

## VER AND BOSS IN VERY TIGHT SPOT

Stories on pages 8 and 9

More from Jose Maria Sison:

### 'The Stalemate is Likely to Happen'

(Not long ago, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile said in a speech that the Communist-led New People's Army is expected to reach a "stalemate" vis-a-vis the Armed Forces of the Philippines in the next three to five years. The term "strategic stalemate," ironically, came into current usage from the vocabulary of the revolutionary left. The Philippine News and Features interviewed for a reaction political detainee Jose "Joma" Sison, alleged chairman of the outlawed Communist Party of the Philippines at the time of his arrest in November 1977. The interview with Sison was conducted in a courtroom during a recess in a recent hearing of his subversion case and by letters through legal intermediaries.)

**PNF:** Philippine Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, in a recent statement, said that the NPA will reach a stalemate vis-a-vis the government's armed forces within the next three to five years. Do you agree with this view? Could you describe the characteristics of such a stalemate?

**JMS:** Enrile's forecast is likely to happen. At the cumulative rate the NPA is gaining strength, it shall have control or influence over about 50% of the 1,500 municipalities in the country and will be able to easily concentrate companies and even battalions to wipe out AFP units in most parts of the country.

Right now, the NPA can wipe out or disarm entire AFP platoons in various parts of the country. In the strategic stalemate stage, the annihilation of enemy companies or battalions in single operations or campaigns will become commonplace. There will be repeated temporary seizures of big towns, provincial capitals and small cities to wipe out or disarm AFP units.

In Metro Manila and other big cities, the fascists will be in mortal fear of the armed revolution and will tend to concentrate increasingly larger forces for immediate protection. Wide areas of the country will thus be left open to the revolutionary forces.

The split among the big comprador-landlords will become more and more bitter and violent. The unity and strength of the broad democratic movement, both underground and aboveground, will grow rapidly as never before.

The economy will deteriorate in the areas controlled by the regime. The regime will be unprecedentedly corruption-ridden and will have trouble scrounging for funds and resources for its parasitic military forces.

But in widening areas of the countryside, land reform and production campaigns will be carried out by the revolutionaries. There will be an effective boycott of goods imported from enemy sources in favor of goods locally produced as well as those imported from friendly sources.

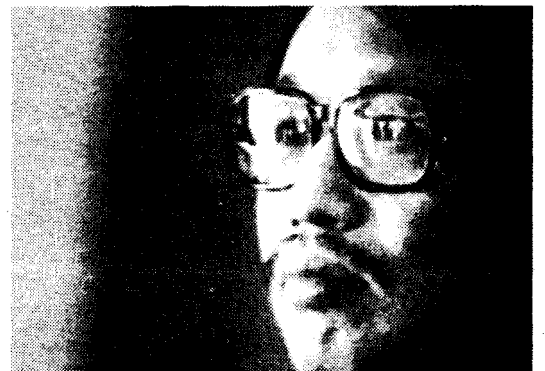
**PNF:** Will this stalemate occur without present conditions changing? What conditions do you see as necessary to reach it?

**JMS:** The revolutionary party of the proletariat (the Communist Party of the Philippines) must strengthen itself ideologically, politically and organizationally. Reaching the stalemate is not simply a matter of building the people's army and winning battles. There are comprehensive requirements.

There should be tens of thousands of cadres well versed in theory, experienced in the mass movement and other practical work, and competent in work at various territorial levels and various spheres.

There should be at least 200,000 cadres and members (of the Party) at the basic level of the branch, in about 50% of the 40,000 barrios, and in the mass organizations of workers, peasants, fishermen, youth, women, children, cultural activists, and others.

Organs of democratic power and mass organizations must exist where the Party and the New People's Army are. The united front should develop further in both urban and rural areas and grow even in the areas still securely controlled by the regime.



Under the leadership of the proletariat, the NPA should build sufficient forces to launch military campaigns of regional and national scope. The guerilla fronts and zones will have to multiply and link up.

Continued on page 7

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# FOUR MORE PERILOUS YEARS

One of the most crucial presidential elections in U.S. history is now over and Ronald Reagan won it by an overwhelming—and sickening—landslide. Reagan swept 60% of the popular vote and grabbed more than 500 electoral votes to Walter Mondale's pitiful 13. The latter won only in Minnesota, his home state, and in the almost all-Black District of Columbia where he garnered 85% of the vote. The whole country has shifted sharply to the right.

The Democrats hardly had a chance. This country's ruling circles and institutions took a decided move to the right and backed Reagan. The media hyped his much-vaunted charisma, and vision of an America always ready for war in defense of its "traditional values." Reagan was obviously helped by a temporary economic recovery which he was quick to pass off as the start of a permanent condition of prosperity.

Obviously, the majority of white American voters—including those who have been hurt by Reagan's first four years—bought that rightwing vision and unceremoniously ignored Mondale's center-right alternative. The New Right, with Reagan in the lead, has gained more initiative and will definitely use his landslide as a mandate to pursue the most reactionary of policies in the domestic and international fields.

## ROUGH YEARS AHEAD

For people who clamor for peace and justice here and around the world, the next four years look very rough and almost disheartening. Despite a "softer" rhetoric, Reagan will press on with his drive to gain qualitative nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union and edge the world closer to a nuclear confrontation.

Central America faces the spectre of a U.S. invasion. Reagan's victory serves as a virtual red alert for the people of Nicaragua for whom the last four years have already meant a steady dose of death, destruction and indignities as a result of his no-so-secret war.

South African apartheid will continue to enjoy the salutary effects of Reagan's policy of accommodation. While one can almost hear the collective groans of the people of the Philippines, Chile, South Korea, and Guatemala, their respective dictators are surely toasting his second term.

At home, Reagan's economic policy of survival of the fittest will see the "fittest"—the rich—get more breaks from the government while the poor, the minorities, the elderly, and the disabled get cut off from their very means of survival. Civil and democratic rights will see a sustained battering as Reagan fills the Supreme Court with rightwing operatives and directs his Justice Department to stop minorities from "getting much more than they deserve!"

## ROOM FOR RESISTANCE

But all hope is not lost despite this gloomy forecast. While the election showed a dramatic shift to the right, this swing is not as consolidated as the hardcore New Right wants it.

While the Democratic Party is weakened, it is not decimated. The Republicans maintained their majority in the Senate, but the Democrats maintained theirs in the House with the former gaining fewer seats than they hoped for. Thus, some ground for liberal opposition to Reagan's legislative initiatives remains.

Furthermore, as Reagan's broad generalities clash with concrete conditions, his platitudes can begin to wear thin. As Reaganomics comes full cycle, as the assault on the poor starts to threaten social peace, and as American boys begin coming home in plastic bags from Central America, the question can emerge: is Reagan's sugarcoted vision for America nothing more than a sticky mess?

Progressives should therefore take note of these possibilities and of the most positive development in this election—the attempt of the dispossessed and the

disenfranchised to cohere in a "Rainbow Coalition." As a result of this motion, there was a heavy turnout of minority votes. Ninety percent of the Black vote and a majority of the Latino vote rejected Reagan and went Democratic.

This is a significant base from which to build a resistance movement. If from this base progressives can establish a political momentum against war and racism, a motion Mondale and the Democrats were unwilling to embrace fully, the Right can be challenged.

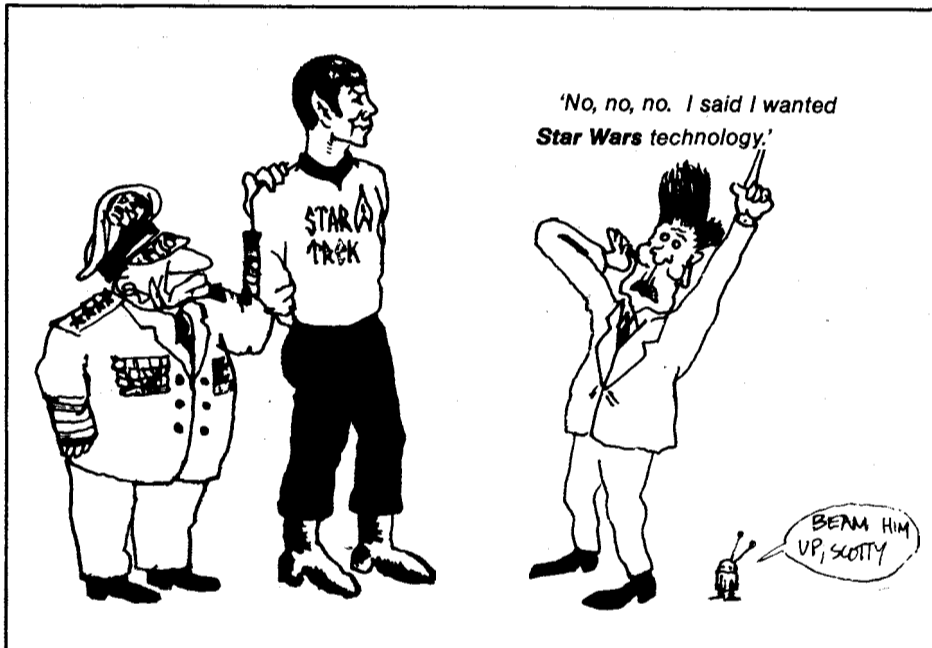
And in regrouping, those who clamor for peace abroad and justice at home would do well to close ranks with the struggling peoples of the world. For they already know that the only way to meet the Reagan challenge in the next four years is with renewed ferocity and determination. □

## For War, He Wastes No Time

It cannot be said that the Reagan White House does not know how to start a war. As news of the Reagan landslide began flashing on television screens, the State Department chose the occasion to announce "U.S. intelligence reports" that a Soviet ship "loaded with MIG fighter planes" was on its way to Nicaragua.

The final tally of his mandate was not yet in and Reagan was already conditioning the public to the possibility of a "military emergency"—including a possible preemptive strike on either the ship or on Nicaragua. This calculated move followed Reagan's provocative attack on the first democratic election in Nicaraguan history, an election he called "a sham." Some Washington experts are now predicting a U.S. invasion by November 15.

All advocates of peace and non-intervention must now show that if Reagan knows how to start a war, they know how to stop one. □



## Letters

### Ironic

It is ironic that Benigno Aquino was more effective dead than alive. Are our people serious now or are we just honoring the dead? I hope we're for real.

S.V. Hobilla  
San Jose, CA

### How Come?

Am very impressed with your newspaper. How come no movie stars? Joke only. Keep up the good work.

Dong Garcia  
Parasmus, NJ

## ANG KATIPUNAN

A socialist periodical for the Filipino community

Publisher: Union of Democratic Filipinos

Editor: **Rene Cruz**  
Philippines: **Christine Araneta, Nancy Rocamora, Nene Ojeda**  
Filipino Community: **Emil De Guzman, Vicky Perez, Vince Reyes**  
U.S./International: **Wicks Geaga, Eddie Escultura**  
Art and Production: **Emil De Guzman, Wicks Geaga, Nene Ojeda, Vince Reyes**

ERRATUM—The *Voices* article, "Kalinga," stated that photographer Lenny Limjoco took part in a "national project researching the conditions of various ethnic groups." There was no such national project on ethnic minorities. The article should have said that Limjoco spent time "documenting conditions of life in the Philippines, concentrating on human rights issues."

## Litter from Manila

## Ver and the Crimebusters



By INIDORO DELIHENCIA

How can anyone even link my friend Gen. Fabian Ver to the Aquino murder? The public does not know that he is such a harmless, considerate and sensitive man. In fact, when I visited this gentle soul to get his side of the story, I found him apologizing profusely to a housemaid who had accidentally spilled hot cooking oil over half his body and dropped a cleaver on his right foot. So as not to hurt her feelings, the general gave her a raise. Then, a bodyguard brought in a prowler who was caught running off with Mrs. Ver's bonds and jewelry. Ver's eyes welled with tears of understanding as he gave the wayward stranger a brotherly embrace, promised him a job, and set him free. We then walked in the garden and as pet white doves swarmed over him in the early morning sunlight, he coyly confessed that dawn was his favorite time of day. Yet this is the man they accuse of murder.

I asked him only one question: "Did you ever kill a man in cold blood?" He looked me straight in the eyes and said, "No. Not in cold blood."

The only thing they have against him is his loyalty to President Marcos. True, Ver answered, "What floor, sir?" when the president asked him if he would jump out of a window to prove his loyalty. But Ver—and I know him—is not a fool. He made sure they were in a

bungalow when he sensed the President was about to ask that question. This is why his friends cannot accept the charge that he hatched the plot against Ninoy. They are ready to take matters into their own hands.

I'm not talking about the 60 or so generals and flag officers who signed a manifesto supporting Ver. I'm talking about the secret vigilantes. UPI and Manila newspapers reported that a secret 20,000-man vigilante force of soldiers and police are rumored to be massing in Mindanao, preparing to spring into action should Ver get a bum rap from the courts. The reports say this army calls itself "El Diablo Crimebusters" and is led by a "Supreme Godfather Consultant."

Well, I'm scooping everyone because I managed to get a secret and exclusive interview with a leader of the vigilantes, Col. Irwin X (no relation to Col. Irwin Ver, the general's favorite son).

ID: "El Diablo Crime busters, that's the name of your group, correct?"

Col. X: "That's right. When the chief gets stuck, who you gonna call?"

ID: "Crimebusters. But why El Diablo?"

Col. X: "Because we're no angels, get it?"

Ver's detractors better realize that the Crimebusters know their stuff. Col. X kept thumbing through a CIA manual titled "How to Take Over a Government—Six Easy Lessons." It was meant for the *contras* in Nicaragua but Col. X got a copy from the PX black-market in Subic before President Reagan recalled all copies in time for the last U.S. presidential debate.

The vigilantes will not respect the usual chain of command of the armed forces. They will purge officers whose loyalty to the President is in question. Anyone who is not willing to jump out the window is out, according to Col. X.

ID: "How are you planning to rescue Ver and the First Family?"

Col. X: "We will go by the book. So, if we follow this manual we will have to mine North Harbor, blow up bridges—like Mendiola I guess—and operate from some border. I guess the Quezon City-Manila border will do, like the Welcome Rotunda. We've had successful military operations there last September. Boy, you should have seen those Aquinistas drop like flies. If we follow page six here, we may also have to change our name. Hmm. I got it! 'Cronytras,' that's close enough."

ID: "Speaking of names, why is your leader called the Supreme Godfather Consultant?"

Col. X: "The military has been accused of being arbitrary and fascistic. We chose that title because we wanted a more democratic image."

ID: "Did you think of other titles?"

Col. X: "Yes. But 'Fatherly Teacher' sounded like the Maharishis and 'Chief Guide Advisor,' sounded like 'Fortune Teller Palm Reader Advisor.' However, 'Supreme Godfather Consultant' has a nice, benevolent, give-and-take, democratic ring to it."

ID: "Was that a unanimous choice?"

Col. X: "Someone wanted to add 'Moderator' to really hammer in the democracy part but I objected. We're democratic but not wimpy like that guy Mondale. Boy, if he wins, the Americans will realize more than ever that they need President Marcos."

ID: "As a key ally in Southeast Asia?"

Col. X: "No, in the White House. Reagan is great. But if he loses, who will make America manly again?"

Detractors of Gen. Ver be warned. El Diablo Crimebusters are not 90-lb. weaklings. Being soldiers still in the armed forces that the President commands, and having been trained by Gen. Ver, they are real machos—"machunurin" to their Supreme Godfather Consultant. So to those who are eager to prosecute Ver: Remember, justice may be blind but if you make the vigilantes mad, she will also be walking around in crutches. □

## Philippine Policy Debate

## White House Scenario Disarms Liberals

By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

President Ronald Reagan really opened up a can of worms. "I know there are things there in the Philippines that do not look good from the standpoint of democratic rights," he said on October 21 during his televised debate on foreign policy with Democratic candidate Walter Mondale. "But what is the alternative? It is a large communist movement to take over the Philippines."

The president was responding to *New Republic's* Morton Kondrache who asked what should be done to prevent the Philippines from becoming "another Nicaragua."

"I think that we're better off trying to retain our friendship and help them right the wrongs we see rather than throwing them to the wolves and then facing a communist power in the Pacific."

Reagan had just finished criticizing President Jimmy Carter for "helping to undermine two friendly dictators who got into trouble with their own people, the Shah of Iran and President Somoza of Nicaragua."

## THE SAME OLD LINE

The State Department went haywire and rushed the following morning to set the record straight. Reagan did not mean to go "that far," a spokesman said. "I think there is a certain recognition on everybody's part that there are other forces working for democratic change in the Philippines."

But it was too late. U.S. officials in the Philippines were shocked by the President's comments. Most shocked of all were the Filipino legal oppositionists many of whom are anti-communist and pro-U.S.. Their outpouring was immediate.

"We believe there is a clear alternative and that is a government led by people who have been chosen freely," commented *Batasan Pambansa* member Ramon Mitra.

"President Reagan displays an abysmal ignorance of the situation in the Philippines," commented civil rights attorney Joker Arroyo. "If the U.S. should withdraw support from Marcos and let the Philippines decide her own destiny, it wouldn't be as bad as he thinks."

Some were not so surprised. "Reagan is mouthing the same line that Marcos has been using for years—the communist bogie," responded Agapito "Butz" Aquino, Benigno Aquino's brother who is now closely identified with the non-Batasan opposition known as the "parliament of the streets." Butz is a leader of the Coalition of Organizations for the Restoration of Democracy.

## NOT A PET DOG

Marcos himself joined in a few days later.

Speaking on the seventh anniversary of the Philippine Army Reserve October 27, he told the crowd that the Philippines is "grateful for such a strong and generous partner, but we don't want to appear before our Asian brothers as if we were the pet dog of any western ally."

But in actuality, Marcos was responding more to U.S. pressure for the prosecution of his loyal friend Armed forces chief of staff Fabian Ver than to Reagan's debate night blunder.

