?)

Or perhaps you'd be glad to know that the editor of the book is Monina Allarey Mercado. Mrs. Mercado is a graduate of Maryknoll College and has been a feature writer with *Graphic* magazine. She has two sons who played a part in the revolution—Paolo, 15 and Gabe, 13. They were June Keithley's "technicians" at the watchtower, Radio Veritas.

Thus, this is how a review of this book would take shape if one were to regard it as a family album. I also learned from this book that a dear friend of mine, Danny Dimacali, is now in Australia, where he watched the revolution on TV, during which he spotted another dear friend, Jun Abad, as the camera panned the crowd. I'm sure we have all had the same experience.

Speaking of crowds, the book itself is one. It is a

limb—so they could hope for a better future . . . With towels and lemon juice to lessen the sting of tear gas, I walked out into the early dawn alone . . . out of grace . . .

from my marriage (so I thought at that time) into independence and freedom." This was a sacrifice worthy of Abraham, and like Abraham's sacrifice, God did not take it.

Or this, from Cardinal Sin: "Do you know what EDSA stands for? It stands for Epifanio de los Santos Avenue. Epifanio de los Santos was the name of a man, but if you translate the entire phrase, 'epifanio de los santos,' it means 'epiphany of the saints.'" Brilliant.

Yet another one from Lulu T. Castañeda: "We were told to link arms. I looked at the faces of the people around me, especially the man to my right who was holding on tightly to my arm. My big concern was: I am going to die with this man and I don't know his name. I wanted to ask his name . . . as utter strangers, we faced what seemed like imminent death together . . . and I said the Hail Mary, especially the part which goes, 'pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.' That seemed the same at the moment." Can Dr. Malabed & Co. come up with anything more touching?

So, go ahead. Don't mind the rhetorics, the "literary



crowd of "somebodies" and "nobodies," of the "haves and the have-nots," of the *ilustrados* and the illiterates. Somehow, familiar names, faces, places, and experiences leap up to warm you, to bring a tear to your eyes, and make you say a prayer of thanksgiving. It is a wonder that the book had any kind of order at all, but it has—chronologically, and with a thousand voices talking.

The anecdotes compiled in this book are like our main weapon during the revolution—the rosary. Each is a bead that holds the mysteries of a miracle that is reflected over and over.

One such anecdote came from former Manila Vice Mayor Herminio Astorga: "I asked Radio Veritas to inform the Luneta Group (who wanted to go to Camp Crame and Camp Aguinaldo) that I would be on my way to pick them up. It took me sometime to reflect that perhaps, it was the Holy Spirit who made me act the way I did . . . I was aghast to see the enormous crowd. How do we accommodate this whole crowd into our Hi-Ace and Fiera? . . . I felt a sudden chill and my hair stood on end . . . 'A miracle is happening,' I told my wife. 'God, what is this miracle that you are doing here?' (Answer on page 109.)

And this, from Teresa C. Pardo, identified only as "wife and mother," whose husband had urged her to stay at home and think of the children. "I got angry. Precisely it was for the children that I was going to risk life and

value," the "epilogue," the "moral-of-the-story" bits. Just open the book and enjoy. Share the religious experience. Laugh a little, cry a little, and by all means, feel triumphant. This book has set down its own rules; so does this review. As a reader, you are just as free to do so. □

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4. For now, AK cannot give monetary compensation for published material although we wish to do so in the future. But your contribution to the enrichment of the Filipino community's cultural experience will itself be a satisfying reward.

Cory Hits A Homer

Continued from front page

country's Congress, its media and much of its population at large.

MIXED SIGNALS

The U.S. government began sending out mixed signals on Corazon Aquino the day her people's power revolution toppled Ferdinand Marcos. The source of Washington's unease was the streak of nationalism which threaded through her cabinet, lodged principally in some of her most trusted advisors and, to a large degree, in the President herself.

Particularly unsettling was Aquino's decision to release all political prisoners, including some known leaders of the Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army.

Those varying signals from Washington represented the different camps within the Reagan administration itself. The military, concerned first and foremost with the U.S. bases at Subic Bay and Clark, saw the new nationalism as a threat to U.S. interests. Moreover, they were afraid that Aquino's high regard for human rights might provide the Communist movement an edge they never enjoyed under Marcos' iron hand.

Reagan himself and his closest advisors leaned toward this position. It was, after all, the trusted Donald Regan who sighed the night the dictator was flown out of the Philippines, "We could have done a lot worse than Ferdinand Marcos."

Moderate Republicans—inside the Reagan administration and out—took a very different view. Pragmatists like George Shultz were eager to forge friendly ties with Aquino first and worry about differences later. Senate Foreign Relations Committee chief Richard Lugar (R-Ind.) insisted the new President was her nation's "only hope."

A CONFLICT TO BE WAGED

Then there were the Democrats. The excitement in this country over the Aquino victory promised to stand in good stead those Congress members who had historically opposed Marcos and supported the opposition.

