

## Snap Poll Fever:

- U.S. Twists Marcos' Arm
- Aquino, Laurel Form Last-Hour Ticket
- What About the Coup Option?

(See Stories on pages 8 and 9)



## 'Illegal' Pinoys 'TNTs': Undocumented Lives



By VINCE REYES

Get a group of Filipinos together and as soon as the conversation becomes a bit relaxed someone sooner or later pops the big question: "Immigrant ka ba?" meaning, "Are you here legally?"

From anyone who simply cannot avoid telling the truth, the answer, after some hesitation, most likely will be: "No, TNT lang" ("No, just TNT.")

"TNT" or "tago nang tago" means "always in hiding."

Calling someone "illegal" may be considered too cruelly direct. "Undocumented" may be too embarrassingly euphemistic. So, humorous upbeat acronyms

like "TNT", "CIA" for "Certified Illegal Alien," or "NPA" for "No Permanent Address" are the preferred terms for Filipinos "on the run." The humor somehow makes these terms "more dignified." But for thousands of Filipino TNTs the situation is not that funny.

### THE 'SINGLES LIFE'

"I get tired from walking around all day," says Francis of his new job as a telephone salesman. "But it's much better than standing in front of that hot stove all day."

Francis who came to San Francisco last year as a tourist sips a can of beer in a narrow living room cramped with gaudy, mismatched chairs obviously bought from the Salvation Army. The unmistakable smell of pork adobo hangs from the stained walls. Stacks of designer blue jeans are piled in the corridor to the bedrooms.

"They are my landlord's, *Pilipino rin*, who's into

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# Feb 7: A Chance That Must Be Taken

A great deal of cynicism greeted Ferdinand Marcos' announcement of a snap presidential election, and for good reason. To begin with, Filipinos do not have particularly endearing memories of the goons, guns, and gold that ruled the polls even before martial law.

Then the imposition of martial rule systematized those methods and institutionalized them in the service of one man, one party and one camp of the oligarchy. In Marcos' "New Republic" the people have been repeatedly mocked with farcical voting exercises that pushed absurdity to its limits.

In other words, the so-called democracy spawned by the marriage of imperialist and oligarchical interests, and that produced deformed bastards that passed for elections, is the best argument for why the electoral road cannot be taken as a serious option in determining the main route to social change in the Philippines.

However, this is not to say that electoral means cannot be useful tools of political struggle. And it is mainly for this reason that the circumstances surrounding Marcos' snap election must be closely examined.

A good look at this election reveals that it is not an ordinary one. Not that it will be exceptionally clean and fair. But the circumstances surrounding it give it a significance far different from the past exercises staged by the regime.

## A RARE COMBINATION

This snap election comes at a time when the Marcos

dictatorship is in the midst of an unprecedented and irreversible governmental crisis.

At the same time, and for the very first time, there is broad consensus in U.S. ruling circles and institutions that Marcos has become a burden and must be replaced, gracefully, if possible.

The assassination of Benigno Aquino unleashed a massive ferment that has rocked the pillars of neo-colonial rule and made it even more unstable. The murder also made the U.S. realize that the reunification of the Philippine elite—its main hope for regaining stability—cannot take place without the removal of Marcos. The Washington that could care less about Marcos' blood debts to the people must care about his blood debt to the elite because it stands in the way of America's strategic interests.

Thus, the pressure from the U.S. has flowed undisguised: loans have been held up; congressional and grand jury investigations of the misuse of U.S. economic and military aid have been launched; the snap election itself has been imposed on Marcos; a bipartisan U.S. group of electoral observers has been dispatched; and the U.S. media has yet to let up on its torrent of criticism.

Marcos is now faced with a very rare combination of a deeply dissatisfied sponsor looking forward to his exit and a profoundly discontented people looking forward to his political, even physical, demise.

In a rare historical moment, U.S. imperialism and the people's movement agree on one thing though

obviously for different reasons—that Marcos must go. Herein lies the source of his political crisis.

## DEFEAT OR ISOLATION

This crisis is what makes the February 7 election different. In the past, Marcos' cosmetic electoral exercises had the full backing of his sponsors, a support he no longer enjoys. Furthermore, the broad resistance movement has made significant chinks in his fascist armor. Intuitively sensing the regime's new vulnerabilities, the people—their eyes open to the limitations of the confrontation—will spontaneously pick up the ballot as the next available weapon of resistance.

For the first time, there exists the possibility, though not the certainty, that Marcos can actually be ousted through his own game.

What will not be different in this election is that the dictator will not allow that to happen. Already, the rules are stacked in his favor. He will definitely cheat, lie, murder and maul to rig the results. And if in spite of this he still faces a looming defeat, he already has provisions to cancel the election altogether.

But Marcos no longer has an ounce of credibility to his name. A victory through his usual means will only prove extremely costly and push him closer to the brink of final defeat. He will have taught many more Filipinos the lesson that more drastic measures than

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SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL OUR READERS! Here we are faking a meeting for the benefit of the camera. We'll be taking a break so we'll see you at the end of January. By the way, Wicks (2nd from left) and Vicky (2nd from right) had a baby boy last December 7.

## Litter from Manila

Perry Mason's Last Trial and other Great Books for the Holidays



By INIDORO DELIHENCIA

Christmas is always a time for giving and, in my case, receiving. Stocks, bonds, fat envelopes and commissions are fine but what I like best are the new books friends send me. These let me replenish the store of wisdom from which you, my admiring public, benefit all year round. Here is a list of what I have received this season. They're great gift ideas for friends in the government who would like to think this Christmas:

"A Christmas Quarrel," the classic by Charles Dickens' distant cousin George. The United Scrooges of America, unhappy with their loyal ally, a handsome president, finally decide to cook his goose. They send three nocturnal visitors. First comes Vice President Bush toasting the president's "adherence to democratic principles" after a glorious election in which the latter was so strong he even won against himself. "That was the ghost of Elections Past, the good ol' days," says the hapless ally. Then comes Sen. Laxalt, who bluntly warns, "Stop screwing up, make it credible this time!" The ghost of Elections Present he was. Finally Holbrooke, the ghost of Elections to Come, advises the president to take his money and run, or the only election he'll be able to join is the PTAs—if, he qualifies. Fed up, the president heroically refuses to die and threatens to have his wife as running mate. The bad guys panic. Great yuletide suspense! Carrot & Sticke Press, Washington, DC, \$13.95

Remembrance of Things That Went Past The Public, a highly original work by Information Minister Gregorio Cendaña. An evocative recollection of

praises for President Marcos that escaped public notice. Some examples:

"He is sooo intelligent he must be white."—P.W. Botha, Prime Minister of South Africa.

"Es muy simpatico, noh?"—Augusto Pinochet, President of Chile.

"President Marcos is the sexiest man alive! I'm amazed that despite his age and infirmities he's still capable of having an election."—Hugh Hefner, President of Playboy Enterprises.

"Even Satan won't run against him. Marcos is so smart, his opponents don't have a prayer."—Rev. Jerry Falwell, President of the Moral Majority, if it has one. National Media Productions Center, Manila, Free, with box lunch and T-shirt if you attend the rally.

Speaking of the Rev. Jerry Falwell, read his Origin of the Subspecies. He traces the evolution of a brilliant class of world leaders who were never stained with the original sin of social conscience, and are destined to rule the world without end. Among them are our very own First Couple who Rev. Falwell confirms are the incarnation of a Filipino legend of Adam and Eve. The legendary couple take a bite of the Big Apple's real estate and self-appointed angels howl. I like Rev. Falwell who, as the leader of the Moral Majority, stood up all by himself to defend our president. I now tend to agree with him that man could not have descended from apes. Some members of the international media did, but certainly not all of mankind. Cretino, Idiotta & Mengele, Forked Tongue, Indiana, \$6.66.

"Perry Mason's Last Trial," a semiautobiographical first novel by Sandiganbayan judge Manuel Pamaran in which he has a courtroom duel with the famous barrister whose record is 2,165 wins, 3 hung juries, 0 losses. Mason scores early by solving The Case of the Crying Lady. Pamaran calls in the Kissing Lady. Mason counters with the Three Airmen but is overruled by the high court and, for the first time in his illustrious career, panics. Unable to disprove the innocence of 26 men involved in a freak airport accident, the dejected

## Ang Katipunan

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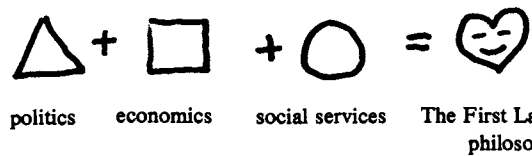
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## (SEE 'LETTERS' ON PAGE 15)

Mason fires Della Reese. While waiting for his plane home, he accidentally runs in front of one of those speeding bullets that is usually encountered at the Manila International Airport. and dies. Ironically, this is the same way the freak accident in question happened in the first place. A literary triumph for Pamaran. Highcourt Briefs Jonovabich, New York, New York \$1.75

Philosophy and You by Imelda Romualdez Marcos, with color illustrations. The First Lady cuts philosophy down to size so that even the simple-minded can appreciate it. "People think that if it's not black, it should be white, not knowing there are other colors of the rainbow. Could it be red?" So simple yet so profound. In a chapter called "Ma'am and Superman" Ma'am illustrates the secret of the Marcoses' staying power. She draws a triangle representing politics, then a square for economics, and then a circle representing social services. The sum of these drawings is a heart with a smiling face.



Yours truly contributed a chapter in the book in which I reveal how the First Lady's principles have changed my life. This is how I apply it:



By seeing life "Over a Cup of Coffee," I have gained sufficient grounds to smell what's brewing, when to spill the beans, when not to stir up a fuss and, if someone deserves praise, when to pour it on. The results of this insight: valued friends and wealth, both of which I expect plenty this Christmas. ☐

## 'Verdict of the Century'

# Ver, Cohorts Go Free



Gen. Fabian Ver

By HILARY CROSBY

**T**he trial of the century" ended as a predictable farce when the Marcos-appointed Sandiganbayan acquitted Gen. Fabian Ver and all his 25 co-accused of all charges stemming from the murder of Benigno Aquino and his supposed assassin Rolando Galman in Manila on August 21, 1983. President Marcos promptly reinstated Ver as chief of all the armed forces.

The joke in Manila is that Aquino actually committed suicide—but he killed Galman first.

By finding every defendant innocent of the charges, the verdict completely rejected the Agrava Report, published by the commission specially constituted to investigate the murder.

Instead, the court upheld the government's contention that Aquino was assassinated by a lone communist gunman, Galman, who penetrated tight airport security and shot the taller Aquino, sending a bullet through his skull from above.

Marcos was under a lot of pressure from the U.S. to insure a "credible trial." Therefore, the prevailing opinion before the verdict was that although Ver himself would be acquitted, some defendants would



be "sacrificed" in the interest of credibility.

Critics see the across-the-board acquittals as a means of insuring the defendants' loyalty, so that no one will be so disgruntled as to tell the real story. Marcos' pre-verdict promise to revamp the top echelon of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is also seen as an attempt to blunt U.S. displeasure over the acquittals and Ver's reinstatement.

The 100-page verdict deplored the "pressure on the court to convict the accused" and credited the "Filipino people" with resisting the "petulant urgings of a misguided few to destroy the honored place" of the courts. Marcos' statement admitted "it is perhaps too much to expect that the tensions and recriminations will cease with the decision" but expressed "hope that calm and reason will settle on this most distressing and tragic case."

Marcos' hopes and the judges' sermon notwithstanding, Filipinos overwhelmingly believe the verdict is a sham and a miscarriage of justice.

Outside the courthouse, several protestors brought banners and picket signs protesting the "U.S.-Marcos Dictatorship" and decrying the whitewash of the murder. Later, sections of Manila erupted in noise barrages and the Makati business district was once again awash with protest confetti.

"My whole being tells me it was impossible for Galman to have shot Ninoy. I still hold Mr. Marcos responsible for the assassination," Aquino's widow Cory said.

Cardinal Jaime Sin said the verdict "threatens to push our country to the brink of despair."

In the U.S. Charles Redman, a State Department spokesman, said in a carefully worded statement, "It's very difficult to reconcile the exemplary, thorough work of the Agrava Board and the conclusions it reached after a year of hard work with the outcome of this trial."

### HAND-PICKED JUDGES

What was amply demonstrated by the verdict, in fact by the progress of the trial, was that Marcos could rely on his hand-picked judiciary to deliver the goods.

Six months ago, he by-passed the senior Supreme Court justice, Claudio Teehankee, well-known for his judicial independence, and appointed a classmate Ramon Aquino (no relation to the victim) as chief justice.

This choice paid-off when a mistrial petition was filed delaying the announcement of the verdict. The petition was quashed.

That petition was prepared and signed by 29 well-known civil libertarians and judicial activists, including three members of the Agrava Commission, and a retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

It accused the three judges presiding over the Sandiganbayan of "failure to serve the interests of the sovereign people of the Philippines through gross violations of the cardinal requirements of due process."

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## Reaction to Verdict

# U.S. More Miffed at Ver's Return

**U**.S. government reaction to the "verdict of the century" ranged from cautiously worded and implicit criticisms by Reagan officials to calls for withholding of U.S. aid by Congress liberals. Almost with one voice, the American media slammed the acquittal of Gen. Ver and his 25 co-accused with stinging editorials.

The anti-Marcos opposition in the U.S. for its part, condemned the acquittals and within hours of the verdict held press conferences and protests calling on the U.S. government to stop all aid to the "discredited dictatorship."

The tone of statements from the Reagan administration at times sounded as if it was more disappointed with Ver's reinstatement as Philippine armed forces chief of staff than with the verdict itself.

Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev), whose October trip to Manila as President Reagan's emissary preceded Marcos' sudden decision to hold a snap presidential election, said that

Ver's acquittal "comes as no great surprise." But he told Marcos that "an unconditional reinstatement would be met with extreme criticism in the U.S."

### IMPLICIT CRITICISM

"Marcos told me he had an 'honored commitment to reinstate Gen. Ver' in the event of an acquittal, but that he had not determined the length of the reinstatement or the circumstances. What we must watch now is the length and the circumstances of his reinstatement."

State Department deputy Charles Redman only implicitly criticized the decision clearing Ver and company but added, "How the reinstatement of Gen. Ver squares with President Marcos' professed desire to initiate serious reforms in the Philippine military is a question only he can answer."

While White House and State Department officials played the role of the "good cop," liberal democrats took up the "bad

cop" role.

Sen. John F. Kerry (D-MA) in contrast to Laxalt's wait-and-see attitude, suggested that aid that is already in the pipeline be held back "pending the outcome of the reappointment of Gen. Ver."

Rep. Tony Hall (D-OH) pressed a foreign aid conference committee to adopt the House version of the Philippine aid package which cuts Reagan's request for \$70 million to \$25 million.

Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-NY) and chair of the House Subcommittee on Asian-Pacific Affairs called the verdict "a mockery of justice" and added that Ver's reinstatement "appears to have destroyed what little hope remains for fundamental military reform in the Philippines."

Sen. Alan Cranston (D-CA) said the decision "will hurt democracy in the Philippines, hurt American security interests, and help only the Communists."

Rep. Ronald Dellums (D-CA), chair of the House Armed Services subcommittee

## Bribe Offer Failed To Hush Crying Lady

**R**ebbecca Quijano, the "Crying Lady" who testified that she saw a soldier escort shoot Aquino said at a press conference in New York December 2 that she was offered two million pesos, a house, a plane to go anywhere if she would only change her testimony.

According to Quijano who now lives with her sister Cielo Ulpindo in California, a retired army officer and a mayor tried to make her change her testimony after her first court appearance on May 2.

She said that from December 12, 1983 until her cross examination on June 6, 1985, she and members of her family were victims of intense intimidation, including:

- numerous calls to her sister in Sunnyvale, CA., with the intermediaries one time claiming to have "discussed the offer [of 2 million pesos] with Marcos."

- threats to her brother that "the same thing that happened to your father will happen to you" (Herman Quijano, Sr., six feet tall, allegedly hung himself from a five foot high window while in military custody at Camp Crane in 1981).

- the ransacking of the family home outside of Manila by armed thugs.

The pressure really mounted after her court appearance and continued up until the night before her cross-examination when the two intermediaries came with a cardboard box containing P2 million, and offered her a free house in Baguio and a plane to anywhere in the world.

