

ang KATIPUNAN

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FACLA REFORM MOVEMENT ANNOUNCES SLATE

As the Filipino-American Community of Los Angeles (FACLA) December election nears, the local Filipino community is beginning to take a more critical posture towards the candidates and their platforms.

After three years of turmoil under the reign of Antonio San Jose, most community members are keen to the unresolved issues and problems plaguing the community.

The main opposition to San Jose, represented by the FACLA Reform Movement, has recently finalized their platform and slate. Leading advocates of the Reform slate are: Salvador "Buddy" Paja for President; Remedios Geaga, Amparo Paat and Greg Santillan for Vice-Presidents; and Board of Trustees candidate Jaime Geaga.

According to the Committee to Reform FACLA (CRF), the main stress of their campaign is issues.

Given the growing and immediate needs of the large Los Angeles Filipino community, there is a concrete need to have an organization which can play a central role in serving the community.

CRF candidates expressed their concern against vote-buying and outside interference in the December 2 elections.

FACLA REFORM MOVEMENT SLATE

SALVADOR PAJA
President
REMEDIOS GEAGA
AMPARO PAAT
GREG SANTILLAN
Vice-President
REMY GALEDO-REYES
Recording Secretary
BEN YANTO
Asst. Recording Secretary

ROSARIO BUGTONG
JAIME GEAGA
SENCIO GUZMAN
AMPARO PAAT
FRANK RACIN
VINCE REYES, JR.
GREG SANTILLAN
Board of Trustees
FERNANDO FERNANDO
Sergeant-at-Arms

FACLA's Community Center: Reform slate challenges the old politics.

One CRF spokesperson, Greg Santillan remarked: "Real changes in the community can only come from involvement by FACLA members. Our platform attempts to make the FACLA accountable to the community. We believe our goals and objectives are sensible and achievable. But to get our program off the ground, we need the support of FACLA members December

2." Santillan further expressed confidence that the community will expose the present corrupt administration.

CRF spokespersons stressed that their platform is a result of closely examining the needs of the community, and the formulation of realistic proposals for implementing direct services and support. □

COMMUNITY VICTORY One-Hour, Week Diversion for Aquino

By Willie Briones
AK Correspondent

San Francisco—"I'm glad it's all over—we've shown them that they can't push us around," exclaimed Hermie Aquino who was victimized by the city's police decoy program. Aquino was responding to the recent ruling by the court to grant a one-hour, one week diversion for Aquino.

"It was the display of community support," declared Wilma Cadorna, spokesperson for the defense committee for Aquino, "that pressured the court to give a favorable ruling. It is a victory for the community because we have shown that strong public opinion and support are the final decisive factors in bringing about justice."

The ruling was regarded as a political victory; a concession by the district attorney's office acknowledging that the grand theft charges against Aquino were without basis. "This is the same as

(continued on page s-2)

The Committee to Reform FACLA Program

SENIOR CITIZENS:

Senior Citizens are the forefathers of our community, the pioneers of our present. Their legacy is our history; their future is our responsibility. The problems of the aged—health, nutrition, limited social and recreational activities, transportation, fixed-income, facilities, must be addressed.

Our goal is to form **Project Manong**—a task force which will study the needs of our senior citizens and implement programs such as cultural programs, recreational activities, and health check-ups. If elected, our first priority will be to renovate the blighted FACLA Senior Citizens house into a safe, clean and decent facility which will meet City building code standards.

YOUTH AND STUDENTS:

The youth of our community is the hope of our future. Yet Filipino youth face the difficulties and challenges of growing up as a minority in the United States. Cultural shock, adjustment, and identity crisis are common. Problems with drugs, gangs and violence threaten our youth.

We propose to form a **Youth Advocacy Project** comprised of youth and parents which will provide young people with needs, services, and facilities essential to their productivity in the community such as sports leagues, school tutorial programs, drop-in nights, rap groups, dances and cultural activities.