Most of these were Democrats eager to use the Philippines as an issue come election time. It was thus no accident that Aquino's invitation to the U.S. for a "working" rather than a state visit came from House Speaker Thomas "Tip" O'Neill (D-Mass.), not from Ronald Reagan.

The decisive issue within the Washington foreign policy community on the Philippine question was Aquino's decision to conduct peace negotiations with the Communist Party of the Philippines.

The Defense establishment expressed continued unease over her failure to take a "stronger"—that is, military—approach. The pragmatists were reassured by her continual assertions that, if the peace negotiations failed, she would be more than willing to adopt a military solution.

With Reagan on their side, the militarists were ascendant. It thus came as no great surprise when, one week before the visit, "anonymous sources" within the administration leaked a story to the *New York Times* that Washington was "concerned" over Aquino's reconciliation policy and suggested it was time for her to get tough. These "concerns" were "virtually certain to be discussed" during the Washington visit.

Aquino responded three days later in no uncertain terms. She told *The Times*, "The fact is, it is I who will decide just what we will do in this country."

Thus it became clear that the Washington visit represented a conflict to be waged between Aquino and her Reaganite detractors—however diplomatically. Someone was going to have to win and someone was going to have to lose. Reagan blinked.

PLAYING TO CONGRESS

In a display of political sophistication impressive for an outfit so new at the game, Aquino and her advisors used the



new President's extreme popularity in the U.S. to unite the liberals and moderates so thoroughly behind her as to leave the hard-core conservatives totally isolated.

The Reaganites thus found themselves forced to express full and effusive support for Aquino and all her programs, though they hardly meant it. This included even the most controversial: negotiations with the Left and Aquino's insistence on keeping her options on the U.S. bases open until 1991 when the current treaty expires.

After his meeting with Aquino, Reagan, aware of the adulation she was already winning said, "As one might surmise, I'm bullish on the Philippines."

Aquino's political acumen was visible everywhere, from the composition of her entourage to her wardrobe. Since much of the visit had to do with re-negotiating debt, it was clear that her party had to contain figures such as Finance Minister Jaime Ongpin, Central Bank Governor Jose Fernandez, Industry Minister Jose Concepcion and their ilk—the most conservative wing of her cabinet short of the neo-fascist Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile.

To balance the conservative weight, Aquino surrounded herself with prominent progressives such as Audit Minister Teofisto Guingona, National Economic and Development Authority chief Solita Monsod, Press Secretary Teodoro Benigno, Presidential Spokesman Rene Saguisag, and key personal counselor and former Information Minister Teodoro Locsin.

Vice-President and Foreign Minister Salvador Laurel, who is strongly pro-U.S., was left behind and his nationalist deputy, Leticia Ramos Shahani, accompanied the group. And while Aquino reportedly put a great deal of personal time into writing her speeches, progressives Locsin and Saguisag served as principal speechwriters.

Meanwhile, though Aquino claimed to be seeking a "beautiful friendship" with Ronald Reagan, it was clear that her main audience was Congress.

Noting on the eve of her congressional speech that she had to date worn beige, pink, navy, and powder blue, one reporter asked why she had not yet worn yellow, the trademark color of her presidential campaign. "That's for tomorrow," she replied.

CALLING THE BLUFF

Indeed the sunshine yellow of the suit Aquino wore to address Congress only underscored the emotionalism that informed what was almost a homecoming rather

than a mere welcome.

Sen. Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.) of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee was among those who attributed the Aquino success to congressional intervention in foreign policy.

"I remember the President [Reagan] saying there was no alternative to Marcos except Marxism . . ." he told the *Associated Press*. "Had it not been for Congress' insistence, I'm not sure the President would have acted as he did."

The chamber was already dotted with yellow long before Aquino arrived. Ties, boutonnieres, blouses, shirts, even George Shultz' neon-yellow handkerchief expressed the audience's symbolic support. As she entered the room escorted by congressional dignitaries, chants of "Cory! Cory!" could be heard coming from the congressmen and women above the thunderous four-minute standing ovation. Here and there hands waved the Laban sign.

In an extremely well-crafted address which played upon the emotions of her listeners, Aquino essentially called the bluff of her congressional supporters. Leaving aside the nationalism that characterized her other statements, she played to her audience's stated commitment to democracy. "Ours must have been the cheapest revolution ever," she insisted.

It was, according to dignitaries such as O'Neill and Sen. Ted Kennedy (D-Mass.), the best speech they had ever heard from a head of state.

"There goes another 50 votes," noted Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.) as she wound up to another standing ovation. His proposal for an additional \$200 million in emergency aid had faced sure defeat in the light of Gramm-Rudman. Instead, within hours of the speech, the House of Representatives voted in the aid package by a six-vote margin.

The assistance bill still faces rough going in the Senate. But the expression of support was unmistakable.

'DIPLOMATIC HEADACHES'

Given the breadth of Aquino's Washington backing, it was no surprise that the White House found it necessary to express its unqualified support. The criticisms reported by the *New York Times*, they quickly assured the President and her entourage, came from no responsible party within the administration. In fact, they added, journalists ought to be more careful to check their sources before printing a story.