"The U.S. Expects Swift Action on the Aquino Case" read the title of a State Department statement released in the wake of the Agrava Commission's majority report naming Ver as part of the conspiracy and, just a couple of days after the presidential debate.

"May we inform our friends," said an acid Marcos, "that we are not doing things here to satisfy either the State Department or the Americans but in order to meet the requirements of law provided in our Constitution."

## SMOOTH TRANSITION

This latest State Department signal reflects a trend within U.S. ruling circles to place pressure, usually discreet though sometimes obvious, on Ferdinand Marcos to clean up his act.

In the interest of a smooth transition, U.S. policymakers stress three areas to which the regime must devote its attention.

- A parliament with some degree of legitimacy—or at least a sufficient opposition presence to lend it credibility. U.S. officials worked overtime last March and April trying to convince oppositionists to run in



Presidential debate: controversy over Marcos.

the May elections. They also leaned on Marcos to minimize election irregularities.

- Regulating the Philippine economy. U.S. officials have pushed Marcos to cooperate with the International Monetary Fund's austerity plan.

- A credible resolution to the Aquino assassination. Washington is alarmed over the polarization of Philippine society following the Aquino murder. Given the widespread conviction that Marcos himself was behind it, Washington recognizes that a simple whitewash will not do and that someone fairly high up on the chain of command will have to take the rap. They have been pressuring Marcos for several months to sacrifice Ver.

## MARCOS IS ON HIS WAY OUT

It is not just his value as a sacrificial lamb which makes Ver expendable from the U.S. perspective. Ross Munro, in a think-piece for *Foreign Policy*, blames Ver for a dizzying decline in morale within the Philippine military. No one could agree more thoroughly with Munro than the Pentagon. The Department of Defense insists that Ver is an obstacle to modernizing the Philippine military.

The Pentagon takes a far gloomier view of the Marcos regime than does the State Department. The Defense Intelligence Agency, in an October report, gave Marcos only two more months to survive in a worst case scenario. State, on the other hand, predicts that Marcos can last a good two years.

In Washington today, everyone—conservatives and liberals, Republicans and

Democrats, Reaganites and oppositionists—agrees on one thing: Ferdinand Marcos is on his way out.

The differences boil down to questions of timing and tactics. Reaganites are looking toward the 1987 presidential elections as a means of easing Marcos out and easing a successor in. Until that time, they hope to use low-key pressure to force Marcos into providing the groundwork for a transition.

## REAGANITES IN CONTROL

This faction, currently dominant in Washington, hopes that by 1987 a consensus can be forged among pro-U.S. forces in the military, the church and the business community that will allow for a continuation of Marcos' ruling institutions, but with a new—or at least partially new—cast of characters.

Unfortunately, the current liberal proposal differs only slightly with the Reaganites' scenario. There are those who would prefer to see Marcos replaced with a democratic formation via the coming elections, but they offer no concrete plan as to how to bring this about.

The liberals are concerned about timing. They are critical of the White House's apparent lack of a contingency plan to deal with a possible worsened situation before 1987. Marcos' unpopularity, they claim, continues to drive more and more people into the arms of the opposition and away from the U.S., a process which must be stopped. U.S. liberals also want to protect U.S. credibility by being more openly critical of Marcos. They say Reagan's "quiet diplomacy" is not helping in this regard.

Continued on page 11

## Threat to FM Ousted from Batasan

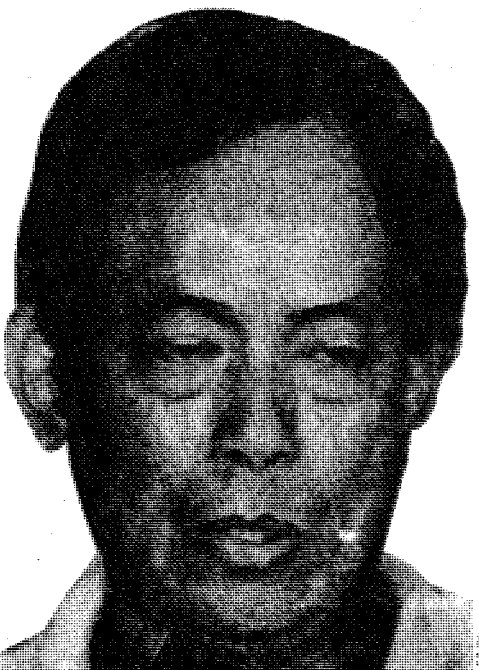
By NENE OJEDA

While all attention was drawn to the question of who put Marcos' chief rival permanently out of commission, another candidate for successor was quietly elbowed out the road to Malacañang.

The Commission on Election October 24 reversed Cagayan de Oro City Mayor Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel's *Batasan Pambansa* victory over Pedro Roa. The COMELEC's 89-page report stated that Pimentel's 4,000-vote margin in the May 14 election was made possibly only by tampering with ballots in 87 precincts. The final count gave *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* candidate Roa a lead of 1,500.

Pimentel is the first opposition assemblyman to be removed since the body convened July 23. He also holds the position of Assistant Minority Floor Leader. The opposition's newly enlarged presence in the parliament was underscored when Pimentel and 11 other MPs opened the legislative body's first session with a resolution calling for the repeal of President Marcos' special powers.

Removal of Pimentel came when attention, both domestic and international, was drawn to the long-awaited release of findings by the Agrava Commission on the assassination of former senator Benigno



Aquilino Pimentel

Aquino. Pimentel's ouster was all but lost in the public outcry over the controversial findings.

## HISTORY OF HARASSMENT

Though some anti-Marcos forces expressed fear that Pimentel's removal signals a new crackdown on the opposition movement, the regime's move proved long-held

suspensions by political observers that Marcos sees the Cagayan de Oro MP as a genuine threat. Aquino himself was once quoted saying "Nene is destined to become president of the Philippines after Marcos."

"Nene" Pimentel has a number of characteristics of the late Senator. He has established himself as a genuine opposition figure over the 13 years of his political career.

Pimentel has taken a consistently anti-Marcos stance and suffered frequent government harassment as a result. As a young Constitutional Convention delegate, he was first detained in 1973 after denouncing the just finished Constitution as "inimical to the people's interest" and refusing to sign the document. Five years later he was among the many politicians and community leaders arrested for the noise barrage condemning the fraudulent 1978 interim *Batasan Pambansa* elections.

His mayoral post, won in a 60,000-20,000 race during the 1980 local elections, was nullified on charges of tampering. His constituents' strong support in massive demonstrations prompted Marcos to restore his position.

Pimentel was last arrested in April 17, 1983, and charged with rebellion for reportedly giving a New People's Army commander ₱100 (then around \$10). He was kept under house arrest for 103 days, but popular pressure allowed him to launch

an election campaign for the assembly seat while confined. Marcos ordered Pimentel's house arrest lifted one day before the *Batasan* convened.

## A U.S. FAVORITE

But while Pimentel is staunchly anti-Marcos, he has kept a highly visible distance between himself and the National Democratic Front. A social democrat, he has anti-communist leanings and, like Aquino, he remains safely pro-U.S.

None of this is lost on U.S. government observers, many of whom see him as a strong candidate to succeed Marcos. His biggest flaw, noted a congressional researcher last year, was his lack of national stature. The *Batasan* seat was meant to fix that.

Pimentel is among the younger, non-radical politicians and civic leaders approached by the U.S. Embassy at the height of the mass outrage following the Aquino assassination. Calls for Marcos' resignation and rumors of ill-health pushed the question of succession to the top of the list. Paul Quinn-Judge of the *Christian Science Monitor* noted that Pimentel's presidential ambitions "are clear and his politics are malleable."

Pimentel called the COMELEC's decision "ridiculous." His lawyers have appealed to the Supreme Court to overturn the seemingly final action. □

## Metaphysical Education

## Students Foil Guru Takeover

Francisco Dalupan purchased back 922 shares in the family-owned University of the East October 15, capping one of the strongest controversies yet in the history of Philippine education.

Controlling interest in the financially troubled UE was snapped up last September by followers of the Maharishi Mahesh Yoga, the beatific guru who brought Indian mysticism to the Beatles in the sixties and has been peddling it worldwide ever since.

The Age of Enlightenment Foundation of the Philippines, the Maharishi's local affiliate, bought the founder's shares plus 22% of the common stock of the largest university in Asia. In addition, it lent the school's administration ₱5 million to pay its staff.

In exchange, the group replaced Panfilo O. Domingo, Chairman of the university's board of trustees with the AEF's executive chairman and filled three of the board's seats with its own members. Most significantly, it arranged to offer the Maharishi's own "Technology of the Unified Field" along with UE's conventional courses.

UE's students and teachers hit the roof.

## AGE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

It all began last July when 1,200 followers of the Maharishi descended on Manila well-armed with cash and knowledgeable in the ways of public relations. They leased several floors in three major hotels and began saturating newspapers and airwaves with advertisements promoting the Maharishi's techniques.

The Maharishis even showed up at Malacanang Palace September 11 for President Ferdinand Marcos' birthday. They presented the dictator with a certificate proclaiming him "Founding Father of the Age of Enlightenment." (Imelda Marcos was declared "Founding Mother.") Marcos accepted "the great honor," acknowledged the Maharishis as "world-re-

scientists" and concluded the ceremony by ringing the movement's "bell of invincibility."

The group then turned its considerable resources toward promoting the Marcos cause. Advertisements appeared in newspapers across the country urging Filipinos to "adore" the president.

At the same time, the Maharishis began to look around for permanent institutions to preach their gospel from. Ripe for the picking were a number of private schools driven to the edge of bankruptcy by the hard times gripping the country.

## EDUCATION, NOT MEDITATION

Owners of the bankrupt UE had just announced plans to close down the school on its 60,000 students. It became the first of the Maharishis' 12 planned takeovers including Far Eastern University, Centro Escolar, Feati, and Mapua in Manila, Trinity and Metro-Manila Colleges in Quezon City and schools in Pangasinan, Cebu, Davao and Legaspi cities.

Students and teachers at UE were not impressed with the Maharishis. The UE Central Student Government branded the takeover a "pacification campaign" against the militant student sector.

In separate statements, the Association of Concerned Teachers, the League of Filipino Students, UECSG and the Catholic Educators of the Philippines assailed the takeover. ACT called it an attempt to "douse, diminish, or defuse the spreading nationalism of the youth."

Fearing further curriculum changes and compulsory meditation sessions, UE and Centro Escolar students and teachers rallied October 4. They marched through UE's campus shouting "Education, not meditation!" and set up blockades in protest.

Other sectors were equally disturbed. Jaime Cardinal Sin and other religious leaders condemned the intrusion of an "alien ideology." Critics accused the Maharishis of violating constitutional prohibitions against foreign ownership of educational institutions. The Education and Labor Ministries, and the Commission on Immigration had to announce probes of the AEF.

At the heart of the uproar was the Maharishi's own home-brewed panacea for what ails the world. His followers insist that transcendental meditation, an offshoot of traditional Indian yoga, practiced in conjunction with certain laws of physics, can produce a "unified field" and improve the quality of life.

Supposedly a mere 7,000 people massed in one place practicing unified field technology can promote peace and bring harmony to all. The figure 7,000 is crucial because it is the square root of one percent of the world's population.

David Orme-Johnson, chairman of psychology at Maharishi International University insisted that crime had already declined and the economy improved since he and his group arrived in Manila. Even oil imports had dropped.

The true test of the theory, according to Orme-Johnson, came in 1978, when teams of 100 to 200 Maharishis sped to the world's hotspots including Nicaragua and Iran. "There was a worldwide calming effect," he claimed.

He did not explain how the triumphant Iranian and Nicaraguan revolutions in 1979 figured in his claim, if they did.

## NOVEL APPROACH

It was clearly a bigger controversy than anyone had anticipated. The combined outcry plus a rally of 20,000 before the Education Ministry on October 9 finally



Maharishi Mahesh Yoga

prompted Minister Jaime Laya to cancel UE's operating permit effective at the beginning of the second semester in November. Six days later the Dalupan family bought back its shares.

The grinning gurus remained unruffled, claiming to be "delighted" that the Dalupans regained control of the school. According to Noel Paterson, of the AEF North America, the flap merely proved the validity of the Maharishi's technology. "It shows that cultural integrity is rising in the Philippines. . . . This is only the beginning."

Noticeably quiet during the entire affair was the "Founding Father," Marcos himself, even though he had publicly embraced what he called "the scientifically tested and proven technology of unified field."

Some critics suggested that Marcos just used the Maharishis to draw attention away from more pressing issues.

Others were less sure. Pointing to the president's heavy reliance on faith healers and other mystical sorts in the past, they suggested that a desperate dictator will try just about anything to stay in power. Even, according to the League of Filipino Students, "modern day voodoo, magic, witches and wizards." □NFR

## Interview with Visiting Writer

## 'Crony Press is Still in Control'



Paulynn Sicam and children

By CHRISTINE ARANETA

Ms. Paulynn Sicam, a freelance writer in the Philippines is currently doing post-graduate studies at Stanford University. A journalist for close to 20 years and a member of Women in Media Now, Ms. Sicam has seen the rise and fall of the free press and has been part of the struggle for the democratization of the media.

AK: When did you start your career as

a journalist and what kind of topics did you cover?

P.S.: I started in 1968 as a staff writer with the *Manila Chronicle* and that continued until 1972 when martial law was declared. I wrote for the features page of the daily, covering the health and education beats—which meant following the students who were then swarming in the streets. After martial law was declared, I turned freelance, co-editing a general interest magazine for General Motors. I lean towards magazine journalism, contributing features to magazines.

You became more politically active in recent years. How has this been reflected in your journalism?

Well, of course I'm more selective about the topics I choose to cover, and I make sure that there is no conflict of interest when I work for private firms. That's why I freelance. I started getting concerned with the political prisoners issue, first because my mother, Ester Jimenez, was arrested in 1978. She was accused of belonging to the "Light-A-Fire Movement."

I also got involved in the case of Satur Ocampo, the imprisoned former head of the National Press Club. Along with Dean Armando Malay (Satur's father-in-law) we formed the Free Satur Ocampo Campaign. Thereafter, my involvement expanded to working for the rights and welfare of all political detainees. After the Aquino assassination, relatives of political detainees formed the JAJA-POP [Justice for Aquino, Justice for All—Political Prisoners—Ed.] which pressed for general Amnesty for all political prisoners.

You were also in the thick of what seems to be an active women's movement.

Yes, after the Aquino assassination, a lot of women were angered and spontaneously got together. Organizations such as AWARE and WOMB sprouted. There were already active women's groups in cause-oriented organizations that wanted to get together. That's why GABRIELA was formed. And in the media, the Women's Writers in Media Now of which I am a part, was formed as a support network, for the improvement of the craft, to better the status of women in the media.

Women are getting aware of issues beyond the home so there is a new dimension to their lives. Feminism in the Philippines has meant getting involved in the national issues. And activism has become an outlet for many women who were not involved.

Since the assassination there appears to be a trend towards liberalization of the media. Is this observation valid, and if so, how long will it last?

Liberalization! There's no such thing. Did you know after the Aquino assassination, the next day the [official press] headlined that two men were killed by a lightning bolt and the Aquino murder was practically a footnote on the front page! After that there was a boycott of the *Daily Express* and *Bulletin Today* which has continued up to now. Occasionally, magazines like *Mr. & Ms.* and *Malaya* carry critical pieces but this is the exception to the rule.

On the one hand, Marcos likes to point to these magazines as evidence of a free press to the rest of the world, but repression continues in many forms. There is censorship, threats of libel suits, pressure and harassment of writers, even the wholesale destruction of issues which have just rolled off the press. The crony press is very much in control.

The small press publishers and especially the provincial press are always under threat. Just recently a close friend of mine, Alex Orcullo, an editor of a Davao newspaper was killed. (See story, page 6.) Five media persons from the provinces have been killed. If the press appears "liberalized" it is because a growing number of journalists have grown bolder.

It seems that being a published writer functioning under repression has meant walking a tightrope. Will you continue to tread that tightrope? What does the future hold in store for you?

Definitely. I intend to go back to what I was doing . . . if I can still find a job. I will continue to work for the betterment of the media, which means strengthening the National Press Club and I will continue supporting political prisoner issues. □

## Parliament of the Streets

## CORD to Bring Fight to a 'New Phase'

By CHRISTINE ARANETA

In a press conference held September 28, leaders of the "parliament of the streets" pledged to "bring the mass struggle against the Marcos government to a new phase."

Announcing the launching of a "People's Strike" or "*welga ng bayan*," the leaders of the Coalition for the Restoration of Democracy said the disobedience campaign will include industrial strikes, boycott of classes, a tax revolt, and transport paralyzation.

Leandro Alejandro, a student leader and a member of CORD's national executive council said the protest movement is reaching a new level "because we have seen a higher level of military repression, a higher level of public support, and a higher level of organizational strength."

Even as CORD was just announcing its plans, the components of its strategy seemed to have already begun unfolding.

## TAX REVOLT

Some 90,000 members of the Alliance of Concerned Transport Organizations staged a transport strike to demand a rollback in the price of gasoline and petroleum products (see story on the right). It was supported by sympathy strikes by pro-



Butz Aquino

professionals, students and workers nationwide.

University of the Philippines students protesting a hike in tuition fees, also threatened a systemwide shutdown if the administration does not accede to the students' demands, Loudette Almazan, president of the UP student council announced.

In early October, CORD bared its intention to call for a tax revolt "in the last phase" of its "militant but non-violent campaign," in order to paralyze the economy and bureaucracy.

To raise revenues to pay the country's debts, the government imposed October 15 more taxes affecting bank deposits, insurance premiums, games and amusement, liquor, contractor services, and a host of other items. The tax hikes put the squeeze on small businesses and independent operators.

A tax revolt is expected to gain momentum among the urban classes already groaning under the weight of a new oil price hike, the peso devaluation and a projected 70% inflation rate.