PROMOTE OUR CULTURE & HERITAGE

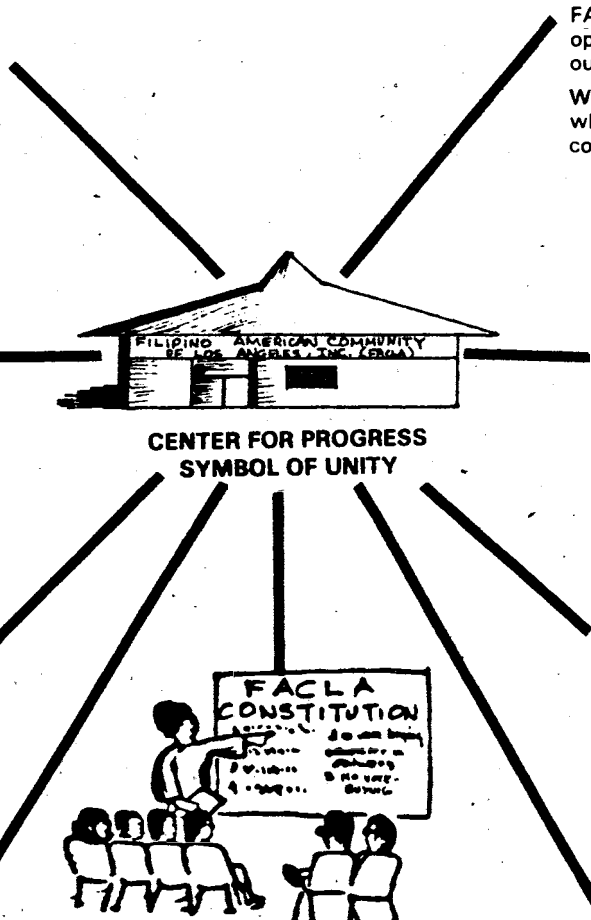
Filipino culture is a rich blend of diverse influences. We believe our heritage should be preserved and popularized thus instilling pride in our community.

We propose to form a **Filipino-American Cultural and Historical Project** to seek concrete ways to promote our culture such as through Filipino history classes, cultural dances, and activities in art, music and theater.

WELCOME THE NEW IMMIGRANTS:

30,000 Filipinos enter our shores yearly. A large percentage settle in the Los Angeles area. The need to become acquainted with our city and get settled would be an appreciated service.

If elected we propose to form a **Welcoming Committee** which would serve as an information and referral center for our newly-arrived Kababayans.



REFORM THE FACLA:

Presently, FACLA is in administrative and financial turmoil. First on our agenda would be to rebuild the FACLA by reviving its membership through their participation in the process of instituting positive reform and programs.

To do this we propose to form a **Constitutional Committee** to strengthen the institution with the goal of eliminating the ills (corruption, vote-buying, financial scandals) which have plagued our community and undermined the democratic process.

SOCIAL CONCERNS COMMITTEE:

There are over 150,000 Filipinos in Los Angeles County. As the fastest growing minority community we are confronted with many needs. Last year alone, we witnessed issues affecting nurses, CPA's, county employees and students. FACLA can play a major role in shaping public opinion and applying community pressure to assist our Kababayans.

We propose to form a **Social Concerns Committee** which will oversee our participation in these concerns.

MEDICAL WORKERS:

Medical workers such as doctors, nurses, medical technicians comprise a large proportion of our community, the largest number being nurses. Although there is a shortage of medical personnel in America, Filipino nurses in particular have encountered many problems such as licensure, the CGFNS exam and other immigration-related problems.

If elected, we will support the medical workers and offer FACLA's resources to promote their interests. For example, we will offer FACLA facilities for low-cost review classes in cooperation with interested existing community and nursing groups.

SEEKING PUBLIC & PRIVATE FUNDS:

We believe the Federal, State and local government has a responsibility to the community. As taxpayers, we are entitled to our share of benefits of government revenue. In addition private funds may be available for our benefit.