During her ordeal, Quijano moved more than 20 times. She was apprehended by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation who offered to let her go in exchange for a P20,000 bribe but were forced to give her protective custody when news of her detention got out. She stayed briefly at the NBI headquarters but when she heard that some of the defendants might also be housed there, she went back into hiding.

"I was scared, really scared. I was weighing what to do, calling my sister three and four times a day. . . I remembered my father."

Finally, Quijano got in touch with U.S. consul general Vernon McAnich who facilitated visas for Quijano and her brother, enabling her to leave for California two weeks after her cross-examination. She said she wanted to join U.S. based opposition activities but McAnich told her not to get involved. □

on military construction, has asked for a full congressional investigation into the U.S. role in the scrambling of Philippine jets on the day of Aquino's assassination. The jets were tracked on U.S. radar at an airbase jointly operated by U.S. and Philippine personnel. The testimony of three U.S. airmen who witnessed the attempt to intercept Aquino's plane was rejected by the Philippine court.

### NERVOUS

The cautious response of Reagan spokespeople implies that Marcos may have promised Ver's eventual retirement and some steps towards "military reform" in exchange for passive U.S. acceptance of the verdict. Since the verdict cannot be invalidated by another trial under Philippine law, Marcos now has his cake.

Whether he can eat it too by maintaining the military in its pre-assassination status quo, with Ver at the helm, depends on how much pressure Congress is willing to put on the aid lifeline to Manila.

Nervous Republicans are aware that Marcos may not fulfill his part of the deal.

Sen. Richard Lugar (R-IND), who chairs the Senate Foreign Relations Committee said, "The court ruling does not contribute to the crying need for credibility, nor does it answer the need for reform and

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# Nuestra Señora de Bakal, Our Lady of Iron

By CHRISTINE ARANETA

"A political stampede is in the offing," wrote *Bulletin Today's* Jesus Bigornia. The clamor, he said has one message: "Draft the First Lady!" No, not in the army—in President Marcos' slate as vice presidential candidate.

State Department strategists wince everytime the suggestion is made. Most Filipinos shake their heads but will not be shocked if despite her current denials, Mrs. Imelda Marcos ends up as a candidate anyway.

For someone who is supposedly "lying low," Mrs. Marcos has had a lot of publicity lately, not all of it unsolicited.

Battered by critical international media coverage, the Marcos government has unleashed its own media campaign with the President making himself available to virtually any foreign correspondent seeking an interview.

Acting once more as the president's secret weapon, the First Lady did her share of public relations work during a 20-day diplomatic globetrot which brought her to New York, the Soviet Union and Tokyo.

Mrs. Marcos' appearance at the 40th anniversary celebration of the founding of the United Nations was a bit disappointing. Her voice was drowned out by President Reagan's pre-summit address. But her New York stint was not completely wasted. While there, the First Lady gave a little historical lesson to a U.S. congressman who was listening to her complaint about the U.S.' lack of concern for her "little people." She pulled out a yellow pad from her attache case, sketched out a map of the world with the Philippines at the center, and told the astonished solon that her friend, President Nixon, once confided to her the real reason the U.S. went to war in Vietnam: "To protect the Philippines."

New York also gave Mrs. Marcos the chance to rub elbows once again with her international counterparts. Even though not all is well between their two households, U.S. First Lady Nancy Reagan graciously invited Mrs. Marcos to an anti-drug conference, attended by the spouses of some 31 heads of state. Imelda profusely thanked her host and proved that she was not only an able diplomat, but an expert in chemical warfare as well. "I am privileged to be a part of this great cause to stop the new chemical imperialists," she declared.

The centerpiece of her diplomatic tour, however, was the U.S.S.R. If Mrs. Marcos had anything under her sleeve it was the "Soviet card" which she played intently while the pro-Marcos media blared background music with titles like "Soviets Expand Embassy," "Russkies Increase Embassy Personnel." Everything, of course, was for Washington's consumption. In a not-too-subtle effort to make an old lover jealous, Mrs. Marcos flew to the Soviet Union on October 14.



First Lady: 'America's best friend.'

But it was not all cynical politicking, mind you. The First Lady, according to the *New York Times*, consulted a fortune teller who predicted that the true effect of the First Lady's trip will be to bring Christianity to "Godless" Russia.

It was a blessed event. The First Lady parted with the dearest and most sacred of her icons, the Nuestra Señora de la Solterrana, patroness of all who hail from Tolosa, Leyte—that idyllic town which blessed Filipinos with the would-be First Lady 57 years ago.

Our Lady of Tolosa, (Toulouse in French) is now enshrined in one of the ancient churches of Vladimir. There it will be viewed among the relics of the Orthodox Church by the, ahem, atheistic Russians.

Let it not be said that Mrs. Marcos does not understand throw weights or that she does not understand the nitty gritty of world politics. For example, Vladimir used to be the seat of religious and political

power 200 years ago until it lost this honor to another citadel, Moscow. The First Lady shrewdly detected this shift of power and so it was in the Moscow Cathedral that she serenaded the Russians with "Ave Maria."

But did her proselytizing convert the politburo? The First Lady claims she wrangled a few promises from such top Soviet officials as Gromyko and Shavernadze among these being more cultural exchanges, a trade agreement and a pledge "never to interfere in the internal affairs of the Philippines."

She did not forget to throw a few darts in the direction of Washington:

- "While America is immersed in high technology and hardware, Russia is building relationships—and when it is people you are cultivating you can never go wrong. America had better watch out. The moment Pres. Marcos and I are no longer here, the Russians will take over. Stupid America!"

- "We really can't understand why America keeps thrashing away at us while the Soviets don't. The Soviet leaders did not press us at all. 'Tell us what you need,' they said, 'and we will give it to you.' President Reagan is no problem. He is very enlightened about us. It's the U.S. system."

However, the First Lady was quick to switch to the "U.S. card" just to let the White House know she was not that angry. She told *Time Magazine*:

"It's ironic. The Americans are actually responsible for the Soviet's keen interest in the Philippines. I was told during my trip to Russia that were it not for the Marcoses—with whom they can still communicate in a civilized way—they would have overrun the Philippines long ago. So you see, I'm actually America's best friend."

To the Tokyo press, Mrs. Marcos shared more of her complaints. Her husband who is really a "far-sighted visionary" is "misunderstood," she said. The Marcos era, she later told a *New York Times* reporter, is the Philippine equivalent of Camelot, and she and her husband are the Adam and Eve incarnates of the Philippines.

The more she spoke to the press, the more it became clear that some of her bitterness towards the U.S. was real. The First Lady is convinced that the U.S. has an axe to grind because she is so beautiful:

"Americans cannot accept a woman's superiority... especially tall and beautiful Filipino women who are smartly dressed, like this [touching her dress], and they go even crazier if you are wearing high heels. Just because you're a woman they think you are frivolous. Just because you can sing a little, you're not to be taken seriously."

It is a theme she likes to repeat. She told the *New York Times*' Seth Mydans: "O.K., they don't like my face. But I can be a good friend. I feel like the hunchback of Notre Dame. Here was this man, such a beautiful spirit, you know? It is my favorite movie..."

"I am not at all privileged. Maybe the only privileged thing is my face. And corrupt? God! I would not look like this if I were corrupt. Some ugliness would settle down on my system."

Inevitably, Mrs. Marcos reveals the tough core beneath the soft exterior; the dark outlook that makes her shine:

"If you're a friend, you're damned. If you're an enemy you're dead. One of these days you'll see me hanging from a tree. So what else is new? I don't want an old ugly corpse. The beauty about me is that I'm not attached to anything, not even to life. □

## Odds and Ends

**THE POSTMAN DIDN'T THINK TWICE:** Lucio Dolpo, a mailman, was sentenced Dember 3 to 16 years in prison for failing to deliver two letters. The case came from a complaint by a woman who said the letters contained \$250 in international money orders sent by her son in the U.S. Aside from the sentence which was the maximum, Dolpo was also fined the equivalent of \$53 and barred from public office for 32 years. The charge was infidelity in the custody of public documents. Dolpo's sentence was handed down by the same ombudsman's court that earlier acquitted Gen. Fabian Ver and 25 other defendants in the Aquino murder. Justice Amante Alconcel said Dolpo's offense was serious because "it alienates the confidence of the public in a government service which is of great necessity in social life." Dolpo would have been better off shooting a senator because that, presumably, doesn't alienate the public as much.

**CITIZEN BARNAARD:** One can become a Philippine citizen by being born of Filipino parents (*jus sanguinis*) or being born in the Philippines and electing

to become a citizen as an adult (*jus soli*). One can also become a citizen *jus by presidential decree*. Dr. Christian Barnaard, white supremacist, famed pioneer in heart transplants, and patron of the First Lady's Philippine Heart Center, became a Filipino citizen by presidential fiat. A native of South Africa, Barnaard should be banned from countries with anti-apartheid policies. But he evidently resides in many countries and is rather well connected, as his brand new passport shows.

**MANILA VICE:** This cop wears expensive European designer clothes in the line of duty too. Under Executive Orders 1021 and 1027, Mrs. Marcos has been authorized to appoint and assign police chiefs and superintendents as well as deploy and concentrate Integrated National Police forces, as she deems necessary. EO 1021 transfers police supervision from the military to local city and municipal mayors. EO 1027 grants the Metro Manila governor, Mrs. Marcos, additional powers over police personnel, or to "police the police." Yes, but who will police the police police?

**MORON MAJORITY:** P.W. Botha of South Africa and Ferdinand Marcos share not only ill fame but a common friend as well. The Rev. Jerry Falwell, head of the right-wing Moral Majority, who openly backs Botha's apartheid regime, condemned American policymakers for "bellyaching about the Philippines." At a dinner given in his honor at Malacanang Palace on November 11, Falwell admonished Filipinos: "I don't think any fair person can deny the fact that had it not

been for the Marcos family the chances are that the freedoms you enjoy now would not be here." Say it, brother!

**COPYCAT:** Chilean President Agosto Pinochet was seen on the front pages of Santiago newspapers on his 70th birthday jogging along the beach and lifting weights. His opponents said the pictures were proof that Pinochet wants to run for the presidency again in 1989. They said the pictures were meant to show the dictator in excellent health, "so he can be in power until 1997." But he's not very original, don't you think?

**HEARTS AND LOANS:** It was a finely scripted ceremony. Three thousand "former rebels" marched to the stage to the searing vibrato of Elvis Presley's "It's Now or Never." They pledged allegiance to the government of President Marcos. On hand to witness how the NPA is "surrendering in droves" were 19 foreign correspondents and local reporters flown in courtesy of Malacañang. The surrenderees put garlands on the necks of the correspondents, who were later introduced individually over the loudspeaker. All were later seated to a feast of roast pig and seafood. But some reporters were hungry for other things. Knowing that Polanco, Dipolog in Mindanao, the scene of the ceremony, has been hotly contested by the government and the NPA for a number of years, one correspondent asked: "Will peace return to Polanco?" An unnamed source answered: "I don't know, these people are here because they think they are being given government loans."

# Lorenzo

By DOMINI TORREVILLAS-SUAREZ

*This article was taken from Filipina II: An Anthology of Contemporary Women Writers in the Philippines. "Lorenzo" which first appeared in the author's Sunday column, "Talk," in Philippine Panorama (Feb. 12, 1984) is a fitting reminder of Dec. 10 "International Human Rights Day." We thank Filipina II editors Mila Astorga Garcia, Marra Pl. Lanot, Lilia Quindoza Santiago, and the Women Writers in Media Now for the permission to reprint. Filipina II was published by New Day Publishers, P.O. Box 167, Quezon City, 3008 Philippines.)*

What a revelation Rochit Tañedo turned out to be one cold afternoon at Bicutan Rehabilitation Center last December. There were 16 of us women from media who had gone to the detention center to bring cheer, hopefully, to 29 political detainees on what should have been the loveliest of seasons for all of us. The visit began with a security check that had soldiers fingering the packages that the media persons had brought (surely no one would be caught bearing guns and knives there!) and the visitors given the run-around on who should check the validity of the issued passes, where to check, and so on.

One full hour of that bureaucratic process, and after warm embraces and salutations between "comrades" in spirit, a merry lunch followed, of patatim, fried chicken, chocolate cake and loaves of bread. The bottles of wine had been disallowed by the guards and left at the gate, but no matter, for what followed was a vibrant display of skills by the visited and the visitors who sang carols and swapped jokes and presented skits that made fun of life outside and within prison walls. Yes, even in our distress we can laugh and make our remaining days on earth, even for a few hours, bearable.

At close to four in the afternoon, a guard came to the door to say it was time for the visitors to take their leave. There was a flurry of no-we-won't-leave protests from the women, and, as if to distend the interrupted pleasures of that afternoon, clamor was heard for more numbers, please, and, some called out, "Rochit, sing your song about Lorenzo."

There was some hesitancy on Rochit's part. "The last time I sang that song was last year, here, I think," she said. I thought, Rochit really can sing? I couldn't imagine this mournful-eyed, frizzy-haired young woman given to wearing polo shirts and khaki-colored slacks possessing more gifts other than the absolute gift of writing—and only about human conditions in the country today, and if we are to define those conditions according to Rochit's writings, they are oppressive, exploitative and sad. Could the misery of her countrymen have caused the sadness in Rochit's eyes?

But Rochit did sing a song that she had written—another gift yet!

We leaned back in our seats to listen to Rochit, who was now strumming her guitar. She looked sad and lovely sitting in the middle of a hunched group in a squat white building where, on ordinary days, the detainees work on revenue-generating projects, like greeting cards and wall decor with catchy freedom slogans. The detainees sat with their small children on their laps, or stood back, hands across their chests, or looked at their feet. Something is snatched away from me each time I visit political detainees. For there is that insufferable



look of anguish on their faces, brought about I suppose not so much by the desire to be close to the people they love passionately during the Christmas season, as the basic human need to be free—from prison walls; from the forces that oppress; from situations that make so many lives miserable.

Rochit's song hit us hard—like a thunderclap, as fiercely as mother's tears. Her song was about an elderly woman who had boarded a fully packed bus, and to her gentle surprise, a young man offered her his seat. She turned to say thank you, but when she saw his face she couldn't speak a word. He looked like her deceased son, Lorenzo. How she had loved that boy; how he had grown up embodying all the values that she had taught him. One day he left home to serve his country. She learned later that he had been shot with his arms raised in surrender. The old woman wanted to tell the boy who had offered her his seat, may I kiss

you? My son Lorenzo would have been 19 this December.

There were tears in the media women's eyes—yes, in those women who might appear to feel too fiercely skeptical about the business of living and caring, in a world where people "rushing headlong through the highways and byways of life, leaving broken hearts behind." But the media women care, as all freedom-loving people care, when they listen to songs like that about Lorenzo.

Those of us with children know how it is or what it will be to lose our sons from natural cause or from soldiers' bullets. How to explain the loss you feel when you are unable to behold or smell or embrace the light of your life, the joy of your existence?

There were tears in the eyes of the detainees—each one of whom is a mother's Lorenzo.

SI LORENZO  
(Alay sa kanyang ina)

*Kanina'y nadaan ako sa may eskuwelahan  
Punong-puno na ang bus na aking nasakyan  
May dali-daling umabot sa 'king mga balutan  
Isang binatilyong nag-alok ng upuan  
Ako ay umupo at siya'y tiningnan  
Magpapasalamat sana'y nabuhol ang lalamunan  
Kay amo ng mukha, nais ko siyang hagkan  
Ako ay natigilan, kamukha siya ng bunso kong si  
Lorenzo*

*Kaarawan na niya sa darating na buwan  
Labing siyam na taong gulang, parang kailan pa lang  
Nang siya'y sabitan ko, medalyang di mabilang  
Ang aking bunsong si Lorenzo  
Kay amo ng mukha, nais ko siyang hagkan  
Ang bunso kong si Lorenzo  
Malaon nang handa sa kanyang digmaan  
Ang bunso kong si Lorenzo*

*Bumalik na namang bigla sa 'king guni-guni  
Nang siya'y mamaalam upang magsilbi  
Sa mga taga-nayon at mga inaaapi  
Tugon niya'y pag-alay ng sarili  
Buhay 'pinaubaya sa gulong ng kasaysayan  
Hinayaan kong umibig sa paraan na kanyang nais  
Ang bunso kong si Lorenzo*

*Nang mabalitaan kong siya'y pinaslang  
Habang nakadipa, walang kalaban-laban  
Ilang gabi at araw sa aki'y naipamalas  
Kimkim niya't pinalago sa napakaikling bukas  
Bagama't inaasahan ko ang ganoong pangyayari  
Lungkot ng isang ina'y di ko maikubli*

*Kilala mo ba si Lorenzo, anak?  
Hindi po, ngunit tila yata kayo'y umiiyak  
Kamukha mo siya, maari ba kitang hagkan  
Labing siyam na siya sa darating na buwan.*

*(Domini Torrevillas Suarez has a B.A. in English from Silliman University and an M.A. in journalism from the Medill School of Journalism in Evanston, Illinois. She wrote for the Manila Daily Bulletin from 1961 to 1969 when she joined Philippine Panorama, eventually becoming associate editor in 1976 and its editor in 1981. She wrote two booklets for Manila Community Services, Inc.: Vendors of Manila and Hanap Buhay, the latter consisting of vignettes on working women.)*

## Reading, 'Riting, and Riot Control

Five years after being decreed into law by President Marcos, a program requiring all Filipino citizens 10 years and older to perform "national service" in defense of the state was launched on a pilot basis in Central Luzon.