If Marcos does not submit the tax hike edicts to parliamentary review, opposition member of parliament Ramon Mitra warned, the military may very well have to collect taxes themselves.

## STREET ACTION

CORD has been responsible for the most recent massive demonstrations that have been crushed by violent military reprisals. But the coalition, which includes Butz Aquino among its leaders, appears undaunted.

The mass rallies and marches, according to founding member former senator Lorenzo

Tañada, "have attracted millions and covered thousands of kilometers, teaching us the strength of our members and the value of our unity."

CORD's determination to use street mass actions as a "potent weapon of dissent" recently gained sympathy even from the conservative wing of the Catholic hierarchy.

Jaime Cardinal Sin, reacting to the violence unleashed by Marcos troopers on demonstrators September 22 and 27, scored the regime for "a saturnalia of violence and sadism," adding that its leaders are "trigger happy" and "power hungry."

The September 27 violence and police brutality which left one dead and scores injured shocked even members of the Marcos ruling party—*Kilusang Bagong Lipunan*. In a rare show of unity, opposition and pro-government members of the *Batasan Pambansa* renounced the violence and ordered an investigation of the incident.

In a mass officiated by the Cardinal on October 7, the official church threw its weight behind the "parliament of the streets" by urging the continuation of a "Gandhi-style non-violent campaign" to press for Marcos to step down. Following the mass, some 30,000 demonstrators thronged the Welcome Rotunda, scene of a carnage ten days earlier, to "assert our rights to free assembly."

The rally was joined by members of the business community, notably Jose Concepcion, president of Republic Flour Mills; Jaime Zobel de Ayala of the Ayala Corporation; and businessman Jaime Ongpin.

## NEW CHALLENGES

While CORD appears to be gaining political momentum, new questions and new challenges face the anti-dictatorship movement as a whole. The protest movement, which is composed of organizations from the traditional opposition, the "left-of-center" moderates or "liberal democrats," and the left, has shown signs of a growing rift.

The traditional opposition, associated with UNIDO had preferred to stage a separate rally at Liwasang Bonifacio on September 21, purportedly because of fears of communist infiltration.

On October 7, the differences surfaced once more when businessmen led by Jose Concepcion, asked Marcos for a permit for the Rotunda rally site. The move was criticized by the main sponsors who said Concepcion had no mandate to represent them. CORD leaders also said they had the fundamental right to protest, and asking Marcos for a permit would just be used by the regime to its advantage.

True enough, pro-government newspapers portrayed the oppositionists as being "thankful" to the President for having granted them the permit. Earlier, however, Marcos had even threatened to arrest all protest leaders if they went on with the demonstration.

With the differences emerging at a time when even top government officials are beginning to be convinced that Marcos has to step down sooner than later, even influential moderates are forced to contain some of their anti-communist fears.

Echoing this sentiment, Ramon del Rosario, president of Asian Savings Bank and ANSCOR Capital Investment Corp. said, "The parliament of the streets is a broad-based effort and I would accept that there are leftist elements active in the street parliament. This is why I think the so-called moderates should participate more actively in it. They should make an effort to seize the initiative and become a more meaningful component."

Whether they will be able to seize the initiative or not, the so-called moderates do have to make the decision as to who it is they are principally against—Marcos or the left. □



## 'People's Strike' Leaders Issue Ultimatum

MANILA (PNF)—"We have not given up the fight," declared Bonifacio de Luna, chairman of the 90,000-member Alliance of Concerned Transport Organizations which spearheaded the "people's strike" that paralyzed Metro-Manila and key cities in the Visayas and Mindanao for several days last October 22-29.

ACTO leaders agreed to temporarily lift the strike in Metro-Manila October 24 after a dialogue with government officials. If the government fails to act on our demands within two weeks, de Luna stressed, ACTO would resume its strike.

Aside from the rollback in the prices of all petroleum products, ACTO also asked the government to suspend the transport fare increases which took effect October 25, the repeal of increased registration fees for private vehicles, and the release of those arrested during the two-day strike.

The strike began October 22, three days after the Philippine government authorized oil companies to raise the prices of gasoline and all petroleum products by an average of 78 centavos or 12%.

Labor, student, professional, and cause-oriented groups as well as members of opposition political parties joined striking jeepney drivers in demanding an oil-price rollback. Human barricades were set up and protest rallies held in major streets in key cities nationwide by strikers and their sympathizers to dramatize their protests.

Hundreds were arrested and scores injured—some by gunfire—in dispersal operations conducted by police and military units. The government also fielded buses and jeepneys escorted by Armalite-wielding troopers in an effort to break up the strikes.

Classes in most schools were suspended and business activity disrupted in the areas affected by the protest actions.

Protest actions in the cities of Cebu, Bacolod, Iloilo, and Dumaguete in the Visayas, and Davao in Mindanao, however, continued despite ACTO's decision to lift its strike in Metro-Manila. Sympathy strikes were also reported to have broken out in Cagayan de Oro, Butuan, Iligan and Cotabato cities, all in Mindanao.

As the week came to a close, strike leaders in Davao City decided to call off

their strike October 25 upon the intercession of Archbishop Antonio Mabutias who had successfully negotiated with military authorities for the release of some 400 strike participants from detention. A constabulary sergeant was shot dead by unidentified gunmen at the height of the strike in Toril, a district of Davao City.

In Cebu City, an accord was reached October 26 after local government officials agreed to deliver a copy of the strikers' demands to President Marcos. They also demanded an immediate investigation into the killing of a student who was shot while manning a barricade in this city.

The "people's strike" of October 22-29 was the first of its kind to be held on a nationwide scale since 1972.

In another development, President Marcos ordered October 26 a ₱5 (U.S.\$0.25) increase in the minimum wages of workers in the private sector effective November 1 this year. Only those workers earning ₱1,800 or less, however, are covered by Presidential Wage Order No. 6.

Mr. Marcos signed the order before officials of the National Economic Development Authority, the principal planning agency of the Philippine government. The order also provides increases in the cost of living allowances of private sector workers.

The increases mean that non-agricultural workers in Manila will have a minimum wage of ₱37 plus ₱17 for COLA; for non-agricultural workers outside Manila, ₱36 plus ₱17; for agricultural plantation workers, ₱32 plus ₱12; and for agricultural, non-plantation workers, ₱26 plus ₱7.50.

In a related development, workers affiliated with the *Pambansang Katipunan ng Manggagawa Laban sa Kahirapan* (PKMK—National Coalition of Workers Against Poverty) will hold a one-day general work stoppage the first week of November to protest the "minimal pay hike" approved by the government.

This was announced by PKMK Chairman Bonifacio Tupas who said that "the minimal pay hike was partly influenced by a wage restraint policy committed by the Philippine government to the International Monetary Fund." PKMK is asking for a ₱32 increase in minimum wages. □

# Buod ng mga Balita

## BATASAN PROBES POLICE ASSAULT ON PROTESTERS

The Batasan Pambansa October 3 unanimously approved a resolution to look into the government's violent assault on the September 27 protest rally (see *AK, Vol. X, No. 10*). Shortly before his surprise ouster from the parliament, Aquilino Pimentel (PDP-Laban-Cagayan de Oro), through the Committee on Justice, Human Rights and Good Government, urged the investigation of the government's use of force in the dispersal of 5,000 demonstrators.

The demonstrators had gathered to protest the government's use of tear gas, smoke bombs and truncheons to break up a 16-hour sit-in on September 21-22. Fifty thousand marched on the 21st from downtown Manila to Mendiola Bridge near Malacañang Palace, commemorating the 12th anniversary of the declaration of martial law. A number stayed through the night and were violently dispersed the next morning.

The violence escalated, however, on September 27. At least one person was killed and over 62 injured when police attacked. They used tear gas, water cannons and truncheons. But this time they opened fire as well. Eleven corpses were found in various parts of the city the following day, widely assumed to be demonstrators abducted and "salvaged" by the military.

Former senator Lorenzo Tañada, leader of the Coalition of Organizations for the Restoration of Democracy, testified before a Batasan committee that he received a letter September 26 warning that demonstrators would be killed if the rally went beyond 5:00 p.m.

Brig. Gen. Alfredo Yson of the Eastern Police District justified the shooting by citing crowd violence. "We reassembled and while the crowd threw stones

and tear gas grenades at us, I ordered my men to move forward along with the firetrucks, prompting the crowd to move back." The following day, the government introduced video footage to support Yson's testimony. It did not reveal any stones or tear gas hurled by either bystanders or demonstrators at the anti-riot forces.

The investigation has been hailed by some as a positive move toward democratizing the Marcos-controlled parliament. J. Virgilio Bautista, a CORD member, however, expressed skepticism and apprehension about the government's ulterior motives.

Solicitor General Estelito Mendoza, chair of the Justice Committee, insisted that the inquiry will be used to formulate guidelines on rallies and demonstrations. Bautista thus fears that the hearings might be turned around and used as a tool to limit free assembly.

\*\*\*\*\*

Meanwhile, citizens urged two other investigations.

Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile received a request in early October from the National Secretariat for Social Action to look into the death of a Samar priest, Fr. Rey Kangleon. Kangleon died in the hands of the military on January 4, 1984, after being held captive for three months.

The National Press Club called on President Marcos to order an investigation of the murder of publisher/editor of the *Mindanao Observer*, Jacobo Amatong and human rights lawyer Zorio Aguilar. The two were gunned down in their hometown Dipolog City in Mindanao on October 14. Amatong was prominent in the local chapter of CORD. More than 20,000 residents joined a two-kilometer march the following week protesting the murder.

Five days after Amatong's death, another newsman was gunned down in Davao City. Alexander Orcullo, 38, editor of the weekly magazine *Mindaweek* and the weekly tabloid *Mindanao Current* was gunned down by unidentified men. □



Batasan probe of police violence: more limits to free assembly?

## PESO FLOATS, INFLATION SOARS

Last month's change in the value of the Philippine peso may have been slight, but it was a distressing omen to the Filipino worker and consumer.

The rise from an official exchange rate of ₱18:\$1 to ₱19.95:\$1 came about as a result of the decision to let the peso float freely to seek its own level on the international exchange market. It was part of the package to which the Philippines agreed with the International Monetary Fund in order to qualify for special drawing rights amounting to \$630 million. With the new policy on the floating peso, a beaming Ferdinand Marcos announced that the IMF had finally accepted the Philippines' letter of intent—its part of the bargain.

The impact of the peso float, Marcos claimed, will not "result in drastic changes in the price levels because importers have already been utilizing the parallel market as their source of dollars at this same rate."

This little sacrifice promises "speedy economic recovery" and the IMF good housekeeping seal, sought after for over a year. IMF approval of the country's economic programme paves the way for rescheduling the country's \$26.5 billion in external debts and facilitates fresh loans.

Focus now shifts to implementing the measures set out in the package. Aside from the peso devaluation (which will make Philippine exports more competitive in the international market and boost foreign receipts) the Philippine government promised to raise taxes on petroleum products, allow commercial banks to

resume dollar trading; repeal trade taxes; increase fees for motor vehicle registration and double airport taxes for travellers.

But while the IMF was suddenly giving the go-ahead, time was running out on the repayment front. The fourth 90-day moratorium on repayment of principal on Philippine loans expired October 15 with still no cash in hand. Finance Minister Cesar Virata and Central Bank Governor Jose Fernandez promptly cabled the country's 483 creditors to request a fifth, a function performed on the four previous occasions by an 11-bank advisory committee of Philippine creditors.

The 9.7% effective devaluation was the fourth in the last 14 months and it is not expected to be the last. Some foreign exchange traders are already asking for ₱20.50:\$1. But what really concerns the average Filipino is the surge in commodity prices that accompanied the move along with the wage restraint policy tucked in the letter of intent.

Petroleum products, the country's largest import item, immediately rose 12.7%. This pushed up transport prices and other commodity prices in turn. Government and IMF officials predict that inflation in the Philippines will reach 60-70% by the year's end. Government-imposed ceilings temporarily limit food-stuff price increases to 27%.

The solution, according to Marcos in his October 14 address on the newly-reached understanding with the IMF is to "resolve to live within our means."

Consumer outrage did not remain unexpressed for long. Higher transport operating costs fueled jeepney and bus drivers to take to the streets, paralyzing the country's four major cities (see story, page 5.) Other disaffected consumers may follow soon. □

## AWARE Statement on September 27 Violence

We, the women of AWARE, who were present at the September 27, 1984 rally at the Welcome Rotunda on España, condemn the brutal and savage manner in which the rallyists were dispersed. We have been to numerous rallies since the nation's reawakening on August 21, 1983. We have felt indignation every time a peaceful and orderly rally was forcefully dispersed and participants and bystanders hurt or arrested. One of us, Narz Lim, was in the front line in Mendiola on the dawn of September 22, 1984, when the military trained high-pressure water cannons on the crowd as they prayed the Rosary after Holy Mass, lobbed smoke and tear gas bombs at them when they tried to hold their guard, and beat them up with truncheons as they fled. But we have never experienced the blatant disregard for human life that the military men displayed on September 27. We witnessed and experienced the following:

1) When water from fire trucks and smoke bombs failed to disperse the crowd a second time, rocks began falling on the demonstrators, hurled by the military in systematic volleys. This gave us the impression that they were being thrown at a given signal.

2) Long firearms, which rested on top of the shields, were trained directly at the people assembled in front of them.

3) When the crowd started to break up, countless shots rang out, some of which injured not only demonstrators, but bystanders as well.

4) As we ran to the side streets to seek safety from smoke bombs, truncheons, rocks, and bullets, military men chased us, hunting us down like animals.

5) Shots were being fired even in Apo St. where Ching Escaler, Narz Lim, Mariel Tolentino, and Phyllis Zaballero sought refuge in the home of Sen. Ambrosio Padilla. Even when we were safely behind the wall, we had to stay low because guns were still being fired outside. (Later reports stated that there were no military men in that street. The shots may have been fired by plainclothesmen.)

6) We experienced real fear as two of our members, Ting-ting Cojuangco and Guila Maramba, ran into Speaker Perez St. when they could retreat no further down Quezon Blvd. which was also blocked by the military. Beside them fell Fidel Nemenzo who had been hit by a bullet on the back. A young man coming home from school forced the gate of his home open to offer shelter to them and other rallyists.

The rallyists wanted to rush Fidel to a hospital because he was bleeding profusely, but since military men were still in the streets outside the apartment, they were afraid that if they had come out, they would have been shot. It was only after a lawyer arrived and had interceded with the military that the group was able to rush Fidel to a hospital.

7) Contrary to many reports, we were an unarmed, non-violent group. Violence was started by the military. If the on-lookers started throwing stones at the military in anger and retaliation, it was because they saw that the demonstrators were defenseless. In fact, we were pleading with them not to throw stones because we are against violence in any form. But they could not be held back. They wanted to fight for us.

We therefore condemn the use of force, especially the use of guns against a defenseless people who were merely expressing their outrage, in a peaceful and orderly manner, against the measure used to disperse the Mendiola rally of September 21-22. We join our brothers and sisters in that rally who have recommended the filing of criminal charges against the military officers and men responsible for killing, maiming, and injuring demonstrators on September 22 and 27.

The nightmare of September 27 is not yet over. The wounded are still suffering; the families of those who died are still grieving; those who are missing may still be experiencing pain and fear. Many of us, though uninjured, are still recovering from the trauma of that day.

We put the blame for these incidents on the highest levels of government for its clear lack of leadership, moral authority, and responsibility. We therefore resolve to sustain our efforts at peaceful mass actions and non-cooperation with an extremely callous regime that has lost the support of our people. And we will continue to do so until Mr. Marcos, his wife and his minions step down from power and true democracy is restored to our land in a system which will no longer allow any man, or any group of men, to oppress any Filipino or to violate his rights with impunity.

### ALLIANCE OF WOMEN FOR ACTION AND REFORM

Dede Caniza  
Ching Escaler  
Guila Maramba  
Betty Nelle  
Phyllis Zaballero

Ting-ting Cojuangco  
Narz Lim  
Winnie Monsod  
Mariel Tolentino

And we, the members of AWARE who were not at the September 27 rally, fully support this statement:  
Vicky Garchitorea, Triccie Sison, Dory Soler



(TFD)

Continued from front page

There will have to be widespread and frequent guerilla offensives by small units as well as operations by regular mobile forces.

**PNF:** How do you assess the people's forces now in comparison to 1983?

**JMS:** The legal democratic movement is now far more developed and far stronger than it was last year. Just consider the millions of people who poured into the streets of Metro-Manila and other cities on the first anniversary of the martyrdom of Ninoy Aquino, despite all the scare tactics of the Marcos regime.

Behind this massive mobilization is a year of accelerated political education and organizational work among the democratic classes, sectors, groups and individuals. What could be accomplished before in several years can now be accomplished in a matter of months or weeks.

The armed resistance has made big strides. The AFP is losing more arms in ambushes, raids and arrests conducted by both the NPA and the MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front). The government has been losing entire platoons frequently. Reports say that the guerilla fronts, and the zones under each front, have increased in number.

The number of people covered by local organs of democratic power and various types of mass organizations led by the Communist Party has risen to about seven million, according to independent sources. This is the direct mass base for the armed struggle waged by the NPA. At the same time, the broad united front enjoys real support from tens of millions of people.

**PNF:** How would you assess the state of the Marcos government? Can you describe possible scenarios of change in the Philippines?

**JMS:** The U.S.-Marcos regime will most likely last up to at least 1987. Three more years of a puppet autocracy and intolerable economic suffering will

# 'The Stalemate is Likely to Happen' ...

result in an intensifying and rapidly expanding legal democratic movement and revolutionary armed resistance against the three evils of U.S. imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The United States wishes to revive a two-party system controlled by rival cliques of big-comprador and big-landlord politicians subservient to U.S. imperialism. This is what the U.S. means by "strengthening democratic institutions and processes."

