

Aquino Expands Breathing Space—At A Price

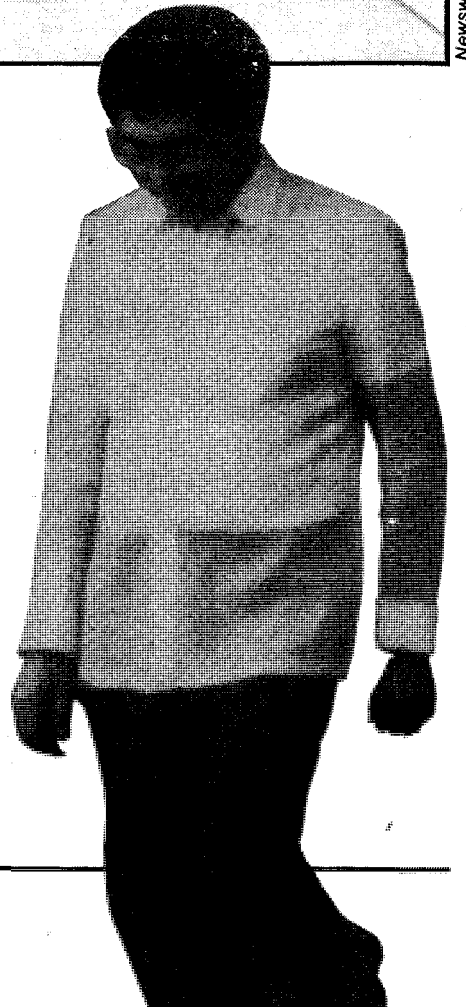
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Newsweek



‘With Enrile gone, the left was quick to see that the lost political ground could be regained with the signing of a ceasefire.’



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Yes to the New Charter

There is no question that the Filipino people will ratify the draft Constitution on February 2 if only to reaffirm their overwhelming preference for democracy over fascism, regardless of how unwieldy or flawed that democracy might be. Given the circumstances, the particular charter they will ratify is nowhere near a repulsive proposition. Taken as a whole, the new charter's positive points far outweigh its weaknesses.

Even a cursory reading of the draft shows that this Constitution is much better in spirit and content than its 1935 predecessor and definitely far superior to Marcos' self-serving fiction of 1973 (see analysis on page 3). But critical observers might hesitate to render such a judgment because of the fact that despite the participation of progressives, elite or liberal democrats had the most initiative in drafting the new Constitution.

But this fact alone is an insufficient basis for rejecting the document. The truth is, history compelled elite democracy to rein in its darker impulses when producing this charter. Having been victims of fascism themselves, liberal democrats are truly eager to institutionalize protections from their violent and backward colleagues in the ruling elite. But most importantly, a popular movement brought elite democracy back into power, and to retain the people's allegiance the new government must make more than just a passing recognition of the people's aspirations. It must claim the aspirations of the poor and the powerless to be also its own.

BARRIER AGAINST FASCISM

Thus, it is not surprising that the charter's strongest and most positive provisions are those dealing with safeguards against fascism and guarantees of political

and social rights. These measures reflect and confirm the unity of all the classes victimized by fascism against its brutal legacy and possible attempts at a return. For this alone this Constitution deserves ratification.

But the Constitution does not fully reflect the long-term interests of the nation and the people. Its weaknesses are detectable on such issues as the protection of national sovereignty and patrimony and on matters of social justice such as agrarian reform, regulation of profits, women's reproductive rights, etc. These weaknesses are true to the fact that the leadership of the anti-fascist struggle passed into the hands of elite democracy in the final moments. This Constitution therefore reflects liberal democracy's vacillation vis-a-vis imperialism, as well as its immutable loyalty to private property and enduring marriage to the Catholic Church.

Still, there is an evident attempt to soften the glare of these weaknesses. And from the perspective of the people's long and bitter struggle for national independence and social justice, even the charter's deliberate ambiguities can be considered an advance, constituting as they do elite democracy's retreat from blatant puppetry and social callousness. In addition, the charter promises mechanisms and options for popular participation in government as well as for the pursuit of reforms, in another gesture of recognition of popular aspirations.

For defeated fascism and its unrepentant allies, these formal concessions to popular aspirations are simply intolerable. The fascists are truly the ones who can be expected to oppose this charter and its "flirtation with radicalism." Its ratification will indeed be a blow to those who can rule only through naked force and would

deny the people even the formal recognition of their rights and aspirations.

HARSH REALITY

Overall, the Constitution's promises look good—on paper. Meanwhile, Philippine reality is much more severe and the ruling classes have had no history of remaining true to the good intentions they profess. Understandably, those who see correctly that full democracy, equality and commonly-shared prosperity are not possible without the basic reordering of Philippine society are apprehensive. Elite democracy's formal concessions may, after all, be meant to lull the people into complacency or sedate them with illusions.

Be that as it may. But if this Constitution is examined objectively, and in its particular historical context, it is elite democracy who should shudder with apprehension over the political and social vision it has committed to paper. That elite democracy, emerging triumphant over fascism, has to commit itself to a charter that is more advanced than the social and economic relations that actually exist must be seen as a victory for the masses upon whose shoulders it rode to power. Now, the great burden of proving to the expectant masses that this Constitution is not a fictitious one lies with no one else but elite democracy.

PRESS FOR CHANGES

The struggling masses can use the new Constitution to press for the transformation of formal rights into reality, and to press for more concessions that liberal democracy has so far hesitated to grant. Chances are, with astute political leadership, the people will learn through that most effective of all political teachers—*direct experience*—that liberal democracy, though preferable to fascism, is itself incapable of bringing about the changes that only revolutionary measures can achieve.

The ratification of the new Constitution, with its strengths and weaknesses, will be a victory for all democratic classes against fascism. But with this Constitution, the people, if given effective political leadership, will have nothing to lose but their illusions. Thus, in the long run, it could prove to be an important stepping stone to revolutionary triumph.

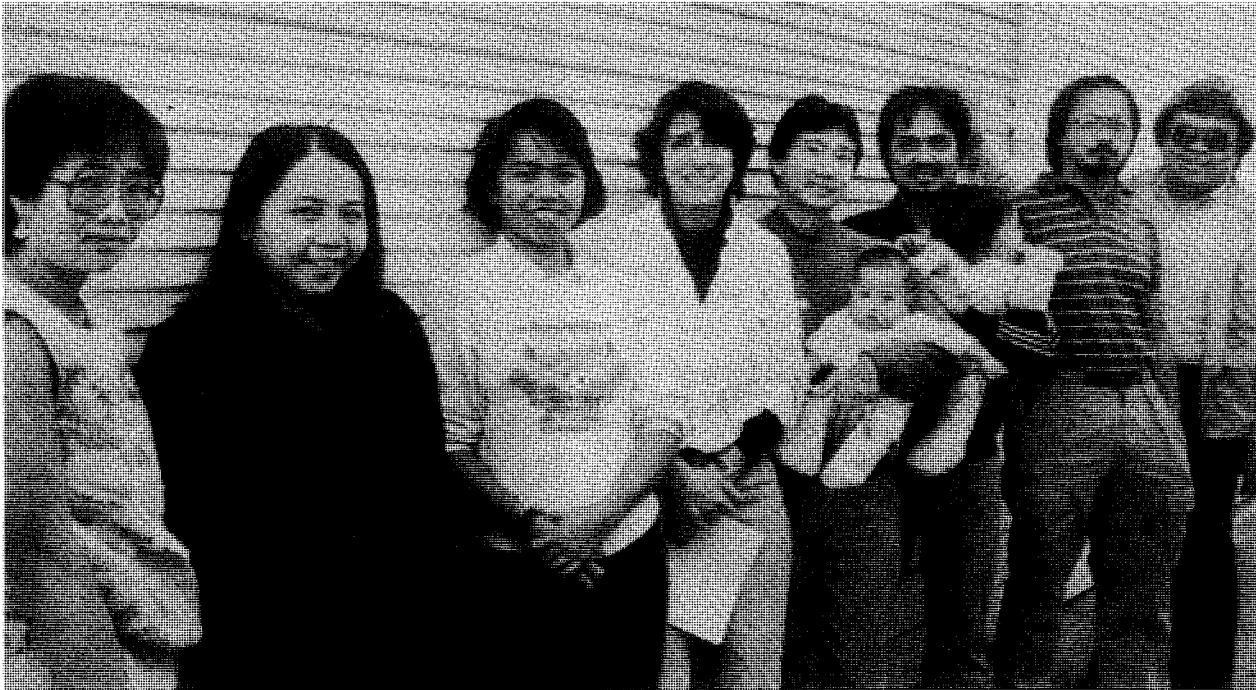
Yes to the new liberal democratic Constitution! □ RPC

Letters

SCRUMPTIOUS . . .