The Reaganites' support was all the more remarkable given the essential content

of Aquino's message to the U.S.

Toasting Shultz at his Washington party in her honor, Aquino warned him gently to expect his share of "diplomatic headaches" from the new government.

"Now the United States faces a Philippines prickly in independence and bent on its own self-development," the President explained to a San Francisco audience. "That makes us a maturer friend, and, if not always an easy one, certainly a more dependable ally in the things that truly matter . . ."

In a string of finely written speeches, Aquino hammered home her mildly nationalistic orientation. The Filipino people regained their pride, she explained, in the act of expelling Ferdinand Marcos. Having risen to power on the shoulders of a popular revolution, her government does not have to look abroad for support, for the "foreign handout" so critical to Marcos' survival. Even with regard to "that other slavery," the crushing \$26 billion foreign debt, "we look first and foremost to ourselves," she insisted.

AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY

Other members of her regime echoed those thoughts in other settings. Shahani, both in an interview with the *AK* (see page 7) and a meeting with foreign policy experts and press, insisted that it was time for her country to broaden its ties beyond the narrow confines of its relationship with the U.S.

It is time, she claimed, for the Philippines to establish more meaningful ties with the socialist bloc and the Third World countries of the Non-Aligned Movement.

And while Aquino and Reagan, by mutual agreement, avoided all talk of the U.S. bases, Shahani confronted the topic head-on when questioned. "There is a feeling they cannot stay there forever," she told the gathered specialists. "The Philippines is an independent country."

Events back home made the Reagan administration's new posture all the more remarkable. Constitutional Commission delegates, approving two separate measures for the draft document, proclaimed the country nuclear-arms-free and ruled that the next U.S.-R.P. bases treaty has to be approved by plebiscite rather than executive agreement. Both created immediate problems for the bases.

The U.S. has consistently refused to reveal whether or not vessels being serviced at Subic Bay are carrying nuclear weapons.

As to the future plebiscite, "There is no question that this will make it more difficult to gain approval for a new treaty," admitted Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J., a close Aquino advisor and ConCom member.

MESSAGE TO ENRILE

"I don't think for a moment that the Reagan administration has suspended its disbelief in a woman who says that to have peace with the communists you have to love them first," remarked Philippine specialist Richard Kessler of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. "I think they don't have any choice."

In fact, whether the Reagan administration means what it says or not is irrelevant. Winning the hearts of the Washington reactionaries was hardly the goal of the visit. And while it would certainly be useful to receive more financial assistance—particularly in the form of grant aid—the political success or failure of the trip is not to be measured in dollars and cents.

More important is the message Washington's expression of unqualified support, even if insincere, sends to the neo-fascists trying to undermine the Aquino government. This applies specifically to Enrile who is fond of floating talk of a military takeover.

The U.S. government has clearly decided that for now there is no viable alternative to Corazon Aquino. This leaves the new president with greater room to maneuver and more security as she goes about establishing her government.

This hardly means that Enrile can be expected to suddenly cut off the verbal barrage. But with the Reaganites forced to back off from their whining by an extremely popular Aquino, he will have to work much harder. □

Mitra Interview

Continued from page 3

wherever they're found. General Ramos turned around and accepted the government's position. There has not been a single commitment that I made that we did not follow. None of the negotiators has ever been trailed by the military. I exacted this commitment from Ramos and Enrile. If I cannot comply my commitment then I will not be sitting down with them.

With Jose Diokno back in the talks will things go better?

It doesn't really matter who is representing us. It's an impersonal thing. There's no difference if they're talking to me, Diokno, or Guingona.

Does your previous relationship with Satur Ocampo and Antonio Zumel help a lot in the negotiations?

Well, Zumel and Satur are old friends of mine. The talks are relaxed and friendly and we agreed that we shouldn't make any formal records unless we have agreed on things that could be put in writing. Those points we cannot really agree on we'll put down in writing as well. Our side came with plenary powers to negotiate. We asked the same thing of them.

Did the NDF really demand the flying of the flags of both parties and . . .

No, there was no such demand. In fairness to them, they didn't make such demand.

What did they ask for then?

They gave me a draft agreement, with their request that this not be published. So I kept that in confidence. However, I furnished copies to Enrile, Ramos, and the President because everytime I talk to NDF negotiators I report to the President and she calls in Ramos and Enrile for discussions. I've never discussed what these demands were. Enrile discussed them publicly.

Were there points in the draft that both sides could agree on?

Yes. All in all the draft had seven points. The NDF's lawyers asked me to write down my comments but I said, "If I do that, our positions will harden." I sensed that our positions on some issues were too far apart and would not be reconciled, so I suggested that we just talk about it. We talked, I asked them to give me a different draft, taking into account our exchange of views. According to one of the lawyers, Romy Capulong, the differences have been narrowed down to three points, I think. They did not tell me which three points, but said they were going to write these down on paper. But they never gave me the copy.

Will you let the NPA maintain the territories under its control? Where it already has its own political administration?