If Marcos gets himself re-elected again through the usual fraud and terrorism, or if he puts up a surrogate as president, the ruling system will become even more hopeless and will be overthrown by armed revolution towards 1990 or a few years after.

If the U.S. decides to remove the Marcos clique from power through elections, it can do so by manipulating its economic and military assistance as levers for encouraging opposition to Marcos within the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan and for pressuring Marcos himself to appoint a new defense minister in order to neutralize the despotic use of the armed forces, in the same way that Ramon Magsaysay as defense secretary was used to undercut President Quirino. In this way a pro-U.S. but anti-Marcos group can peacefully rise to power and replace the Marcos clique, from either the KBL or a legal opposition party.

I think the U.S. would rather smoothly weaken Marcos' hold on the armed forces through a new



NPA guerilla

defense minister, rather than sponsor a coup d'etat by military officers. Such a coup d'etat can only further fan the flames of armed revolution in the Philippines.

**PNF:** What are the chances of President Marcos winning over a significant section of the opposition through a stance of accommodation normalization?

**JMS:** Marcos has no chance of winning over a significant section of the legal opposition because, in the first place, he is unwilling to make any substantial concessions towards real normalization.

He continues with his autocratic rule, his monopoly of political power. He speaks of accommodation and normalization only to entrench and further institutionalize his autocratic rule, aggravate foreign and feudal domination, and worsen the political and economic crisis.

Even the reformist groups in the country would now rather plead with the U.S. first and cite the revolutionary movement for bargaining purposes, rather than approach Marcos or expect voluntary concessions from him.

**PNF:** How does the U.S. government—the Reagan administration, particularly—stand in relation to the Marcos government? Is it closer to, or distancing itself from it?

**JMS:** The U.S. continues to support the Marcos regime and is committed to making it last up to 1987 at least. There has been some apparent distancing by the Reagan administration from the puppet regime because the U.S. has been embarrassed by the murder of Aquino in the eyes of the whole world. It wants to heap all the blame for the economic and financial crisis on its puppet and to divert the attention of the people from its responsibility for the tyranny and economic crimes of the Marcos regime.

Thus, the distancing has been expressed by U.S. President Reagan's aborted visit to Manila, the U.S. bipartisan condemnation of the Aquino assassination, the pressures on Marcos to give minor concessions to reformists in the opposition, and the occasional critical remarks made by Armacost, the former U.S. ambassador, and the incumbent, Bosworth.

If Mondale, the Democratic presidential candidate wins, the autocratic powers of Marcos are likely to be undercut faster. Marcos will not continue as president beyond 1987. There is a written commitment which amounts to this in the platform of the Democratic Party.

But even if Reagan is re-elected, the next three years will further prove that Marcos has become a serious liability to long-term U.S. interests. Any U.S. president will have to dump Marcos in consideration of those interests. □

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By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

**F**erdinand Marcos is in a jam. The release of a plausible set of findings by the commission appointed to investigate the assassination of former senator Benigno Aquino was to have provided credibility to his floundering regime.

Instead, following the release of two separate reports on October 23 and 24 by the Agrava Commission, he is in more trouble than ever.

Both reports target the military, Marcos' key internal base of support, and dismiss out of hand the story that Aquino was killed by a lone gunman in communist pay. Worse, the majority report insists that Marcos' closest ally, Armed Forces Chief of Staff Fabian Ver was the mastermind behind the assassination plot.

Rumblings from the military suggest the makings of a split within the ranks, leading to uncomfortably frequent official assurances that no, there will not be a coup. "We know how to get angry," Brig. Gen. Luther Custodio, one of the accused warned, reassuring no one.

"After this report naming Ver, not many people are going to rush to raise the ruling party banner in 1986," a senior government official told one reporter.

Meanwhile, the opposition is busy on a number of fronts. The minority within the Batasan Pambansa issued a call to Marcos to resign and one group asked members to commence impeachment proceedings.

The country's growing mass movement, condemned both reports for failure to name Marcos himself as the real culprit. Marchers led by the late Senator's wife and brother demanded Marcos' resignation the day after the second report was released. Butz Aquino promised that the demonstrations will grow.

Though Marcos still hopes to find some way to save his trusted aide, the U.S. government has made it clear that it expects Ver to be brought to trial. The Philippine dictator thus finds himself in the tightest spot of his career—and with nowhere to turn.

#### WHITEWASH, GRAYWASH

No one expected the Agrava Commission to name Marcos, the man most widely assumed to be responsible for the crime. After all, the panel was appointed by the dictator himself. The real question was: would Marcos be let off the hook in a simple whitewash? Or would it be a "gray-wash," with someone high up on the ladder of authority serving as a sacrificial lamb to spare the dictator? It turned out to be a little bit of both.

The whitewash came first in the form of a minority report signed by only one member of the five-person Board—none other than the chairwoman herself, retired

Appeals Court Justice and former Imelda "Blue Lady" Corazon Agrava.

While spurning the military version that Aquino was killed by hitman Rolando Galman, she named only the six soldiers who escorted Aquino down the stairs at Manila International Airport last August 21 and Brig. Gen. Luther Custodio, chief of the Aviation Security Command.

#### 'A STARVING MAN ON A BREADCRUMB'

One day later came the graywash. On October 24 the four remaining members of the panel, businessman Dante Santos, educator Amado Dizon, corporate lawyer Luciano Salazar, and union leader Ernesto Herrera issued their own report. The majority named the same seven targeted by Agrava and then moved on to name a civilian and 18 other military men including Ver and Maj. Gen. Prospero Olivas.

Malacañang quickly took advantage of the panel's split reports.

"Marcos jumped on Agrava's report which exonerated Ver like a starving man on a breadcrumb," noted prizewinning *San Francisco Examiner* reporter Phil Bronstein.

The president indeed treated the chairwoman's report as if it were that of the whole panel. Accepting it in a solemn, televised ceremony, Marcos immediately ordered all seven accused soldiers confined to quarters and promised speedy civilian trial.

One day later it was a different matter. The four panel members were made to cool their heels for over an hour in a Malacañang waiting room. Their brief visit with a chilly Marcos was not televised and the president, who did not rise to see them out, told them ominously as they left, "I hope you can live with your conscience."

#### KEEPS NISA

Ver and Metrocom Commander Olivas promptly requested temporary leave. Ver further demanded a separate trial.

Many wonder just how seriously Marcos intends to prosecute his right-hand man. "We are more than ever aware, General," he stated in a letter granting the leave, "that the circumstances under which the board has chosen to implicate you in its findings are fraught with doubt and great contradictions of opinion and testimony."

Marcos' grudging acceptance came on the heels of an attempt to save Ver at all costs. One board official was approached by a cabinet minister who promised that, if Ver were spared, the president would find a way to get rid of him.

Marcos was reportedly seeking an ambassadorship for his beleaguered friend. Indonesia had been approached and declined, but both Thailand and South Korea were allegedly open to the possibility of accepting the controversial figure.

# VER AND BO IN VERY TIGHT



While Ver was replaced by Vice Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos, not a word was said about removing the all-important National Intelligence and Security Agency from his control.

Further, Ver made it clear that he expects no major changes. His former rival for the position of Chief can continue the plans for the armed forces, he noted, using "the same personnel whom I have used, during the period of my trial."

#### DEATH THREATS, LAWSUITS, ARRESTS

The drastic differences between the two reports came as no great surprise to observers. Rumors of conflict over just how high up the command structure the blame should be placed had been leaking out of the deliberation chambers for weeks, and it was well known that board members were laboring under tremendous pressure.

This ranged from death threats phoned in anonymously to Dante Santos, to a petition asking the Supreme Court to block release of the findings.

A few days before Ver's cross-examination, Marcos reportedly tried to strip respected Chief Counsel Andres Narvasa of his legal responsibilities. Outspoken Lupino Lazaro, lawyer for the Galman family, was arrested and jailed in connection with libel suits brought against him by Ver and Marcos crony Eduardo Cojuangco one week before the findings were released. In an interview Lazaro had named the two as the master plotters.

Two days later, Minister Leonardo Perez, interviewed live over U.S. radio, hinted that panel members might be arrested for subornation of perjury if it could be proven that they induced a key witness, Cesar Loterina, to testify against the government.

## Who are Ver and Custodio?



Lt. Gen. Luther Custodio

**L**ike the three sides of a triangle—interlinked and inseparable—the Marcoses, Gen. Fabian Ver and Gen. Luther Custodio stand out as the main

characters in the plot to kill Aquino.

Even members of Ver's own family say that the general would do nothing without Marcos' knowledge. According to the *Christian Science Monitor*, Ver sees Marcos three to four times daily.

Just who is this man who has declined to live in the official residence of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff in favor of a home in the Palace grounds in order to be close to the President?

Gen. Fabian Ver rose through the ranks in the shadow of Ferdinand Marcos and is totally beholden to him. Embarking first on a law career at the University of the Philippines that was interrupted by World War II, he joined the guerilla forces during the war as a 3rd lieutenant. After the war he completed his studies, then continued at Indiana State, Michigan State, and at various schools of the U.S. armed forces.

#### ABSOLUTE LOYALTY

The newly-elected Congressman Ferdinand Marcos selected Capt. Fabian Ver to serve as his personal bodyguard and chauffeur in the '50s.

When Marcos became President in 1965, he brought Ver to the Presidential Palace to head up the Presidential Guards. Ver reorganized and expanded it into the now powerful division-sized Presidential Security Command.

The former bodyguard's influence expanded significantly when Marcos appointed him to head up the National Intelligence and Security Agency, an organization akin to the U.S.'s FBI and CIA rolled into one. In 1981, Marcos chose him as Chief of Staff of the

AFP over Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos. It was not a popular choice, even within the military because the West Point-trained Ramos was seen as the most professional among the potential candidates.

Ver's loyalty to Marcos is absolute. The AFP Chief was asked in a recent interview about the Manila joke that has Marcos asking him to jump out a window and Ver responding, "Yes, sir. Which floor?"

"Is that true?" the interviewer asked. "Yes, that's true, with my loyalty," he replied.

#### VER DYNASTY

Ver's entire family has a major stake in the dictatorship. Three of his sons hold top positions in the PSC.

Col. Irwin Ver, in his 30s and one of the youngest full colonels in the Philippine Army, is the PSC's Chief of Staff and its chief intelligence officer. Although in theory he is outranked by the PSC commander, he is thought to have direct command over the PSC forces.

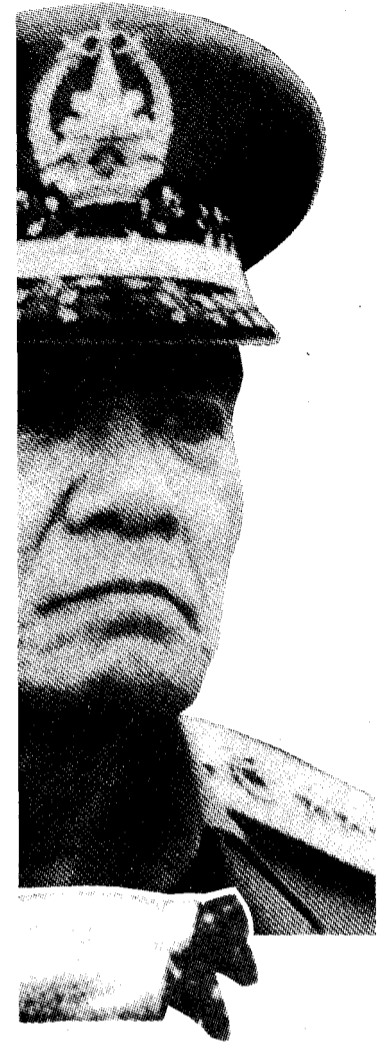
Irwin is a graduate of the Philippine Military Academy and is popular among the younger officers. Both facts mean that the younger Ver is a potentially powerful figure.

Irwin's older brother, Lt. Col. Rexor Ver, 37, has overall responsibility for the security of the Marcos children. He is an aide to his father and a security specialist with a master's degree in criminology.

Still another brother, Wrylo Ver, 34, commands a PSC company, probably its armored unit. He attended a special course at the Ft. Benning armored school in England.



# SS SPOT



names because it knew it had a supporter even more powerful than Marcos himself," said one observer. That force was none other than the U.S. government.

U.S. officials were determined—as part of developing a smooth transition from Marcos to a successor—to provide a clean break from the Aquino assassination. They had been quietly pushing for the sacrifice of Ver.

In particular, Defense Department officials broadly hinted that they viewed the Chief of Staff as an obstacle to military reform. The U.S. has long favored the West Point-educated Ramos and is pleased to see him take over from Ver.

State Department spokesman John Hughes told reporters immediately after the release of the first report, "We expect the Philippine government will take equally swift action following the submission of the majority report. We trust that . . . those responsible . . . no matter who they may be will be held accountable for this terrible crime."

Immediately following the release of the second report, the State Department issued another statement entitled "U.S. Expects Swift Action on the Aquino Case." "We simply will not abide by a whitewash," commented Hughes.

On a less visible front, the Central Intelligence Agency has been active, according to reporter Bronstein. The CIA was reputedly plugged into panel deliberations via one member closely associated with a longtime Manila operative now living in Virginia. The board member remained in regular contact, providing most leaks to the press. Observers presume this to be the widely quoted Dante Santos who first broke the word of a military plot.

## JUSTICE DELAYED

Other pressures on the board to avoid a whitewash came from the broad opposition movement. Daily pickets outside the building in which the sessions took place urged, "Agrava, the Nation is Impatient," "Fear the People, Not the Military," and "Justice Delayed is Justice Denied."

And if Marcos betrayed dramatic differences in greeting the two reports, the opposition movement did him one better. A tearful Agrava was roundly booed when she appeared in the hearing chamber after presenting her report to Marcos.

One day later, the four remaining members were cheered wildly as they read off their list of allegations in the same hall. Friends and strangers hugged each other, tossed flowers and struck up a chorus of the symbolic "Bayan Ko."

A full-paged ad appeared in the major dailies one day later calling for "immediate and permanent relief" of all military men accused of conspiracy. It was signed by 34 influential business, legal and civic groups including the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Bishops'

Businessmen's Conference, the Trade Union Council of the Philippines, the Integrated Bar of the Philippines and the Jaycees.

## 'MARCOS RESIGN!'

Oppositionists criticized both reports for failure to name Marcos. "The moment you implicate Ver, you implicate the President," noted former senator Salvador Laurel. "We've not gotten to the real mastermind," added Butz Aquino.

"President Marcos has two choices," commented Batasan member Alberto Romulo, "to resign or be impeached."

To that end, 59 opposition members of the Batasan signed a statement that Marcos, as commander-in-chief of the armed forces, is "morally, legally and politically responsible" and should resign. A separate statement by UNIDO asked parliament "to respond to the clamor of the people by commencing impeachment proceedings immediately."

Six thousand took to the streets the day after disclosure of the second report. Spectators cheered from the sidewalks and overpasses at the placards reading "Marcos Resign!" and "Agrava Loves Ver!"

The military maintained a low profile and allowed the marchers to pass peacefully. But five days later police bearing truncheons and firing smoke bombs and water cannons sent two marchers to the hospital and arrested 11 more.

The occasion was a march of 750 through Makati to demand trial for Ver and the others by a "people's court." Cheering observers leaned from office windows as students, socialites and professionals passed. When the violence began, they pelted the police with bottles, glasses and flowerpots.

## ROOM FOR MANEUVER

Marcos promptly passed both reports to the office of the Tanodbayan or ombudsman. This office ruled November 5 that all 26 must respond to the allegations within 10 days.

This by no means insures that all will be prosecuted. A three-man prosecution panel headed by Justice Manuel Herrera will review the replies and evidence and determine whether there is "probable cause" to refer the case for trial.

The ombudsman will then serve as the prosecutor within the *Sandiganbayan*, a new court recently created by Marcos to deal with graft and corruption on the part of government employees.

Some wonder what kind of trial is likely to occur in the *Sandiganbayan*. One source familiar with its workings told a reporter, "That court has been used to go after the enemies of the regime and small-time crooks." Further, Judge Manuel Pamaran, chosen to head the panel to try the case, is known to be a staunch Marcos man.

Finally, Justice Minister Estelito Mendoza admitted in an interview that the Tanod-

bayan could very well find no merit in their reports and rule that no trial is called for.

The choice of the *Sandiganbayan* was clearly designed to provide Marcos with maneuvering room as was the staggered release of the two reports. Bronstein and *Christian Science Monitor's* Paul Quinn-Judge predict, "maneuvering and endless wrangling over which constitutes the basis for prosecution."

## TROUBLE IN THE CAMP

But there is precious little room for that. The U.S. has made it clear that it expects to see Ver prosecuted. The popular movement, already angered at the failure to implicate Marcos, threatens to boil over if the president fails to go after his close friend and ally.

Traditional enemies of Ver are playing it cool but loving every minute of it. Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, long ago upstaged by the Chief of Staff, solemnly told a reporter that all legal procedure would dictate that the majority report be considered official.

Most ominously, much of the military, now heavily dominated by Ver's men, has made it clear that it is unhappy with the accusation of their patron. Sixty senior officers, among them the heads of the army, navy and air force took out an ad on October 28 declaring "unwavering loyalty and support" for Ver. It added, "Unfazed by these tragic developments, we affirm our total and unqualified support for Gen. Ver."

Even more frightening, stories recently appeared in the *Bulletin Today* and the *Metro-Manila Times* claiming that a secret 20,000-man vigilante force threatens to disrupt the functioning of the military. The "El Diablo Crime Busters," are rumored to be based in Mindanao and under the command of a "Supreme Godfather Consultant."

The threat of in-fighting within the military is real. No one has fully dismissed the possibility of coup attempts by the Presidential Security Command under the authority of Col. Irwin Ver, the general's son who has repeatedly said that he will not let his father "take this lying down."