Thank you for sending me copies of *Ang Katipunan*. Kudos for introducing me to Dr. San Juan and other authors. Indeed, all the articles were scrumptiously written, most filling for my enormous appetite for informative and objective journalism. Thus, with my paid subscription, I look forward to my monthly share of dinner and dessert from your newsmag's future issues.

E. Aguilar
Hayward, CA



Happy holidays to all our readers! We will be taking a much-needed break. Meanwhile, we'll see you again in February '87. Do not forget us during the long break—send AK subscriptions as gifts to friends. Thank you for your support.

Litter from Manila

SEASON'S READINGS



By INIDORO DELIHENCIA

It has been very tense around here. But due to an exceptional upbringing, I've remained coolly unaffected. So I'll take it upon myself to help you cheer up this Christmas. It's a dirty job but somebody's got to do it. Here's what I do. During the holidays, I take a break from my work as a top-flight columnist to indulge in some form of intellectual activity, like reading non-fiction. Below are suggested holiday readings to help you forget nasty political events. Give them to friends as gifts. Go ahead. Dare to be merry this Christmas.

Raise your spirits with *The Power of Positive Drinking* by Blas Opiel. When the author (who was some sort of labor minister somewhere) went on a last-minute TV blitz in the U.S. last February, people wondered why he spoke English that way. "Was he drunk or German?" people asked. Turned out he was both. Herr Opiel's theory is that one's political career can blast off if he/she chooses the proper drink. "Hitler tried it vonce from a beerhall," he writes. Opiel's own reliable favorite is the American concoction, "Uncle Tom Collins." He warns that "Molotov Cocktail" will take you on a longer route. A weak vice-president won't get anywhere because he does nothing but "wishkey." An ex-cabinet member who wanted to get drunk with

power thought "RAM and coke" would do, but he only ended up with the big hangover. Only once in his life did President Marcos take a swig, "but it vass zat Aryan firewater called 'schnapps' election." Marcos' career went on the rocks and now his wife is sipping kahlua in Moanalua. The tragedy inspired Blas to sober up and write the book. *Bacchanal & Kampf*, Munich; DM 10, tips not included.

The rules of etiquette are the best answer to destabilization attempts and other forms of rude rightist behavior, says E.Z.C. Aquino in her book, *Good Manners and Right Conduct*. "A well-placed apology can soothe dark conspiratorial moods," she writes. When confronted by usurpers, "a President must smile and offer them a seat or, slowly give in to their demands or, refuse insincere offers of resignation, as the case may be," Aquino suggests. "But," she warns, "should plotters fail to say 'please,' block them with the sternest measures." Foreword by Emily Putsch. Centrist Press, Manila; ₱40 or ₱60 or something in between. Which-ever pleases you most.

Inspired by the findings of Masters and Johnson and aroused by the Constitutional Commission's decision to set presidential terms at six years (giving the incumbent until 1992), Fr. Soltero Celibe, S.J. has written *The Joy of Six*. He chronicles February's hot and heavy events up to the climactic decision that sent the nation into a fit of ecstasy. "Six is no longer taboo," he writes. Its advantages: prevents premature ejection from office; allows officials to try various positions on a given issue; leads to prolonged interplay of ideas; and encourages fantasy in legislative proceedings. "Since Congress will have, ehem, two chambers, we might even explore the use of whips." *Sublime Books, Loyola Heights*; ₱100 and pledge to favorite parish.

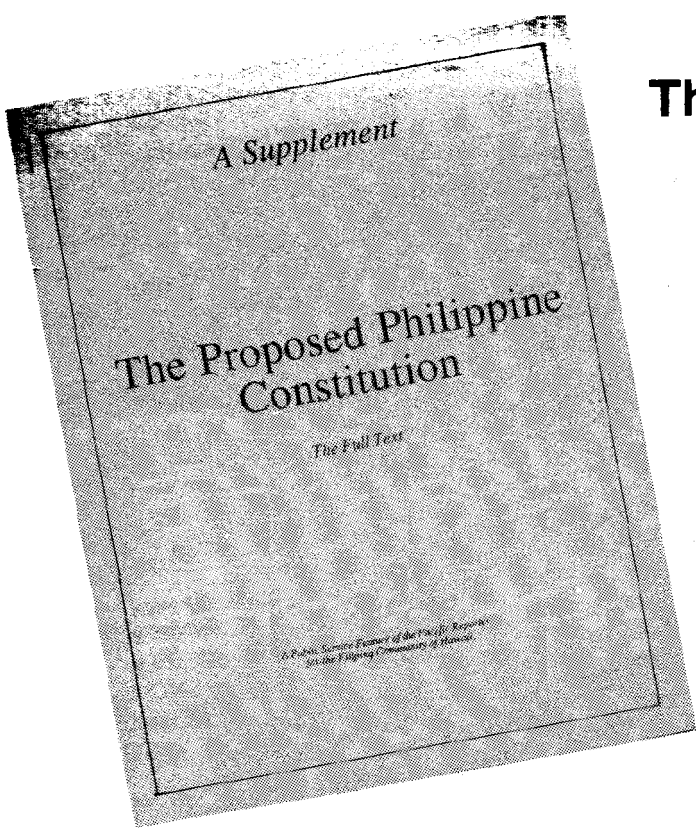
There was an aborted attempt to bump off that book

from the best-seller list. The challenger was *The Joy of Coupking* by that great cook, Johnny Go Goh. It featured recipes for power meals like "Indonesian Surprise," "Chile Blood Pudding," "Colonel's Delight" and that scrumptious dessert, "Coconut Take-over Cake" (which you can have and eat, too). Johnny's piece de least resistance, "Corazon Asado," was simply daring. His recipe: get somebody's goose, surgically remove left wing, discard; insidiously tenderize the heart with a barrage of criticisms, add in salt to injury, season with oyster sauce, simmer over flickering ceasefire (stir to make sure ingredients don't coalesce), serve quickly before constitution is ratified. Serves self primarily. Unfortunately, while Johnny was demonstrating the recipe, he fell from the frying pan into the fire. He might try again, though. *Schemer & Shyster, New York*; \$20 plus bill of rights.

Now all that holiday drinking, eating and six might clash with good manners and create an image of instability. So learn to patch things up from guru Vhidal Rhamos' "Transcendental Mediation." "Our leaders must levitate above their differences," writes Rhamos. People thought he was wishy-washy, namby-pamby and did nothing but dilly-dally. But what did they know? Rhamos has, in fact, taken the art of mediation beyond the limits of human experience! How, as Chef-of-Staff, he managed to foil Johnny Go Goh's culinary adventurism and at the same time convince the incumbent housewife to reorganize her kitchen cabinet to Johnny's specifications—this was simply beyond my comprehension. Truly, he didn't learn his mantras at West Point for nothing. *Hare Krisis Institute, West Point, NY*; any form of military assistance blissfully accepted.

I would give you Arturo Tolentino's recipe for egg nog but like him, I'm already spaced out—as hip Americans would say, if I'm not mistaken. □

A Step Forward for Liberal Democracy



By CHRISTINE ARANETA

Barely two months from now, Filipinos will flock to the polls to vote on the country's new Constitution, the third since 1935, the sixth since the formation of the first Philippine republic in the anti-colonial struggle against Spain.