If elected we pledge to form a **Grantsmanship Committee** to seek funding from such sources as the Los Angeles Bicentennial Project, the Los Angeles Neighborhood Improvement Project, Municipal Arts Department.

CHILDCARE:

For many families in our community, childcare is an essential yet expensive need. For many it is difficult to afford reliable childcare with someone you can trust.

We propose to form a **Community Childcare Committee** in cooperation with existing groups, with the objective of providing high-quality low-cost childcare operated by community members sensitive to the cultural needs of Filipino families.

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION

COMMENTARY

A Great Day for the Community

By Wilma Cadorna
KDP Regional Executive Board

Tuesday, Nov. 6 was a great day for the Filipino community here in San Francisco. Not only did we hear the good news about Dr. Alona's charges being dropped (see page 1), but justice was also delivered to Hermie Aquino! After three months of fighting an uphill battle, community pressure finally forced the San Francisco Police Department to relinquish the frame-up charges against Aquino and admit defeat.

Aquino was "sentenced" to a diversion "penalty" of one hour within one week, a token fine that even the judge knew essentially amounted to an acquittal.

How did we do it? What was the secret? Actually, there is no secret at all. In both the cases of Dr. Alona and Hermie Aquino, it was the unity and determination of the people's movement. This victory was not achieved through bribery or having friends in City Hall pulling strings. Neither was it won by an expensive big-shot lawyer who had friends in court or found technical loopholes in the law to get Hermie off the hook.

This victory was not won the rich man's way, but the people's way. Hermie was innocent and the defense movement consistently maintained this position. Through our own efforts, we analyzed the issue, studied the forces we were up against (like the SFPD and D.A.), and matched that with our own strength. Petitions, leaflets, publicity, letters, mailgrams and delegations—it's like the drops of rain that come together into streams until it flows into a river, flooding down the mountainside with tremendous force.

Yes, it was this type of people's strength that the SFPD and District Attorney were up against! So, it's no wonder that they were forced to give in.

And what brought the people

together? Aquino and hundreds of South of Market residents came together to fight not only an individual injustice against Hermie, but to fight against the victimization of their whole neighborhood. For some time the "decoy program" has been going on in the South of Market area and countless numbers of unknown victims, like Hermie, have been trapped by it. The police have said they are doing this to protect older people from muggers and violent crimes. But a mugger is someone who is willing to use force to take money from another person, not someone who finds money on the street!

If the police were really sincere in their supposed crime prevention goals, then street lighting should be improved, foot patrols maintained and senior citizen escort programs increased. But no, none of these things have been done. Instead, the police create a situation that encourages petty crime and they are so intent on "catching criminals" that they blatantly lie about it. Remember, Hermie found the money on the sidewalk—in full view of the police who later accused him of stealing it!

The police would never go into places like Pacific Heights or the Sunset District with this decoy program. They would never get away with the set-up they run. We all know that. But they do go into poor neighborhoods, like South of Market, and because the people there are mostly new immigrants unaware of their rights, the police further exploit their ignorance! So who would believe the word of a "criminal" against the police? No one...that's why most victims of the decoy program do not fight this injustice and plead guilty.

What was different in this case was that Hermie wanted to fight this injustice and he did not stand alone. The Aquino victory is a victory for all of us, especially the hundreds of South of Market residents who stood together in our common struggle for justice. □

Sacramento Needs New Leadership

By Maxi Villones

Although CAR (Caucus to Advance and Reform FCSV) has been around for only a few short weeks, it has been long enough to convince me that it was the right thing to do.

For most of its 20-some years of existence, FCSV has done little for the community outside of a few yearly social activities. It was only three years ago when progressive forces in FCSV initiated more relevant activities and reached out to the whole community, especially new immigrants, that FCSV began to perk up with life. Now an ad hoc grouping of progressive forces has formed CAR, and I think its time that change is very much needed in FCSV.