Master balancer, maneuverer and tight-rope walker Ferdinand Marcos is thus left in a situation where not only is he unable to please all of his backers at once, he may find himself unable to please any of them at all. With his own camp threatened by internecine strife, Marcos may be on his way out sooner than he thinks.

"People here are starting to look to a post-Marcos period," a senior government official told one reporter.

For the First Lady, Imelda Romualdez Marcos, everything seems to be coming apart. She responded to the situation by telling reporters, "Poor nation. I weep for the nation. The nation is beautiful." □

Loterina had suddenly recanted his dramatic testimony and accused the board of reneging on their promise to help him and his family immigrate to the U.S. In secret testimony earlier, he claimed to have seen a hand holding a gun reach up behind Aquino's head and fire while he was still on the stairway with his military escorts. Loterina's letter of retraction was delivered by a military driver and arrived during an eight-day period in which he was missing from home.

All of the various pressures were seen as emanating from Marcos. Even the staggered release of the two reports was seen as an attempt on his part to create confusion over which of the two was official.

## MORE POWERFUL FORCE

Despite the pressures from Marcos, "The board felt free to go ahead and name

Needless to say, the Ver family has grown rich, much like other Marcos cronies. One of its holdings, Fairways Security, for example, provides security guards to establishments such as the luxurious Manila Hotel—a creative arrangement not coincidental with Gen. Ver's close relationship with the Marcoses.

## USTODIO—CAREER LINKED TO VER AND MARCOS

Gen. Luther Custodio heads up the Aviation Security Command that was supposed to insure the "security" of Benigno Aquino last August 21, 1983. Custodio too carved out a career in intelligence and has been closely linked to Marcos and Ver. In fact, observers say the relationship between Ver and Custodio is not unlike that between Marcos and Ver.

A pilot by training, Custodio studied intelligence and air security in the U.S. He served at one point as Marcos' personal pilot, then went on to act as a regional head of NISA in the late '70s.

Before moving to AVSECOM, Custodio served directly under Ver as PSC Chief of Staff and Chief of Intelligence—the two positions now held by Irwin. He acted as advance security planner when Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos made state visits to other countries.

Irwin Ver has told reporters that he will "talk" if his father is "sacrificed." "I will not take this lying down," he told the *Christian Science Monitor*.

Given young Ver's stature and the importance of the SC—the only full division stationed in Manila and that one observer described as "the elite of the elite"—is not a threat to be taken lightly. □ EE

## The Gulf Between Rosie and the Majority



The Ver issue clearly opened up an unbridgeable gulf between Corazon Agrava and four colleagues. The chairwoman devoted four pages to a discussion of why Ver could not possibly have played a part in the assassination—even attacking the concept of command responsibility.

The majority, on the other hand, took up a full 33 pages pointing out the inconsistencies in Ver's testimony before the board and concluding that the general was involved in the plot.

They based their conclusions principally on Ver's insistence that he and his intelligence network had kept up with all of Aquino's moves over the last several years—including his "dental activities" while in prison—except for the last leg of his journey from Taipei to Manila. In 21 other instances, they concluded, Ver had been "less than candid."

But there were other significant differences. Agrava claimed that Aquino had been killed by one of the six escorts but declined to determine who among them was the killer. The majority singled out Constable First

Class Rogelio Moreno and Constabulary Sgt. Filomeno Miranda as the most likely suspects.

The majority further targeted Gen. Prospero Olivas who headed the first investigation into the murder as part of the cover-up. Olivas, they said, "sought to mislead us" by trying to prove that Aquino was killed with a .357 magnum when chemical tests indicate he was shot with either a .38 or .45 pistol.

In addition to the other AVSECOM guards targeted for deliberately lying to the panel, the majority named Col. Vicente Tigas of the Presidential Security Command. Tigas, the closest link to Malacañang from among those at the scene of the crime, reportedly arranged to black out the TV monitoring system servicing Manila International Airport just in time for the murder and to have ordered journalists into positions where they could not possibly see or photograph the killer.

Tigas also called on journalists and photographers following the assassination to collect their undeveloped film as "evidence." The films were never seen again. □

# Agcaoili Freed, Ocampo Release Pressed Cardinal Sin Backs Amnesty Call

**J**aime Cardinal Sin promised to personally submit to President Ferdinand Marcos an appeal signed by 42 personalities and organizations in the U.S. and Canada seeking general amnesty for all Philippine political prisoners and offenders.

The appeal was handed to Cardinal Sin by Armin Alforque on behalf of the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network during a meeting last September 21 held in New York between the Cardinal, U.S. church leaders and Philippine opposition groups.

A partial list of signatories includes members of the U.S. House of Representatives such as California Democrats Ron Dellums, Don Edwards and Pete Stark. A Canadian member of Parliament, Dan Heap, Mayor "Gus" Newport of Berkeley, and other city officials, distinguished academics, civil and human rights advocates, various church personalities and organizations, and officers of different Philippine opposition groups attached their names to the document which supports the Filipino people's "legitimate and just demand" for the restoration of democracy.

"The Statement in Support of the Appeal for General Amnesty in the Philippines" is part of a campaign launched last August by CAMD/PSN to popularize the demand for a general and unconditional amnesty for all Philippine political prisoners and "political offenders." The group sees amnesty as an "indispensable criterion for genuine democratization."

According to the statement, "granting general amnesty, without condition or discrimination" will pave the way to normalization but this has to be "accompanied by the restoration of basic political and human rights which are violated by

decrees and laws that currently justify summary detention and loss of liberty of Filipino citizens."

The amnesty campaign took off with reception-meetings in eight cities last August in which the wife of a political prisoner spoke of the unjust incarceration and miserable condition of several hundred Filipinos in Marcos' jails.

CAMD/PSN has also published a brochure entitled "General Amnesty: a condition for democratization in the Philippines." This brochure is now being distributed in a drive to add 10,000 signatures to the appeal which will be sent to the Philippines by spring of 1985.

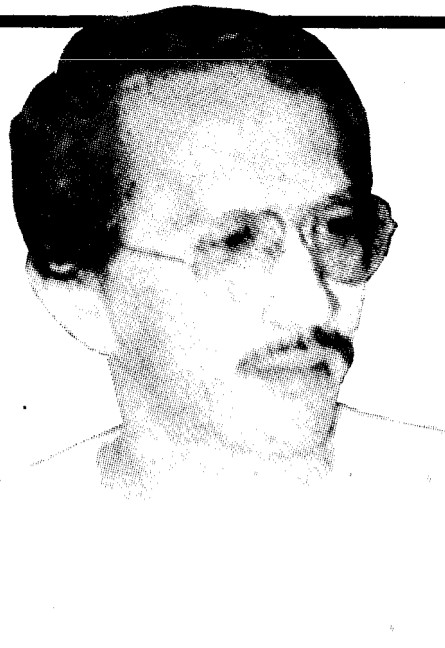
The amnesty campaign adds a new dimension to CAMD/PSN's political prisoners project which involves forming adoption groups that work for the release of individual prisoners. An "urgent alert network" which responds to emergency cases of salvaging, disappearances and arrests is also a part of the project.

## FIDEL AGCAOLI RELEASED

In a related development, long-time political prisoner Fidel Agcaoili was released last October 24, and his adoption groups are calling for a celebration. Agcaoili was the very first prisoner adopted by CAMD/PSN.

A relative of Agcaoili in the Sacramento area who joined his adoption group there confirmed the good news that after more than ten years, the Marcos regime finally relented and set the prisoner free.

Agcaoili was charged with rebellion in the Andrea-Karagatan case. If he had been found guilty, Agcaoili would have already served his sentence with his long incarceration.



Fidel Agcaoili

"Agcaoili's case is symptomatic of the whimsical injustice perpetrated under the Marcos dictatorship against those it considers its enemies," said Susan Araneta, a staff member of the Philippine Political Prisoners Resource Center, the CAMD/PSN project.

Agcaoili had been separated from his wife and four children ever since his arrest on May 12, 1974. Petitions for his release came from all over the world and from business, church, academic, legal, and media circles in the Philippines.

## SATUR OCAMPO'S CASE BROUGHT TO WASHINGTON

Meanwhile, the case of journalist Satur Ocampo was the main topic of a round of talks given by his fellow journalist Paulynn Sicam in Washington the third week of October.

In a meeting with the International Human Rights Law Group on October 26, Sicam sought support for the campaign to release Ocampo, the second longest-held political prisoner in the Philippines.

Sicam, who is currently on a fellowship at Stanford University, headed the Free Satur Ocampo Committee in Manila, and is a member of Women Writers in Media Now.

The International Human Rights Law Group, based in Washington, is made up of concerned lawyers who provide information and legal assistance in cases involving human rights violations. Officers of the group promised to look more closely at Ocampo's case and consider more concrete assistance.

Following a meeting with representatives of eight American University campus groups, Sicam was featured in a reception/fundraiser for political prisoners co-sponsored by the National Alliance of Third World Journalists, and the CAMD/PSN Congress Task Force. This alliance of mainly Black and Third World media individuals had passed a resolution seeking Ocampo's release during their national conference in New York last September.

At a CAMD/PSN "Solidarity Night" more than 45 members of a Filipino senior citizens group and some 30 guests listened to Sicam's appeal for material help for political prisoners' families.

During a breakfast meeting hosted by the House Human Rights Subcommittee, senior aides of Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-NY), Rep. James Oberstar (D-MN), Rep. Mel Levine (D-CA), Rep. Tony Hall (D-OH), and other staff of the Asia-Pacific Subcommittee exchanged views and information with Sicam about the issue of general amnesty as a requirement for genuine democratization.

"This round of talks featuring Ms. Sicam is our chapter's initial effort to pursue intercessionary work on the case of Satur," said Baby Kiuchi of CAMD/PSN Washington, one of four chapters working for Ocampo's release.

Ocampo was arrested on January 14, 1976 and is detained in Bicutan. Recently, appeals for his release were addressed to Marcos by the 105,000-member International Federation of Journalists, the 13,000-member Swedish Union of Journalists and the Association of Danish Journalists.



At left, opposition delegation delivering protest letter to LA Consulate (l-r): Homobono Adaza, Josue San Pedro, Rafael Fernando, Greg Santillan. At right, protest in San Francisco.



(AK Photo)

## Agrava Stirs Up Pinoys Here

Once again, Filipinos took to the streets to air their disgust at the Marcos government. This time, they protested the failure of the Agrava reports "to point to the real mastermind" of the Aquino assassination.

Opposition groups came together in six U.S. and two Canadian cities to coordinate protest actions and press conferences.

"The verdict of the Filipino people has been in for a long time—'Marcos is the killer,'" asserted a joint statement signed by Bay Area opposition groups: Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship, the Movement for a Free Philippines, and the Philippine Support Committee.

Members of the New Aquino Movement led by Ruben Mallari, joined CAMD/PSN in a picket outside the Philippine consulate.

A Los Angeles delegation including Rafael Fernando and Raul Daza of the

Aquino Movement; Greg Santillan of the CAMD/PSN; Josue San Pedro of Kapatirang Rizal; and Homobono Adaza, former assemblyman, read a statement condemning the report to Philippine consular staff member Peter Chan. The statement was read in the doorway after the press was refused entry. A picket outside the consular office was joined by members of the MFP. Former senator Jovito Salonga gave a message of solidarity.

In New York, a delegation to the consulate led by Armin Alforque of CAMD, Luisa Reyes of MFP and Melvie Pacubas of the Concerned Artists of the Philippines was prevented from meeting with consular officials.

Pickets were coordinated in Toronto, Seattle, New York, San Francisco, and in front of the White House in Washington, D.C. followed by community meetings to discuss the implications of the Agrava reports. In Sacramento, Hawaii and Montreal, CAMD/PSN displayed banners accusing Marcos of the Aquino murder.

Press conferences were held in New York, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco. □

## REAGAN AXES REFORMED EXTRADITION BILL

The Reagan administration claimed it needed new extradition legislation to facilitate the return of "terrorists" to their homelands for prosecution.

The bill it submitted to Congress as part of the President's Comprehensive Crime Control Act (S. 1762), allowed the U.S. government to imprison anyone, foreign or American, for up to 60 days without establishing "probable cause" that a crime had been committed.

The measure also limited the "political crime exemption," so those whose only "crime" was opposition to an authoritarian regime would find it even more difficult to fight extradition.

Under pressure from civil libertarians, the version that finally emerged from the House Judiciary Committee this year actually strengthened the rights of refugees fleeing persecution and former officials of deposed regimes, while still facilitating

the extradition of genuine terrorists.

The amended version, H.R. 3347, would have given the federal courts a role in denying extradition requests if there were "probable cause to believe that the person would be persecuted on account of his race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular group, or political opinion." For the first time, the motives of the requesting nation would be examined.

These reforms proved to be too much for the Administration, which urged representatives to oppose the extradition bill when it came up for a vote in the House on September 10. As a result, H.R. 3347 went down to defeat in a voice vote and the Senate version, more to the Administration's liking, near came up for final action. □

—Civil Liberties Alert, ACLU  
November 1984

# Filipinos Joined Election Fray

By VICKY PEREZ

In an unprecedented flurry of activities, organized sectors of the Filipino community rolled up their sleeves in an effort to influence the outcome of one of the most critical presidential elections ever held in this country. Despite the Reagan victory, most viewed their participation as a worthwhile step in the political growth of U.S. Filipinos.

Voter education initiatives sponsored by community civic and grass roots organizations reached several thousand Filipinos across the country.

In Daly City, it was standing room only at the October 19 meeting of the Filipino American Democratic Club of San Mateo County held in the home of its president, Alice Bulos.

"When I first came to this county, Bulos explained, "I didn't even know what propositions were. I looked in the *Chronicle* and just voted the way they said. We need to be aware of why we vote 'yes' or 'no' on the issues."

There were always new faces in every meeting, observed one FADC-SMC member. "It took an election like this to draw us out."

While a number of groups across the country held "non-partisan" registration drives, the most visible activities were decidedly against the Reagan administration.

Bulos' FADC-SMC, for example, later



Volunteer doing voter outreach by phone.

teamed up with the Filipinos of the Rainbow Coalition, Ninoy Aquino Movement, and members of the Filipino American Political Association to form "Filipinos for Mondale/Ferraro." The coalition produced informational brochures calling on Filipinos to vote against Reagan. A few days before the elections, it organized a Vote for Mondale/Ferraro car caravan that drove through San Francisco and Daly City streets.

This followed a Filipinos of the Rainbow Coalition (FORC) "Dump Reagan" forum November 3 which featured in addition to Bulos, Wilson Riles, Oakland city council member, Mila de Guzman of FORC, Gonzalo Zapata of Casa Nicaragua and Gaston Ortigas of the Movement for a Free Philippines.

In Oakland, the Filipino American Political Movement (Oakland) held an "Issues and Candidates Forum" October 27 which was joined by FORC, Filipino Immigrant Services, Filipino American Political Movement of Alameda County, Filipino American Council of Union City and the Filipino Senior Citizen's Association, East Bay.

The Filipino Outreach of the Washington State Rainbow Coalition Inc. sponsored a forum in Seattle November 4 and organized neighborhood voter education efforts. Meanwhile, in Los Angeles, anti-Reagan Filipinos conducted door-to-door voter outreach.

## IN EAST COAST TOO

Filipinos were no less active in the East Coast. In Washington, a tri-state Coalition to Dump Reagan drew close to 200 Asian

Americans, over half of whom were Filipinos, to a forum November 2.

David Valderrama, Chair of the Maryland Asian Pacific Caucus and Vice-Chair of the Democratic Central Committee of Maryland; Jon Melegrito of the Union of Democratic Filipinos and Remo Dela Pena, President of the Pilipino Senior Citizens Club of Maryland, rallied the crowd against the Republicans.

A "Get Out the Vote, Dump Reagan" meeting was held October 25 in New York featuring state assemblyman Al Vann who was joined at the podium by Armin Alforque of Filipinos in the Rainbow, Rick Braun, president of Village Independent Democrats, Evelyn Linares of Latinos in the Rainbow, Irene Natividad, Vice-chair of the National Women's Caucus, Peggy Shepard of Women of Color for Empowerment and Rev. Tony Watkins of the Rainbow Coalition Peace Caucus.

The meeting was endorsed by community organizers such as Bonnie Gillego and Dr. Orly Apiado of the Movement for a Free Philippines-NY, Linda Faigao, poet Luis Cabalquimpo, Serge Estrada, Manoling Maravilla, Lourdes Avelino, Ramon Jodell, Melvie Pacubas, and many others.

## ANTI-REAGAN BENT

In most of these nationwide election activities, the Reagan-Bush ticket received many criticisms.

"The Democratic Party is for minorities. Civil rights, human rights, it's only the Democratic Party that has taken them up—including Kennedy, Mondale, Jackson," asserted Renato Geniblazo of the Filipino American Political Movement of Alameda County and the Filipino American Council of Union City.

"Reagan prefers America for the 'Americans.' But when he says 'Americans,' he means the whites."