The proposed Constitution is the most democratic charter yet drafted, reflecting the sentiments and goals of a nation newly freed from a 17-year dictatorship. As a product of this recent historical process to overturn fascism, the new charter's chief character is its commitment to the development of democracy—from a re-strengthened Bill of Rights to constitutional protections of human rights, from the curbing of executive powers to the reforming of the military. The 1986 charter reflects a new level in the maturation of Philippine democracy, one wrested from a determined struggle against constitutional authoritarianism.

While reflecting the lessons of bitter struggle against autocracy, the new charter also bears the indelible imprint of its chief architects—the liberal democrats in power.

The Constitutional Commission drawn from presidential appointees, reflects the political outlook, economic and social agenda of the liberal-democratic wing of the anti-Marcos opposition and native elite. As such, while the charter makes strides in some areas, it hesitates to effect sweeping reforms which would produce thoroughgoing structural changes.

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS

The 1986 charter thus fails to alter qualitatively the neo-colonial status which the Constitution of 1935 introduced and the Marcos-manipulated 1973 Constitution reinforced. These two Constitutions allowed for economic provisions which paved the way for foreign plunder of the economy, a fact that the '86 version only mildly addresses. Thus, the nationalist tone of many of the provisions suffers from a lack of substantial reforms to back them up.

Despite this weakness, the chief strength of the new charter is laying the foundation for genuine participatory democracy, departing from the elite model of previous years. Again, this reflects lessons from recent political history. For while the liberal democratic wing of the country's elite hold power, they do so with the awareness that their success owes chiefly to the exercise of "people's power" which installed them.

This strength may ultimately pave the way for overcoming the document's weakness. In facilitating the broad participation of the people in political processes, the possibility for effecting meaningful legislation lies on the horizon.

Even without these developments, the Constitution is expected to be ratified by an electorate still aware of the threat of fascist restoration, and eager to consolidate the gains of the February revolution.

STATE AS A SERVANT

This task—the exorcism of fascism from the nation's body politic—is immediately evident in the Declaration of Principles and State Policies.

Thus an important but seemingly minor revision describes the Philippines as a *democratic* and republican state. The 1935 and 1973 Constitutions simply read "republican state." While the '73 charter states that the "defense of the state is the primary duty of government and the people" (which was conveniently used by Marcos to justify the declaration of martial law), the 1986 version declares that the prime duty of government is to serve and protect the people.

The Bill of Rights contains two significant improvements. The first expands the right to form associations and societies to include the right to form unions. Article XIII, Section 17, on Social Justice and Human Rights,



expands the protection of basic freedoms through the creation of an independent Commission on Human Rights. The Commission will investigate all forms of human rights violations, provide legal aid to the poor whose rights have been violated, oversee the enforcement of the privileges and rights of prisoners, recommend to the legislature measures to promote human rights and compensate victims, and monitor the government's compliance with international treaties.

Article XVIII declares that private armies and other paramilitary forces, including the Civilian Home Defense Force, are not consistent with the citizens' army established by the Constitution and shall be dismantled. Article XVI on General Provisions prohibits members of the military from engaging in political activity and prevents active members of the military from accepting appointive civilian positions. The tour of duty of the Armed Forces Chief of Staff is limited to three years, and provisions requiring the armed forces to be imbued with patriotism, nationalist consciousness, respect for people's rights, and professionalism are clearly spelled out.

Finally, and more importantly, the restoration of the House of Representatives and the Senate to its full pre-martial law powers, restores to the people the right to elect representatives of their choice from a multi-party system. The restored legislature replaces an impotent rubber-stamp *Batasang Pambansa* whose members were selected from the *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* patronage system. An entire new generation of political leaders now has a chance to emerge to replace the traditional *politicos* and paid Marcos hacks.

LIMITS ON POWER

The same determination to prevent unbridled abuse of executive power produces limitations on the president's ability to declare martial law. The president is allowed to suspend the writ of habeas corpus and declare martial law for a maximum of 60 days, but she/he must inform Congress formally within 48 hours. Only Congress can ultimately determine the validity of a martial law declaration.

The president serves one six-year term, and is disqualified from running again. The chief of state and other officials are prohibited from appointing relatives by consanguinity or affinity to government positions. The same provisions to curb nepotism and monopolization of political power apply to Congress members.

Congressional representatives are limited to 3-year terms and can be re-elected for only three consecutive terms. Senators can only serve up to two consecutive terms of six years each if re-elected.

A newly created Office of the Ombudsman will prosecute complaints against government officials, elective or appointive. The anti-graft court Sandiganbayan has been retained while the Tanodbayan will become the Office of the Special Prosecutor.

In reaction to the previous regime's deceptive policy regarding Marcos' health, the Constitution requires that the president make public any serious illness.

EXPANDING DEMOCRACY

Provisions throughout the charter enable greater numbers than ever of the disenfranchised to participate in the political process. Marking a departure from the

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Children of the Night

The Philippines may have one of the highest rates of child prostitution anywhere. This is one of the legacies of the profligate Marcos era.

Former UN official and Social Welfare Minister Dr. E. Aldaba-Lim estimates that the number of children involved in prostitution in the Metro-Manila area may run as high as 20,000.

The young sex merchants—some reported to be no more than four years of age—roam the tourist-laden M.H. del Pilar, Mabini, Sta. Monica, and Flores streets, openly peddling themselves for some quick cash.

But the problem is hardly limited to Metro-Manila. In rural Pagsanjan Falls, a favorite tourist spot, at least 3,000 boys are reportedly involved in the sex trade.

No one really knows the full extent of the nationwide problem, as no thorough studies or surveys have yet been completed. Expressing a common frustration, Fr. James Reuter, who has been working with the poor in the Philippines for over 40 years, remarked, "God knows how many there are in Subic Bay where it was first discovered? Or Angeles? Everywhere? I don't know. . . ."

SOLD BY PARENTS

With few exceptions, child prostitutes come mostly from poverty-stricken families. Many impoverished children, who at a very early age are forced to work the streets as cigarette or newspaper vendors in order to buttress their families' meager incomes, are often lured into the illicit sex trade by pimps and brothel owners.

It is reportedly not uncommon to find the parents themselves selling their children to sex rings in a desperate attempt to help alleviate their bare existence.

To economically deprived families, the opportunity to earn from ₱100 to ₱600 (\$5 to \$30) or more a day from one child ultimately undermines moral or religious scruples deeply embedded in Filipino family life. No matter how meager the added earnings may appear, they often mean the difference between survival and starvation especially for large families.

MOSTLY FOREIGNERS

Once initiated into the trade, young children—being

helpless and unable to fend for their well-being—are subjected to the grossest acts of sexual exploitation that can be imagined.

Charged with the responsibility of fulfilling a customer's varied sexual fantasies, child prostitutes are invariably forced to perform lascivious acts they have never been exposed to. In some cases, a client may simply request a pair of child prostitutes to perform sexual intercourse as a peculiar means of deriving sexual pleasure.

According to some studies, pedophiles (those who hire child prostitutes for sexual exploitation) in the Philippines are predominantly from Australia and the U.S. A smaller number are Japanese and Arabians.

Because child prostitution flourishes in Olongapo and Angeles—urban centers straddling the two major U.S. bases of Subic and Clark—a sizable number of pedophiles are also suspected to be U.S. servicemen.

The same studies describe the typical pedophile as a male ranging in age from 22 to 60 years and relatively well-educated. Many are even school teachers.