FIGHT FOR OUR RIGHTS

I became even more convinced of CAR's goals and the need to reform FCSV after reading about the Ku Klux Klan violence in North Carolina when a group of white racists opened fire on an anti-Klan rally, killing five people. These kinds of racist attacks are serious problems and we must be prepared to fight them.

In a period in the U.S. when inflation, taxes and unemployment are spiralling,

dissatisfaction mounts and people look around for easy answers. This atmosphere is fertile ground for racist and anti-alien attitudes to flower, resulting in scapegoating minorities for the problem.

The Bakke decision and Prop. 13 are clear examples of attitudes such as "unqualified minorities are taking our jobs," or "we are wasting our money on unimportant community programs when those people should just go out and get a job like everybody else."

And recently, the cases of the Narciso-Perez and Dr. Alona frame-ups are clear examples to the Filipino community that new immigrants are especially vulnerable to these attacks. Behind their frame-up lurked the attitude that Filipinos, being trained in a "foreign country," were incompetent and therefore responsible for the death of their patients. At the height of this anti-alien hysteria was the commonly held fear that "American patients could die because we were entrusting their lives to inferiorly trained Filipino medical professionals."

Friends, it's just like the 1930's in many ways. Here we are in the midst of a deepening recession with the American people desperately looking for an end to

DIVERSION FOR AQUINO . . .



Members of the Aquino defense committee emerge from a meeting with Charles Bryer, Assistant D.A.

continued from page 1

dismissing the case," responded William Leong of the city's Pretrial Diversion Project.

The defense committee also explained that the ruling was preferable to pursuing the case through a trial where court fees, legal counsel fees, and other financial expenses would have added to the mental anguish and emotional burden of Aquino and his family.

The defense committee also noted that the district attorney's office had always pressed charges on cases involving the decoy program. At the same time, the diversion ruling was also considered very rare because the diversion project requires a minimum of three months of diversion instead of the one hour one week. A special court order was necessary to effect such a ruling.

Aquino, as reported exclusively in the *Ang Katipunan* three months ago, was charged with stealing \$4.00 from a police officer who was posing as a delinquent. But like other victims of the decoy program, Aquino picked up the money from the sidewalk a few feet away from the "bum."

When he attempted to return it to the slumped figure, realizing it might possibly belong to him, Aquino was arrested and charged with grand theft-felony (later reduced to grand theft-misde-

meanor).

The residents of South of Market, Aquino's own neighborhood, where the decoy program is being effected, responded overwhelmingly to defend Aquino. The predominantly Filipino immigrant community in the downtown area, circulated petitions, attended community meetings, went door-to-door on an educational campaign, confronted the assistant district attorney in charge of the case, donated money, attended the court hearings, and showed that injustice could be fought only with a militant and broad support.

"This is a very good example for the community," added Cadorna, also a member of KDP, "an experience and learning process on how to assert our rights, especially as minorities in this country—giving a precedent on how to handle other issues like this in the future." □

VICTORY CELEBRATION
EVERYONE IS WELCOME

A merienda celebration will be set within the next two weeks from press time; everyone is welcome, most especially the supporters.

For more information, call 863-5691 or 239-4721.

their worsening economic conditions. Yet the conditions are even worse back home in the Philippines, continually pushing people out of the country to the U.S. to seek better opportunities elsewhere. In the meantime, U.S. big business encourages the relaxation of immigration to take in more foreign-trained workers, but to use them as cheap labor. Yes, another set-up for exploitation!

RELEVANT PEOPLE'S ORGANIZATION

Unfortunately, the Filipino community itself is not very well prepared to fight the racist upsurge brought on by these new conditions. Our organizations are mostly social, and those that should play a more active role do not even recognize that these injustices exist. Not only that, but they do not unite our people nor meet the community's basic needs.

We need a relevant Filipino community-organization that unites all three waves and concretely addresses their needs, combating social isolation and cultural shock and fighting discriminatory attacks.

FCSV in Sacramento is a good example of this very problem. On the one hand, FCSV as a broadly defined organization is in the best position to take up these problems. But its membership and orientation is too narrow; it is mainly social, dominated by second wave Filipinos without any real plans to reach out to third wave Filipinos.