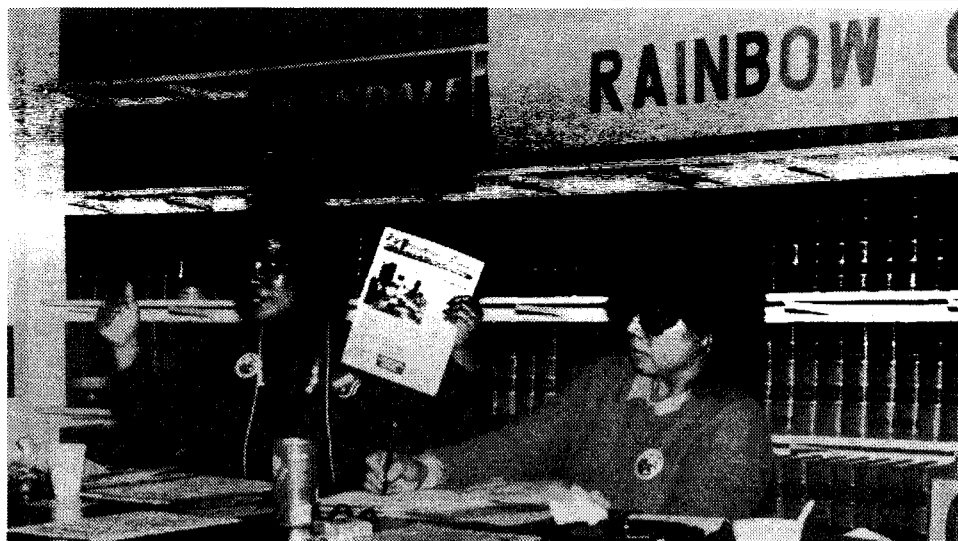
In a letter to community groups and individuals, the D.C. Coalition to Dump Reagan stated, "Clearly, the only wise choice is to vote for a Democratic ticket that has taken a progressive stand on issues that directly affect us." Aside from Valderrama, Dela Pena and Melegrito, the letter was signed by Joey Ortiz, president of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce, Benny Benson, president of the Ilocano Society of America, and Gloria Caoile, Chair of the Virginia Asia/Pacific Caucus. The letter said further that "the last four years have shown the cruel results of Reagan's unfair and unjust policies."

NAM's Ruben Mallari said "The Reagan administration is not for fairness. Short of being a bigot, Reagan has held a racist policy in regard to civil rights, opposed the 1964 Civil Rights Act and is undermining civil rights laws."

The election stirred up a lot of interest in the community, when the Philippines became a topic in the presidential debate. Criticism of U.S. support for Marcos became a central theme in Geraldine Ferraro's speeches in Oakland and San Jose after CAMD/PSN members conferred with Ferraro's aides. "Without a doubt," said Geniblazo, "Mondale and Ferraro's stand on the Philippines will attract Filipinos."

Ortigas of MFP stated, "Community members against Marcos have no choice. The Reagan policy against the Philippines is an inhumane policy. Mondale has a policy in support of human rights. Filipino freedom and self determination is important and must be respected by any president of the United States."

"Mondale said you can't separate the issue of human rights and security," said Bulos at a San Francisco forum. "Reagan is just concerned with security. How can you just talk about security in the Philippines when people are dying? When Mon-



Alice Bulos (l) and Mila de Guzman (r) of Filipinos for Mondale/Ferraro.

dale talks about these issues, that's when we side with him."

## REPUBLICANS ACTIVE TOO

When the Philippine issue became central in the presidential debates, Filipino Republicans were put on the defensive.

In an Oakland forum, Ernie Santos, president of the Filipino American Republican Committee in the Bay Area, found himself in a tight spot. When asked about Reagan's policy towards the Philippines, Santos responded, "I am unable to say whether or not Mr. Reagan does not know, or has forgotten that Mr. Marcos' opponents are not all communists," and cut his response short of the two minutes he was allotted.

In Washington, D.C., political observers noted that pro-Marcos groups distanced themselves from participating in election activities altogether.

Melecio H. Jacaban, founder of *Bataan News*, now called the *Filipino-American*, exemplified the pro-Marcos support for Reagan. On one hand, he asked Filipinos to concern themselves only with issues in the U.S.. On the other, he wrote "Today, they [the Filipino people] look to the Republicans as more sympathetic to their struggle to forestall the communists from taking over the country."

Not all Filipinos were spontaneously pro-Democrats, however. At a swearing in of new American citizens in San Francisco, one Filipino said she registered Republican, "because Reagan made me proud to be an American—anyways, he's a nice guy."

## EMPOWERMENT

Underlying the election fever that gripped an unprecedented number of community organizers was the rising issue of empowerment, or representation in the political process.

Filipinos represent the fastest growing Asian community in the U.S. and exhibit the highest rate of naturalization among immigrant minorities. Community organ-

izers unanimously observed that the number of Filipinos who can vote is increasing every year.

"In our quest for empowerment, the number of voting constituents is important, but not enough," said De Guzman of FORC. "We also have to decide what kind of politics we want to align with, will we go with policies detrimental to minorities?"

Letty Jue, president of the Philippine Nurse's Association in Los Angeles, warned that "The issues of the other minority communities also impact us. Filipinos need to be more involved not only in issues of the community but of other minorities."

Election organizers also took issue with groups who remained non-partisan throughout the presidential contest. When the question was raised at a San Francisco forum, the panel of speakers simultaneously responded, "It's a problem."

"It is difficult," said Ortigas. "You become less and less active because you avoid taking sides. I don't believe it results in greater membership."

In another instance, Mallari addressed the issue by stating "I don't think they present the issues and be neutral. The issues are on fairness, human rights and foreign policy. You can't be neutral on these. Filipinos need to stand up for justice and against unfairness," Mallari added. "We can't be afraid to rock the boat."

Remo Dela Pena from Maryland lamented the fact that some community organizations devoted more time to meaningless activities, like Mrs. Philippines, or Miss Little Philippines beauty contests.

"These projects sap our energies," he said. "They emasculate the community from aspiring for nobler visions of itself. They serve as an opiate which keeps people from asserting their democratic rights. As community leaders, we should instead educate our community about the issues that affect minorities in the country so that they can become a more enlightened electorate." □

# White House . . .

Continued from page 3

So far, the Reaganites retain complete control over policy. An interagency group has been meeting regularly—and confidentially—over the past several months to hammer out a new approach leaving the liberal foreign policy establishment decidedly miffed.

In an effort to break open the discussion, Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-NY) held a series of hearings in the Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs of the House Foreign Affairs Committee last month.

## LIBERALS OUTMANEUVERED

While the liberals fumed over their inability to interact with policy formation, several interesting facts emerged. Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard L. Armitage revealed that the U.S. government has leased 18,000 acres on Saipan and Tinian in the Marianas as a fallback should the U.S. be driven from Clark Air Base and Subic Bay Naval Base.

Armitage expressed fear that the Philippine revolutionary movement might succeed within the next 10 years. In doing so,

he struck a chord which unifies the Washington establishment, conservatives and liberals alike.

Carl W. Ford and Frederick Z. Brown, authors of a Philippine report for the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, wrote, "Most disturbing is the fact that the insurgency—the rationale for imposing martial law 14 years ago—is stronger today than ever before."

Ross Munro warns of real trouble should the Philippine Communist Party "abandon its Maoist emphasis on self-reliance and seek Soviet bloc help."

In spite of what the liberals see as an urgent situation, it is clear that the Reagan camp is not about to make any abrupt move and is determined to only slowly ease Marcos out. It has used quiet diplomacy to date—with an occasional sharp nudge—and it will continue to do so until 1987.

In spite of their blustering, heavy-handed doctrinaire approaches on other fronts, the White House has in fact, adopted a fairly pragmatic scenario for the Philippines, pulling the rug out from under the liberals in Congressional foreign policy circles. But once in a while, it lets its ideological slip show, such as during Reagan's debate night blunder. At those times, the liberals quite effectively give Reagan's quiet diplomacy a beating. □

Commentary

# Why Immigration Bill 'Died'

By BILL TAMAYO  
Co-Coordinator, Bay Area Committee  
Against Simpson/Mazzoli

Despite a backdrop of growing anti-alien sentiments, INS factory raids and presidential speeches declaring the need for the U.S. to "regain control of its borders," the Simpson/Mazzoli immigration bill "died" in Congress last month.

Those who fought against the bill were surprised that the conference committee charged with resolving the differences between the House and Senate versions failed to produce a "final consensus."

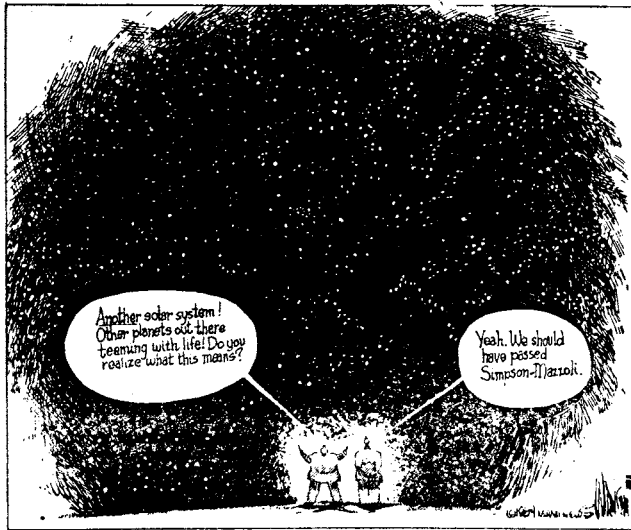
So why did the bill die? Was the opposition movement so powerful that Congress buckled under the pressure? Were the differences between the House and Senate so substantial that no final package could develop?

It should first be made clear that the differences between the House and Senate were significant *but not qualitative*. In fact, the main differences were on numbers and dates, not on premises or perspectives on immigration.

Both versions were based on the following premises: 1) the U.S. must curb illegal immigration; 2) undocumented immigrants are a menace to society, i.e. they take away jobs and resources from citizens; 3) immigrants, documented and undocumented, have less rights than U.S. citizens; 4) the agriculture industry should still have ready access to a large pool of highly exploitable immigrant labor from Mexico and Jamaica; 5) since the conflicts in Central America would lead to massive immigration from that area, Congress must place severe restrictions on access to political asylum.

### BIPARTISAN SUPPORT

Given these premises, Simpson/Mazzoli could only be viewed as a crackdown on immigrant rights rather than as an advance for civil or human rights. These



premises continued to be expressed in the "compromise" version which prescribed:

- Fining employers who knowingly hire undocumented workers (\$1,000 per worker for first offense, \$2,000 for the second offense, with possible six months in jail for repeated offenses);
- A two-tiered legalization program that allows "illegals" who have been in the U.S. since January 1, 1981 to have access (with no guarantees except exposure to the INS) to permanent residency;
- Expansion of the temporary workers program from the current 30,000 to 1/4 million or more a year;
- Only 14 days to file a political asylum claim from the day of arrest by INS;
- Summary exclusion of aliens at the borders without hearings.

No major differences between the House and Senate and between the Democrats and Republicans arose over these provisions which actually mirrored the more repressive, Reagan-backed Senate version.

Bipartisan support for the bill was indicated early enough. In the vote on the House version in June 1984,

91 Republicans and 125 Democrats voted for the bill while 73 Republicans and 138 Democrats voted against it.

### ILLUSORY VOTE

The relatively large "opposition" vote, however, did not necessarily mean that a large bloc in Congress supported immigrant rights. In fact, much of the opposition represented conservative views that opposed any "legalization program," or opposed the bill's "legalization" proposal because it was "too liberal," or that it "rewarded illegal conduct," or that it was too expensive. Others opposed the bill because "employer sanctions" and the consequent record keeping "would hurt U.S. businesses," especially those that rely on undocumented labor.

Later, after having finally agreed on the main provisions, the conference committee found itself initially split on an anti-discrimination amendment, pushed by Barney Frank (D-MA). Responding to the charges that employer sanctions would result in discrimination against Latinos and other minorities, the Frank amendment made it unlawful for employers to discriminate on the basis of race, national origin, sex, religion, and alienage. Meaning, employers could not prefer U.S. citizens over non-citizens without the risk of being sued. Senator Alan Simpson refused to accept this amendment, and for two weeks the committee was at an impasse.

However, a last minute effort by Rep. Schumer (D-NY) resulted in Frank agreeing to a watered down version of his amendment: only lawful permanent residents who indicated intent under oath to apply for citizenship could charge alienage discrimination.

Thus, aliens who have been permanent residents for years but who have not applied for citizenship for various reasons (including a limited ability to speak, read, and write English) could be denied jobs by discriminatory *private employers* simply because they are not citizens.

### REAGAN MANEUVERS

President Reagan had made it clear that he would sign the bill only if it fell in line with the more restrictive Senate version. Conference committee members, both Democrats and Republicans, did succumb to White House pressure to produce the aforementioned compromise version. Despite this, the Reagan administration declined to push the bill in the end. Why?

The White House claimed it did not approve of the budget for federal reimbursements to local governments for public assistance to the legalization program applicants. An amendment by Rep. Don Edwards (D-CA), sup-

*Continued on page 14*

# Schools Sue Parents Over Bilingual Education

By EMIL DE GUZMAN

Some Latino, Asian and Black parents in Oakland are locked in an unremitting showdown with the city's School District over the future of a sub-standard bilingual education program.

The controversy began when the parents filed a lawsuit in April against the Oakland school district claiming that the district failed "across the board" in its statutory duties to provide bilingual education services to limited-English-speaking children.

In September, J. David Bowick, school district superintendent, filed a counter lawsuit in Alameda Superior Court charging two parent leaders and their lawyer with libel and "abuse of the legal process." The suit named Carlito Cardona, a Filipino, and Tomas Morales, a Mexican parent. The two are chairman and vice-chairman, respectively of the district's Bilingual Advisory Committee. Also named was their lead attorney Lois Salisbury, a member of Public Advocates, a public interest law firm in San Francisco.

The School District is seeking \$120,000 in general damages to cover legal costs. The original lawsuit included a \$4 million claim for punitive damages which the district later dropped.

**CIVIL RIGHTS VIOLATIONS**  
"Every student, regardless of whether they are English-speaking or not, when they enroll in school for the first time, is supposed to be given a home language survey. If English is shown to be their second language, they are assessed for their English proficiency. If the student is not proficient, then there is proper place-



Parents press Oakland on bilingual education.

ment in a bilingual education program," Shirley Nakao of the Legal Aid Society of Alameda County, attorney for the parents explained.

The parents' lawsuit rests on the district's alleged neglect and failure to survey and assess students on English proficiency.

The U.S. Department of Education has already found the Oakland School District in violation of the civil rights of limited-English-speaking students four times in the last eight years.

The school district's total enrollment is 50,000. There is an estimated 9,000 students considered to be Limited English Proficient (LEP). The 8,000 already identified LEP in the district suffer from 62 fewer bilingual teachers.

There are 37 languages and dialects spoken in the district, including Spanish,

Pilipino, Vietnamese, Chinese, Laotian, and Cambodian.

### SURVEY CANCELLED

The parents suffered a legal setback when a temporary injunction was withdrawn by a judge who earlier ordered the district to survey LEP students in the district. Alameda County Superior Judge Winton McKibben, presiding over the parents' lawsuit, had ruled that the district was to complete a survey of students' bilingual needs by September.

Then, Judge McKibben ordered the parent plaintiffs, who had posted a \$7,500 bond, to sign an open-ended guarantee to cover the district's costs in excess of \$7,500 if the parents' lawsuit was defeated. The district claimed that it had spent over \$200,000.

Since the working class parents could not sign the pledges, Judge McKibben dissolved the injunction and the survey was not completed.

### PARENT SOLIDARITY

The controversy is bringing together Asians and Latinos, but the parents are also getting support from Blacks. One of the plaintiffs in the parents' lawsuit is a Black doctor with two English-proficient children studying in Oakland schools. She joined because the district's inadequacy limited the ability of proficient students to learn in a bilingual education setting.

Another Black parent, Oscar Wright, stated, "In recent months we have seen and heard a lot of confusion in the Oakland Unified School District, watched the intervention of corporate giants, chambers of commerce, and grand juries to deny all American children equal educational opportunity in Oakland. We have witnessed the district trying to separate people of one race from another in this city."

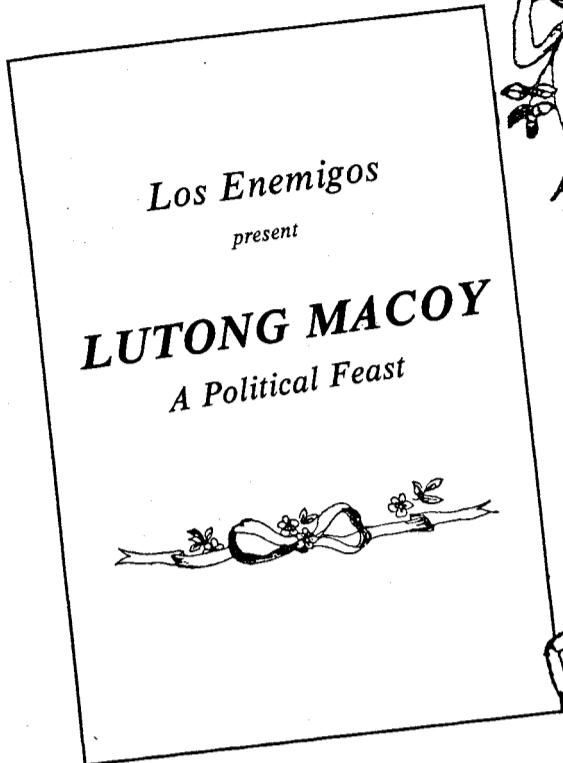
Carlito Cardona is a father of two Ilocano-speaking children enrolled in Oakland's bilingual education program. He has been active for three years in the district's Bilingual Advisory Committee, two years its chairman. He is also a staff at the Filipino Immigrant Services in Oakland.

Cardona told *Ang Katipunan*, "No longer is the issue bilingual education. The issue is now the parents' right to speak out. When the school district filed a countersuit against myself and the two others, it served as a warning to all parents that this is what you get when you don't cooperate."