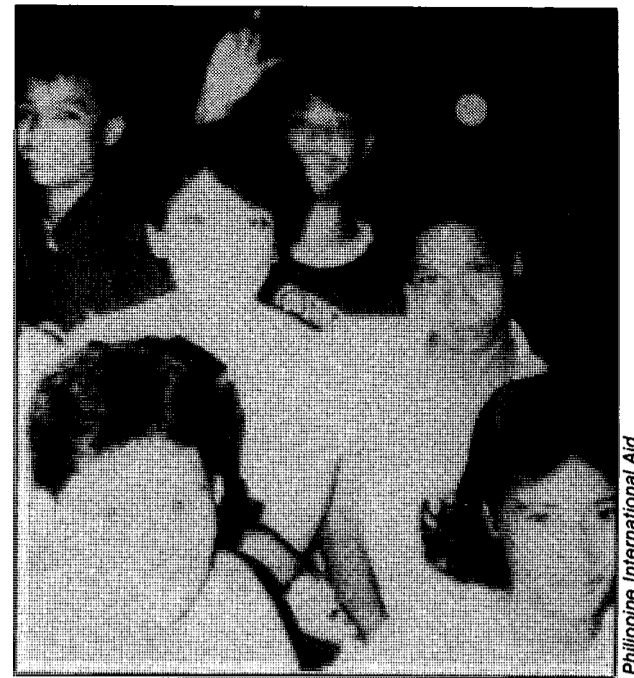
Most reportedly use prominent and well-reputed organizations as a front for their activities. Reportedly, pedophiles have often used Foster Parent Plan as a cover for their illicit activities, under the guise of wanting to adopt Filipino children.

ILLUSIONS OF WEALTH

Although the exception, wealthier pedophiles are known to bestow their young victims with expensive gifts such as houses and trips abroad, undoubtedly with strict sexual obligations attached. Such uncommon cases are often widely popularized, and serve to foster illusions among indigent families about the fortunes that await them.

Child prostitution, an outgrowth of an already thriving prostitution industry, has proliferated amidst rampant poverty. In many instances, the child prostitute, whose parents are both unemployed, is effectively the only wage earner in a family of as many as eight or nine children.

Under the previous regime, child prostitution was



Luneta Park children: victims of exploitation.

not merely condoned, but even encouraged by government policy. Because prostitution was viewed as a boon to the tourist industry—a major foreign exchange earner—laws were passed to facilitate, rather than restrict, the trade in human flesh. For example, by making venereal disease tests mandatory, laws subtly aimed to make the sex trade legitimate.

Recognizing the damage that child prostitution has done to the social and moral development of the nation's youth, the new government has adopted a completely new posture toward the problem.

President Corazon Aquino signed Proclamation No. 13, declaring June 1986-May 1987 as the Year of the Protection of Exploited Filipino Children.

Aquino also created an interorganizational task force—which includes government agencies, as well as private, non-governmental and international organizations—to collectively implement campaigns to stop the spread of child prostitution and to rehabilitate its victims.

But the success of these efforts are expected to be spotty. The government is strapped for cash and numerous other areas of public concern are crying for attention. No one doubts that the long-term solution lies in the healing of a fractured economy. In a dramatic way, child prostitution is symbolic of the degradation of an entire nation and rooted in a deeper economic and social malaise. Any gains towards its complete eradication would also serve as a measure of the new dispensation's overall performance. □

Data for this article was provided by Philippine International Aid.

Aquino Visits Tokyo

Desperately Seeking Yen Loans



President Aquino toasting Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone.

By WICKS GEAGA

In her effort to drum up aid abroad for her debt-strapped government, President Corazon Aquino recently dropped in on the capital-rich neighbor to the north. Securing a \$250 million loan for a coal thermal plant in Batangas and receiving pledges of increased trade, investments,

and financial aid, Aquino did not come away from her Japan visit disappointed.

The total amount of Japanese government aid and private investments to the Philippines—a fraction of which has been firmly committed and the rest still awaiting final approval—would reach nearly \$2 billion.

Prime Minister Yasuhiro Nakasone told Aquino that Japan "is ready to consider

making a commitment exceeding" the loan package of \$309 million Tokyo pledged to Manila last year while Marcos was still in power. The government aid package announced by Nakasone—if fully approved—would total \$900 million or three times last year's amount.

In addition to the Batangas thermal plant loan—which is the only component firmly committed—the aid package would include a \$195 million counterpart fund of commodity loans for rural-based programs, a technical cooperation grant of \$62 million, and a grant-in-aid of \$40 million.

In meetings with Aquino, top Japanese business leaders also pledged to boost their investments and trade with her country. Sogo-Sosha, Japan's giant trading combine, promised to raise its Philippine imports by nearly \$200 million to \$1.03 billion from \$845 million last year.

Leading Japanese monopolies and corporations informed Aquino of plans to expand their Philippine investments, in light of the renewed climate for private enterprise. Aquino, in turn, promised to relax or eliminate regulations imposed by the previous regime that dampened investor interest.

The Aquino government is hoping that an infusion of Japanese capital will help revive a severely depressed Philippine economy. Aquino is especially eager to

see increased investments generate badly needed employment.

In the short term, aid from Tokyo will most likely help ease Manila's immediate financial problems. With more cash in hand, the government should be able to improve its balance of payments, reduce its budget deficit, and meet its current obligations from its \$26 billion foreign debt—much of it owed to Japanese banks.

The long-term benefits of Japanese aid, however, seem more dubious when examined historically.

From 1956 to the late 1970s, Japan funneled to the Philippines \$250 million in development loans and \$550 million in goods and services. The Japanese government offered the aid as reparations for the destruction brought about by the Japanese invasion during World War II.

Filipino nationalists, however, viewed the reparations with skepticism. Because aid money could only be spent on Japanese goods, it was seen as principally subsidizing Japanese industry. Under this "aid" arrangement, Japan's manufacturing enterprises enjoyed several major economic advantages via trade with the Philippines. First of all, they gained a guaranteed market for their manufactured commodities, regardless of the availability of cheaper or higher quality goods elsewhere. They

Continued on page 13

Overhauling the Tourist Trade

By MARRA PI. LANOT

Tourism to the ordinary citizen during the Marcos regime meant dollars. It meant opening the Philippines to free-spending foreigners—sex-crazy Japanese businessmen, dirty old men from France, filthy-rich Americans.

Tourism also meant virtually declaring the Philippines the happy hunting grounds for transnational investors, small-time racketeers, and international crime syndicates. It meant looting, plunder and rape. How else attract big business—commonly male dominated—but through offering more than money could buy?

Under martial rule, no matter how blind the Ministry of Tourism pretended to be to the side effects or direct results of its promotional efforts, the connection was always there, between earning revenues and losing our land, between gaining publicity abroad and prostituting our culture and our people. For it was not just a matter of selling a piece of shell or fish or flesh, it was giving up our dignity, our self-respect, our sovereignty.

The Ministry denied any relationship between tourism and prostitution. But former Director Lucina Alday of the Bureau of Women and Minors did say in an interview that so-called hospitality girls were trained to be reliable tourist guides, to please their pleasure-seeking clients. The trade had some 5,000 registered hospitality girls and about 100,000 unregistered ones. What the women did with their customers outside their designated "official" job was considered by the tourism and labor ministries as none of their business. In fact, pornography and prostitution were shrugged off as natural risks an impoverished society had to face. Besides, they reasoned out, prostitution is to be regarded as a purely private transaction.

Not only our women but also our natural resources and sacred rites were desecrated. Wherever a traditional festivity or religious practice was commercialized, like the Ati-Atihan in Aklan and the Moriones in Marinduque, a beach was scraped of its wealth, and the history and meaning of such customs were lost, together with the innocence of the natives. Wherever tourists flocked, motels and bars mushroomed and spread their pollution. Even the hanging coffins in the sacred mountains of the north were reportedly pried open by tourists and stripped for souvenirs.

Now that we have a new administration, much is expected in terms of reorganization, reorientation and redirection. But what's a nice girl, er, woman like Nars Lim doing in a graft-infested establishment like the Ministry of Tourism? She would rather remain an English teacher at De La Salle University, Maryknoll College or the University of the Philippines. Or president of her own company, the Business Resource Center, Inc., in Makati, where she enjoyed a higher salary and flexible hours. The job, too, meant more hours with her children, Miguel, 11, and Maria Regina, 8, not to say a congenial social life.