Critics of the government attacked Presidential Decree (PD) 1706 or the National Service Law as an attempt to systematically militarize the schools.

Starting from the fourth grade, students are required to spend at least 60 hours attending lectures on such politically-loaded topics as "loyalty," "the Filipino ideology," civil disturbance/riot control, and intelligence work. The classes will undoubtedly be taught from the government's political perspective.

The National Service Program (NSP) will be directed and coordinated by the

Ministry of National Defense. The Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) is charged with conducting the Military Service component while the Philippine Constabulary/Integrated National Police (PC/INP) administers the Law Enforcement Service Program.

### HOTBEDS

AFP officials claim that non-military service options exist at the college level, but the law, nevertheless, requires 80% of all male students to take the Military Service Program to ensure that the reserve force requirement of the AFP is met.

The NSP pilot project is now operative in all 74 state colleges and universities and volunteer schools in Metro Manila, Central Luzon and some schools in Cebu, Iloilo and Cagayan de Oro City. Education

minister Jaime Laya cited Central Luzon's compact nature as the reason behind its selection for the pilot program.

Critics of the program, however, note that Central Luzon is a traditional hotbed of insurgency and charge that the NSP is simply part of the regime's counterinsurgency campaign.

They also note that schools and universities are known centers of radical opposition. The program, they charge, is meant to generate loyalty to Marcos in the guise of promoting patriotism.

### EXTERNAL THREATS?

Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile insists that the National Service Law is just an implementation of the National Defense Act and the constitutional provision that require citizens to defend the

country against external threats or attacks. Opponents counter that the NSL actually stretches the constitutional provision and includes internal insurgency.

Indeed, section 3 of the rules and regulations for the implementation of PD 1706 requires every Filipino to "defend the nation's integrity and stability against those who aim to bring it down in ruin through aimlessness, violence and misjudgment," not against foreign aggression.

If the government has its way, the NSP will become part of the academic curriculum in all schools throughout the country by the next school year.

Already, student groups and teachers in many schools across the country are organizing protests in the hope of building a movement to overturn the national service law and program. □

# The Case of the Presidential Kidneys



National MidWeek

The Late Dr. Mike Baccay

Before a worldwide audience, President Marcos ribbed *ABC Nightline's* Ted Koppel about the latter's interest in the president's health. Boasting of a strict regimen which includes daily workouts and jogs, Marcos crowed: "I'm healthier than an ordinary man with two kidneys."

How many kidneys did he have then? It was a dead giveaway.

Other than slurred speech, occasional memory lapses, and a right hand which trembled throughout the interview, viewers would have had no reason to doubt the aging dictator's claim to a clean bill of health. But the slip was made, and the rumors started up again. They were also fanned by new reports on the president's medical secrets.

On October 28, the *Washington Post*, quoting U.S. intelligence and Congressional sources, confirmed that Marcos was suffering from systemic lupus erythematosus, a degenerative disease which attacks the vital organs, especially the kidneys.

Marcos reportedly underwent two transplant operations, coinciding with periods when rumors that the president was seriously ill were the ripest.

## MYSTERIOUS DEATH

Four days later, on November 1, Dr. Potenciano "Mike" Baccay, a nephrologist at the National Kidney Center and one of Marcos' trusted kidney specialists, was found dead in his van.

Brig. Gen. Alfredo Yson, district police chief of Muntinglupa, the suburb where Dr. Baccay resided, officially announced that the physician was the victim of a gang robbery. Household appliances and other valuables found beside the body, were cited as evidence of the robbery motive.

However, other police probes who refused to be identified disagree with Yson's report. Why, they ask, were the stolen goods left behind and why did the robbers who entered the house at an earlier hour, wait for the physician to return?

Why the president's attending physician expired earlier than the patient, is now puzzling not only police probes but Philippine medical circles as well.

Baccay evidently had been linked to "a leak" which gave U.S. intelligence the real score on Marcos' health. Part of the reason Washington is now pressing Marcos for a transition mechanism is the belief that he does not have too long a time to live.

## YANKS DID TRANSPLANTS

Dr. Baccay and Dr. Enrique Ona, director of transplantation of the National Kidney Center apparently

told the *Pittsburgh Press* that Marcos underwent two kidney transplant operations, in August 1983 and November 1984 at the Kidney Center in Manila.

Baccay said the doctors who did the transplants were Dr. G. Baird Helfrich, director of Renal Transplants Georgetown Medical Center and Dr. Barry Kahan, director of transplantation for Herrmann Hospital in Houston.

Marcos reportedly rejected the kidney transplanted by Helfrich and had to be operated on a second time by Kahan. "It is common knowledge among the medical community here that the transplants were done by the Americans," said Ona.

When the *Pittsburgh Press* pursued them after Baccay's death, both Kahan and Helfrich were evasive. Kahan, however, admitted to being in the Philippines for several weeks in 1984 to perform some kidney transplants and to introduce the drug cyclosporine as an agent to prevent transplant rejections.

When asked if Marcos was one of his patients, Kahan answered: "I have no comment. Is this really news at this stage?"

## 'SILLY' AND 'GARBAGE'

Fear now haunts the principals in the kidney caper. Dr. Ona now claims that he was "misquoted." The U.S. doctors are similarly tight-lipped, perhaps aware that even the distance from the Philippines is an insufficient guarantee of their safety.

"You know what happened to Mike, don't you," Kahan reportedly snapped at a persistent reporter.

Meanwhile, Palace spokesmen dismissed the *Post* report as "silly" and "garbage" and countered with a media campaign of their own.

Minister of Information Gregorio Cendana released a 16-page statement admitting the president was once briefly sick in 1984, but dismissed claims of kidney transplant operations as "preposterous."

Pictures of the president jogging around the palace grounds were touted as fresh evidence that the chief executive was in top form.

The *Post* said, however, that the disease goes through long periods of remission, but like any chronic degenerative illness, has a poor prognosis. Marcos, the *Post* continued, may not last through the end of his term in 1987. □

# Dollars Drain On

Despite the recent uproar over the "dollar salting" activities of the Marcos family and its close cronies, the country's dollar reserves continue to hemorrhage. Stricter custom inspections, a package of incentives to keep dollars at home, and a presidential order to investigate unreported assets abroad, have failed to plug up the drain.

Richard Kessler of the Carnegie Endowment of International Peace charged that it is not in the interest of Marcos and company to prevent the dollar drain: "They're not doing it because it would affect them. . . Marcos has turned the whole Philippines into one big money machine, for himself and his friends." U.S. officials have recently begun to look into this accusation.

The *New York Times* reported on November 20, Congressional investigators and a federal grand jury in the Washington area, are looking into the charges of

and nationalist sentiments of the Filipino people.

Cory Aquino, in particular, symbolizes the broadest expression of the people's discontent. This campaign, if it remains united, has the potential of mobilizing millions to an open confrontation with the hated tyrant.

While this electoral struggle can lead to either Marcos' ouster or further isolation, what it cannot accomplish is the fundamental reordering of the exploitative and oppressive social structures that have produced the likes of Ferdinand Marcos.

But his ouster will not be of minor significance. Fascism's logic leads to its reliance on one-man rule. It always needs a Hitler, a Franco, a Somoza or a Marcos to sustain itself. The dictator's removal will weaken the fascist structures he has built, put his minions in disarray and free Philippine politics from the stifling grip of autocracy.

"hidden wealth" first revealed by *San Jose Mercury News* reporters Pete Carey and Kathleen Ellison last summer.

A Senate Intelligence Committee staff report released this month summarized the charges as follows: "Corruption has become a serious burden on the economy. The First Family and their favored cronies amass great wealth much of which is transferred abroad.

The federal grand jury in Virginia, is investigating tens of millions of dollars in Philippine military contracts financed by the Pentagon, in which Gen. Fabian Ver was involved.

Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-MA) has also asked the General Auditing Office to look at the possible misuse of U.S. aid by the Marcoses. Although similar General Auditing investigations in the past failed to turn up hard evidence showing that U.S. aid was being diverted, certain irregularities were noted in the handling of aid disbursements by the First Lady's Ministry of Human Settlements. In 1984, a Philippine audit of the National Food Authority, disclosed that \$125 million in inventory were not reconciled with the accounting records. Many of the 300 government corporations used as conduits were private companies of favored cronies before they went bankrupt and got absorbed by the government. These firms' accumulated debt make up 30% of the country's national debt. Of these 300 corporations, 118 were recently audited, and only 50 were given a clean bill of health. The 68 others were found to have "material exceptions." Mrs. Marcos is listed as the chairman of the board for 30 corporations. Only six of these received a clean slate.

While the U.S. has yet to catch Marcos in the act of actually malversing funds for personal enrichment, it has tripped him acting on behalf of his cronies a few times. Last summer, the U.S. held up a \$40 million loan to the National Food Authority and demanded that the agency relinquish its monopoly over wheat and flour importation. After the loan was released, Marcos issued a request to the Central Bank asking that foreign exchange to buy wheat be issued only to one group. The request would have created another monopoly for the president's associates. Marcos' request was rescinded only after the U.S. protested the action and threatened to withhold an additional \$19 million in development aid.

The current U.S. probes only tickle the widespread curiosity over how Marcos, whose salary as president is only \$5,000 (P100,000) a year, acquired fabulous wealth. The Marcoses own real estate and banks in Europe and the U.S., and extensive art, antique and jewelry collections. Their wealth is concealed by layers of offshore corporations, lawyers and dummies. The First Lady, says the Central Intelligence Agency, ranks as one of the richest women in the world. Thus far, the Marcoses have managed to dodge efforts to reveal their income and assets, usually by "hushing up" potential informants. Two suits against Imelda Marcos filed in Suffolk County and San Francisco by ex-dummies were quietly settled out of court.

The dollar hemorrhage continues, and according to the *San Jose Mercury News*, the siphoning methods used by the wealthy and well-connected become more sophisticated. Even recent dollar transfusions in the form of loans, disappear overnight. Complained one U.S. banker: "You pump money in and it gets pumped right out."

Some of these methods include:

- Wire transmission: special wire transmitters are illegally set up to transmit dollars from accounts in Hong Kong to accounts in the U.S.

- Export manipulation: traders under-report how much they are paid for exports and deposit the difference in overseas accounts.

- Arbitrage: stocks are listed on exchanges both in Manila and overseas and bought in Manila then sold overseas. This results in a build-up of temporary dollar reserves.

- Hidden deposits: a Filipino deposits money in a Philippine branch of a U.S. bank in exchange for an equivalent loan from an overseas branch of the same bank. The net effect is that the deposit made in the Philippines is transferred abroad. □

# Editorial

Continued from page 2

voting are necessary to remove him from his throne.

However, ousting Marcos or deepening his isolation on February 7 requires the united efforts of the broad opposition movement. This is why the forging of a united opposition ticket came as such a relief, after several anxious moments of uncertainty.

## AGAINST THE NARROWEST TARGET

The Cory Aquino-Doy Laurel ticket has the best potential of handing Marcos an electoral or political defeat on February 7. Given the circumstances, this coalition's platform expresses the broad democratic

For the forces from left to right of the broad spectrum of opposition, such a respite would be no small matter. The common interest of establishing a more democratic terrain of political struggle sets the basis for building the broadest unity against the narrowest target.

The next two months present the opportunity for forging the broadest unity among the people to isolate or defeat their most immediate enemy, and to take a big step towards the long-range goal of national and social liberation.

We call on all progressive and democratic North Americans to step up the demand for an end to U.S. support to the tottering Marcos regime. We call on all Filipinos on this continent to unite and render all possible assistance to the Aquino-Laurel campaign and the people's effort to hand the Marcos dictatorship a resounding defeat. □



# Copper Mining Caves In to Crisis

Like other parts of the Philippine economy, the mining industry is caving in from the pressures of a national economic crisis and sagging world-wide prices for exported minerals. The country's bleak trading picture is being dimmed further by plummeting mineral exports. Total export revenues from mineral products dropped nearly 40% in 1984 from \$440 million in 1983 to \$266 million, with copper exports declining by 54%.

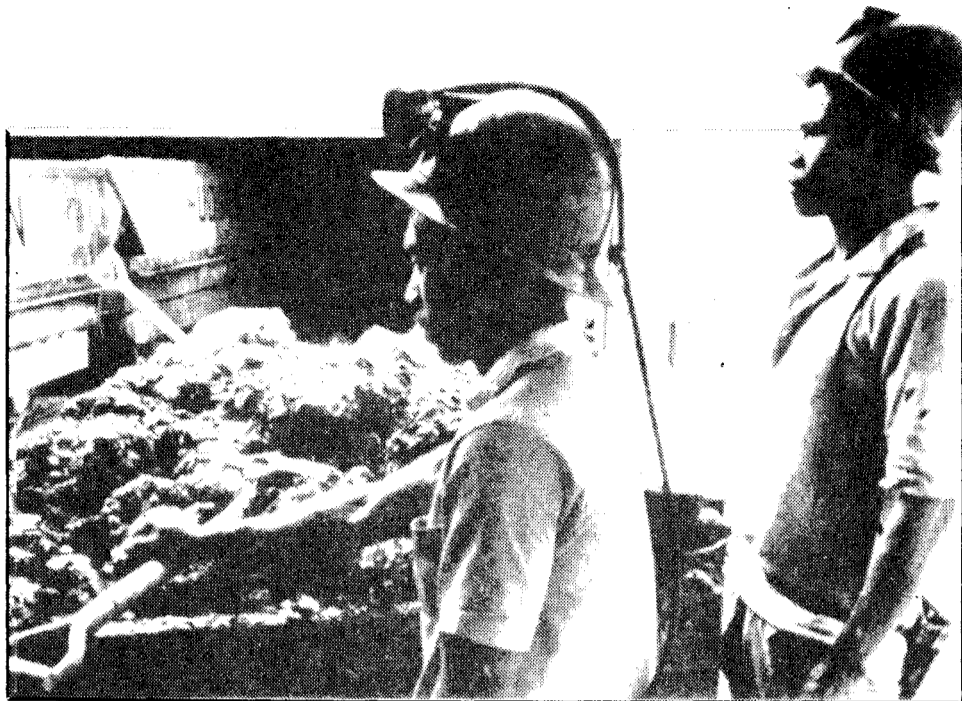
With production and operating costs vastly outpacing the price of minerals in the world market, the country's leading mining companies are digging themselves deeper in debt.

The collapse in late 1984 of Marinduque Mining and Industrial Corp.—one of the country's top nickel producers—triggered shock waves that continue to reverberate throughout the mining community.

## COPPER FADES

Especially hard hit is the copper mining sector. Copper is one of the country's top mineral products.

The average price of copper sold by Philippine mining firms fell by 10 cents or 14% in 1984 while production costs continued to soar. Companies blame peso devaluations and high interest rates on loans for their mounting overhead costs.



Miners inspect ore: jobs disappear with sagging prices.

Of the 15 major copper producers in 1980, only seven remain in operation; the other eight were foreclosed or swallowed up by larger firms by 1984.

Contrary to expectations, the country's largest producer of copper and silver, the Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp., is faring no better than its weaker counterparts.

Atlas posted a loss of ₱696.5 million

last year but may very well surpass that dismal deficit if present trends continue. In the first quarter of 1985 the company already accumulated a net loss of ₱471.3 million.

Expecting no improvement in the imbalance between production costs and market prices, Atlas managers are seriously considering drastic cost-cutting measures, such as mass layoffs and the indefinite

suspension of operations.