In addition, its leadership has rested

complacent in the face of these new conditions and in fact, acted as a fetter against the efforts of others to change FCSV. Despite the endorsement of FCSV for the Far West Convention or the Philippine National Day, for example, the leadership did not lift a finger to play an active role in these activities.

That is why CAR has been formed—to give a new approach to FCSV and transform it into an organization for all Filipinos to meet our various needs. And behind this new approach is also a new criteria for leadership itself. We in CAR believe that the leadership in FCSV must be:

1. willing to recognize social injustices and be bold and committed to take up controversial issues;
2. sensitive to the needs of the whole community, especially the new immigrants;
3. assertive to challenge the colonial mentality of passivity that has traditionally held back Filipinos in fighting for our democratic rights;
4. and lastly, to be part of the community and not hold oneself above others because of one's leadership position; this also means being able to work with different kinds of people and bring everyone in the community together.

CAR aspires to these goals and we are committed to accomplishing them. The struggle to change from the old to the new will be a difficult one, but a necessary step for us to take if the Filipino community is to advance. □

SEATTLE REGION

PROBLEMS OF IMMIGRANTS MUST BE ADDRESSED

By: David Della, Silme Domingo and Leni Marin

The continuous stream of recent immigrants into Seattle has once again brought to the forefront, a multitude of problems that the Filipino community must begin to address.

The problems of cultural, social and economic adjustment are not new ones, but are "part and parcel" of each new set of immigrants that arrive daily to the shores of the United States.

To speak a bit more specifically, most of us at one time or another, can remember the hardships our parents experienced in attempting to find a job and a decent place to live only to be rebuffed because of the color of their skin, and the accent in their language.

To be rejected by the mainstream of society is a very painful experience, to say nothing of the fact that whatever social services, public entertainment spots or social organizations that existed at that time also refused to accept these "brown foreigners."

But times have changed...or have they?

We can all come to agreement that our generation does not suffer from the same kind of open hostility, isolation and rejection (in such blatant forms) as did our parents.

We can all come to agreement, that through the course of many years, the Filipino community in the United States has matured, grown, and become more conscious of the growing problems that

alert itself to the pressing needs and be able to inject into the community a sense of unity and organization needed to take on these problems.

In Seattle for example, in the 1930's, past FCC president Pio DeCano successfully challenged a state law that prohibited Filipinos from owning property in the State of Washington.

Furthermore, in the 1960's, Filipinos played an active role in the nationwide effort to rescind Title II of the U.S. Internal Security Act, (a law which legally maintained the use of concentration camps similar to those used in World War II to incarcerate over 112,000 Japanese Americans.)

In the more recent past, members of the Seattle community have played an active role in such issues as the campaign to defend nurses, Narciso and Perez; the campaign to support Dr. Bienvenido Alona, and a number of immigration cases involving SSI beneficiaries.

Since 1972, with the imposition of martial law in the Philippines and the growing repression our kababayans face back home, Filipinos here have demonstrated great concern for the many relatives, friends and family that face the day to day hardships under the repressive regime.

We are positive there are countless other examples that can be elaborated on, but what remains is the need to call to attention a leadership body that will attend to, seek out, address, and be able to organize around such concerns facing the Filipino community in Seattle.

The question of leadership should not be seen as just another "high-sounding" position that concerns itself with cotillions, dances, beauty queen contests, or hobnobbing with elected government officials.

still confront our people. And we can all come to agreement that in one way or another, the Filipino community still needs to develop the kind of leadership necessary to take the problems that we all face, channel those problems in the best direction and effectively deal with them.

This lack of leadership has become more glaring as problems continue to arise. As working people in America Filipinos too, face the day to day problems of increasing prices caused by inflation and a lowering of wages caused by the devaluation of the U.S. dollar.