When 39-year-old Narzalina Zaldivar Lim was offered the post by Deputy Minister Antonio Gonzalez, her reaction was: "I didn't think this was work for me. . . First of all, it came so suddenly. There was really no time to psychologically adjust to the fact that we had won the revolution, and that we would be called upon to serve in the government. Second, I thought ending up in Tourism seemed so far from the idea of marching in the streets, considering the policies of the past—glossing over the ills of society and projecting an image just to bring in the tourists. Since I

was in the convention business, I knew what was happening to this Ministry in and out. And I detested it!"

Nevertheless, she accepted the job, taking it as a challenge to help the government and to serve the people. She is one of four appointed deputy ministers, tasked to oversee not only domestic tourism but also strategic planning and product development. Right now, everything seems to be a puzzle whose parts still have to fall in place. With Minister Gonzalez so often in and out of the country, Nars is left to take care of the business.

"I think tourism has always been money, bringing in the dollars," she says. "Now, I don't exactly agree with that. The stress in the past was to bring the foreign tourists in and hit the P1-M mark, and then make the tourism industry one of the top dollar earners in the country. I believe in that, too. But at what cost? In the meantime, women get raped, the children prostituted, all the negative aspects of the tourism industry are there."

Instead of encouraging the moneyed Filipinos to go abroad, Nars would have them travel in their own country, know the Philippines and their own people first. She suggests that employers give travel in-

After all is said and done, however, Nars thinks Filipinos, at least at the moment, will not be able to bring in much revenue. She fears that because of poverty, people might prefer cash to travel. Thus, tourism still has to rely on attracting foreigners. And there's the rub: how to control underworld characters from operating in private hotels? It is said that some of the purportedly best hotels are fronts of pimps, illegal recruiters of migrant workers, and other characters. Foreigners have enough money to tour the entire country, but some of them give the place a bad name, so much so that even *Penthouse* and other similar publications have spread "exotic" nude bodies of Filipinas on their glossy, colored pages. Elementary textbooks dub the Philippines as "Pearl of the Orient Seas," but *Hustler* of January 1985 tags Manila as the "Sodom of the Pacific."

Pedophiles have also begun to roam the once pristine beaches of Cebu, Bacolod, Pagsanjan, Mindoro, and Borocay. Nars has read that Australians marry Filipinas just so they could put up sex dens in Ermita. With the help of Deputy Minister for Tourism Services June Campillo, Nars will look into "tourism establishments"



centives to workers: "Instead of lavish Christmas parties, why not give bonus packages in terms of travel?"

This vacation time, the MOT is sponsoring a tour of Tagaytay. It's supposed to be a "wholesome family project" which will promote local sites. On display will be the products of Tagaytay, its flowers, fruits, arts and crafts. Other sites will be developed or revitalized such as the old Balara, once a natural beauty spot at the foot of the Marikina mountain ranges. Inexpensive family tours to neighboring provinces will be worked out for the students, the low-income citizens, and senior citizens.

As for the dollars: Tourism, after all, has been touted as the Number 3 foreign-exchange earner. What about the hotels and resorts which have actually been turned into white elephants? Nars believes that the Ministry should not compete with the private sector. Hotels and resorts, therefore, ought to be divested of government ownership, sold, and privatized.

whose licenses are acquired from the Tourism Ministry and the City of Manila. Nars also cites a study done in 1981 that shows that 90% of the Japanese tourists who came here merely did so for the sex tours.

"Prostitution has been institutionalized, it's disgusting!" laments Nars. How will she then promote the Philippines without encouraging sex tours and prostitution? This is the nagging question.

"We would like to attract the quality type of tourists," proposes Nars. "The Minister uses the term 'higher quality.' Meaning, those who bring their wives, the businessmen who come home for business trips. We can also attract Japanese educators who may appreciate the Philippines for its culture."

Meanwhile, Nars Lim intends to clean up the promotional ads. She wants to do away with using pretty women looking like Playboy bunnies or Hollywood cheese-cake pasted on cheap travel brochures and calendars. These appeal only to European bride hunters and to male executives out



Deputy Minister Nars Lim

to feast on fantasy islands. Instead of selling the Philippines like a basket of sex objects, Nars would want to project the nation's history and cultural heritage as something every Filipino should be proud of.

A series of dialogues with the private sector and the government agencies has already been arranged by the Ministry. For instance, the National Economic Development Authority has to assist the Ministry in its long-term planning to assure revenue returns. The Ministry will coordinate with transportation firms regarding schedules and conditions of buses, trains, boats, and planes. The Ministry of Natural Resources, too, has to step up the campaign to conserve, say, the vanishing trees in Baguio, and the marine resources in Borocay. The Ministry of Finance must take care of the travel tax cut, a review of the balikbayan program which has been extended after June, and possible trips of public school pupils and teachers.

The Ministry of Labor has to step in to clarify its role in activities related to Tourism, especially regarding the hospitality or service trade, the hotel and restaurant workers, etc. The Ministry of Local Governments and Community Development and the police will likewise have to do their share in cleaning up local pockets of graft, manifested in tong, illegal protection, and the like.

The Ministry of Education, adds Nars, also has to include in its curriculum a thorough study of the Philippines. Textbooks must be revised to erase colonial mentality among students and teachers in order to heighten the Filipino's self-image. Sexism in textbooks ought to be stamped out, too, since it supports gender stereotyping, and leads to the maintenance of the low status of women in society, as seen, for example, in her image as sex object.

Most important for Nars is keeping the Ministry open to criticism and suggestions. She believes that cause-oriented groups should stay vigilant and enthusiastic in improving the government to protect people's interests. She has been, after all, a freelance journalist; a co-founder of the Alliance of Women for Action and Reconciliation, one of the many post-Ninoy politicized women's groups; a trustee of Manindigan, an organization of business people, professionals, and concerned citizens; and public information officer of BANDILA, an alliance of around 98 cause-oriented groups.

Nars Lim believes that it is necessary to overhaul the entire Ministry's attitude itself towards tourism. True, she has to contend with the ominous presence of countless Rest & Recreation joints. Many of these cater to American servicemen; U.S. bases in the Philippines occupy a total ground area larger than all the U.S. military bases combined outside of the U.S. She reiterates, however, the need to reorient values in ads and policymaking; to attract the broad masses of Filipinos to see the country at affordable expenses; and to preserve culture and the national heritage. Nars Lim concedes that it certainly is no mean task to eradicate "the extravagance, the waste, the prostitution, the degradation, the decay. It's just been horrible!" □

This article was first published in Midweek, June 4, 1986.

BUOD NG MGA BALITA

CABINET ADOPTS NEW BUDGET

By her cabinet's approval on December 4 of a \$6.2 billion budget for "national reconstruction and reconciliation," President Corazon Aquino laid down one of the major foundations of her economic plan.

Aquino said the budget was a blueprint for her program to lift the nation from the worst economic crisis since World War II through sustained growth, increased employment and the alleviation of poverty.

But the budget faces an immediate drawback because of the collapse November 8 of debt talks between the Philippines and its commercial bank creditors on new repayment terms for the \$3.6 billion the country owes. The budget includes a sharp reduction of foreign loan interest payments from 46.6% in 1986 to 38.5% in 1987. The reduction was made conditional upon a successful completion of debt-restructuring talks.

With the talks' breakdown, government social spending will be strained. The new budget earmarked the money saved from the reduction on interest payments for a raise in social services.

Philippine negotiators headed by Finance Minister Jaime Ongpin blamed the talks' failure on the "intransigence" of Citibank which refused to allow the Philippines the same loan repayment terms recently negotiated by Mexico. Although the 11 other banks on the advisory committee were eager to continue bargaining, Citibank firmly refused, arguing that economic conditions in the Philippines did not warrant terms as favorable as those Mexico received.

Citibank holds \$1.8 billion in public and private Philippine debt.

MARCOS LINKED TO CONTRAGATE

The Manila connection has been disclosed in the ongoing U.S. investigations on the arms sales to Iran and the diversion of funds to the Nicaraguan contras. It has been reported that Adnan Kashoggi who is suspected of facilitating the Iranian arms shipments was also involved in the laundering of Marcos' hidden wealth in U.S. banks. However, the details of the connection has not yet been established.