Just a little over a year ago, Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co.—another top copper producer, was forced to close down for five months, but only after having laid off 1,251 workers or about a third of its workforce.

## NOTHING BUT LOSSES

Meanwhile, Marcopper Mining Corp., the second largest copper producer and Benguet Corp. reported losses of ₱23.8 million and ₱62.3 million, respectively for the first quarter of 1985.

Marcopper's first quarter deficit is nearly five times its loss for the same period in the previous year while Benguet Corp.'s negative total was a complete reversal from its ₱52.8 million profit a year earlier.

As companies have either collapsed or cut back on their operations, total copper production industry-wide has plummeted. Copper extraction nosedived by 17.2% in 1984 to 226,053 tons. Following the same pattern, copper production for the first quarter of 1985 dipped 5.5% as compared to the same period in the previous year.

The mining industry's woes do not bode well for the Philippine economy, which is already reeling from a crisis of major proportions, one that has led to a combined unemployment and underemployment rate of 60%. □ W.G.

## Reaction

*Continued from page 3*

reorganization in the military."

The U.S. based opposition movement raised a different concern. In a joint statement, the major opposition groups called on Congress "to stop using U.S. taxpayers' dollars to support Marcos and to live up to its commitment to cut military aid if Gen. Ver is reinstated."

The statement was released by six organizations: The New Aquino Movement, Movement for a Free Philippines, Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network, Washington Forum, Philippine Support Committee and the Friends of the Filipino People.

### PROTEST DELEGATION

Odette Taverna, director of the CAMD/PSN Congress Task Force criticized the White House's prior acceptance of the acquittals in exchange for promises of changes in the military "but at the expense of justice for Aquino and the Filipino people."

Less than 24 hours after the announcement of the verdict, 75 noontime picketers defied a law prohibiting picketing within two blocks of a foreign embassy in Washington, DC by sending five representatives to carry their joint statement to Philippine embassy officials.

The delegation was composed of Charito Planas (FFP), Odette Taverna (CAMD/-PSN), Walden Bello (PSC), Rev. Bill Weiler, director of the Episcopal Church and Benigno Aquino III, nephew of the slain leader. Although embassy officials had limited the size of the delegation to five, they admitted the twenty reporters who accompanied the group into the embassy.

The following day, on December 3, the same groups held a joint press conference with Sen. Kerry and demanded that the expression of outrage over the acquittals be followed up concretely with a halt to U.S. support for Marcos. □

## Ver Free

*Continued from page 3*

"Prosecutor Bernardo Fernandez the petition charged, failed to conduct "an independent and impartial prosecution that seeks to present all the evidence."

The petition charged all four with making themselves "instruments, wittingly or unwittingly in the miscarriage of justice through their manifest partiality."

Among other things, the petition cited

instances of the judges passing notes to defense during the trial; the presence in the courtroom of a video camera that allegedly transmitted directly into Malacanang; the dismissal of the active prosecutor, Miguel Herrera; and the interference of the judges in the work of the prosecution.

Furthermore, it protested the Supreme Court's refusal to allow testimony made by the defendants to the Agrava Commission as evidence in the trial. (When the high court threw out Ver's Agrava testimony as evidence, Manuel Pamaran, presiding judge of the Sandiganbayan court, jumped for joy shouting "We won, we won.")

The petition also attacked the prosecution's refusal to use evidence provided by U.S. Air Force personnel of the military's attempt to scramble jets to intercept Aquino's plane. This evidence undermined defense claims that those accused had no prior knowledge of Aquino's arrival.

### SALUTES CHIEF

The mistrial petition delayed the release of the verdict for almost two weeks. But as soon as it was rejected, the Sandiganbayan announced its verdict, apparently ignoring the petitioners' preparations to appeal the Supreme Court decision before the 15-day appeal period expired.

Under Philippine law, no one can be tried twice for the same crime. Now that a verdict has been rendered, none of the 26 defendants need fear a second trial, even if the mistrial petition appeal is eventually heard and accepted.

As soon as the verdict was announced, Ver drove to Malacanang, saluted his commander-in-chief and resumed his post as chief-of-staff.

Even while on leave, Ver lived in the palace grounds and presumably exercised his powers as usual.

In fact, sometime in November, Ver joined an important conference with Marcos, acting chief-of-staff Fidel Ramos, and about a dozen military experts. The session included a two-hour caucus among Ver, Marcos and three others while Ramos and sixteen military officials waited.

At this point, it is not clear how long Ver will retain his old post. Some speculate that he will stay for a while and then retire "honorably." Marcos promised Ver that acquittal would mean reinstatement and has fulfilled his pledge.

What remains to be seen is whether the president will keep his promises to Washington: to reorganize the AFP and retire Ver and other generals who, like their president, have served years beyond the mandatory retirement period. □

## CAROLING FOR A CAUSE

*"Have faith that the Christmas of our freedom will come..."*

**The Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship-Philippine Solidarity Network launches its 11th annual Christmas Fundraising Drive.**

*The Holiday Season finds most of us thinking about the situation in the Philippines and what can be done to help deal the final blow to end the repressive Marcos regime.*

*Open up your homes to CAMD-PSN's caroling teams and share your Christmas spirit with the cause of freedom. Let us share with you our Christmas message of Philippine carols, skits and resistance songs.*



To set caroling appointments, call:

Honolulu: Venny (808)523-2821

Seattle: Esther (206)723-0352

Viqui (206)722-3207

Los Angeles: Minerva (213)483-7236

San Francisco: Shirley (415)468-6840

Rafael (415)261-6734 for East Bay

Sacramento: Sonny (916)428-4415

New York: Beth (718)424-8631

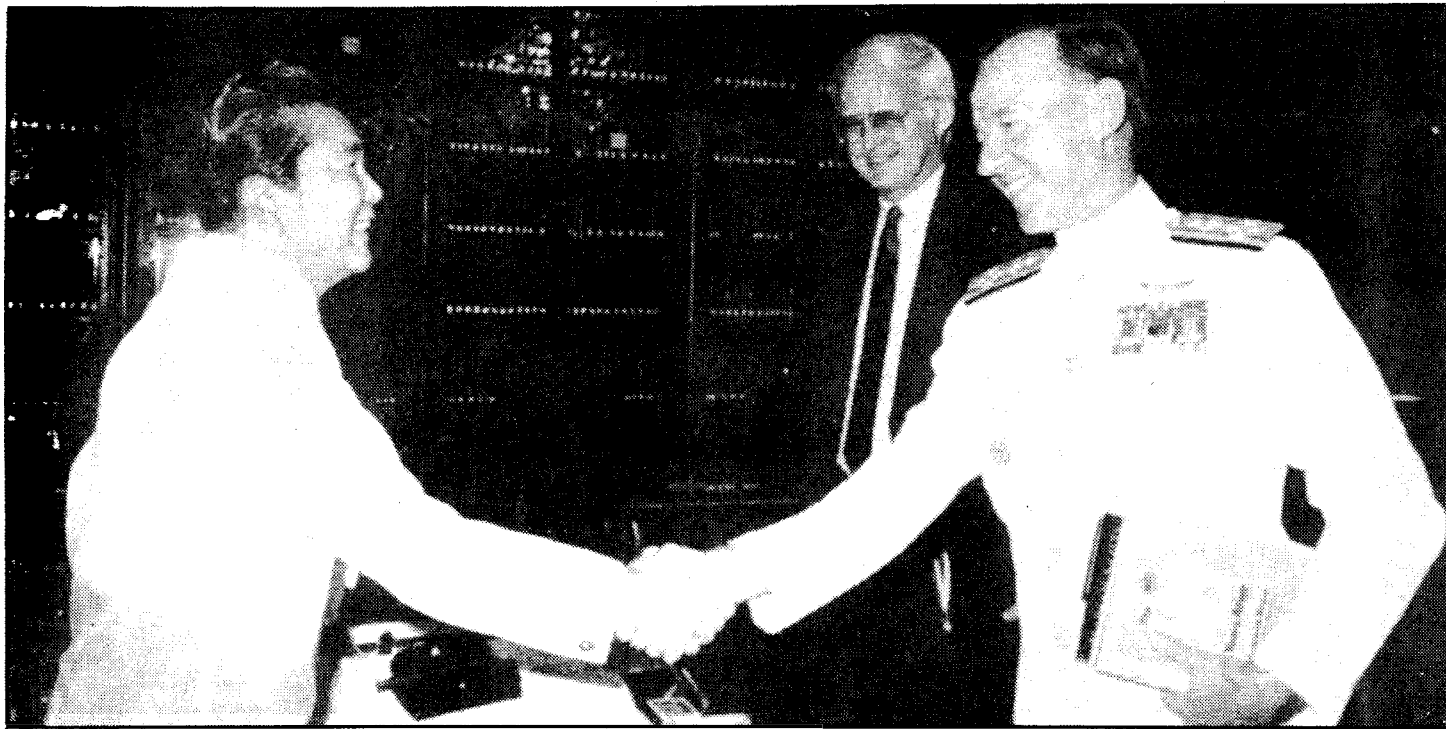
Washington, D.C.: Ning (202)396-3910

Montreal: Dors (514)932-2577

Toronto: Ging (416)535-8550

If you are not able to host the caroling team but wish to make a Christmas donation, please write a check to PSN and mail to: CAMD-PSN, P.O. Box 31856, Oakland, CA 94604.

# Arm Twisting Brings On Snap Election



Marcos, Bosworth and U.S. military official: Friendly on the outside.

By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

Judging from the furious tit-for-tat between Washington and Manila, the road to Ferdinand Marcos' recently announced snap presidential elections, has been paved with clashing intentions.

"The U.S. Congress has no intention of rubber-stamping a phony election," Sen. John Kerry (D-MA) announced December 4. "If this election cannot be free, fair and open, then a snap election solves nothing.

Kerry was announcing the formation of a bipartisan team to observe the Philippine presidential polls now set for Feb. 7. Organized at the behest of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the group will include representatives of the Republican and Democratic National Committees (each party's election campaign outfits), the Federal Elections Commission and the American Bar Association.

This will not be the first time such dignitaries have observed elections in other countries. But the SFRC group is slated to visit Manila as early as December 7, a full two months early, spend a week noting

preparations for the vote and report to an SFRC subcommittee as to whether voting procedures are likely to be impartial.

The SFRC move is only the latest example of building U.S. pressure on the Marcos regime. In fact, the last two months have seen bitter and open quarrelling between these once coziest of allies, a falling out graphically reported by the U.S. media.

## A DEAL ON VER?

Things began popping in mid-October when Ronald Reagan dispatched personal emissary Sen. Paul Laxalt (R-Nev), to inform Marcos that it was not just congressional liberals who wanted to see reform in the Philippines, but the White House itself. Laxalt's "blunt message" stressed the need for a credible resolution of the Aquino trial, revamp of the military and presidential elections before the scheduled date of 1987.

Marcos brushed aside much of the criticism as ill-informed and stood his ground on reappointing relative and devoted follower Gen. Fabian Ver who was at that time still on leave as an accused in the Aquino trial. Speculation was that some sort of deal was struck: White House acceptance of Ver's acquittal and brief, face-saving, reappointment in exchange for a sweeping reorganization of the military into a

more effective counterinsurgency force.

Still, administration and congressional critics remained pessimistic about the visit. Some told reporters that they expected little from Marcos in spite of the strength of the Reagan/Laxalt message.

## "BIPARTISAN CONCERN"

Then came a seemingly orchestrated attempt to tell Marcos via the airwaves what he refused to hear behind closed doors when the SFRC held widely publicized hearings Oct. 30. Stressing the bipartisan character of the U.S. concern, both Richard Lugar (R-Ind) and Alan Cranston (D-Ca) made opening remarks.

The Philippines is "one of the most serious foreign policy challenges we face," Assistant Secretary of State Paul Wolfowitz told the committee.

He and Assistant Secretary of Defense Richard Armitage reiterated the National Democratic Front's prediction of over a year ago that a strategic stalemate between the New People's Army and the Armed Forces of the Philippines is possible within three to five years.

## OTHER ACTIONS

Two days later, the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence released sanitized portions of a classified report predicting the downfall of the Marcos government within three years.

Underscoring the urgency of U.S. government concern, Sen. David Durenberger (D-Mn) Committee chairman, admitted it was the first time the Committee had ever released such a report. Marcos, he said, should step down.

*Newsweek* reported that Washington had sent an offer to Marcos of a sanctuary in the U.S. if he would only take his money and run.

Interviewed on television, Durenberger noted ominously that, if current trends continue, the U.S. may have to take "other actions." President Jimmy Carter, he noted made no effort to build a counterforce to the Sandinistas before they took over in Nicaragua. "We don't intend to make that mistake in the Philippines; the President doesn't intend to make that mistake."

Meanwhile back in Manila, U.S. Ambassador Stephen Bosworth met with Marcos for four hours on Oct. 31 before leaving for the U.S. purportedly to visit his father. He headed for Washington in time to see Marcos announce via David Brinkley's "This Week" Nov. 3 that in order to settle the "silly claim that my government is inept," a snap presidential election would be held Jan. 17.

## THE ISSUE IS MARCOS

U.S. reaction to the announcement was

*Continued on page 15*

## FM Party Feuded Over VP Spot

President Marcos chose ex-Foreign Minister Arturo Tolentino, a maverick he fired nine months ago, as his running mate December 11 during the KBL nominating convention.

But the surprise selection of a man in his seventies, with no base of his own only came after furious lobbying among contending factions.

The fiercest lobbying came from the powerful First Lady Imelda Romualdez Marcos and her camp within the party. Observers insisted that a Marcos/Marcos ticket would be an extremely unwise move and likely to arouse much opposition in Washington.

Both the President and the First Lady have repeatedly denied that the upopular Mrs. Marcos will run for the office. But Mrs. Marcos is known for her denials of interest in public office followed by carefully orchestrated "draft Imelda" campaigns. And, as columnist Teodoro Valencia puts it, "In politics, if it looks like a duck, it waddles like a duck, and quacks like a duck, it must be a horse."

Tolentino's selection can still be radically changed at the last minute. The new election code allows any candidate for

president or vice-president to withdraw before noon of election day and name any other person from his party to take his place.

The rumor is that Marcos intends to have Imelda join him at the last minute.

Lobbying against the First Lady was longtime nemesis Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile. Another cabinet member seen as a strong potential candidate, Labor Minister Blas Ople spoke openly of his interest in the job. Some of Mrs. Marcos' supporters worked openly to keep him off the ticket.

The most feared contender was Marcos crony and businessman Eduardo Cojuangco. Cojuangco owns San Miguel Brewery; controls the country's coconut industry and, with Enrile, its sugar industry as well. A Marcos loyalist, he is seen as being capable of protecting the family's interests after Marcos leaves the scene.

These credentials did not seem to impress the First Lady, however. In a recent interview, she commented, "There are people good for coconut and sugar and people good for people, but very few are good for coconut, sugar and people."

—NFR

## What About the U.



Major Gen. Josephus Ramos

By RENE CRUZ

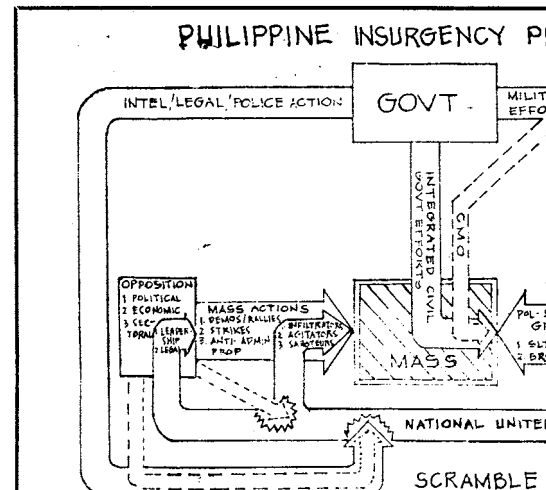
While elections are Washington's preferred form of transitioning out an ally who has become a burden, the shift to more drastic means, to paraphrase jailed leftist leader Jose Maria Sison, is always just a CIA operation away.

The U.S. has downplayed the immediate possibility of sponsoring a military coup, but its pursuit of "military reform" has always reflected its twin desire to turn the AFP into a more efficient counterinsurgency force, and to firm up a pro-U.S. base in the military for future political use.

But just as he has not taken the election scenario lying down, Marcos has fought to define military reform on his own terms. Therefore, it has not been smooth sailing for would be pro-U.S. reformers from above or below.