"The school district," said Cardona, "underestimates the parents' love for their children. We will make sacrifices for our kids." He recounted the evening meetings and weekends he spent working over three years with other parents on the district's masterplan "at no pay"—only to see the plan rejected by Bowick and the district. Because of his militant public criticism of the district, Cardona claimed he has even received a death threat. □

# Voices

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



## ORDER NI MISIS

*Azucena a la Valencia*  
*Blas Souffle*  
*Bola Bola Cendaña*  
*Callos Romulo*  
*Cesar Salad*  
*Chicharong Bulaklak*  
*Chicken Aspiragos*  
*Cocojuangco Macaroons*  
*Eggs Benedicto*  
*Glaced Tantoco*  
*Ice Cold Ver*  
*Jaimelaya Ube*  
*(also known as giniling na mamera)*  
*Joly B Cheeseburgis Sandwich*  
*Macaroni Velasco*  
*Maruya Katigbak*  
*Okoy Romualdez*  
*Olivas Alone Hototay Soup*  
*Sharks Ongpin Soup*  
*Tinolang Manotoc*  
*Macapuno Supreme*

## Ihaw-Ihaw Ballot

*Bagoong Lipunan*  
*Boneless Comelec with Perez Sauce*  
*Crony Norte*  
*Daing ng Bayan*  
*Kinurakot na Kangkong*  
*Lengua Estupida a la Señora*  
*Nilasing na Cronies*  
*(Available on Saturdays only)*  
*Paksiw na Eleksyon*  
*Pinaupong Tuta*  
*Piniritong Ibong May*  
*Layang Lumipad*  
*Sariling Sikwat*  
*(Snails with toothpicks)*  
*Tinuhog na Peña*  
*(in season)*  
*Tostados Estados Unidos*  
*Utang Sapin-Sapin*  
*(All year round)*

## Pasalubong Counter

(Gate 8)

*Agravadulce Sauce*  
*August 21 Leche Plan*  
*Dreaded Metrocom*  
*Dinuguang Tarmac*  
*Fabian's Tira-Tira*  
*Galman Con Sago*  
*Pusila Pusit*  
  
*All orders served in New Society portions (very small), Sariling Sikap style (self-service), except on the feast of Nuestra Señora de las Alahas, Patron of the Poor.*

One of our readers sent in this menu which some freedom-starved souls in the Philippines have been circulating. This humorous protest mixes up popular dishes with the names and idiosyncracies of cabinet members and cronies. The mix-up includes government programs and other things associated with the New Republic that denote its distinctive taste and aroma.

## Carlos Bulosan is Remembered With a New Headstone

Last Saturday, [September 29] about 50 people gathered at a cemetery on Queen Anne Hill to watch the unveiling of a new headstone placed over the gravesite of influential Filipino author and activist Carlos Bulosan.

Bulosan, born in a town in the central Philippines in 1913, came to Seattle in July 1930 and worked as a migrant laborer, cannery union activist and author until his death in 1956.

He is best known for his passionate autobiographical novel "America Is in the Heart," which describes the poverty, discrimination and exploitation faced by the first generation of Filipino immigrants who came to this country. Scenes in the book are set in Seattle's International District, where Filipino laborers would come to await dispatch to Alaska for the salmon canning season.

The book, first published in 1943, was reissued by the University of Washington Press in 1973 during a period of increasing interest in Asian American literature.

Stan Asis, an actor with Northwest Asian American Theatre (NWAAT), told the gathering at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery last Saturday that Bulosan deserved to be remembered for his literary achievements and his social activism. "He was a very important man to all of us," Asis said. Asis, who will star in the upcoming NWAAT production of "Flowers and Other Household Gods," produced some of Bulosan's folktales for theatre as a student at the University of Washington (UW) years ago.

A local committee raised approximately \$1,000 from individuals and organizations to purchase the polished black granite headstone, which replaces a small, nondescript burial marker.

Aurelio, Bulosan's brother who lives in Huntington Beach, California, contributed \$200, but was unable to travel to Seattle for the ceremony because of poor health.

Dely Judal, an employee for the Asian and



Pacific American Student Counselling Services at UW, unveiled the new headstone, inscribed with an epitaph Bulosan himself had written: "Here, here the tomb of Bulosan is; here, here are his words, dry as the grass is." The words "writer, poet, activist" are also chiseled beneath Bulosan's name.

Judal, who worked on the fundraising committee for the new headstone, said that when she first went to visit Bulosan's gravesite she was unable to find it without assistance because the location was marked by a small stone with faded, illegible lettering.

She helped organize the fundraising drive, Judal said, because she felt that anyone who contributed as much as Bulosan did to local Asian American history should be remembered with a quality headstone.

Since his death, Bulosan's achievements as a writer, poet and labor activist have been rediscovered by a younger generation of Asian American activists and students. Many of those who came to watch the unveiling were activists who read "America Is in the Heart" as students in college.

Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes, the two young reformers who had worked to rid the Seattle-based cannery union, Local 37 of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, of corruption and bribery before their murders in 1981, frequently cited Bulosan's work as an

inspiration for their own efforts.

In the year before their murders, they had discussed reviving the cannery union yearbook, citing the 1952 yearbook edited by Carlos Bulosan, as the model edition. Chris Mensalves, Bulosan's close friend, served as president of Local 37 that year. Mensalves, who died in 1978, was portrayed as Jose in "America Is in the Heart."

Bulosan is still fondly remembered by many of Seattle's elderly Filipinos, who remember his work as an organizer for Local 37.

Al Masigat, 80, one of those at the Saturday gathering, recalled that Bulosan would come from California to Seattle during the cannery season and eat at the Rice Bowl Cafe, a business Masigat operated on Second Avenue and South Washington Street during World War II.

"That guy—he taught me everything," Masigat, a long-time International District resident and housing activist, said. "It did not matter whether you are illiterate, if you are uneducated, if you are poor, if you don't have a job. He would talk to you. He wanted to know what you had to say."

Marion Kinney, a former staff writer for the "People's World," was the one who sparked the fundraising drive by informing others of the late writer's burial site in Seattle. Kinney said she first met Bulosan, "a very slight person with the most irrepresible personality," during the 1940s while

he was recovering from tuberculosis in a local sanitarium.

"He was always very nice and charming and very literate, as he would be, being a poet and a writer," she recounted after the brief unveiling ceremony. "I think of the discrimination against Orientals during those years and the tremendous obstacles that he overcame to become the writer and poet that he was. He had tremendous heart."

Maria Batayola, one of the pioneers of Asian American theatre in Seattle, concluded the ceremony by reading a passage from "America Is in the Heart," part of which Gene Viernes used in a poster that once hung on the wall of the Alaska Cannery Workers Association office:

"America is not a land of one race or one class of men. We are all Americans that have toiled and suffered and known oppression and defeat, from the first Indian that offered peace in Manhattan to the last Filipino peapickers.

"America is not bound by geographical latitudes. America is not merely a land or an institution. America is in the hearts of men that died for freedom; it is also in the eyes of men that are building a new world. America is a prophecy of a new society of men: of a system that knows no sorrow or strife or suffering. America is a warning to those who would try to falsify the ideals of free men.

"America is also the nameless foreigner, the homeless refugee, the hungry boy begging for a job and the black body dangling from a tree. America is the illiterate immigrant who is ashamed that the world of books and intellectual opportunity is closed to him.

"We are all that nameless foreigner, that homeless refugee, that hungry boy, that illiterate immigrant and that lynched black body. All of us, from the first Adams to the last Filipino, native born or alien, educated or illiterate—*We are America!*" □

Ron Chew is the editor of International Examiner, a community newspaper serving Seattle's International District. This article first appeared in its October 3, 1984 issue.

## Ang Tulay sa Mendiola at ang Piitang Bastille

Matalim na guilotin ang pamugot sa Bastille  
ngunit ang bunga'y damdaming nagtining  
at sambayanang Frances ay nagsumugid  
upang katarungang madla'y tanghalin —  
Iyan ang kahulugan sa 'kin  
ng mga naganap sa piitang Bastille.

Nagtipong bayan ay hindi nasindak,  
tinugis sila ngunit sila'y nagbalik  
di alintana palo sa katawan  
sigaw nila sa puso ko madiing nakintal!  
Iyan ang kahulugan sa 'kin ng mga  
naganap sa Mendiolang sukatan.

Diwang nagising sa batasang lansangan  
ang yumakap sa Bastille at siya'y sinagisag  
bagamat Mendiola'y inalambreng tinik —  
sa halip nang matalim na pangkitil  
may pampaluhang gas at batutang pangsupil  
pambayo sa pare at madre at kabataang nagising.

May dumanas ng palo at may sumugod sa tulay  
na walang malay sa naganap sa Bastille  
ngunit damdamin duo'y siya rin sa tulay:  
karapatang tao ay dapat mahalinal!  
Hindi luha ang Mendiola —  
siya'y paringal-hiyas ng kalayaang Pilipinas.

Sedfrey A. Ordoñez  
September 26, 1984  
Narita Airport Hotel

*Sedfrey Ordoñez, a lawyer, is a member of the Board of Commissioners of the Civil Liberties Union of the Philippines and of the Human Rights Commission of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines.*

## A foliage of fire

There, in the sequestered pit  
The flesh of my country is bared,  
An epoch of grief  
In the solace of the earth  
Lingers like a viper of hatred,  
A blade in the ground's enclosure  
That will cut the snare of tyranny  
And pierce the glitter of its shell  
And gouge the matrix of its heart  
Until it bleeds out the offal  
And the venom of its loins.

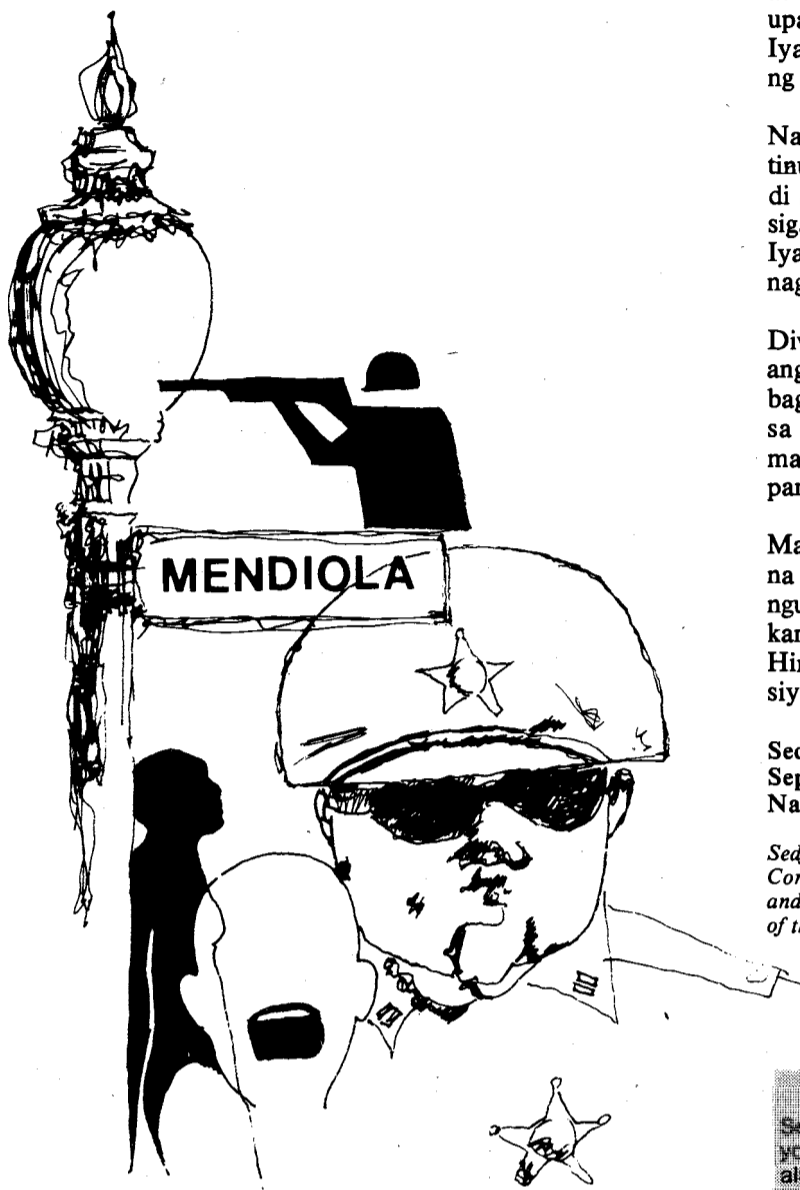
I stand before a rustle of growth:  
The crackle of irons  
And the havoc of metals  
In a crescendo brimmed by blood,  
Fertilized droplets of blood  
Tasting of salt and sea water  
That glued the cries  
Of children slaughtered in innocence  
And bolted their lips into silence  
In the dark distances of night.

I stand before a blossoming thunderstorm,  
Guns sights calibrated searching  
For the mark of your heart,  
O, poacher of land and liberty!  
Flagellant of lacerated warriors,  
Foul reveler in catacombs  
Hallowed by pain.  
Daily you celebrate a feast of terror  
Squandering lives and dignity,  
Mutilating a race of man,  
Devourer, always devouring.

I stand in the hour's excitement:  
From bondage swords will branch out,  
A profusion of blades,  
And a foliage of fire!

David Villavera

*David Villavera is a painter, graphic artist and photographer who lives and works in Montreal, Canada. He is also an active member of the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network in that city.*



### TO OUR READERS:

Send your essays, satires, poems, short stories, photos of your paintings, sculptures, or woodcuts, photo art etc. Send also a brief description of yourself as a writer or artist.

1. Contributions must be generally progressive in content. However, all written materials accepted for publication are edited only for length. The contributors are responsible for the political opinions expressed in their work.
2. Essays, feature articles, or short stories, should not exceed 2,000 words. All articles must be typed double spaced and received by us within the first week of the month. Only articles with self-addressed stamped envelopes will be sent back if not accepted for publication.
3. Photos of art work will be sent back upon request by the contributor.
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.

## Immigration . . .

Continued from page 12

ported by the National Association of County Organizations, demanded 100% reimbursement from the federal government, while the White House wanted a \$1 billion cap per year.

Reagan's own Office of Management and Budget reported that the legalization program could possibly cost \$11-13 billion in costs and benefits alone. He claimed this would undermine his policy of "cutting federal spending," and as a result he preferred not to push the bill.

However, these amounts are a drop in the bucket relative to the astronomical proportions of the federal budget. And these would not have been an unreasonable amount to pay for an immigration bill that was close enough to the version Reagan preferred.

But he was clearly not satisfied even with that final version. "There were things added in the House side that made it less of a good bill," he said in the last presidential debate.

Wary of the Latino vote as a factor in the elections, the White House figured it would look better to have the bill die "due to budget reasons" than to have Reagan veto it because he disagreed with the amount of "anti-discrimination" protections for immigrants.

### MIXED OPPOSITION

For the opposition movement, the nearly three-year battle against Simpson/Mazzoli has provided some important lessons. The opposition movement was by

no means homogenous. In fact, towards the last few weeks of the bill, a broader, but tenuous, alliance formed against the bill, which included the AFL-CIO (a proponent until three days before the House vote in June), U.S. Chamber of Commerce, American Civil Liberties Union, Mexican-American Legal Defense Education Fund, Japanese-American Citizens League, Black Caucus, church organizations, and refugee groups. Growers Association, Congressional Black Caucus, church organizations, and refugee groups.

The pro-immigrant wing of this alliance still has to grasp the political implications of sharing the opposition platform with lobbies who operate on the premise that the "U.S. must keep illegals out, but in a way that doesn't hurt our business or political agendas." For example, some forces opposed to the bill's discriminatory and repressive nature found themselves supporting increased and more restrictive border enforcement—either for the sake of preserving alliances with narrow-interest opposition lobbies or because they themselves assume that undocumented aliens are indeed harmful to the public interest.

Confident of winning another term, the administration most definitely prefers to push for a more restrictive bill starting next year—unencumbered by pre-election politics.

What was clearly lacking on the national level was a voice that spoke out consistently against the bill's underlying racist rationale, and in favor of the defense of all immigrants be they *documented or undocumented*.

Despite the fact that over 500,000 Salvadorans in the U.S. face possible deportation, no consistent major force has stepped forward to link Simpson/Mazzoli to U.S. foreign policy in Central America, or to link U.S. involvement in Mexico and the Philippines to the

massive immigration from those countries. Attempts were made on the local levels to make these links clear, but much more work needs to be done.

### TOUGH TESTS AHEAD

Simpson/Mazzoli will definitely be reintroduced in the next Congressional session in January 1985 as its old self or in new disguises. Proponents might break up its contents into several bills to disperse the opposition. Without sensitive presidential campaigns and debates to worry about, Simpson/Mazzoli's bipartisan backers will come charging with battering rams.

The opposition movement, particularly its pro-immigrant wing faces more difficult tests. Will those who support immigrant rights be able to hold on to the just, but unpopular premise that demands full rights for all immigrants, documented, and undocumented. Will their opposition to racism and national discrimination remain unshaken in the face of powerful rightwing attacks? Will their opposition to Simpson/Mazzoli or any of its forms be total? Or will they waver if, for example, the AFL-CIO reverts to its old position of supporting the bill? Will they waver because of some seemingly liberal legalization proviso?

The immigration question will not be put to rest simply with the passage of legislation. Poverty and wars abroad will force the exodus of tens of thousands from Central America, Mexico, and the Philippines. Our responsibility is to insure that the rights of these immigrants are fully guaranteed, and that no distinctions which create a second class status for people become law. □

*(Bill Tamayo is also a staff attorney with the Asian Law Caucus.)*

## Fascist Terror Continues

## Another Vietnam Supporter Slain

By VINCE REYES

The murder of Professor Edward Lee Cooperman last October 13 extends the list of political assassinations directed at supporters and activists of the Vietnam solidarity movement in recent years. He is the first non-Vietnamese to be murdered.

Cooperman, 49, was shot in the throat with a .25 calibre pistol and bled to death in his office at California State University, Fullerton where he had been a nuclear physics professor for the last 16 years.

The day after Cooperman was shot, Fullerton police arrested Minh Van Lam, a 20-year-old Vietnamese refugee and former student in one of Cooperman's physics classes. He was arraigned in municipal court on October 17 and charged with murder.

Cooperman was widely known for his activities as founder and chairman of the Committee for Scientific Cooperation with Vietnam which promotes exchange of information, technology and training between U.S. scientists and their Vietnamese counterparts. He spent several months of each year in Vietnam coordinating the exchange and distribution of medical and scientific materials.