Meanwhile, Minister Jovito Salonga, chairman of the Presidential Commission on Good Government, said in an interview that the \$100 million in government

funds stolen by Marcos from the Philippines passed through U.S. banks before being deposited in Swiss bank accounts. Evidence showed that Marcos deposited the money in Switzerland three days before the "people's power" revolution led by President Corazon Aquino.

TWO SOLDIERS ARRESTED IN OLALIA MURDER

Two soldiers have been arrested in connection with the murder of Rolando Olalia, leader of both the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* and *Partido ng Bayan*.

Newspaper reports quoted unnamed investigators as saying that they had solved the killing of Rolando Olalia after a set of witnesses positively identified the two from a lineup. Another group of witnesses would be asked to identify them.

The suspects are allegedly part of a group of armed men seen tailing Mr. Olalia before he disappeared on November 12. His mutilated body was found along with his driver's the next day.

Now that the actual killers have been identified, the next question is who ordered the killings. □

AQUINO, MNLF SET TALKS

The Philippine government and the Moro National Liberation Front will start formal talks in January to settle the Moslem rebellion in the Southern Philippines.

A statement signed by both Butz Aquino, special emissary and President Aquino's brother-in-law, and Nur Misuari, MNLF chief, confirmed that the two sides have agreed to send a joint panel to the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Jeddah to finalize the details of the talk.

Despite the statement, however, all is not well with the President's peace initiative in Mindanao. In a press conference held November 22, Butz Aquino revealed that a faction within the MNLF has announced that it will declare a separate Islamic Republic to cover Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan. To mark the declaration, the faction plans to raise the MNLF flag in various parts of the Mindanao region.

Mr. Aquino said that he got the information from Nur Khan, a former MNLF leader who surrendered to the government during Marcos' time but who rejoined the MNLF recently. Other sources said Khan was involved in Marcos' attempts to discredit President Aquino during the last presidential elections where Marcos publicly announced an alleged agreement between the late Senator Benigno Aquino and Nur Misuari.

But Aquino also expressed confidence that the MNLF representatives to the peace talks would not take any action which could destabilize the government. In fact Misuari has promised not to prevent any MNLF member from going out to campaign for the ratification of the draft Constitution in February.

The draft charter includes sections on the creation of autonomous regions in Mindanao and the Cordillera provinces. □

MILITARY SWEEPS RANKS

In line with the Aquino government's attempt to eliminate Marcos supporters in the military, Luis Villareal, the director of the National Intelligence Coordinating Agency, announced November 2 that his agency has been completely "demilitarized."

NICA replaced the National Intelligence Service Authority which was directly under the control of Gen. Fabian Ver who fled with Marcos to Hawaii.

Villareal disclosed that many of the 500 servicemen hired by the NISA were actually spies planted by the former regime in government offices and government-owned corporations. He added that some of the 500 who were reassigned did not like their new assignments and so either deserted or went on absence without leave. They were later dropped from the rolls of the New Armed Forces of the Philippines.

In a separate development, a military anti-graft board has recommended filing charges on November 22 against a general involved in a failed rebellion against President Aquino last July.

The board, according to a military statement, found Brig. Gen. Jaime Echeverria guilty of acquiring "properties and wealth which were out of proportion" to his monthly salary, equivalent to about \$200 a month.

The government did not file rebellion charges against Echeverria because he swore allegiance to President Aquino's government. Instead, he was one of those ordered to do pushups for breaching military discipline. □

Odds and Ends / Odds and Ends / Odds and Ends / Odds and Ends / Odds and Ends / Odds and Ends / Odds and Ends /

Let's Do the Shuffle. Now that President Aquino has picked the tune after quelling two attempted coups, everybody must dance to her music. The first number is a cabinet shuffle that may change the make-up of her government. It has been rumored that Aquino will add a new cabinet position, that of chief of staff. The likely candidates are United Nations official and Marcos' former Executive Secretary, Rafael Salas, and University of the Philippines President Edgardo Angara. She is also expected to let go of Foreign Minister Salvador Laurel who for a while there tried to ride on Enrile's bandwagon. Laurel may lose his job to his deputy minister, Leticia Shahani. And he thought that by playing golf when the crisis was going on he would be spared the axe! Not if you are linked with the enemy. Take the case of Homobono Adaza, another Enrile ally. President Aquino sacked him from the directorship of two state-controlled firms.

Still Number One. Even though Juan Ponce Enrile has just relinquished his title as Number One thorn in President Aquino's side, he still retains another top post—that of Number One warlord, on the list of warlords in the Philippines who continue to hold sway over the Northern Luzon area. The list was

compiled by Forum Ilocandia, an organization of professionals from the Luzon provinces.

U.S. Military AIDS. The Philippine Health Ministry wants the U.S. to guarantee it will send only AIDS-free troops to the Philippines, after bar girls working near American bases were diagnosed to have the AIDS virus. A ministry official said only about one-fourth of American military personnel had so far been tested worldwide and that the first round of screening will not be completed until 1988. Government officials agree that this is not the kind of aid the Philippines want from the U.S.

Hot Ovens. Federal agents arrested a 31-year-old Filipino for attempting to smuggle firearms to the Philippines which were cleverly concealed in three microwave ovens. When informed of the arrest, Minister Jovito Salonga of the Presidential Commission on Good Government said that Marcos loyalists were arming themselves as their ranks have been swelling due to poverty and unemployment. Such misery can only be the result of the change of residence of their former principal patron.

Uninvited Guest. Israel's President Chaim Herzog was scheduled to visit the Philippines November

15 as part of his 19-day tour of Southeast Asia. But he cancelled his planned visit citing recent political developments as reason. It was good that he did since no one among Philippine officials has admitted to inviting him.

At it Again. Employees at the women's shoe department of the Liberty House store at Ala Moana Center in Honolulu, Hawaii, revealed that Mrs. Marcos and a friend had bought 40 pairs of shoes recently. A spokesman denied that the shoes were for the disgraced former first lady, but 35 pairs were all size 8—Mrs. Marcos' size.

Photograft. The auditors going over the books of the Marcos regime came across an entry stating that more than \$1 million was paid to Italian film star Gina Lollobrigida for two books of professional photographs and an unfinished film documentary for Imelda Marcos.

My Gold! The Philippine government is backing efforts by a group of American and Filipino treasure hunters to recover a future in stolen gold believed to have been buried offshore by the Japanese during World War II. President Aquino hopes that the recovery of the billions of dollars' worth of booty that the Japanese plundered throughout Asia could give the Philippine economy a badly needed boost. But already there have been reports that former President Marcos had uncovered some of the buried gold and added it to his personal fortune.

It's Show Time. Only a week after a military coup was reportedly stopped in midstroke, the hysteria and crisis it engendered has already been absorbed into the Philippines' ravenous pop-culture machine. A new Philippine TV variety show, one of many on the air every day, is being advertised as "The Coup of the Year."

Cory Expands Breathing Space —At A Price

By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

Philippine President Corazon Aquino extracted the key thorn from her side November 23 when she ordered the resignation of her chief critic, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile. She thus eliminated the last fascist trace from her regime—but at an extremely high price.

Enrile's exit deprived the fascist elements of their foothold within the government and offered an opportunity for the left to inject itself once more into the mainstream of Philippine politics. But in order to keep the military, Enrile's chief source of support, adequately united behind her, Aquino herself has been forced to tilt visibly to the right.

The decision to sack Enrile came in the wake of the second coup crisis to grip Manila in less than three weeks. Both crises were purportedly orchestrated by the Defense Minister or his "boys" in the Reform the Armed Forces Movement.

Enrile began his destabilization campaign as early as the February revolution by targeting Aquino as "soft on communism." It grew in proportion as he attempted to unite the right elements within the populace, particularly the military behind him. Finally, he capped his campaign with the first threatened coup.