As minorities in America, Filipinos still face discrimination in their places of employment because of racism. Especially vulnerable are the newly arrived immigrants, elderly on fixed incomes and the unemployed who have been laid off by faltering industries, and many more.

The question of leadership and the responsibilities that come along with that recognition should not be seen as just another "high sounding" position that only concerns itself with cotillions, dances, beauty queen contests or hobnobbing with elected government officials.

Leadership is a position that is acutely aware of the pressing problems of the whole community; is able to look at the Filipino community with an open mind;

Our past experiences have shown that Filipinos are prepared and willing to be organized to actively take up the concerns of our people.

What is needed to harness this positive desire are responsible community leaders, and a "standing," not a "Task Force" committee that will facilitate the immediate response to these crucial problems that our newly arrived immigrants, elderly and youth face.

Several months ago, members of the Filipino Community of Seattle's Council proposed the establishment of a "Social Concerns Committee." Within these past few weeks, efforts have been made to firmly define and give direction to this committee.

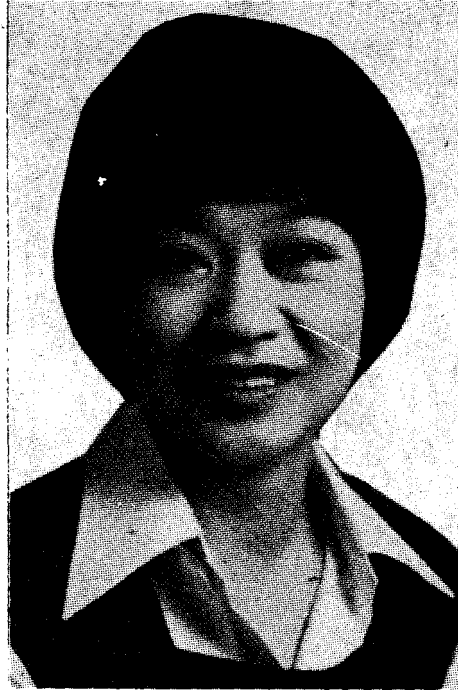
To us, these efforts are a positive step in the beginnings of a stable committee within the FCC that will lend continuity and consistency in addressing the concerns of the Filipino community here.

We feel that by the creation and establishment of the Social Concerns Committee it will allow the FCC to be the kind of organization that is responsive and in touch with the Seattle Filipino community.

Now the issue at hand is whether or not the Filipino community of Seattle is ready and willing to support the establishment of the Social Concerns Committee, or sit quietly by? The challenge is there, the decision is ours. □

COMMENTARY

LOCAL FILIPINA WINS COUNCIL SEAT



Dolores Sibonga, recently elected to the City Council.

Commentary by Elaine Ko

Seattle's first Filipina to be elected to the City Council, Dolores Sibonga, was swept into her position, defeating her opponents by 13,000 votes.

After serving for four months last year on the Council, Sibonga's bid relied heavily on her name and on being a minority, mother and lawyer.

Sibonga joins an unpromising mixture of Old Guards, Stan Smith and George Benson, Moderates Paul Kraabel, Jeannette Williams, Michael Hildt and Norm Rice; and conservative Jack Richards. The newspapers labelled Sibonga as a liberal. However, some of her recent positions are more toned to the appetites of conservative real estate developers and business interests.

Sibonga's victory was not easy. Bob Moffett, a former policeman, gave her a hard race which gave an indication where Seattle's voters stood. The lone supporter of rent control, Mark Stensader, lost badly to Conservative Richards.

Many of those who voted want to see a tough government "which will scrutinize every tax dollar spend and scrutinize how much government intervenes to control the dramatic housing prices in Seattle." This translates into severe cutbacks of social, health, employment services for the poor and less control on the rising rents, unjust evictions, and demolitions clearing the way for commercial developers. Sibonga will have to contend with local government's general posture of "do nothing but if you do something, cut back on those CETA funds, etc."

Newly elected Councilman Jack Richards captures it: "Don't look for any big changes from me. I am a Conservative."