Cooperman had also been studying the effects of Agent Orange and other chemical defoliants used by the U.S. against the Vietnamese during the war. He was also known for assisting Vietnamese students on campus.

## VICTIM LEFT TO DIE

Klaaske Cooperman, the victim's wife, said her husband had received death threats due to his solidarity work. Cooperman reported the threats to the FBI but was merely advised by agents to "buy a gun and learn how to use it." The FBI has denied knowledge of the death threats.

The suspect, Lam, claimed the shooting was accidental and occurred when he was returning a handgun Cooperman had loaned him. The gun was not registered to either men.

"He [Cooperman] was showing me how to hold the gun. I had it aimed at a corner of the room, but he told me to aim it



Prof. Ed Cooperman: latest victim.

at him. I thought the safety was on, but I still didn't want to aim it at him. I put the gun to my side, but he grabbed my arm and pulled the gun up toward him." Lam said the gun went off.

Lam said he ran to get help but could not find anyone, so he left not knowing if Cooperman was still alive. Oddly, he then took a girlfriend to a movie but left halfway through to return to Cooperman's office and then placed the gun in the victim's hand.

## EX-NIXON LAWYER FOR DEFENSE

Interestingly enough, one of Lam's attorneys is Alan M. May, a well-known Santa Ana criminal lawyer who was an aide to Robert Mardian during his term at the Nixon Justice Department. May was also a prosecutor in the famous Pentagon Papers case and was a former Green Beret.

In an unusual move, May is putting up a full-blown defense at the preliminary hearing which is usually used mainly to present the judge evidence to determine if a trial is necessary.

Lam has also retained renowned criminologist Richard Fox, presumably at considerable expense, to refute evidence brought by the prosecution.

Sources close to the case say money for Lam's defense is being raised by anti-communist organizations in the Vietnamese community.

May suggested that Cooperman may have been a homosexual and that his killing was somehow a result of his proclivities. He claimed "some people" were trying to make the case "political."

Cooperman's family denied May's suggestion, and his friends charge the homosexuality issue is being used to detract from the real motives of the killing.

In pre-trial testimony, a forensic pathologist testified that the bullet that killed Cooperman entered at an angle not consistent with the story given by the defendant. He also pointed out that the type of gun used would require from four to six pounds of pressure to pull the trigger, making the possibility of accidental discharge slim.

## TREND OF TERRORISM

Cooperman's murder follows the shooting attack that left Nguyen Van Luy critically wounded and his wife Pham Thi Luu dead last May 23 in San Francisco. Both were popular peace activists and Van Luy was the honorary president of the Association of Vietnamese in the U.S.

On July 2, 1981, progressive Vietnamese activist Lam Trong Duong was shot dead outside his apartment in San Francisco.

A group calling itself the Vietnamese Organization to Exterminate Communists and Restore the Nation claimed responsibility for both killings. They also claimed credit for burning down a warehouse in Southern California that was storing gifts destined for Vietnam. In the spring of 1981, Harvard historian and Vietnam sympathizer Ngo Vinh Long's car was firebombed in Boston.

So far, no one has been convicted for any of the crimes. Local police were quick to blame the killings on extortion rackets or individual acts of violence. The FBI has refused to intervene.

## ANTI-COMMUNIST HIERARCHY

Meanwhile, events in New York last October 25 could provide clues to the source of these crimes. A hooded witness testifying before the President's Commission on Organized Crime claimed that Vietnamese reporters who attempt to report on rackets such as protection schemes have been assaulted, firebombed, and in one case in Houston, murdered by Vietnamese gangsters.

Among the gangs he named were the Black Eagles in San Francisco, the Eagle Seven in Chicago, the Fishermen in Houston, and the Frogmen in Orange County.

On August 24, 1982, Nguyen Dam Phong, a newspaper editor in Houston was assassinated outside his home. Earlier, in 1981, Bach Juu Bong, a newspaper publisher in Orange County, California was beaten and shot by a man he identified as the leader of the "Frogmen," a gang of former U.S.-trained underwater demolition team members trained in South Vietnam.

The witness claimed Nguyen Cao Ky, former premier of South Vietnam, headed the gang operations. Four or five former South Vietnamese generals, he said, were in the gang hierarchy under Ky which he described as the "dark" side of anti-communist organizations pledged to the restoration of the former Vietnamese government.

The witness said he had been a gang member and that his "superior" informed him of Ky's role and that "everyone knows it." In addition, he said the gangs have more than 1,000 members whose leaders report to "bosses" in 15 states.

Ky, now living in Westminster, California, outside of Los Angeles, denied the allegations as "absolutely ridiculous."

Captain Donald Saviers of the Westminster police told the *Los Angeles Times* that "raw intelligence" gathered by an Arizona narcotics task force in 1979 suggested Ky controlled the Vietnamese underground in the U.S., but it would be extremely difficult to confirm.

## FASCISTIC IMPORTS

During the Vietnam War, the infamous "Phoenix Program" trained special units of South Vietnamese in torture and murder tactics with the explicit purpose of terrorizing and crushing civilian support for the National Liberation Front. An estimated 50,000 Vietnamese men, women and children were killed as a result of this program.

It is suspected that many former members of these elite U.S.-trained units now form the membership of Vietnamese gangs in the U.S. According to the *New York Times*, money extorted by the gangs is used to finance rightwing activities, including terrorist operations.

Meanwhile, in what is possibly another political assassination, Hong Lui, a journalist for the liberal *San Francisco Journal* in Chinatown, was shot dead by unidentified gunmen outside his home in Daly City on October 13. He had just published a book critical of the Taiwanese government, particularly of its leader, Chiang Ching-kou. Lui, a supporter of the People's Republic of China reportedly used the pseudonym Chiang Nan for fear of retaliation for his political viewpoints. □

## Why Pol Pot . . .

Continued from page 16

with Pol Pot has absolutely no chance of establishing a political base inside the country. The worst period in Kampuchean history is associated with Pol Pot. It's impossible to imagine anybody being able to come back and rule in that fashion. So this war keeps going principally because of China and Thailand.

China supplies the Pol Pot army with all its arms, ammunition, food and money. The counterrevolutionaries engage in hit-and-run tactics on the Thai border. Every time the Vietnamese and Kampuchean troops hit back they escape to sanctuaries in Thailand. The Vietnamese and Kampuchean troops carefully avoid pursuing them across the border because they don't want to provide a pretext for a wider war. But they say that sooner or later they may actually avail themselves of the right of hot pursuit in certain cases. But so far they are satisfied that they've got this war completely contained. They feel very confident that there is no military or political basis for the counterrevolution to succeed.

AK: What conditions does Vietnam put forward for the withdrawal of its troops?

IS: There have been three withdrawals of Vietnamese troops. What this signifies is the gradual development of the Kampuchean army. You don't actually see too many Vietnamese forces. Most of them are on the border. They are not responsible for internal order. The Kampuchean police forces are in charge of internal security—and I'm sure this was not the case in 1979. Kampuchea has been through a lot and the country is not in the best position yet to defend itself against the

powerful China-Thailand-U.S. alliance. The Vietnamese troops will stay as long as they are needed, but they will leave tomorrow if Thailand denies sanctuary to the Pol Pot forces and if China stops supplying Pol Pot.

AK: What is the likelihood of China and Thailand withdrawing support for the Pol Pot regime forces?

IS: At this time China and Thailand are determined to continue giving support. However, even within their respective governments there is growing anxiety over supporting Pol Pot. There is the realization that this policy is not working after all. I think that as the international standing of Kampuchea develops the China-Thai alliance will continue to be isolated.

**'Pol Pot has absolutely no chance of establishing a political base in the country. The worst period in Kampuchean history is associated with Pol Pot.'**

AK: How do Vietnam and Kampuchea envision the resolution of the conflict? Are there new initiatives to end it?

IS: It is more useful to understand the fundamental Vietnamese-Kampuchean strategy on the war. The Vietnamese and Kampuchean say, "Look, on the question of political power in Kampuchea—that's a settled question and that situation is irreversible." The Heng Samrin government, come January, will have been in power six years. It has ruled longer than Lon

Nol and Pol Pot and restored a normal civil society to Kampuchea. It's not going to be changed and they are not going to invite Pol Pot and his allies back in. There's not going to be a coalition government with these counterrevolutionaries. That wouldn't make sense.

Hanoi and Phnom Penh realize that the Southeast Asian nations are worried about the presence of Vietnamese troops in Kampuchea because it brings them close to the borders of Thailand. But the Vietnamese troops can be withdrawn. It's all a matter of the other governments reconciling themselves with the fact that the struggle for power in Kampuchea is already a settled question. Once they face that fact anybody who is willing to normalize relations with Kampuchea and Vietnam can sit down and negotiate trade normalization, the rate of withdrawal of troops and so on. Nobody has to be afraid that Vietnam is going to use the position of its troops in Kampuchea as a springboard for attacking any other countries for it's got enormous problems of its own.

The Kampuchean feel very confident that time is on their side. For example, the Kampuchean foreign minister took a very important trip earlier this year. He went to Africa. Kampuchea established diplomatic relations with five African countries it did not have diplomatic relations with before. They feel the tide is moving in their direction that even in the United Nations, which may be the last place where it gets reflected, there will be, over time, an acceptance of the new political reality in Kampuchea.

When we spoke to the vice foreign minister in Phnom Penh, he said, "Look, China was kept out of the United Nations for 22 years and that didn't hurt China. We may have to wait 22 years, we'll wait 22 years. The counterrevolution cannot last for 22 years. What will sustain it? Whereas we have territory, we have political power, our economy is getting back to normal, we have military strength. We are growing stronger every day." □

# KAMPUCHEA: Why Pol Pot Can't Return

Last August, Irwin Silber, editor of *Frontline* and former executive editor of the *Guardian*, visited Vietnam and Kampuchea.

Silber visited farms and factories, projects, schools and hospitals, and talked to various government and party figures in both countries. Among those he met with in Vietnam was Huang Tong, editor of the party newspaper and a functionary of the Central Committee of the Party.

In Kampuchea, Silber met with the Minister of Agriculture and the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Dith Munt, among others.

This interview with Silber by Eddie Escultura of *Ang Katipunan* focuses on Kampuchea where the revolutionary government led by Heng Samrin is consolidating power after having overthrown, with Vietnamese help, the Pol Pot-Khmer Rouge regime in 1979.

**AK:** Vietnam intervened to overthrow the Pol Pot regime in Kampuchea in 1979, and this caused a lot of controversy. How do people in Kampuchea feel about this?

**IS:** It is interesting that in Kampuchea everybody talks about liberation as being January 7, 1979 when the Vietnamese troops came and kicked out Pol Pot, not when Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge took over.

When Vietnam intervened Kampuchea was really in a state of devastation. The big task was to get it back to something resembling normalcy—rebuild the cities, get back into place the basic services, electricity, water supply, reestablish ordinary markets so people can buy things, exchange goods and so on. It's a very poor country and life is still very difficult. But if you realize that ordinary Kampuchean consider this an incredible improvement over what was the reality under Pol Pot then you get a sense of what life was like in Kampuchea then.

**AK:** But didn't Vietnam's intervention violate Kampuchea's national sovereignty and self-determination? Wouldn't it have been more correct to leave the Pol Pot regime to its own devices?

**IS:** I would argue that the real national sovereignty has been helped by the Vietnamese intervention. In Pol Pot's Kampuchea you had a genocidal regime using outrageous means of repression against its own people—and doing it in the name of revolution and socialism. You cannot defend that regime, or argue that nobody should do anything about it on the ground of national sovereignty when the heads of millions of Kampucheans were literally on the chopping block.

When you add to this the fact that this regime was being used as a pawn by China to try to subvert the revolution in Vietnam, it becomes clear that the latter's action was not precipitate.

I would argue that today, almost six years later, it is easy to recognize that Vietnam's intervention was necessary, both from the point of view of the Vietnamese revolution and the best interests of the Kampuchean people. This conclusion can be verified a hundred times over. Six years later, the nature of the Pol Pot regime has come out in the open. Six years later, it is easy to see that Vietnam was not out to colonize Kampuchea but was helping the Kampuchean people to develop the political forms and economic base that would make the Kampucheans masters of their destiny. Pol Pot, who was also staging military attacks on Vietnam with China's prodding, stood in the way of all this.

**AK:** The Pol Pot regime claimed to be revolutionary and socialist. What exactly was the problem with it?

**IS:** There was the impression here that something strange was going on in Kampuchea in the years that Pol Pot ruled—that Pol Pot was being provocative towards Vietnam and was committing some kind of ultra-left excesses. There were media reports of massacres and atrocities which, I think, a lot of people took with a grain of salt as being either U.S. imperialist or Vietnamese propaganda. But most of these reports seem to have been accurate, confirmed not only by what we were able to see but by the observations of countless people who had no particular stake in denying or confirming their veracity. It's now very clear that there was death on a massive scale in Kampuchea in the Pol Pot years. There are mass graves, there are remnants of torture chambers and you've probably seen those grisly pictures of people who were killed, their skulls and so on.

But what has to be grasped is that when Pol Pot took power, the logic of ultra-leftism, almost for the first time, had a chance to play itself out in organizing a society.

Pol Pot was a Maoist, the purest kind of Maoist. Not only was he a Kampuchean nationalist in the extreme sense, he had an ultra-leftist concept of socialism and how to proceed in building it. He was trying to develop the equivalent of the Chinese cultural revolution in



Kampucheans celebrate the fifth anniversary of the Heng Samrin government.

Kampuchea. And what that meant was a conception of socialism based upon reducing the level of the population to that of the poorest peasant. Based on this egalitarianism, all other classes and sectors of society had to be viewed with a certain amount of suspicion. The intellectuals—in fact, anybody who lived in the city which is where they could be affected by colonial or neo-colonial influences—were immediately suspect as sources of ideological impurity.

So there was logic behind all the stories we heard about people being marched out of Phnom Penh. It wasn't because "there was no food to feed the people," which was the story Pol Pot put out at the time. The regime virtually shut down all Kampuchean cities and drove everybody into the countryside.

Most of the industries were shut down because all of the technicians and the managers were considered suspect and were driven out. All of agriculture was immediately nationalized and money and markets were abolished. In effect, everybody became an agricultural worker who worked in a labor battalion. For most

But in the broader international sense the grave danger that Pol Pot represented was that his regime was unviable, one that definitely wouldn't last. Sooner or later something would have to give. This was a danger because very early on the United States realized that the Pol Pot regime's weaknesses opened up the possibility of imperialism's reentry into Indochina, that it was the weak link in the Indochina chain. They had lost Vietnam, Laos and Kampuchea and they didn't know what to do about it.

Pol Pot's destructive policies meant that his regime would reach a crisis and would have to be replaced. He was either going to be replaced with revolutionary forces such as the Heng Samrin government, or with forces representing Sihanouk, Son Sann or somebody from the old regime—in which case at least part of the verdict of the Vietnam war would have been reversed. Imperialism would have had a shot at it all over again. Vietnam would have been weakened and China which was trying to undermine Vietnam's ability to consolidate

**'When Pol Pot took power, the logic of ultra-leftism, almost for the first time, had the chance to play itself out in organizing a society.'**

people, this was simply forced labor. It was sort of, well, "We will build this society from the ground up starting with a pure base of an agricultural proletariat and we will do it all by ourselves." It was all crazy. It made no sense. It didn't correspond to reality.

As a result, this unscientific view of socialist construction required an intense amount of repression. So millions of people died not only from hunger and disease, forced labor and exposure, but also as a result of repressive killings. The political killings were very sweepingly directed at anybody who had any connection with the defeated Lon Nol regime, including ordinary soldiers in the Lon Nol army.

They were directed also at opponents of Pol Pot and his concepts within the Khmer Rouge. Once the line struggle unfolded in Khmer Rouge—it seems to have happened in 1975 and 1976—the enemies of Pol Pot were either killed or they had to run away and leave the country. Many of them went to Vietnam. There seemed to be a policy of almost arbitrary killings for any expression of dissent. Especially dissent from what were considered unreliable class elements like intellectuals, technicians, professionals and people like that.

**AK:** Granted that Pol Pot was giving socialism a bad name and that he was launching military attacks on Vietnam, was his regime so dangerous as to merit a direct and drastic response from Vietnam?

**IS:** First of all, the unbearable rule of Pol Pot was no small matter to millions of Kampucheans who were being herded into primitive existence. Secondly, the Khmer Rouge's military incursions in Vietnam should not be brushed aside. These created real hardships for Vietnamese peasants along the border and for a Vietnamese government straining to get the economic reconstruction of the South under way.

itself would have been strengthened in its move to become the dominant power. So what to do with the Pol Pot regime was a crucial question for revolutionaries in Indochina. It was at the very heart of the question of what to do to prevent U.S. imperialism from regaining the ground it had lost in the region.

**AK:** How serious is the threat posed by the alliance of the Khmer Rouge and the rightist forces against the Heng Samrin government?

**IS:** We travelled through areas of the most concentrated population to the West, South and East, all within 100 kilometers of Phnom Penh. One of the things that struck us was that there was no problem of military security. To put it another way, the war against the counterrevolutionary forces is largely contained in a very narrow strip along the border between Kampuchea and Thailand. The rest of the country is pretty normal, and doesn't seem to be a country at war.

The Pol Pot forces can occasionally send small bands of saboteurs into the country. But they are not very effective. The estimate made by the government is that the counterrevolution on its own has no real capacity to threaten power in Kampuchea, which I think is fairly accurate assessment. These forces basically are the remnants of the Khmer Rouge numbering between 20,000 and 40,000 soldiers. The other parts of the coalition represented by Sihanouk and Son Sann have a handful of troops.

In practical terms, it's a coalition in name, with the Pol Pot army being the real force, and not a powerful force at that. It's weak militarily and it has totally discredited itself. So wherever you go in Kampuchea what becomes very clear is that anybody associated

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