Anti-communist rallies gave way to



Ramos (l), Ileta (r): Finally calling the shots in the military.

military exercises. Talk of "surgical strikes" aimed at eliminating left-leaning cabinet members floated around the city. At that point, observers who initially assessed Enrile's actions as designed just to push the President to the right and counteract progressive elements within the cabinet were forced to admit that the Defense

Minister and his hotheaded RAM colonels actually hoped to seize power.

'THIS CANNOT CONTINUE'

Coup II was the last straw. On the morning of November 23, after a night of active lobbying by her supporters in the

military to stop a process which had already been set in motion, Aquino played her cards. She convened her cabinet and requested resignations from all. Enrile was summoned and his resignation accepted—which was tantamount to a firing—Cory style.

The Defense Minister's dismissal set to rest earlier worries expressed by observers and even some of the President's close supporters over what they read as indecisiveness on her part. Fully aware of the image she had been projecting during the crisis, and anxious to change it, Aquino prefaced her announcement of Enrile's departure with, "Of late my circumspection has been viewed as weakness, and my sincere attempts at reconciliation as indecision. This cannot continue."

In fact the key issue behind the President's seeming indecision was the question of whether she could keep the military behind her once she moved against the Defense Minister. "If she said, 'I am in control of the armed forces and the police,'" presidential spokesman Teodoro Benigno told reporters November 21, "she would be telling a lie."

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos began to show his true colors by acting decisively to defuse Coup I. Early in November he ordered the commanding generals of the army, air force, navy, and constabulary to "take immediate action to

Continued on page 12

Ceasefire—On to A More Difficult Stage

The ceasefire agreement signed by government and National Democratic Front negotiators November 28 represents significant concessions by both sides.

The NDF agreed to put off the discussion of a number of substantive issues until the ceasefire took effect and accepted a denial of belligerency status, both of which had been sticking points.

The government, in turn, agreed to eliminate the New People's Army's progressive taxation from a list of hostile acts although another article allows the government to "[exercise] its lawful power to stop any form of taxation or illegal exaction or the illegal procurement of firearms and explosives."

Government negotiators also granted "absolute, binding, permanent, and irrevocable immunity from search, arrest, and prosecution to all those accredited persons who will assist the NDF during the peace talks as consultants, lawyers, and staff persons, for all acts performed or utterances made in connection with their duties relating to the peace talks, regardless of whether their services are volunteered or remunerated."

WIDE PROTECTION

The agreement is divided into two parts. The first, a "Memorandum of Agreement on a Preliminary Cease-Fire," establishes the objectives, terms, and a complex monitoring organization to supervise implementation.

The Philippine government agrees to "arrest, disarm, and prosecute armed groups which include private armies, armed goons, armed fanatical sects, groups such as the Lost Command, and death squads." The Philippine Armed Forces and the NPA both promise to disarm and prosecute abusive members.

A National Ceasefire Committee based in Manila along with local committees in areas where conflicts have occurred will monitor the situation and issue sanctions where violations occur. Each will consist of five members, a chairman and two from each side of the conflict.

The Memorandum of Agreement on Safety and Immunity Guarantees and Physical Centers and Facilities grants the NDF wide protection against interference with their negotiating activities. It allows them to expand their staff to 50, all of whom will be granted safe-conduct passes. The passes will be valid for a minimum of 30 days after the negotiations cease.

ROUGHER SAILING

The second stage of the talks will start approximately 30 days into the ceasefire, which begins December 10. At this point, representatives will take up the far more difficult problem of hammering out a lasting peace.

Observers agree unanimously that this will be the far more difficult stage. Government negotiator Ramon Mitra has already let it be known that he intends to step out here and return full-time to his position at the Agriculture Ministry. Friends say that ambitious Mitra is far less confident of Stage II and doesn't want his name associated with it.

While earlier reports suggested that the NDF negotiators hoped to take up such issues at this point as removing U.S. bases from the Philippines, NDF representative Carolina Malay recently told a TV interviewer, "We have lived all these years, we have fought all these years . . . under the very noses of the U.S. bases, and that in itself shows that we can live with these bases."

The NDF has indicated, however, that it intends to take up key issues such as land reform, social change and the role of the United States in the Philippines. It has also revealed that it plans to add the imprisoned Rodolfo Salas, reputedly Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines, to its negotiating panel.

Stage II thus promises to be rougher sailing for negotiators on both sides of the table and will require extremely sensitive navigating skills. Hopefully the NDF will continue to demonstrate the same flexibility that brought them successfully this far. □

Rafael Ileta: A Believer in Civilian Supremacy

President Corazon Aquino's appointment of retired Gen. Rafael Ileta to succeed trouble-maker Juan Ponce Enrile was greeted warmly throughout the country and abroad.

A soldier and a "gentleman," Ileta's most recent post had been as Enrile's deputy in the Defense Ministry where, said one diplomat, "In hindsight, she may have been putting him in place to replace Enrile right from the start." Other observers insisted from the beginning that the President had placed Ileta, a strong supporter of civilian rule, in the deputy position to keep an eye on and curb the stormy Enrile.

The new Defense Minister's greatest claim to fame with the Aquino government is precisely his belief in civilian supremacy, which short-circuited an otherwise brilliant military career.

In 1972 when Ferdinand Marcos decided to declare martial law he consulted first with his chiefs of staff. Ileta, at that time Chief of Staff of the Army, objected—the only one to do so. No longer able to trust him, Marcos shortly thereafter promoted Ileta to the impressive-sounding but powerless position of Vice Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. Until 1976 when he was appointed Ambassador to Iran and sent safely out of the country, Ileta spent much of his time playing golf and raising chickens.

'QUIETLY EFFECTIVE'

It is understandable why Ferdinand Marcos should feel threatened by Ileta whose friends call him "Rocky." A graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, he is a specialist in both intelligence and counterinsurgency. Throughout his military career, he remained one of the most respected officers in the Philippine Armed Forces.

After serving with the U.S. Army through World War II and beyond, Ileta joined the Philippine military in 1950. He served as Philippine Military

Attaché in South Vietnam and Laos.

His military record also includes distinguished service for U.S. interests in the Philippines. He formed and led the Philippine Scout Rangers, the most effective unit in fighting the peasant-based Hukbalahap. Thus, the U.S. was particularly pleased with Ileta's appointment. The new Defense Minister remains close to Washington and strongly supports the retention of U.S. bases in the Philippines, which puts him against the people's growing nationalist tendencies.

Switching abruptly from soldier to diplomat, he was sent to Iran where he witnessed the fall of a Marcos ally, the Shah. In 1981, he was posted to Thailand. "He was quiet but quietly effective," remarked one Thai official, "always a gentleman."

POTENTIAL RIGHTWARD PULL

The U.S. was particularly pleased with Ileta's appointment. The new Defense Minister remains close to Washington and strongly supports the retention of U.S. bases in the Philippines.

"The priority will be the unification of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and then, with the help of the people, maybe we can solve the insurgency problem," Ileta announced shortly after accepting his new position. The new Defense Minister's professionalism, priorities and style put him on the same wave-length as Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos. With the elimination of Enrile who hoped to use the military to further his own personal ambitions, the Aquino government can at least look forward to stabilizing itself given Ileta's and Ramos' support for civilian rule.

Already, the strength and potential rightward pull of this formidable pair on the Aquino government is becoming evident. But for now, the substitution of Ileta for an unabashed fascist represents the expansion of democratic breathing space. □

Community Responds to Philippine Crisis

The Thanksgiving holiday assumed new meaning for concerned Filipinos across the U.S. as they got word November 23 that President Corazon Aquino was able to outmaneuver her troublesome Defense Minister, Juan Ponce Enrile.

Upon learning of President Aquino's announcement that she had accepted Enrile's resignation, Filipinos spontaneously gathered together to celebrate the happy result of a tense two-month period wherein the people's newly-won freedom from fascism appeared in jeopardy.

"Cory was able to regain authority," said Jon Melegrito, coordinator of the Committee to Advance the Movement for Democracy and Independence in Washington, D.C., in citing the reason for the outpouring of joy.