## DASHED HOPES

U.S. officials pinned their hopes on Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos as the "upright professional" who could whip the armed forces into shape in the absence of Marcos'



Col. Biazon's diagram: Scrambling for mass

favorite, Chief of Staff Gen. Fabian Ver.

"The Armed Forces is mistakenly perceived not as the protector of the people but the oppressor," Ramos told a group of regimental commanders shortly after taking his oath of office. "Help me to reverse this trend," he exhorted them.

Washington also closely followed the progress of the "We Belong" military reform movement whose demands, curiously enough, were the same reforms it would like to see, i.e. professionalizing the AFP, weeding out corrupt officers, proper implementation of the merit system, abolition of patronage and the removal of Ver.

The "We Belong" movement includes in its ranks officers such as Cols. Greg Honasan and Hernani Figueroa who are linked to Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, Ver's arch-rival. Thus, talk of an Enrile-Ramos faction spread quickly. Initially, the reformists placed great hopes on Ramos to blaze the trail towards reform and to create a climate more favorable to serious professionals. But Ramos has so far let his loyalty to Marcos get in the way of reforms and has fallen short of the



# Aquino-Laurel Ticket Forms At Last Hour

Ferdinand Marcos hates being pressured and the world knows—thanks to a boisterous U.S. media—that his decision to call for a snap election was the result of some heavy pressure from Washington. Despite his show of bravado, February 7 is one election Marcos would rather do without.

Even his fortune teller would probably tell him that the stars do not bode well.

On the one hand, his long standing U.S. sponsors have come to a "bipartisan consensus" that he must go, and would he please keep his exit "clean and credible." On the other hand, the evidence that most Filipinos want him to leave is more than convincing—it is overwhelming.

Both hands show that if he is not careful, he just might find himself fighting a losing battle at the polls. His precarious situation has raised the hopes of all electoral oppositionists, and they cannot be faulted completely for hoping. Marcos is indeed in a tight spot, for once.

## PROVISIONS

But the man did not become such a powerful figure by being careless. Thus, he has made provisions.

If the cheating, fraud and intimidation his campaigns have been known for can't halt the groundswell for the opposition, the snap poll can always be cancelled at the drop of a Supreme Court decision.

Most moderate oppositionists are fully aware of these tricks but many have chosen to participate nonetheless. Even a losing campaign can do serious political damage to Marcos if it forces him into massive fraud and manipulation in order to win.

"If only for the reason of educating people by their experience, for exposing Marcos even more, I am willing to endorse participation," said Jose W. Diokno at a forum in San Francisco State University last November.

But to expose Marcos, much more to



beat him, requires a united opposition front. A split opposition will only help Marcos slip away from his tight spot.

Thus for several days, the picture looked pretty grim when the two leading contenders for the opposition presidential spot, Cory Aquino and Salvador Laurel, could not forge a coalition. Laurel refused to give way to Aquino and insisted on running for the presidency himself.

Many thought that the worstcase scenario had unfolded. But at the very last minute, before the final deadline for the filing of candidacies, Laurel agreed to run as Aquino's vice-presidential running mate. Everyone in the opposition heaved a big sigh of relief.

"Now Marcos has an election to worry about," said one foreign observer.

Laurel, visiting the United States on November 3, threw his hat in the ring immediately upon hearing Marcos' announcement of the election. Chief of the United Nationalist Democratic Opposition (UNIDO), the former senator and *Batasan Pambansa* member is the only opposition candidate in the country backed by an organized, nationwide party.

Drafted into running by popular demand is Cory Aquino, widow of the assassinated Senator Benigno Aquino. Aquino gained national prominence after her husband's murder as the center of the protest movement that erupted in its wake.

A reluctant candidate, she announced her intention to run December 2 only after the Cory Aquino for President Movement collected over 1,200,000 signatures urging her to do so.

On December 6, reporters in Manila released word that the two had reached an agreement. After much serious bargaining, Laurel was reportedly prepared to run for vice president.

## JUST FOR SHOW

But two days later, Laurel announced that the pact had fallen through. Aquino had broken an agreement to run on the ticket of his party, he claimed. "This leaves me no choice but to decline her offer to run as her vice president," he added. "I cannot sacrifice my party and my principles."

UNIDO leaders explained Laurel's concern that, should Aquino run under any other banner, his party might lose its status within the *Batasan* as the dominant opposition party.

Aquino's camp responded quickly and tersely: "The statement of Mr. Laurel that Mrs. Aquino refused to run under the UNIDO banner is incorrect. The truth is that she had agreed to run under the UNIDO-LABAN banner but that was not acceptable to Mr. Laurel." Laurel then changed his terms. He filed his candidacy for the top post and offered Aquino the vice president slot.

Observers quickly announced that the opposition was finished and the Philippine president was in for an easy victory. "Ferdinand Marcos must be sitting in his palace having his first good laugh in days," one U.S. official told the *San Francisco Examiner's* Phil Bronstein.

Others claimed that Laurel's dramatic announcement was just for show. "Laurel is just positioning himself in order to get the most out of the pact for UNIDO," insisted one. "He will ultimately accept the position."

Laurel reportedly asked for an equal say in cabinet appointments and the post of prime minister.

Pressure started coming down on Laurel to change his position. A number of his supporters reportedly defected to Cory. Finally Laurel amended his candidacy papers changing his status to vice-presidential aspirant.

## "OPPOSING MOTHERHOOD"

The decision to place these two vastly differing individuals on the same ticket is a wise one. It could be a winning slate. Each has strengths and weaknesses and will nicely compensate for one another.

Laurel's biggest strength is UNIDO itself. The former senator has worked for a number of years developing a nationwide organization precisely, many say, in order to run for president some day.

But Laurel's strength is also one of his weaknesses. He is perceived as a machine politician, a political hack, highly self-interested. Many mistrust him because he was a member of Marcos' own party until 1980 when he resigned and formed UNIDO.

Cory Aquino, on the other hand, bears the freshness and sincerity of a woman wronged and the magic of the Aquino name. She appears to be genuinely motivated to get rid of Marcos and not particularly interested in furthering her own career. In the eyes of many, she symbolizes the nation's grievances against one-man rule. "No one will want to oppose her," as *Batasan* member Ramon Mitra, originally another contender, put it. "It's like opposing motherhood."

"Cory Aquino and the shadow of her husband scare him," commented one KBL member speaking of Marcos' campaign tactics. "Laurel is the devil he knows how to handle."

But no one can deny Aquino's lack of political experience. Furthermore, although backed by the coalition *Lakas ng Bayan* (LABAN), a grouping of two large and five smaller regional parties, she has nowhere near the nationwide organization or financial base of Laurel. Thus Aquino's advisors pressed her into bargaining with the former senator in order to create a blend of her political image with the backing of the ex-senator's party machinery.

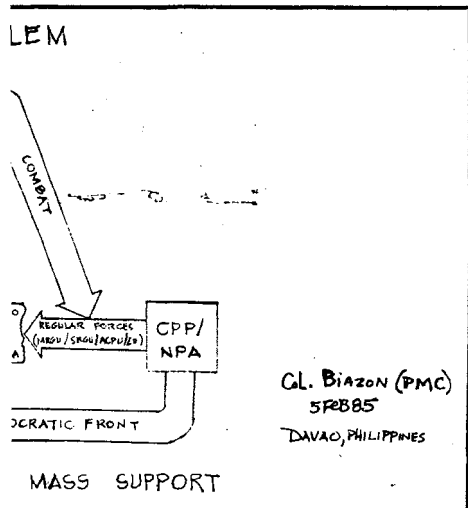
## U.S. CONCERN

If Washington had its way, Laurel would occupy the number one spot for his basically pro-U.S. and anti-communist politics. Aquino's coalition, by contrast, calls for the removal of the U.S. bases when the lease expires in 1991, and the legalization of the Communist Party of the Philippines. She counts among her advisors the more left-leaning and nationalist among the moderate forces.

Laurel endears himself to Washington

Continued on page 13

# 3. Military Option?



Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos

directive to be "low-key about the movement."

In addition, Marcos said that in the military reorganization plan that he, Ver, Ramos and other top officers have been working on in response to U.S. pressures for reforms, the hierarchy down to "company commanders sitting on their butts" will be reshuffled as early as Christmas. While this was made to sound like a promise to rub out corruption, it also sounded like a threat to punish trouble-makers.

The stick, however, has not been reserved for reformers from below. Those at the top entertaining thoughts of plotting with the U.S. also were issued a veiled threat in the guise of a criticism of factionalism.

## GOOD LOOKS

Candidly admitting that "there are Ver men and Ramos men" Marcos told *Asia Week* that he intended to eliminate factionalism completely. He indicated he wanted to retire both generals.

Continued on page 15

port.

zealots' expectations.

"Ramos hewed too closely to the 'don't-rock-the-boat thinking'. He pulled his punches, *hindi todo* (not all the way)," said a disappointed navy officer.

Another reformist summed up Ramos performance: "He's a good chief of staff for the armed forces during normal times, but these are critical times." Others criticized Ramos for joining "those officials who continue to paint a rosy picture" of the armed forces' demoralizing defeats at the hands of the New People's Army.

## WAVING THE STICK

Marcos has of course, given signals that those thinking of reforms better not entertain wild ideas.

First came the stick, more of a warning. Even before Ver's reinstatement "We Belong" members expressed fears of a "backlash." Navy Captain Rex Robles reported rumors that the president had signed PDAs (preventive detention action) for key officers of the group. A Defense Ministry spokesman denied the reports but admitted there was a presidential

# Pinoy Denied Job Due to Accent

**“W**hen you are the number one among over 700 applicants and you still don't get the job, it's a very strong indication of discrimination somewhere,” said a Filipino immigrant who should know what he was talking about. He was that number one.

Manuel Fragante took the civil service exam in December 1981. When the scores were released in February 1982, he ranked the highest and became one of nine candidates for two positions in the Licensing Division of the Department of Finance of the City and County of Honolulu.

Two months later, Fragante was told he did not get either one of the positions. He asked why he was not chosen and was told that the two other persons selected were “both superior in their verbal communication ability.”

“Of course, I have a Filipino accent because I am from the Philippines,” Fragante told the *AK*. “But that does not mean I cannot speak English.”

Fragante immigrated to Hawaii in 1981. He received his law degree from the Lyceo de Cagayan in 1959 and completed a civil engineering training at the University of the Philippines. He served in the civil service with the Armed Forces of the Philippines for 30 years before retiring in 1971.

## YES OR NO ANSWERS

During the interview which he said lasted from 5-10 minutes, Fragante was asked such questions as whether he was willing to pull carts or if he was able to lift 60 pounds of boxes. He felt the questions were not relevant to the job, but he answered them anyway, he said.

Throughout the interview, he said the interviewers did most of the talking while he answered their questions with a simple “yes” or “no.”

One of the interviewers asked him if he knew how much the salary was. He answered that it was a civil service job and was listed at \$880. Then the interviewer allegedly sneered and commented, “Oh, isn't that a big amount in the Philippines?”

Fragante filed a complaint with the Equal Employment Opportunities Commission in September that year and was issued a right to sue letter on August 1,

1983. Hawaii State Legislature representative Al Lardizabal referred him to a public interest law group, the Na Loio no na Kanaka (Lawyers for the People of Hawaii) to pursue his case in court.

Bill Hoshijo, Na Loio attorney and executive director said they were seeking injunctive relief in the city and state of Hawaii's practice of using foreign accent as a criterion for denying someone a job.

“The practice is widespread,” he asserted, “and we hope this case will set a precedent in changing that practice.”

Fragante now works as a clerk at the Department of Labor of the State of Hawaii. Before applying for the civil service exams, he worked for 15 months with the Honolulu Community Action Program.

## AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

According to a joint study by the East-West Center Population Studies and Operation Manong in 1985, Filipinos

currently comprise about 13% of Hawaii's workforce, yet 48% of them are concentrated in low-paying jobs such as service workers or laborers.

For the past 10 years, the Filipino community has been pushing for verifiable affirmative action and equal employment opportunities, said Helen Toribio, a KDP activist involved in the issue.

A Filipino representative in the Hawaii State Legislature Al Lardizabal, told the *AK* earlier this year that despite the existence since 1965 of affirmative action program requirements under Executive Order 11246, offices within Honolulu and the state of Hawaii have not complied with affirmative action plans.

Lardizabal introduced a bill, which passed several years ago, commissioning a study on the extent of discrimination within the state agencies. Departments were requested to submit affirmative action plans but not everyone complied.

The Fragante case might raise the same issues again, said Toribio. A litigation fund has been set up by the Anti-Discrimination Task Force to which Toribio belongs.

“We've been able to gather support from Filipino organizations including the Cavitenians and Associates, the Ilokosurians and the Filipinos Against Discrimination in Employment,” Toribio added.

“Our goal is to educate and organize within the community on the importance of pushing for affirmative action and equal employment opportunities. Otherwise, Filipinos and other underrepresented groups will continue to be at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder.”

To support Fragante or join the Anti-Discrimination Task Force, call Helen Toribio (808) 845-2352, Jessica Ordon (808) 523-2821 or Moy Tacazon (808) 847-6678. Information about the case can also be obtained from Bill Hoshijo at Na Loio no na Kanaka (808) 847-8828. □



In Hawaii, 48% of Filipinos end up in low paying jobs.

Totoy Kocamora

# Activist Group Mourns A Stalwart

**E**d Cablinga, 73 years old and long-time active member of the Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines (CHRP) in Honolulu died of a heart attack on November 21. Over a hundred people attended his funeral, including supporters of the CHRP which is a chapter of the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship, and members of the Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP) who sang Philippine revolutionary songs at the memorial service.

“Tata Ed,” as Cablinga was fondly called by CHRP members, was drawn into the anti-dictatorship movement in 1979 during one of the group's demonstrations in downtown Honolulu. Vocal pro-Marcos elements were harassing and taunting the group and a large audience had gathered. From out of the crowd, a frail-looking senior citizen stepped forward to the microphone being held by a demonstrator.

He asked to be allowed to speak and was hesitatingly handed the microphone. Agitating in English and Ilokano, Ed Cablinga told the crowd that he had been to the Philippines many times since Marcos declared martial law and that everything the CHRP speakers were saying was true. With that baptism of fire, Ed Cablinga, joined the ranks of the CHRP.

Tata Ed became one of the most consistent and most active member of the CHRP. Despite his poor health, he never missed any of the major activities and actions of the anti-dictatorship movement in Hawaii. He was at the airport to greet Ferdinand Marcos with a “No Aloha for Marcos” banner in 1980 during the dictator's visit to Honolulu. Tata Ed joined a core group of protestors who followed Marcos around throughout his stay.

In 1981, Tata Ed joined the “Concerned Filipinos

for the 75th Anniversary of Filipinos in Hawaii” which successfully blocked the attempt by pro-Marcos forces in the Filipino community to have Imelda Marcos open the ceremonies commemorating the 75th anniversary of Filipino immigration to Hawaii. When President Marcos officially visited Washington, D.C. in 1982, Tata Ed brought out his banner again.

Despite his failing health, Ed Cablinga regularly attended the CHRP's monthly pot-luck general meetings, always bringing along his family. He was an exemplary member, always helping the organization in whatever way he could. He was one of the best ticket sellers for the group's annual “huli-huli” chicken fundraiser, and was always among the first to pay their monthly membership dues.

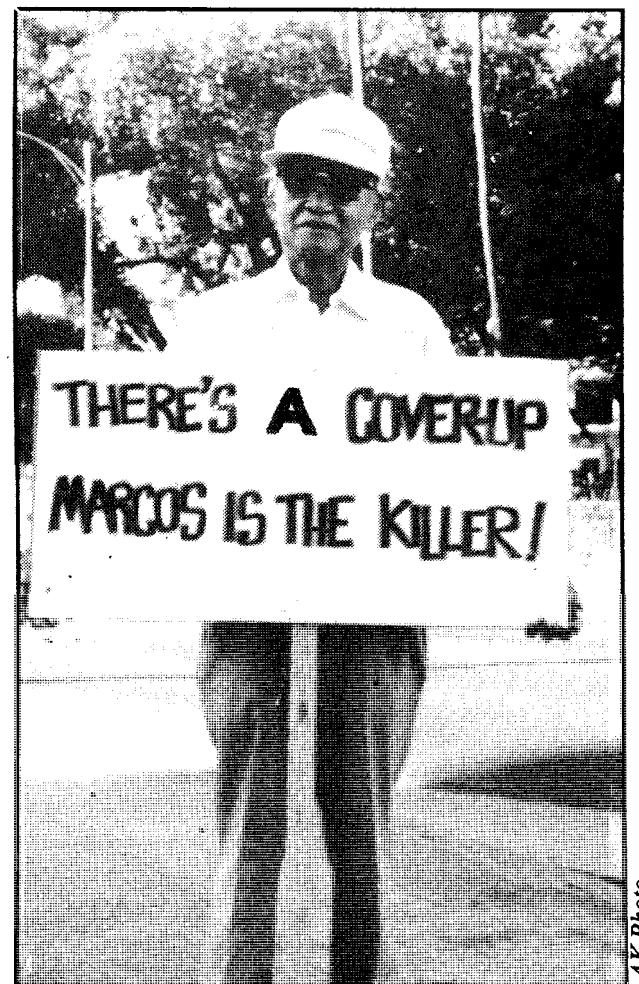
Tata Ed attended his last CHRP meeting on November 9 and along with his wife, Margaret and daughter Momi, dutifully collected dues when the steering committee forgot to remind the members.