Activists criticized Sibonga for running an "image campaign," but she maintains that she was clearcut on all the issues at hand, from defunding the Interstate 90 Project and police officers, to supporting affirmative action for city employees. Sibonga generally ran on "I don't support rent control," but she did change her view from time to time. It is not clear exactly what her latest feelings are on the issue of controlling rents in the city, where rents have risen by 34% over the last year. She now says she will look at specific rent control proposals.

A HOUSING CRISIS

Sibonga, like other Councilpersons, has acknowledged the severe housing crisis with a vacancy rate of less than 2% (while 5% is legally considered a "housing crisis"). But her proposals, similar to other members, will not make much of a dent in the problem.

On building new low-income housing, the Council supports the modest goal of 300 units per year, while 5,000 elderly and poor persons wait on Seattle Housing Authority's public housing list. Of the new programs that are proposed, the majority will continue to pay well over 25% of their income in slated rents or high mortgages for the bank. Even new housing financed by low interest loans will have rents over \$300.

Another proposal by Sibonga and other members is to stimulate the private market to build housing, especially multi-family structures. With interest rates nearing 12%, developers have virtually stopped building high income condominiums for the time being, not to mention building low income housing. There is a reported 39% vacancy in condominiums because of over-reaction to the Boeing Co. "boom" which is bringing thousands of professionals into the city. Developers cannot afford to build and professionals cannot afford to buy the condominiums.

What about landlord-tenants disputes? Sibonga proposes rent mediation—landlords and tenants will sit down together and negotiate over the rent dispute. This was tried in Los Angeles, Boston, San Francisco, and other cities and has failed in all of them. To base rent mediation on voluntary cooperation of landlords will bring the same situation Seattle is in now. Landlords were asked to keep the rent increases to seven percent (concurrent with the Consumer Price Index) but instead increased rents by eight percent in three months' time.

Also, rent mediation was tried by Councilman Hildt during the "Paul Revere" rent increase problem last May. It was the organized reaction by tenants, not mediation, that brought the rents down.

TENANTS HOMEOWNERS PROPOSE ACTION

The candidates who won this election (Sibonga, Smith, Rice, Kraabel and Richards) will spend some time on their victory "honeymoon." Meanwhile, tenants and homeowners are planning a strategy to hit the City Council with a People's Housing Problem. This program will achieve the following: 1) stabilize rent and stop rent gouging; 2) control skyrocketing home ownership costs; 3) prevent unjust evictions and provide security and stability to the renting population; 4) stimulate the construction of affordable housing and extend the loss of structurally-sound housing; 5) limit the conversion of apartments into condominiums; 6) promote responsible investment while taking the speculation out of the housing market.

Whether Council members will support this comprehensive program is yet to be seen. But the issue will be hotly pursued, promising to leave no one "untouched." Either they are on the side of struggling homeowners and tenants, or on the side of developers. □

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION

San Jose Will Not Run in FACLA Elections

After two and a half years of division and strife in FACLA, Antonio San Jose, three-term FACLA President, finally surrendered to public pressure by not seeking renomination to any office in the upcoming FACLA elections on December 2, 1979. The main contenders in this year's election are Jose Baldovino, Atty. Bert Mendoza, and Atty. Salvador Paja. San Jose did not press his candidacy at the November 11 nominations meeting of FACLA.

Jaime Geaga, one of the main spokespersons of the Committee to Reform FACLA, described this development as a major victory for the community and the members of FACLA. While earlier efforts to demand San Jose to step down failed—such as the Filipino-American Senior Citizens' resolution demanding his resignation early this year and numerous other petitions with the same demand—this withdrawal is clearly the result of his growing isolation and lack of support among the members. Geaga stated, "San Jose's resignation in fact is long overdue. He has maintained himself in power mainly through extortion and force and this dictatorial grip has finally begun to loosen under his exposure by the opposition and public pressure."