I don't think the government is prepared to accept that any area of the country would not be under its control. This was the government's position on the recent ambush in Mindanao. The NPA said that in spite of the truce, the government troops went to an area which they controlled. So the NPA ambushed and killed them and the government troops were supposed to be the ones at fault.

With the NDF's rejection of the 30-day ceasefire do you feel optimistic that these talks can work?

Well, not as much as I did at the beginning. I keep insisting that we talk about the President's wish for an immediate ceasefire. They told us that they were willing to agree to a 30-day ceasefire, that they would consult with their people on conditions. And they didn't come back to me. They held a press conference.

One of the problems seems to be the different voices coming from the government side, like Enrile. Can't these voices be controlled?

We were telling the other side that they should not be bothered by this heckling because you cannot control everybody. You know there was that cartoon in the *Daily Star* with Satur and I playing chess. My hair was standing on end and I was pointing at my disappearing chess pieces, while Satur was very relaxed.

I showed this to Satur, he even autographed it. He said, "This is unfair, should bring the pieces back where they were."

Can Cory stop officials like Enrile and Ramos from heckling?

Ramos is not talking.

But the Cory government certainly can apply some pressure on her officials, like Enrile, Ramos and some top brass, to stop the heckling.

Ramos is not talking.

But what about Enrile? The other side would definitely suspect something is fishy if while you're negotiating, here comes Enrile . . .

But all these are all talk. There has not been any violation of any kind of agreement at all. They're talking because the press keeps forcing them to say something.

Does the heckling, the anti-negotiation rhetoric coming from various sources pressure you and President Aquino to be less flexible?

They don't bother us. They don't influence our negotiating position. And that's what we're asking Satur and their lawyers—to

tell us whether there is anything I have committed myself to that has not been followed. We're going to answer to them personally and officially for all that we agree upon. So, anytime we feel we can no longer carry out our commitment, we will not be talking to them.

But when you have someone like Enrile telling the press repeatedly that negotiations weaken the military . . .

Enrile will follow anything the government orders him to do. I'm sure of that. I'm certain of that. He's been told to stop and he has stopped. But he's talking about what the NDF is planning to do, because before I left, I told him and Ramos that our proposal for a ceasefire has been rejected officially.

Is the government proceeding from an overall plan on how to handle the negotiations?

Yes. How to handle the problems, the negotiations and beyond. But we have enough respect for people we're talking to. We cannot come out openly with our plans because we will be undermining them. For example, we cannot openly say that we have a programme for the returnees which is already in place. If we do that, we will be undermining them. We are not trying to dangle this to their members. There are some regional NPA members who wanted to talk to me. I do not want to talk to them, they might think we are undermining their authority. I'm only talking to their leaders. There are at least three NPA regions that are prepared to talk to us. They claim they have control of their own regions. But I want to level with the people I'm talking to and I discourage anybody from talking to these regional leaders. We want Satur and Tony to look this government over, and see whether this government might be able to find answers to the causes of alienation. □

Shahani Interview

Continued from page 7

always tied to the umbilical cord of the United States. We want to evolve a relationship based on mutual respect. I think it's to the interest of the Philippines that we do so.

Deputy Minister Ingles recently upon leaving to observe the Non-Alignment Movement summit made some very positive statements on the concept of non-alignment. Does this signify anything new in Philippine government policy?

We have been an observer in the non-aligned movement for the past seven years and it's nothing new to us. After all, we feel the non-aligned movement is an important group of Third World countries which we can't ignore. We are a poor, underdeveloped country and one of the ways by which we can really develop in a natural way is to link ourselves with the poorer countries. We applied for observer status when the non-aligned met in Cuba. Now, we cannot be a full-scale member because of the presence of the U.S. bases here; our application would be rejected.

In the government, there is a pull toward actual membership in the non-aligned movement?

We will never be accepted as long as we have the U.S. bases in the Philippines. We would be rejected. So what to do with

the U.S. bases?

Non-alignment is interesting because not all members of the non-aligned movement are really that non-aligned. But I believe the majority are, and it is a move on the part of the people in the South, in the developing countries, to get together to see what they need because in union there is strength. Non-alignment politically also means we agree that weak countries should also try to see how they can help each other and economically, an exchange of experience because we have so many similar materials, conditions, attitudes. If we cannot get what we want from the North, from the industrial countries, we have an alternative in the South.

There's what you call a South-South cooperation. It may not always work all the time. But for instance, we need help for the development of our small-scale and medium-scale industries. We don't need to go to the United States to do that when there's India who can supply that technology. Quite often, it is really, I think, even dangerous to link up with the rich countries in terms of technical cooperation because we cannot afford the equipment that are used. So why should we bother with it. And I think a lot of difficulties of the Philippines has come from the fact that we've always geared our requirements to U.S. standards which we cannot afford anyway. So why don't we use the model of a poor country who has also studied it on a scientific basis.

There has been an expression of anti-nuclear sentiment in the Pacific of late—from some of the smaller nations and even from a country as large as New Zealand. How does the government look at the possibility of declaring the country a nuclear-free zone? At ASEAN as a zone of neutrality?