“Papa was so concerned about the CHRP that only a few days before he died he reminded us not to forget to attend the December 7 CHRP Christmas program,” said Momi. His freezer was already stuffed with meat for the occasion.

A Filipino old-timer who came to the U.S. from Camiling, Tarlac with the “First Wave” immigrants in 1929, Tata Ed never lost his love for his motherland. Despite his frail health and advanced age, he was always in the forefront, holding his banner, in the struggle for a truly just, free and democratic Philippines.

Ed Cablinga is survived by his Portuguese wife Margaret, five children and nine grandchildren. He will be sorely missed by the CHRP and the CAMD/PSN.

—Committee for Human Rights  
In the Philippines, Honolulu



Ed Cablinga: He will be missed.

AK Photo



# Mail Order Bride Scheme Blasted

A conference of Asian American women condemned the "exploitative" nature of the mail order bride business and called on Asian women in the U.S. to help educate their counterparts in their home countries.

Meeting in Los Angeles on November 2, women from various U.S.-Asian communities attempted to "bridge the cultural barriers" among them and promptly took up the controversial issue of mail order brides.

The conference, "Breaking the Cultural Barriers of Asian Immigrant Women" was sponsored by the Asian Pacific Women's Network, Los Angeles, and the Pacific Southwest District Japanese American Citizen's League Women's Concern Committee.

Keynote speaker, Lia Shigemura, program director of the national JACL decried the phenomenon of women—primarily

from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia and to a lesser degree the other Pacific Rim nations—being commercially peddled as commodities for the consumption of the "white male market."

Mail order brides, she said, appeal mostly to white males seeking traditional wives who will cater to their needs first; in other words, subservient, obedient and loyal partners.

Because of political and economic instability in many Asian countries, many women have resorted to enlisting in "catalog services" as a means of immigration to the U.S., Australia or Europe. They see the scheme as a quick way of bettering their lives.

The women sign up "at risk" with mail order bride outfits often paying a service fee. Firms specializing in recruiting brides for prospective husbands are known to reap handsome profits.

Once properly "arranged," the women must marry within 90 days and stay married for two years or risk deportation. Being highly vulnerable, they usually become dependent on husbands they may have met for the first time.

Disadvantaged by their lack of familiarity with a new language and environment, having little or no social service support, and with the threat of deportation hanging over their heads, most of the women become potential victims of abuse and maltreatment in the hands of their new husbands.

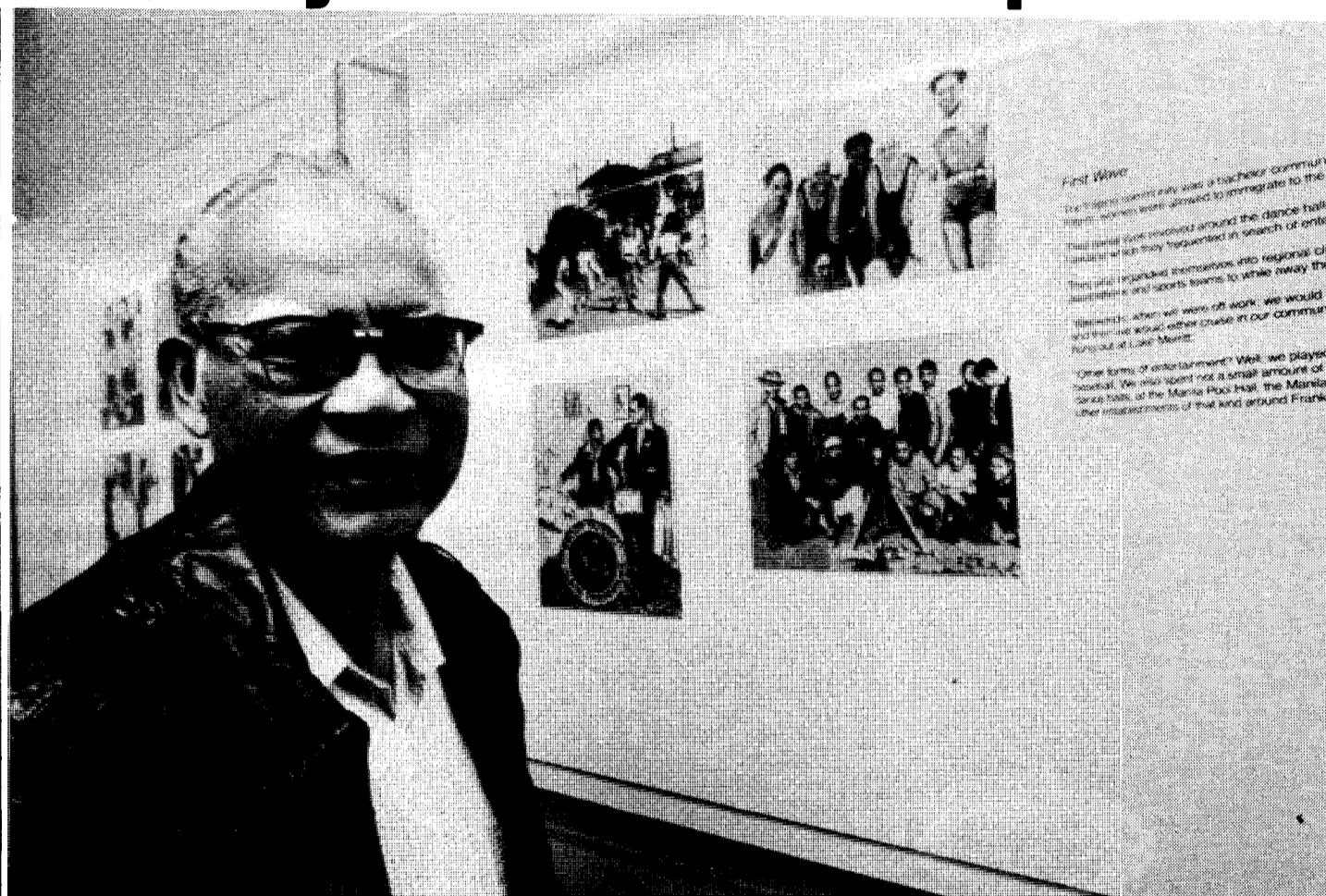
Dr. Bok Lim Kim, chair of the National Committee Concerned with Asian Wives called attention to the absence of government regulations regarding these businesses and provisions that would protect the women's rights. The governments involved have mainly reduced the issue to a question of personal choice.

There are 50 known mail order bride firms in the U.S., some with attractive names like "Cherry Blossom."

Sumi Haru, a Filipino American and national recording secretary of the Screen Actor's Guild underscored the racism and stereotyping of Asian women involved in these transactions. She stressed the need to use the media in drawing attention to this issue and countering media stereotypes of Asian women.

The conference, which drew 75 people representing various communities, expressed concern over meeting the immediate needs of brides who are now experiencing difficulties with their partners. Conference participants were encouraged to educate women in their home countries on the exploitive nature of the mail order bride business. Organizers stressed the need to strengthen the bonds between women from Asia and Asian women in the U.S. □

## History of Oakland Filipinos In Pictures



Dick Berdan stands next to some of the photographs he donated to the photo exhibit on the history of the Oakland Filipino community.

The Oakland Filipino community had a unique chance of viewing its history through photographs contributed by the city's Filipino residents. "Filipinos in Oakland—A Historical Portrayal" was sponsored by the Filipino Immigrant Services (FIS), a local social service agency which provides employment and immigration services to Filipinos.

The exhibit which will be on display until Dec. 15 begins with the 1930s and the lifestyle of the largely young single Filipino men in such urban occupations as culinary work.

The second section, the 1950s, highlights the growing post-WWII community—warbrides, the baby boomers and their social gatherings.

The most recent period of immigration, 1965 to the present is depicted by the large numbers of Filipino immigrating yearly and the community's emerging quest for political expression and identity.

Lillian Galedo, FIS Executive Director, said, "The exhibit has sparked an interest in the community to document its history—once people see the photos, they even offer to donate their own family albums."

Dick Berdan, a first wave Filipino and photographer during the 1920s and 30s donated many photographs.

Because of the enthusiasm for the exhibit, FIS is thinking of expanding the project to include a more comprehensive history of the Oakland Filipino community. □

### Domingo/Viernes Suit Asks RP Hard Questions

The attorneys for a civil suit filed by the families of Gene Viernes and Silme Domingo, two KDP activists and ILWU Local 37 officials murdered in Seattle in 1981, issued interrogatories asking the Philippine government to respond and produce documents relating to the murders.

Among the questions being asked are: how the Marcos government surveilled Viernes when he was in the Philippines a few months before his murder; how the government "monitors and operates against" groups such as the Kilusang Mayo Uno, National Democratic Front, Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army; information on the itinerary and travel of prime suspect Tony Baruso to and from the Philippines a month before the murders.

The Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes said the case raises many far-reaching political issues including Philippine intelligence operations in the U.S.; the unlawful dissemination of information by the U.S. government on U.S. citizens to the Philippine government; U.S. government surveillance of Domingo and Viernes before as well as at the time of the murder; and how closely tied Baruso was to the U.S. State Department. The CJDV fully expects both governments to resist discovery efforts on grounds of "state secret documents" or national security.

"The case presents in the clearest way the conflict between democratic rights of citizens to petition for redress or grievances through the judicial process and to

gain access to information to prove their case, and the efforts by the two governments involved to shield their illegal conduct from the light of public scrutiny," said Michael Withey, attorney for the Domingo and Viernes estates.

### Seniors Nix Mandatory Hot Meal Fees

Tenants residing at the Dimasalang senior citizens housing complex in San Francisco are up-in-arms about an \$85-dollar-a-month hot meal program that everyone has to pay for whether they use it or not.

The Dimasalang Residents Association believes that the compulsory fee would take out too large a chunk from their already limited Social Security and welfare benefits.

The elderly tenants further complained that if the program is enforced it should be subsidized like similar senior meal programs because most of them are low-income and cannot afford to pay the exorbitant fee. Besides, the Dimasalang House apartments have individual kitchens for people who cannot leave their rooms for health reasons or who would rather cook their own meals.

The meal program was canned once before when tenants won an injunction against the housing management board. This time around, however, the federal appellate court in San Francisco sustained the validity of the meal program.

The seniors are fighting back and have enlisted the

help of Reps. Sala Burton and Barbara Boxer and State Assemblyman Art Agnos. They have also collected over 100 names for a petition denouncing the meal program to the board of the Dimasalang House and to the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Calling the program oppressive to senior citizens, the tenants are urging the Caballeros de Dimasalang, the housing project sponsors, to either scrap the whole project or look for an acceptable alternative. □

### Asian Democrats Shun New Group

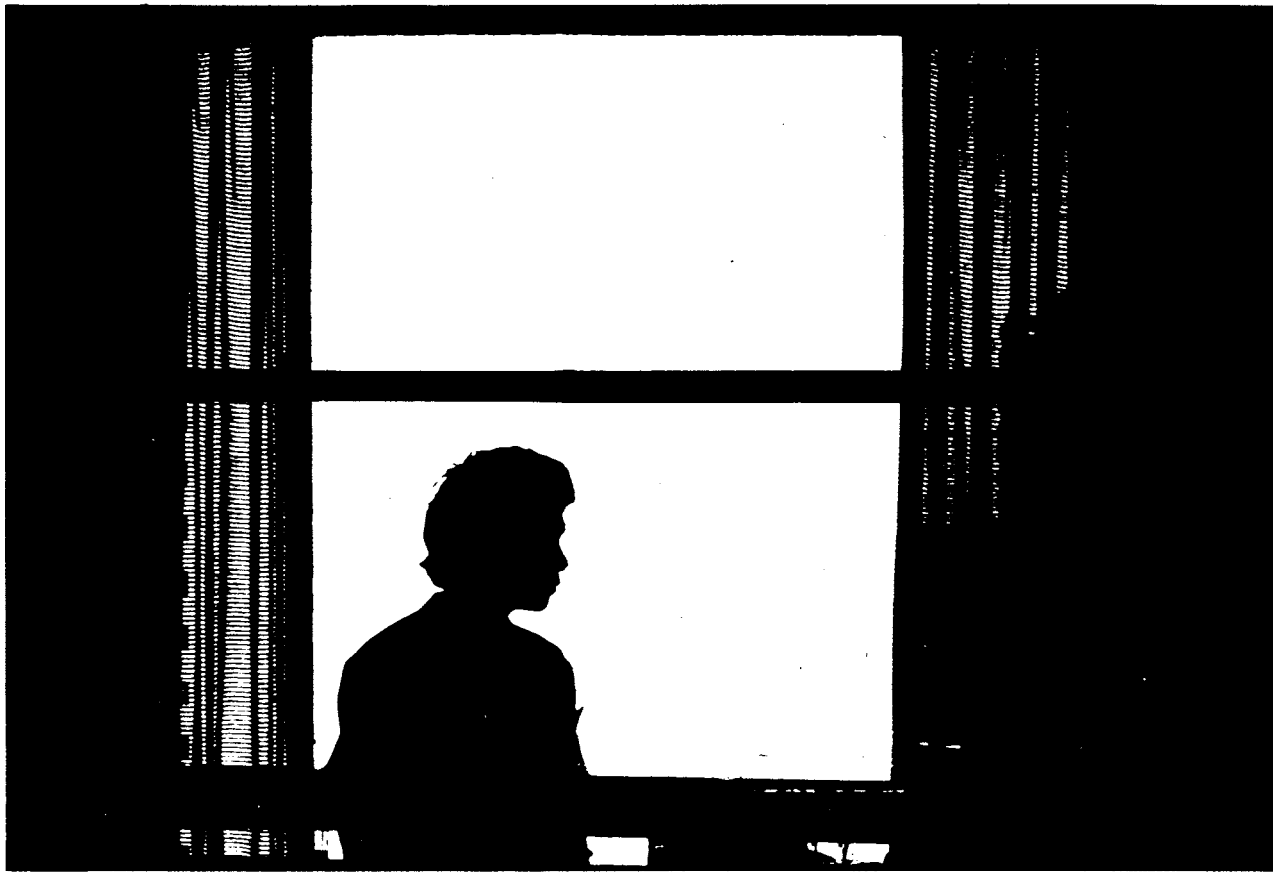
Asian-American Democrats reacted sharply to Democratic National Committee (DNC) chairman Paul Kirk's proposal to form a new Asian American organization in replacement of the Asian Pacific caucus which the DNC dismantled last summer along with the Gay/Lesbian and Progressive/Liberal caucuses. The dismantling was meant to change the Democrats' image as "a party of special interest groups."

Local Asian Pacific Caucus chairman Thomas Hsieh said that the creation of the "Democratic National Federation of Asian Pacific Americans," as a DNC outreach program, sidesteps the issue of whether the Asian Caucus will be recognized as a formal entity within the DNC.

Kirk's initiative was lauded by five Asian members of the U.S. legislature. Senators Daniel Inouye and Spark Matsunaga, Congressmen Norman Mineta, Robert Matsui and Fofu Sunia.



# Undocumented Lives



Continued from front page

buy-and-sell. She has that room down the hall."

An older woman lives in the next room. "She lives with a guy seven years younger than her," he says with a knowing smile.

Francis shares a bedroom with two other Pinoy TNTs. Between his single bed and a bunkbed there is just enough room to stand up and get dressed in.