Reviewing the past two and a half years, San Jose was supposedly "voted" into FACLA as president in two elections that were subsequently nullified by two court decisions for gross irregularities and anomalies. New elections were ordered in both cases. However, San Jose maliciously sabotaged the implementation of both decisions by appealing them and tying it up in the

courts indefinitely.

FACLA has also been corrupted with financial mismanagement disclosed by reports showing around \$22,000 unjustifiably spent by San Jose to pay for his personal legal expenses in two court suits that voided his election. Lastly, he is also charged with undemocratic practices, neglect for parliamentary procedures, disregarding the rights of the membership, monopolizing meetings, and provoking the membership to more anger and frustration.

Aside from these negative factors, outside interference has significantly contributed to the internal strife of FACLA and has always posed a major threat to the stability of the organization. San Jose would dangle plans for a \$20 million building to replace the current center but would never reveal the money sources of such plans nor the strings attached to it. He disclosed only that the Philippine consular offices would be housed in it.

San Jose's decision not to seek renomination has already begun to restore a new sense of life within FACLA. According to one member, he stated that "the FACLA is very important to all Filipinos in LA and as such it cannot be the property of any one individual, or for power-hungry opportunists, or self-serving groups out only to further their own ends and aims."

The rise and demise of San Jose serves as a sober lesson for all seeking to be future leaders of FACLA. Geaga stated, "This has been a bitter experience but this has served to sharpen our vigilance for future 'San Jose's' that may come along." □



San Jose: At last bidding farewell.

San Diego Says No to CONPUSO

For the past few months, Consul General Armando Fernandez has been making a bid to form a local CONPUSO (Confederation of Philippine-U.S. Organizations) in the San Diego area.

His intentions are so much in earnest that he went to great lengths to impress the San Diego Filipino community. Fernandez provided a chauffeur-driven limousine to a few select families on the evening of an August 14 banquet, fully paid for by the Philippine government. There, he formally announced his plans for the formation of the CONPUSO in San Diego.

Despite these costly efforts, two key San Diego organizations have recently voted not to join the CONPUSO. The United Filipino Association (UPA), an organization known for its leading and active involvement in the community activities was one such organization. At

its Oct. 21 meeting, members voted against joining the CONPUSO, stating that the CONPUSO's link with the consulate was suspect as to its intended purpose.

The sentiment of the body was that it did not feel it was appropriate to court foreign intervention into community affairs. One member likened the consulate to guitar strings stating that individual consulates may represent different strings, but essentially all play the same tune composed by Philippine dictator Marcos.

The fact that there is already an existing umbrella organization for San Diego Filipino organizations (COPAO) was another factor. Finally members questioned the foundation of the proposal. "What would the unity be based on?" Spokespersons for the proposed organization left this matter

vague.

COPAO (Council of Filipino American Organizations) was the other leading San Diego Organization that rejected the CONPUSO proposal at its Nov. 5th executive board meeting. There, an overwhelming majority seemed unenthusiastic about the idea.

What seemed clear from both organizations' positions was the issue of martial law which could not be separated from the question of the Consulate-linked CONPUSO. Despite Consul Fernandez's statement that the CONPUSO was his "personal project," members of the community found it impossible to separate the two: the consulate represented by Fernandez and martial law.

The fact that the KDP San Diego chapter and other anti-martial law community organizations were not

among those invited to the Aug. 14 banquet also lent itself to the impression that the martial law issue was indeed a factor in the formation of the CONPUSO.

As Paul Supriada, co-chairperson of the Anti-Martial Law Alliance (AMLA) stated: "If we support the consulate's activities, then it is like supporting the Marcos dictatorship."

Is the CONPUSO a vehicle for unity or a vehicle for getting community support for the New Society? At least for the San Diego community, it will take more than Consulate "razzle-dazzle" events to convince everyone that the "New Unity Movement" is not much more than a hypocritical play to garner unsuspecting support for the Marcos dictatorship. □

500 MILE ISLAND: The Philippine Nuclear Reactor Deal

A comprehensive critique of the imperialist scheme to peddle and dump nuclear technology to the Third World.

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