In 1967 when ASEAN was founded, they declared that ASEAN will be a zone of peace, freedom and neutrality. That is a principle which we in the Philippines have

accepted and all of the other countries. Unfortunately, it remains a principle, you see. But the fact is, it is there and the young people are conscious about it.

As for the nuclear issue, perhaps later on there will be more activities that can also lead to awareness of the dangers of nuclear war. I think you find Filipinos now asking, "Are there nuclear weapons stored in Subic and Clark?" I think as days go by there will be greater awareness of the dangers of atomic warfare and resistance to making the Philippines a storehouse of nuclear arms.

There has been some talk of creating a tariff-free zone in the ASEAN by the year 2000. Is this really possible?

It will take a long time. It is similar to a European Economic Community. It will take some time because you have to go product by product. There will be the ASEAN Summit in 1987 and let us see. The difficulty is we raise the same products so naturally it will be a problem, but all of these things take time but we hope to get there. □

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Proud Welcome

Continued from page 9

In the morning Aquino addressed 10,000 cheering people at the University of California, Berkeley Greek Theatre. She was awarded the Berkeley Medal, the highest award bestowed by the University.

In her speech, she made reference to Berkeley's radical tradition and commitment to social change, saying that like the Rev. Jesse Jackson, she was glad that "the Filipinos were on the right side of history."

She added that "student power is only a shadow of people's power" because it took many sectors of society to initiate the tumultuous changes needed for the Philippine struggle.

Also included among her engagements was a visit to John Swett Elementary School in San Francisco where she sat in a classroom and was treated to a performance of songs composed especially for her by the multi-racial student body.

The president and her entourage were later introduced before 4,000 people in a regal reception at San Francisco City Hall complete with a Marine color guard. Mayor Dianne Feinstein presented Aquino with a Key to the City while the crowd was entertained by traditional Philippine songs and dances.

Hundreds of yellow balloons and a shower of yellow confetti completed the gala event. Aquino jokingly said that her daughter had told her late father that they should stay in San Francisco because "even the air conditioning is free."

After the reception she headed for her last visit with the Filipino community at the Moscone Convention Center where 4,000 people bought dinner at \$50 a plate and over a thousand more waited outside for her at a festive support rally organized by the People's Welcome Committee. The dinner was marred by ticket foul-ups (many ticketholders didn't get to eat or were turned away) but Aquino's mere presence helped soothe ill feelings.

'BE A STRONG POLITICAL FORCE'

Aquino told her supporters: "I am as proud of you as I know you are proud of us at home" and warned that there were still dangers to the existence of democracy.

The President explained her efforts at peaceful negotiations with the New People's Army guerillas. "They have not ceased to be Filipinos just because they have become communists. They are still our brothers and sisters."

She encouraged Filipinos to become "a strong political force in your adopted country" and use that force "to influence your adopted country's attitudes towards your mother country." Aquino asked Filipinos to help the economic recovery by "investing some of the wealth you earned in your adopted country back into the Philippines."

who enroll in ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, 4,000 are turned away because classes are insufficient to accommodate new immigrants who want to learn English.

The district head told KPIX-TV in San Francisco that an average of 30,000 immigrants are turned away each year from English classes and, because of funding cuts in adult education, the district does not expect the situation to get any better.

"In their talks about the use of English, the Proposition 63 people have not said anything about their commitment to increasing English language classes," charged Michael Wong of the Asian Law Caucus.

Recognizing that next to race, language is the single most powerful symbol of social privilege or discrimination, David F. Marshall of the University of North Dakota predicts that the passage of English Only amendments could drastically curtail language rights and lead to ethnic strife and even possible violence.

Today's rejuvenation of the nativist movement is mostly "an anti-Hispanic movement when you take all the finery from it," says Marshall, "because Hispanics are the only group whose language could remotely turn the U.S. into a multi-lingual nation."

IMMIGRANTS LEARN FAST

Bilingual education has fueled controversy, not so much because it promotes bilingualism but because it gives some measure of official public status to the political struggle of language minorities, primarily Hispanics, wrote Yale University psychologist Kenji Hakuta (*Mirror of Language: The Debate on Bilingualism*).

Bilingual education openly acknowledges the legitimacy of non-English languages in a centrally important public institution, Hakuta said, and "it appears to threaten the status of English."

Calvin Veltman of the University of Quebec who has studied language shifts extensively among immigrants, said fears that a group could preserve its language over several generations are "unfounded." The California amendment is unnecessary and the arguments advanced by its proponents are silly, he said.

Contrary to the English-Only position, Rand Corporation found that while only half of immigrants have developed a working knowledge of English, virtually all of their grandchildren speak English and more than half of them speak only English.



Children's choir in Moscone Center: Over the rainbow.

'PROUD TO BE HERE'

While she was speaking, the mood outside captured what was probably the common emotional bond Aquino symbolized for Filipinos.