Outside his building which is part of a row of broken down wooden tenements, the sidewalk is littered with broken bottles and old newspapers. A small group of elderly Blacks are passing around the morning's bottle of cheap wine. This is San Francisco's South of Market neighborhood—first stop for hundreds of new Filipino immigrants who must share the run-down tenements with Southeast Asian refugees and Latinos.

## JUST LIKE HOME

South of Market is not much different from Francis' Sampaloc district in Manila where his family lived in an *acesoria* just like the flat he is in now.

After graduating from the Philippine College of Commerce, he worked for an international airline (which shall remain nameless) rising to the post of supervisor.

"I tried to hang on for years and not leave home. Every year it got tougher. It got so that I even got into petty smuggling with some pilots, you know."

Then Francis decided to get married but realized he could not afford the wedding, to leave his parents or raise a family.

"Terrible *na!* I was never an activist man, but *Ibagsak? Ibagsak na talaga!* ["Down with him!"] I had to find a better way of earning a living. So here I am."

## CAN'T FAKE IT

"I really don't know how I will get a green card. I think I'll get married, you know, just for the visa even though the Immigration and Naturalization Service is already suspicious of this tactic. This also means I can't marry my girlfriend and send for her." Francis' friend, Nitoy, arrives with a bottle of cheap brandy and roasted peanuts. Nitoy is also undocumented but has bigger problems than Francis. He has a wife and four kids back in Sampaloc, and there being no divorce in the Philippines, he cannot even go for a fake marriage after a fake divorce.

Francis always knew immigrating was an option so on the side he made little preparations for a getaway, just in case.

Working for an airline, he had airline travel privileges. With his earnings from the smuggling sideline, he took three separate trips to the U.S. and always returned home.

"That way, the U.S. embassy in Manila became confident and always gave me a tourist visa. So when I was good and ready to immigrate last year, I had no problem getting there. They had no suspicions that I would overstay."

Now of course, Francis is among the thousands of Filipinos who are in the United States illegally.

"In the back of my mind I always think they are going to find me and deport me—but I always keep my nose clean."

Using a social security I.D. number he secured on one of his previous U.S. trips, he got a job as a cook in a country club outside San Francisco. He lied about his experience and got \$6.50 an hour. The place was jumping with Filipino cooks, dishwashers and waiters.

Francis could not endure the long early morning commutes by bus and switched to selling telephones.

Being on the move also lessens the chances of being caught in the raids of restaurants and factories.

Nitoy works as a dishwasher in a restaurant in the Latino Mission District where agents of the INS customarily conduct raids. Tonight, he is already a bit drunk.

"He shocked me by just showing up one day two months ago," says Francis. "How he got a tourist visa and all that, I don't know. How he will get out of this mess, I don't know."

## CAT-AND-MOUSE

According to the INS, over 120,000 Filipinos come to the U.S. each year. Out of that number, only 42,000 are permanent residents. The rest are on temporary visas either as students, temporary workers or visitors.

In 1983, the INS "located" approximately 3,000 Filipinos who overstayed their visas. Another 2,000

**'Of all groups immigrating from Asia, Filipinos are the most suspect in the eyes of the INS for overstaying'**

— A Lawyer

were either deported or left voluntarily upon warning by the INS.

For those who decide to dodge the INS, it is like a cat-and-mouse game. Struggling to get a legal status is like holding one's breath for several years.

Elenita, a former secretary in a big Manila bank who secured a tourist visa to the U.S. through a church-related conference, is still holding her breath. She came six months ago, slipped away from the conference in New York and took a bus to Los Angeles to stay with an uncle.

There, she immediately got an orientation of sorts. Don't talk about your status to anyone, there are Filipino "bounty hunters" who will snitch to the INS. There are a number of ways to become legal, she was told. She might have to get a lawyer.

An employer might be willing to sponsor her as a semi-skilled or unskilled temporary worker and she could get an H2 visa. This is not easy to stumble into. A businessman's visa is too complicated to arrange. There is only one way, the most popular method: marry a U.S. citizen for a fee (or for love if she is lucky).

## SHAM MARRIAGES

Arranging a marriage with a U.S. citizen appealed to Elenita who was made aware by relatives that a large fee would be involved, maybe as much as \$5,000.

But she was warned that the INS has been cracking down on sham marriages. More rigorous examinations of couples including surprise "home visits" to determine if they really lived together are being employed. As a result a number of sham marriage "businesses" have been exposed. In one case in Oakland, California, two Filipinos involved in fixed marriages were indicted recently.

Elenita got cold feet and instead has asked a sister who was already a U.S. citizen to sponsor her. But the 5th preference visa (brothers and sisters of U.S.

citizens) has a 15-year waiting line.

There was nothing for her to do but keep out of trouble and quietly earn a living. Her cousins in Los Angeles put her in contact with an underground Social Security card network which enabled her to "buy" a Social Security number for \$300.

Although non-residents may apply for and receive Social Security cards, these are marked to indicate that they cannot be used for employment purposes. Elenita was able to buy a normal "all-purpose" card. "Someone on the 'inside' must be fixing these cards," she says.

## LOW PAY

With a "legitimate" Social Security number, she was able to get a job at an electronics assembly plant just outside Los Angeles. Her starting salary was a measly \$4.00 an hour. Just recently, she got a 50-cent raise.

"I know this is too low for U.S. standards," Elenita complains, "but at least I am able to send some money home to my mother."

"If only I'm legal, I would go someplace else for a higher paying job."

Elenita says the majority of workers at her plant are Filipinos. She suspects that a good number of them are also TNTs.

"There are other Pinoys there that are as nervous as I am, I noticed. Really, I'm afraid to get caught," says the petite Manila who by her admission has been taking valium and grown fond of scotch.

Elenita does not feel she is taking a job away from an American. Not too many people want her job at the assembly plant.

"Paano kasi, the pay is too low," she says.

According to a study by Courtenay Slater, a Washington consultant and former chief economist at the Commerce Department, undocumented workers are actually "helping" some local economies by providing a base of low-income workers that attracts industry.

Slater also contends that undocumented workers generally contribute more to the U.S. economy in taxes and social security payments than they take out in welfare and other social services which they are often too afraid to use.

Although many Filipinos are living in fear of deportation, their numbers are dwarfed by those of undocumented workers from Mexico and Central America.

But despite government claims of as many as 12 million undocumented living in the U.S., the number seems exaggerated. A recent study by the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences claims that there are only between two to four million undocumented immigrants in the U.S., most of whom are from Mexico and other parts of Latin America.

This year there was a 50% increase in the number of non-Mexicans attempting to enter the country and a 13% increase in the apprehension of non-Mexican immigrants. Most of these are refugees escaping war and repression in El Salvador and Guatemala.

But a growing number also come from Asian countries, among them Filipinos, many of whom even resort to fake passports and visas in the desperate bid to enter the U.S.. The growing economic crisis and social deterioration under the Marcos government have of late become an even stronger "push factor" for out-migration.

Already, according to San Francisco immigration Bill Hing, "Of all groups immigrating from Asia, Filipinos are the most suspect in the eyes of the INS for overstaying."

## BAD HARVESTS

INS dragnets are aimed mainly at Mexicans. But Filipinos work in many of the same factories or

Continued on page 13



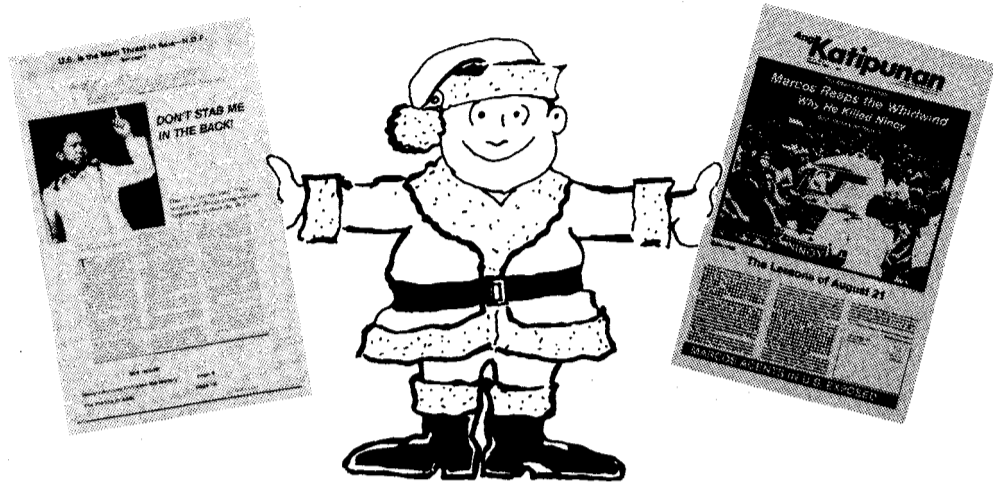
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## Aquino-Laurel

*Continued from page 9*

on the issue of the U.S. bases. When all other key oppositionists, including Aquino, signed a petition calling for their removal from the Philippines, only he and former Sen. Eva Estrada Kalaw hedged. Both called for a national referendum before any decision is taken.

In the interest of easing Marcos gracefully off the scene however—which Washington still hopes to accomplish through this election—it is willing to accept Aquino. After all, a lot can still happen between now and 1991.

It's main concern is keeping the left out of LABAN or whatever group that backs the opposition candidate. The U.S. is thus

working furiously to push Aquino and the entire opposition to the right and toward a stronger pro-U.S. stance.

### DOWNPLAY CRITICISM

To that end, the Reagan administration dispatched former Jimmy Carter aide Richard Holbrooke to meet with six members of the opposition last November 6. Holbrooke described himself as a private citizen, but briefed State Department officials upon his return and promised a written report.

The former Carter aide was reportedly chosen because the moderate Philippine opposition had warmer ties with the Carter administration than with that of Ronald Reagan. During a breakfast meeting held at the home of U.S. Deputy Chief of Mission Philip Kaplan, Holbrooke was particularly interested in discussing the U.S. bases and interaction with the left.

According to Agapito "Butz" Aquino, brother of the late senator, Holbrooke urged the group to downplay criticism of the U.S. and to refrain from making the bases into an election issue. The opposition would "weaken [itself] and create diversionary issues if [it] took on the bases issue," he told representatives of both Laurel and Cory Aquino.

"They urged caution regarding our alliances with the left," Butz added. "We got the impression that they wouldn't be too happy about such alliances."

### NO CLEAR POSITION YET

For the moment at least, the U.S. has little to worry about, as the left has yet to announce its posture towards the election. The National Democratic Front issued a statement November 11 decrying the value of elections as tools for political change, but at the same time urged a

certain level of flexibility.

Antonio Zumel, reputed head of the NDF was noncommittal about the issue when he was interviewed later that month by *Business Day*.

Zumel reiterated his opinion that the election would never happen, that it is a tool designed to confuse and deceive people, and to show Marcos' patrons that he is not afraid.

"Some comrades think a boycott is proper," he added. But there is, as yet "not enough basis for a decision" and much discussion" is taking place, he said.

Meanwhile, Washington sources told reporter Bronstein that the White House was not happy at all about the three-way fight that loomed before Laurel changed his position. Presumably, much pressure came from there to help Laurel change his mind. □

## Undocumented II

*Continued from page 12*

restaurants or farms staffed by undocumented Mexicans.

"You should see us run when somebody shouts 'Migra!' We're like chickens," says Ruben, a 40-year-old Pampagueno now living in Stockton, California.

Ruben, also a TNT, cuts asparagus in the late spring and summer and finds intermittent work around the fruit orchards and vegetable fields when he can the rest of the year.

"The growers need the illegals," he says. "Without the Mexicans and us, they have no cheap labor."

The "migra," he says, tends to look the other way during harvest and raids right after when nothing is going to rot anymore. Ruben's co-workers sometimes get deported across the border but would be back after a few days.

"There are still farmers who will arrange raids with the INS to cheat workers out of their harvest pay."

Ruben was recruited as a seaman on a Greek-registered merchant ship. Sometime in 1977 when it docked in Brooklyn, New York, he put his shoreleave pass in his pocket and never came back.

Many Filipino seamen who had jumped ship lived around the Red Hook area of Brooklyn, an old Italian and Puerto Rican neighborhood of run-down or burned-out brick townhouses.

"I was amazed to find Filipinos who jumped ship 15 or 20 years before me." He hung out for awhile gambling with old Pinoy and earned tips by running errands for them. But he was not getting anywhere.

### BREAKING UP

Ruben took a four day bus ride to Stockton to look for distant relatives. He found what was left of the old

Filipino hangouts on El Dorado Street and a second cousin who fed him but could not help him resolve his immigration problem.

"I used to write my wife and three kids sometimes twice a week, but now I just send them money for Christmas or birthdays," confides Ruben who earlier said something in passing about a Mexican girlfriend.

There are Filipinos who do not want their families broken up like Ruben's, so they come as couples or as a whole family unit. One needs a considerable amount of money to show U.S. embassy officials that you are indeed just taking the family to Disneyland.

But taking the whole family "underground" increases the risks of being caught. According to the INS, more family groups in general are being apprehended. A total of 174,000 women and children were caught this year, 14% more than last year.

### SIMPSON/RODINO

The times are extremely rough for all undocumented immigrants. Every 27 seconds someone is caught, according to INS estimates. Indeed the crackdown has intensified, with the INS lobbying for more money for enforcement.

A controversial immigration reform bill known as the Simpson/Rodino bill is moving fast in Congress. Immigrant and refugee rights activist call it the most repressive bill Congress has contemplated in the effort to pass a law that would control the flow of immigrants across U.S. borders.

People like Francis, Elenita, and Nitoy will not fare well under Simpson/Rodino if it becomes law.

Should they look for other jobs, prospective employers will have to think real hard before hiring them. Simpson/Rodino proposes stiff penalties for employers who hire undocumented workers.

Having come only last year, none of them can use the "legalization" feature that supposedly softens the bill's image. Amnesty will be applicable only to undocumented persons who were living in the U.S. continuously since 1980.

There is reportedly even a renewed effort to get rid of the 5th preference through amendments in the bill.

Ruben who has been here since 1977 might have a better chance at legalization. He would have to apply for amnesty, and if approved, wait for 5 years without any right to public benefits.

The law would be kinder to farm owners who hire undocumented workers. Temporary workers will be allowed in for a set period of time. They will have no rights to public benefits or to organize.

Tough as times are, more and more Filipinos (now the fastest growing minority group in the U.S.) are expected to come to American shores by hook or by crook. The faltering Philippine economy and political decay are sure to fuel the surge.

### AMERICAN ACCENT

Francis starts setting up the Minus-One," a three-foot high "sing-a-long" machine which has become very popular among Filipinos. In an hour the *barkada*, some of whom are old gangmates from Sampaloc, will be arriving for their weekly drunken get-together. The landlord does not mind.

They will tape several songs and send the cassette to remnants of the *barkada* in Sampaloc who will respond with their own tape. It is an endless "contest."

"We go crazy on this thing," laughs Francis. "We sing old Beatle songs and then we impress our friends back home by mentioning real American places like 'Millbrae' and 'Burlingame' in our best 'American' accent, hah hah!"

He tests the Minus One by crooning "a favorite song" called "Balatkayo" or something like that. It means "Pretense." Nitoy provides a passable second voice for the refrain. They like it.

"Am I happy?" Francis is already tipsy on the brandy. "Well, 'Balat kayo,' that's how I feel. Laughing on the outside, crying on the inside. But that's life, isn't it?" he says with an exaggerated wink. □

Madge Bello contributed to this article.





# Snap Poll

Continued from page 8

mixed. Marcos had finally agreed to an advanced election, but the timing and manner of the one he had just announced posed as many problems as they solved.

"We've been mouse-trapped," a legislative aide told Phil Bronstein of the *San Francisco Examiner*. "He's putting the U.S. in a position of approving an election that he's perfectly capable of rigging in his favor. He's a master."

To begin with, the dictator wanted a presidential election only. "because the issue is Marcos." There was no need, he argued, for a vice-presidential candidate. But from the U.S. perspective, the issue was not just Marcos but a smooth succession process. A vice president was essential.

Then there was the constitutional question. The Philippine constitution allows a special election only when the president dies, resigns, becomes incapacitated or is removed from office. Marcos made it clear that he had no intention of resigning and proposed a presidential decree justifying the Jan. 17 polls.

Finally came the timing question. How was an unorganized opposition to unify, select a candidate and mount a passable campaign against a president in control of all of the radio and video outlets and most of the print media in less than two and a half months?