"I'm very proud to be here," said Jose Chua who was carrying his young daughter on his shoulders. Even though he knew he would not even get a glimpse of Aquino, Chua travelled 30 miles by commuter train to be at the rally. "I've never been involved in politics before but Cory really touched me."

While Aquino's speech was being broadcast outside Moscone Center in the cool night air, attentive eyes focused on the loudspeakers and a respectful stillness fell over the hundreds of people on the sidewalks.

"I'm glad to be here, even just to hear her voice," said Aurora Tamparong Mal-

lari who was wearing a yellow jacket and waving a small Philippine flag. It was already 8:30 p.m. and Mallari said she had been there since 2:00.

"Cory's trip was really successful, she accomplished a lot, I have a lot of confidence in her, she is so brilliant." Mallari indicated that she has been in the U.S. since 1969 and has never been back to the Philippines. "I've never lost interest in the Philippines."

While the sparsely attended loyalist demonstration across the street yelled "Cory is a Communist!" A man who identified himself only as Mr. Cunanan remarked, "Cory has brought freedom once again to the Philippines. People can say what they want without fear. Before, even in the villages, people were scared to talk—now they have freedom!" □

English Only

Continued from page 16



Bob Gnaizda

resources and rob the country's "true inhabitants" of their resources.

Erllich's *Population Bomb* is credited with providing the Environmental Fund its guiding principles. The group, which changed its name to Population Environmental Balance, placed an ad in a San Francisco newspaper blaming traffic jams, pollution, increased crime, and high taxes on illegal immigration.

A UNIFYING FACTOR?

Stanford professor Shirley Brice Heath dismisses the argument that language is key in unifying a nation.

"They try to identify language as a carrier of everything else—'You speak my language, you carry my thoughts.' Unfortunately, that is not the reality. In fact, there's a greater range of diversity among English speakers from the very elite upper class in Hyannis Port to the lower class," she argues.

Californians United's Ed Chen said that a common belief in freedom, not language, is the country's social glue. "The measure is contrary to our tradition as a nation of immigrants. It tries to impose conformity of language by punishing those who speak another language."

He disputes allegations that those who don't speak English don't want to learn. "In fact, English language classes are overbooked and there are not enough classes to accommodate those who want to learn," he said.

A study by the Los Angeles Adult School District found that for every 9,000

"People don't become Americans overnight," says Dionisio Santos, a middle-aged Filipino who came to the U.S. in 1966. Unlike his children who speak English with an American accent, Santos says he is still struggling with his. "It takes time and people will just have to be patient," he added.

Veltman believes the English-Only movement is the logical outcome of the characteristic intolerance of the American electorate to the presence of a large group of recent immigrants. He is harsh on the American public, whom he said has not changed in the last 20 years.

Critics of Proposition 63 say that the mere thought of the expected changes in California's demographic landscape is sending chills down the spine of anti-immigrant and racist groups.

One out of every four Californians lives in a household where a language other than English is spoken. By the year 2000 that number is expected to rise to one in three.

By the same year, whites will no longer be a majority in California, according to the Population Council in Washington, D.C. Whites will drop from 70% to 41% of the state's population while Asians and Latinos will make up 51% and Blacks 8%.

Asians will make up about 10% of California's population by the year 2020, according to the Population Research unit of the Finance Department of the State of California. Southeast Asians will take the lion's share of 39% of the Asian population. Filipinos will be 26% while Chinese and Japanese will decline to 13.6% and 5.8% respectively.

Civil rights experts believe there is a concerted effort by conservatives to diffuse an emerging political power bloc in an unstated coalition of minority groups, civil rights groups, labor and the gay movement.

CRITICS GAINING GROUND

Although it started late in the campaign, the Californians United is gaining ground as the November 4 election nears. Officials such as Gov. George Deukmejian, Mayors Tom Bradley (Los Angeles) and Diane Feinstein (San Francisco), Assemblyman Art Agnos, Assembly Speaker Willie Brown, Attorney General John Van de Kamp, and Los Angeles Police Chief Daryl Gates have thrown their support behind the coalition.

The opposition was recently bolstered

by the California Catholic Conference which came out against the initiative, calling it "fundamentally un-American." The conference is an umbrella for the state's 20 archdioceses, which serve 5.7 million Californians.

Financially, Californians United is far behind California English which had spent over \$500,000 to get 900,000 signatures before June to qualify for the November ballot.

Although a recent poll showed that 66% of California voters favor Proposition 63, opponents said that many of the voters are poorly informed about the consequences of the amendment.

"Once educated," said Wong, who cited State Superintendent of Education Bill Honig as an example, "people will switch sides."

Delano Mayor Leonard Velasco, when asked by AK on his stance on Proposition 63 in early September, said that he could vote either way. However, after reading materials provided him by Californians United, Velasco pledged to vote against the proposition in the coming election.

Voting "No" would be essential, Velasco urged, because the proposition is harmful to the people in the community. "Language is an essential tool for people to communicate and carry on their activities."

"Many Filipinos, because of their ability to speak English, may be apathetic. But I am pretty sure if they know that it is more than just affirming the usage of the English language, they will all vote no," Velasco added. □



Delano Mayor Leonard Velasco

'English Only' Proposal

Discrimination Spoken Here

By MADGE BELLO

As Californians go to the polls on November 4, their vote on Proposition 63, the English Only initiative, will be watched carefully by civil rights advocates and conservatives alike all over the country.

Because of its large multi-ethnic population, its history of promoting language rights for minorities and its reputation as a liberal state, California is being used as a testing ground for a more concerted effort nationwide by conservative English-Only forces.

Already, a recent poll showed three out of four voters favor the passage of Proposition 63. If the poll is an indication of how Californians will cast their votes, then California may well be the seventh state in the nation to pass an "English Only" law.

Nevada, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Nebraska, and Virginia have already declared English their official state language.

Proposition 63 seeks to make English the official language of California. It would amend the state's constitution to require the legislature to enact laws that would "preserve and enhance" the role of the English language. In addition, it prohibits the government from taking any action which would "diminish or ignore" the role of English.

Ed Chen, an attorney for the American Civil Liberties Union and one of the spokespersons for Californians United, a statewide coalition of civil rights, minority, and service organizations, said that the proposition which is entitled "English as the Official Language of California" is misleading, dangerous and unfair.

He charged that sponsors of Prop. 63 "are deceiving voters when they declare that the initiative is simply an affirmation that English is our official language."

California Governor George Deukmejian, who spoke out against Prop. 63 recently, said that although he believes a common language is essential to growth, progress, and cohesion in a society, Proposition 63 is not the solution to it. "It is unnecessary, confusing and a counterproductive way to emphasize the importance of common language."

MORE THAN JUST ENGLISH

"No one is disputing that English is already the language used frequently as the medium of official and business communications," said Ron Wakabayashi of the Japanese American Citizens League. "But the initiative is more than just English."

Bob Gnaizda of Public Advocates in San Francisco said Prop. 63 sends a symbolic message: "If you ain't like us, then get out of here."

The measure, which is poorly worded, could be taken to ridiculous extremes he said. "It could encourage thousands of crazy suits that would not be considered frivolous under the interpretation of the law.

"If the proposition passes, does it mean we can't use the word 'crepe' or 'tortilla' in menus?" he seriously wondered.

Monty Manibog, mayor of Monterey Park, a suburb of Los Angeles, said public libraries could be sued because they carry foreign language books. "It's ridiculous. It's very, very wrong."

In areas where similar propositions have been passed, the negative impact is already being felt.

Dade County, Florida, which passed an English Only ordinance in 1980 prohibiting the use of county funds to print bus schedules, property tax notices and even zoo signs in Spanish, is finding out it is not working.

The ordinance is now being rewritten, according to Assistant County Attorney Murray Greenberg. Bilingual services are now provided to the elderly, to patients at the county hospital and in emergency situations, such as hurricane preparedness programs.

Manibog, whose city recently passed an English-only ordinance, said many don't know the ramifications. "It creates fear and resentment." Staff has been cut for Monterey Park's Community Relations Commission and the Commission on the Future of Monterey, despite the fact that the city is 25% Asian and 35% Latino in composition.

BEYOND SYMBOLISM

The ballot measure goes far beyond symbolism, stated Lillian Galedo, director of the Filipino Immigrant Services in Oakland. "It encourages bigotry and breeds intolerance for cultural and language diversity."

Moreover, Prop. 63, she said, will discourage the assimilation of new citizens into American society by denying essential services to people who need them.

Opponents cite numerous services, including some life-saving ones, that could potentially be eliminated with the passage of Proposition 63:

- Interpreters for police, fire, hospital, and emergency services including the 911 telephone operators;
- Vital public service instructions such as brochures informing non-English-speaking parents how to enroll children in public schools;
- Bilingual programs to assist non-English speaking students while they are learning the English language;
- Drivers license tests, fish and game regulations in other languages;
- Private business advertising in lan-

guages other than English.

U.S. English, a backer of California English, the group spearheading Proposition 63, does not hide the real intentions behind the initiative.

In a direct mail campaign it claimed: "They [bilingual movement] have already forced 30 states to use foreign language ballots in national and local elections. If this continues, the next American could well be elected by people who can't read or write English."

Alarmed by the bilingual movement, U.S. English wants to stamp out bilingual education, public and even private services that promote bilingualism. "This amendment is a simple and direct solution to the dangerous spread of 'bilingualism' in our society. And it's long overdue," it declared.

ANTI-IMMIGRANT

Proposition 63 is part of a conservative trend in the state, says Manibog. Galedo agrees, pointing to two other propositions: Proposition 64, which seeks to quarantine AIDS victims, and Proposition 61, which would limit pay increases to public employees.

Others feel that the English-Only proposition is another manifestation of the anti-immigrant sentiment that has been growing in the past decade.

"The Reagan administration's oversimplified solutions to this country's complex social and economic problems have propelled the growth of anti-immigrant sentiments and the rebirth of nativism or national chauvinism," charges the Committee to Defend the Rights of Immigrants and Refugees.