## RESIGNING WITHOUT QUITTING

The State Department quickly issued a series of demands: 1. the military must conduct itself in a "professional" manner during the election; 2. a fair election law must be enacted; 3. a truly impartial Commission on Elections was to be appointed;

and 4. a citizens' monitoring organization such as NAMFREL (National Movement for Free Elections) was to be established and accredited.

Just in case Marcos failed to get the point, Laxalt made a discreet phone call to Malacanang Nov. 4, the night the demands were issued.

And sure enough, one day later, Marcos announced, "It is now apparent that the complexion has changed from Marcos to that of his entire administration and his entire program of government." He thus, agreed to include a vice presidential candidate.

How Marcos will circumvent the legalisms of his own constitution remained the most delicate question. To legalize the election without relying on an embarrassing presidential decree, his Kilusang Bagong Lipunan (KBL) party submitted a cabinet bill to the National Assembly.

Meanwhile, in his most bizarre move of all, Marcos announced Nov. 8 that he would resign his position immediately, but it would only take effect when the winner was proclaimed.

## NOTE OF EXASPERATION

Washington was not particularly reassured by this. As one analyst put it, "We are under no illusions about President Marcos and his intention to stay in power—about his resources and his tactical brilliance."

Pressure thus continued. Hearings of the House Foreign Affairs Committee Nov. 12, again widely publicized, led to a resolution detailing a series of guidelines to insure free elections. Both houses overwhelmingly approved it two days later—just as Marcos decided to postpone the elections until the first week of February.

Bosworth returned to Washington Nov. 19 to brief the SFRC. The atmosphere, remarked one observer, was of downright exasperation. Four committee members—Lugar, Cranston, Claiborne Pell (D-R.I.) and Frank Murkowski (R-Alaska) responded with a personal letter to Marcos once again emphasizing the im-

portance of clean elections. This was hand delivered by Bosworth.

## CHALLENGING LEGALITY

But Marcos seems to have been pushed as far as he was willing to go. He has not moved to reconstitute the Commission on Elections, known to be stacked with cronies and still shy of two members. NAMFREL has not been reaccredited and there has been no word of approving NAMFREL chair Jose Concepcion's "Operation Quick-Count."

Further, the Batasan voted to designate barangay captains as official pollwatchers despite strong objections. Barangay officials are widely seen as Marcos stooges and poll-watching has traditionally been handled by public school teachers.

Finally, the constitutionality of the exercise remains a thorny issue. The Batasan passed Cabinet Bill #7 allowing the president to run without stepping down from office, thereby releasing a storm of protest.

Ten petitions so far have been filed before the Supreme Court challenging the election's legality. The court set Dec. 17 for hearings—well after the campaign period is set to begin.

## RELYING ON THE SUPREME COURT?

Many wonder whether the election will take place at all. Teodoro Valencia, whose column usually reads like a colloquialized Ministry of Information release, insists that "President Marcos is not about to hold an election and spend \$300 million for nothing only to prove the obvious."

Those familiar with Marcos' tactics suspect that, if the dictator feels genuinely threatened by a united opposition he may call off the election—but in a way that he can still claim he tried to cooperate with U.S. wishes.

A particularly nasty scenario was suggested by the *New York Times*. "If the petitions are kept pending until after Election Day Feb. 7 . . ." it suggested in its

Dec. 6 issue, "the Supreme Court could be persuaded if necessary to declare the entire electoral exercise null and void."

Another excuse is to claim that "communists are fomenting violence."

## A DESPERATE WASHINGTON

Such a move would no doubt anger Washington, already annoyed by the recent decision to acquit all 26 accused in the Aquino murder. Since Marcos has already struck out on that front—in fact deliberately thumbing his nose at his Washington critics—the remaining two issues become more sticky than ever.

If Marcos does not reform the military, congressmembers have suggested a cut-off in aid. And if he does not come up with a smooth succession process via this election, the U.S. may have to take Durenberger's "other actions."

A good deal of water has obviously flowed under the bridge since 1981 when Vice President George Bush lifted his glass and toasted Marcos with, "We love your adherence to democratic principles and to the democratic processes."

But it is not the dictator or Reagan who has changed. Marcos is still as determined to monopolize power as he was in 1981. The White House would still be toasting him if only it could.

What has changed is Marcos' political fortunes. His popularity has dipped to below zero. A broad resistance movement has left him thoroughly isolated and thoroughly identified with U.S. interests.

Thus, though political transitions are always fraught with danger, a desperate Washington is forced to find a way to ease Marcos aside—and an election is still the safest route.

Ferdinand Marcos is too astute a politician not to understand what underlies U.S. moves over the last three months. It is for precisely this reason that he continues to play coy games with the ally whose every wish used to be his command. The question in all observers' minds thus remains: just how far does Marcos intend to push the U.S. hand? □

# Military Option

Continued from page 9

"My inclination is to put somebody other than Gen. Ver or Gen. Ramos [as chief of staff] after Gen. Ver has assumed his position and participated in the reorganization." In other words, if Ver goes, the U.S. favorite, Ramos, goes too.

But Ver reportedly has been promised a new ministry [of Interior] which will rob Enrile of his functions. Moreover, another loyalist, Philippine Army Commanding General Josephus Q. Ramos, is reportedly being groomed for the top post. So much for the shake-up the U.S. has been pressing.

Ramos commands 65,000 men and has "somewhere between four to six battalions" in MetroManila as a "formidable force to counter a coup," an army colonel told *Mr. & Ms. Magazine*. He is reportedly an Imelda favorite, coming from the same region and speaking the same Cebuano dialect. He also has the good looks that reportedly impress the First Lady.

## WAVING THE CARROT

In typical Marcos fashion, the stick is also being waved as a carrot with the impression given that there will be something for everyone who is not a troublemaker.

The threat to fire company "commanders sitting on their butts" appeals to career officers and new Philippine Military Academy graduates.

Overstaying generals can still retire and be privileged under different capacities such as "defense consultant" (a possibility for Ver) or "ambassador" (as offered to Ramos).

"I think we should organize a system under which we can accommodate our retiring officers," Marcos said. "It is something we have to work on."

Then in a masterstroke, Marcos announced that the winners and losers will

not be known until after the snap elections. The campaign is obviously intended as a test to weed out the turncoats from the loyalists.

The president's countermoves have obviously demoralized reformers, many of whom admit they are walking a tight-rope and may sooner or late collide with the big man himself. Others have already called it quits by defecting to the U.S.-based opposition.

Following the defection of Col. Alexander Bacalla in the U.S., two other officers, Lt. Col. Jaime Gopilan and Maj. Vicente Carag both with nearly 20 years of service, sought political asylum in the U.S. late November.

To prevent further defections, the AFP has restricted travel abroad of military officials to only those seeking medical care or are under government sanctioned study programs.

## KNIGHT IN ARMOR

Reagan officials, though obviously shaking their heads at the way Marcos has "dutifully" responded to their call for military reforms, have not given up hope that the reformers will ultimately prevail.

They are, in fact, closely eyeing and presumably grooming officers who have shown "professionalism" in the field.

One such knight in shining armor is Col. Rodolfo Biazon, commander of the Third Marine Brigade whose reputation is rising quickly in Washington.

A veteran of the Moro secessionist battles in the 70's Biazon is not openly identified with the reform movement. He regards intelligence as the cornerstone of effective counterinsurgency. So, he has increased the infiltration of villagers with informers.

He has also opted for a propaganda or "soft" approach. Instead of trying to defend the government he stresses the "evils of communism" in his approach to villagers.

One of his favorite gimmicks is to show "Killing Fields," a movie about the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, and he often uses an ex-NPA as narrator.

Biazon believes this approach will gain

back some trust among the civilian population and prevent the mainstream opposition from drifting to the Left. He considers counterinsurgency as mainly "a scramble for mass support." Marcos loyalists look at him with a mixture of jealousy and contempt.

## WAR GAME

Washington is obviously looking for more Biazons and desperately hoping that the AFP will be run entirely by them. With the NPA gaining ground on a corrupt and faction-ridden armed forces, this desperation must be growing indeed.

Richard Armitage, a deputy Defense secretary testified before a Senate Committee last October that the reforms under Ramos have not been "dramatic" or significant and have fallen short of "a comprehensive counterinsurgency plan that integrates political, economic and social liberalization with reinstated military professionalism and resolve." For sure,

## LETTERS

### Not Surprised

This is in response to your November 1985 editorial titled "Red Baiting is Self-Defeating." It is not surprising to see these tactics used by the traditional Filipino opposition figures. Even in the past those at the top always distrusted and discredited any mass-oriented movements or leaders from the bottom. It is an issue as old as Philippine history itself as shown by the ilustrados turning away from Bonifacio and his mass-oriented Katipunan. The Filipino masses have always been betrayed and abandoned by those at the top, by the "compromisers" who have their own interests to protect and worry about. It would do well for the masses to only follow those who have truly sprung from amongst themselves, after all that is what true democracy is all about.

Robert Antonio  
Orange County, CA

### Thanks, Doc

Thank you very much for sending me your newsmagazine "*Ang Katipunan*." I am very impressed with its contents and style of journalism. I

the U.S. is not sitting idly by but is already reviewing its possible options.

A "war game" called "The Fall of the Philippines" was staged last October at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C. The two-day event featured the death of Marcos, the murder of major political and military figures, a communist takeover and the arrival of U.S. troops in Manila.

Present at the event were former CIA officials, retired members of the joint chiefs of staff, and ex-State Department and National Security Agency experts.

The game apparently did not openly deal with a scenario for a coup against Marcos. But it reportedly raised a question of utmost concern for Pentagon strategists: which units of the Philippine military can be depended on for future U.S. initiatives?

If the CIA and its contacts within the AFP already know the answer to this, they are definitely not telling. □

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Arturo M. Taca, M.D.  
St. Louis, MO

### Watch Those Words

You should avoid using "never heard words" that make your (point) statement difficult to understand. Just use simple ordinary words. I also read *L.A. Times* and *Herald Examiner* but I never encounter dictionary words like I do in your paper. Not all your readers are professionals I may add.

Jose Balancio  
Los Angeles, CA

# Geneva: A Summit That Couldn't be Refused



By EDDIE ESCULTURA

As expected the Reagan-Gorbachev Summit in Geneva last November did not lead to dramatic gains in arms control, but both sides expressed satisfaction at the results for different reasons.

President Reagan has reason to be satisfied with the summit's immediate outcome. It boosted his popularity at home and, for the moment, projected him internationally as a hawk who's willing to talk—all without having to give up any piece of hardware.

The Soviets too were optimistic, and this was quite apparent in the quick endorsement of the summit results by the top leadership of the Soviet Union. Their expressed satisfaction over the summit's obviously limited results was read by the U.S. press as rhetoric.

Actually, the Soviets were glad because they were able to put Reagan where they want him.

## SUMMIT POSTURE

Reagan's summit posture as a peacemaker did not mean the abandonment of his strategic goal which is to break the nuclear parity reached by Moscow and regain nuclear superiority via a first strike capacity.

The stance was mainly for the benefit of Western European allies who have become edgy from the pressures of domestic peace movements. Washington's belligerent and interventionist image has not been endearing to Western Europeans who fear being used as pawns in a dangerous game.

Thus, U.S. ruling circles were ecstatic that Reagan was not exposed as having no real interest in peace and slowing the arms build-up. What's more, the U.S. breezed through the summit without incurring a major damage to its star wars plan (Strategic Defense Initiative), the issue on which world attention has become riveted.

## PRE-SUMMIT DILEMMA

In fact, the momentum for the summit had put Reagan in a dilemma: how to go through the motion of negotiating arms control without derailing the U.S. drive to regain superiority. Reagan was under pressure from his rightwing base to scuttle existing arms agreements such as the Strategic Arms Limitation Agreements I and II.

His task was made more difficult by Gorbachev's unexpected, well-publicized pre-summit initiatives: a unilateral 6-month nuclear test moratorium (to be extended if the U.S. responds in kind) and a proposal for deep cuts (50%) in offensive nuclear weapons if the U.S. would scuttle the star wars program.

The Soviets had already taken the moral high ground when they pledged earlier not to use nuclear weapons first or start a war. The U.S. has refused to make a similar pledge.

Combined with a Soviet diplomatic offensive and a

massive campaign that outstripped the U.S. media for the first time in Europe, these initiatives revealed the U.S. positions as the main obstacles to arms control.

Reagan's contention that the Soviets are ahead in nuclear weapons and that the U.S. only needed to catch up lost credibility.

Gorbachev's flexibility and the Soviets' willingness to make concessions and seriously negotiate an agreement elicited relief and raised hopes in Western Europe.

Furthermore, the build-up for the summit sparked much debate even within U.S. ruling circles, exposing the star wars program as a fundamental change in U.S. military strategy.

Nuclear superiority can no longer be gained by developing offense—the Soviets have been able to match every step in this direction. It is now time to shift to "defense" as an offensive strategy.

**In essence, the summit forced Reagan a few steps back towards detente that he earlier rejected as part of his "get tough" approach to foreign policy**

Star wars would build a defensive shield that would allow the U.S. to attack the Soviet Union without suffering the consequences of massive retaliation.

The scientific community polarized, with warnings about star wars' technical problems gaining a lot of public hearing. Critics of the program also raised its political implications: star wars would create a false sense of security that could tempt a preemptive strike against the Soviet Union and, it would also trigger another escalation in the arms race.

As Gorbachev bluntly told Reagan, "If the U.S. goes ahead with star wars, it would blow to the wind all restraints on arms control."

As the summit approached, therefore, the Soviets were already beginning to make political gains. Star wars emerged more and more as the main obstacle to arms control. Reagan had no credible response to the Soviet proposals for deep cuts in nuclear weapons and a moratorium on nuclear tests.

## FANCY FOOTWORK

Put on the ropes by the Soviet diplomatic offensive, Reagan had to do some fancy footwork.

First he tried to shift the main agenda of the summit to "regional conflicts and human rights." The Soviets warned that they could also talk about the U.S. role in

Central America and South Africa or the human rights situation of American Blacks and Latin American refugees but that the burning question for the summit was the arms race. Reagan eventually had to backpedal.

As for star wars, after some embarrassing statements that necessitated quick White House "clarifications," the real Reagan came out. He would install the space-based "defensive" weapon, he said, even if it threatened to destabilize the U.S.-Soviet nuclear balance by giving the U.S. a first strike capability.

Finally, unable to shift the summit's agenda, Washington began to lower public expectation.

For the Soviets, it was already significant that the most militaristic of U.S. presidents in two decades was forced, momentarily, to abandon his "evil empire" Cold War rhetoric and recognize negotiations as unavoidable, even if he himself preferred confrontation.

The agreement to renew cultural, trade and scientific exchanges was also a boon to Moscow. The deterioration of these hallmarks of detente were caused mainly by the U.S. shift to Cold War policies during the transition from Carter to Reagan.

## SOVIET GAINS

This was the "new level of realism" the Soviet leadership detected in Reagan, meaning that the U.S. side has come to terms with the fact that there are serious obstacles that limit its freedom to maneuver.

Furthermore, the joint statement from the summit tied the Reagan administration to a formal recognition of the importance of preventing the arms race in space and stopping it on earth.

It also declared that nuclear war is not winnable, a reversal of the Reagan administration's earlier preoccupation with the idea of winning a nuclear war, and committed both sides to additional summits in 1986 and 1987.

In essence, the summit forced Reagan a few steps back towards the detente that he earlier rejected as part of his "get tough" approach to foreign policy.

He now has to appear consistent with the new level of civility displayed at the summit if he is to retain the image that he tried to project there.

The summit also strengthened the hand of the European peace movement in underscoring the centrality of star wars in the peace process.

Even Britain's Lord Carrington, Secretary-General of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization said: "I would have to be deaf, blind and impenetrably stupid not to be aware of European concerns about the American Strategic Defense Initiative, and it is an important part of my job to ensure that these are understood and taken account of in Washington." To date, only Britain has agreed to participate in the SDI program. The rest of the European allies are still vacillating over it.

Overall, the November summit defined the general terms for the next ones. Unless it has anything more concrete than just handshakes to show at the negotiating table, the U.S. will be put politically on the defensive.

As Pierre Lelouche, a top French specialist on nuclear and strategic questions put it, "In the nine months that Gorbachev has been in power, he has managed to reverse the respective positions of the Soviet Union and the U.S. in the public image. . . . Today it is the Soviets who look good and Reagan on the defensive." □