The committee cites the introduction of the Simpson-Mazzoli Immigration Reform Bill in 1981 as the start of a turn to legalize anti-immigrant sentiments. The increase in workplace raids and the refusal of the INS to grant political asylum status to Central American refugees are indications of that trend.

Over the past several years the Reagan administration has restricted legal immigrants' access to public benefits such as Supplemental Security Income, AFDC and Medicare. The undocumented, even though they pay taxes, have been completely shut out of vital benefits including unemployment insurance and public housing.

ENGLISH ONLY MOVEMENT

Hiding behind a campaign to unify the U.S. population through the use of English as a common language, the English Only movement is at its core an anti-immigrant group. It sees immigration and the use of other languages as factors contributing to the decay of American society.

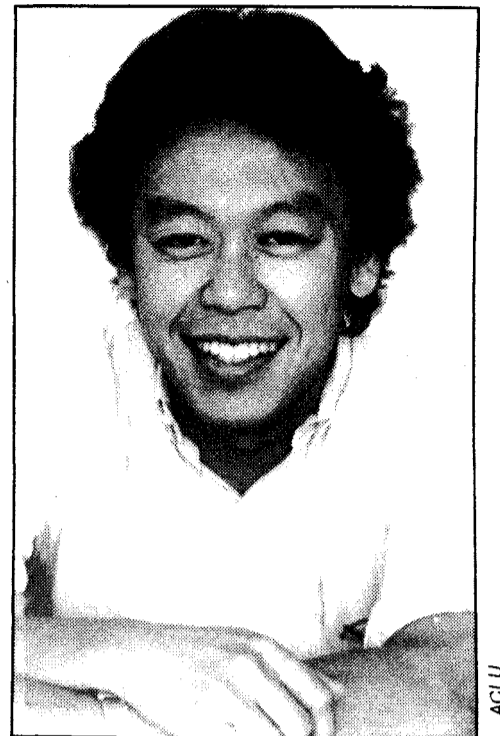
English Only is a well-financed political movement with strong connections to conservative causes. Its leadership interlocks with the immigration restrictionist group "Federation of Americans for Immigration Reform (FAIR)," and the population control group, "Population-Environment Balance."

Although the movement did not gain prominence until the last three years, it had been germinating for 10 years, with individuals like former U.S. senator S.I. Hayakawa and FAIR founder John Tanton at its helm.

Hayakawa, known for his pro-Vietnam war stance while president of San Francisco State University in the mid-1960s, has always dreamed of an English only policy. A semantics specialist and author of *Language in Thought and Action*, Hayakawa, an immigrant from Canada, sees language as the "core of our identity as citizens." The lack of such an identity would result in chaos, he said.

Before his retirement from the U.S. Senate, he introduced an English Only bill but failed to get it passed.

U.S. English was formed in 1983 to fight bilingualism and biculturalism. Its executive director, Gerda Bikales boasts of a membership of over 203,000 with about 92,000 in California. Actor Arnold



Ed Chen

Schwarzenegger is its public spokesman and Norman Cousins and Walter Cronkite serve on its advisory board.

Apart from campaigning to have English declared the official language of the U.S., the group has lobbied against bilingual education and voting rights bills and against licensing applications for Spanish language broadcasts.

Stanley Diamond, head of California English, said that their movement is now launching a campaign into the private sector. He said that they will do everything to stop companies from advertising in languages other than English. Some of the companies targeted include Philip Morris and MacDonald's.

U.S. English is actively working to amend the state constitutions in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Idaho, Maryland, Missouri, New York, Texas, and Washington State to include English Only provisions. It also supported the passage of Proposition O (eliminate bilingual ballot in San Francisco) and Proposition 38 (eliminate bilingual ballot in California).

CONSERVATIVE ECOLOGISTS

A new breed of conservative environmentalists—or human ecologists—make up the backbone of the U.S. English movement.

U.S. English co-founder John Tanton was a board member of Zero Population Growth before he founded FAIR in 1979. Tanton, an ophthalmologist from Petoskey, Michigan, sees a link between ecology and the English language.

But Tanton seems not half as interested in preserving clean air as he is in preserving the American status quo as an endangered species. He believes that current immigration laws are too liberal, and wants immigration reforms stricter than those proposed by the Simpson-Mazzoli bill.

Increased immigration, he argues, not only strains the country's resources but also increases the number of people who do not speak English.

The conservative environmentalists are influenced by the writings of PEB board members William Paddock and Garrett Hardin and FAIR board member Paul Erlich.

Paddock has written extensively on population explosion in the Third World. After studying the population problem in Central America in the 1960s, he concluded that the best way to stem population growth is to have forced birth control and forced sterilization.

A professor of human ecology at the University of California at Santa Barbara, Hardin propounds the "life boat ethics" in his 1977 book *The Limits of Altruism*. Each country's resources are finite, he says, and population growth through immigration would deplete these

Continued on page 15



Bilingual information will be eliminated by Proposition 63.