In the same spirit, about 30 guests led by Consul General Leo Anolin, Ninoy Aquino Movement's Jimmy Bautista, and CAMDI's Greg Santillan and Gerry Villero held a celebration at the Philippine Consulate in Los Angeles right after they heard the reports.

JUST IN CASE

Protest activities had also been planned by several community organizations in case the test of strength between President Aquino and Defense Minister Enrile ended in a tragic takeover by the military.

A show of the community's "people's power" had already taken place when labor leader Rolando Olalia, chairman of the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* and the *Partido ng Bayan*, was slain.

Chanting and carrying signs reading "Support Cory, Defend Democracy!" "Give Peace a Chance," and "Enrile Resign!", close to a hundred D.C. demonstrators braved winter weather at a rally in Lafayette Square Park, followed by a march in front of the White House on November 13.

The noontime rally was preceded by a meeting between Philippine Ambassador to the U.S. Emmanuel Pelaez and community representatives. He was presented with a written "Declaration of Support for President Aquino's Leadership to Give Peace a Chance."

The meeting was the first joint effort of over 60 organizations and political groups since the Aquino visit last September.

Ambassador Pelaez expressed assurances that "the government of Cory Aquino will do everything it can to bring the perpetrators of this murder to justice."



Olalia murder sparked actions in U.S. Filipino community.

The D.C. response to Enrile's fascist maneuvers was led by Jon Melegrito and KABAYAN representative Gerry Jumat who roused the crowd to a militant shouting of "Enrile Resign!" This was followed by a call to the community to recommit itself to defending democracy so that the people's gains in the February revolution will prevail.

In Los Angeles, the Olalia murder generated a protest November 17. The CAMDI, Alliance for Philippine Concerns, the Liberal Party and the Ninoy Aquino Movement co-sponsored a demonstration to condemn the murder and call for "Justice for Olalia," "Give Peace a Chance," and "No to Fascist Terrorism." Acting Consul General Pete Chan was present at the demonstration.

CAMDI-Toronto reacted swiftly to the

murder by holding a peace vigil at the Peace Garden, a square across the Toronto city hall. A coalition made up of the Philippine Human Rights Committee, the Canadian Campaign for Philippine Reconstruction, the Ninoy Aquino Memorial Institution, Movement for a Free Philippines, and Project: Ang Bata issued a joint statement calling for peace and an end to terrorist tactics by rightist military elements.

The groups met with Consul General Juan Ona who subsequently issued a strongly-worded statement denouncing the murder.

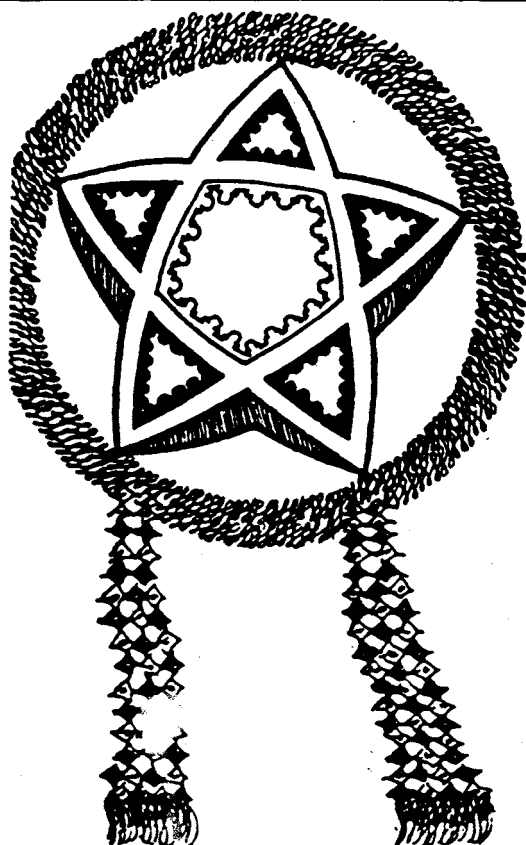
TRICK OR THREAT

In Seattle, November 22, a vigil for democracy drew about 35 participants from peace, church, and Filipino community organizations. The speakers—Joe Pascual of SANDIWA, Greg Castilla of

FACE and Esther Simpson of CAMDI—highlighted the threat to peace and the looming fascist restoration.

In Montreal, New York, San Francisco and Hawaii, community discussions focused on the Philippine crisis. On Halloween, October 31, democratic supporters in Los Angeles organized an "Enrile Haunting Party" with the theme "Trick or Threat." Enrile masks and skulls were distributed in a rally held in front of the Marcos' crony-owned California Overseas Bank's main office. The 40 "tricksters" from NAM, CAMDI, LP, and *Tulong sa Bayan* were covered by local television news teams.

All told, the series of mass events held nationwide signified the community's preparedness to come to the defense of the Philippines' fledgling democracy. □



Maligayang Pasko

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PETA Comes to Town

By SCOTT ROSENBERG

Reprinted from San Francisco Examiner
December 1, 1986, "Philippine Message on Stage."

The story of Malakas and Maganda is a Philippine creation myth: They're the nation's Adam and Eve, released from the innards of a bamboo tree by a mighty bird.

"Oath to Freedom (*Panata sa Kalayaan*)," a theatre piece by the Philippine Educational Theatre Association, is in the middle of presenting a stately dramatization of this myth when an actor falls out of step.

She complains to the narrator that the paintings of Malakas and Maganda she once saw in Malacañang, the Philippine White House, didn't look anything like the simple couple standing center stage—that the portraits bore an unmistakable resemblance to the nation's recent dictator and his wife.

And so the PETA troupe regroups for a parody version of the tale. Dancers in baby clothes hop about to Western party music. The "mighty bird" becomes a red-white-and-blue eagle. And the primeval couple turns into Ferdinand and Imelda, telling their people to "think big, bold and beautiful"—while hiding a quartet of starvelings behind banners depicting factories, highways and other fruits of the "New Society."

"Oath to Freedom," which PETA is presenting on its first world tour (it played November 29 in Oakland and will be performed December 3 at the Palace of Fine Arts), is a two-hour pageant of folklore, history, and current events, mixing music, dance, mime and monologue in a rough street-theatre style.

The piece craftily mixes traditional forms with agit-prop devices, and at its best, as with the Malakas and Maganda sequence, it explores the intersection of Filipino politics and culture in creative and often funny ways.

Much of "Oath to Freedom" is presented in a narrate-and-enact style that recalls the 1930s "Living Newspapers" of the Federal Theater Project. It concentrates on the tribulations of the Philippines under Marcos, as seen through the eyes of a factory worker, sugar-cutters on the island of Negros, and members of the Kalinga tribe—who are variously imprisoned,



T. Rocamora

made homeless, raped and shot.

Then it recounts the events leading up to Marcos' deposition, including the "snap election"—presented as a dance number in which supporters of Marcos and Aquino snap their fingers and square off like the gangs in "West Side Story."

To re-create the February revolution that followed, the PETA actors pass out yellow headbands and flowers and invite a portion of the audience on stage, to represent the masses who filled the streets to ensure Marcos' downfall. The crowd waves flags and chants "People Power!" while a nun prays, helicopters hover overhead and depart, tanks rumble and, finally, news arrives of Marcos' flight.

An epilogue—with a recitation of up-to-the-minute headlines, including last week's foiled coup and this week's ceasefire—outlines the problems that still beset the nation.

PETA has been around for nearly 20 years, and during most of that time its commitment to "people's theatre" left it at odds with the Marcos government. As "Oath to Freedom" reminds you of the various pledges American leaders offered Marcos almost to the end, you realize that the group's visit here would have been highly unlikely before last February.

Now the troupe travels as the Aquino government's "ambassadors of good will," and that's very much the

tone in which it offers its "Oath"—to both non-Filipino and Filipino-Americans. The two dozen actors speak in Tagalog and English; they don't translate everything, but they make sure English speakers will know what's going on.

The rhetoric of struggle in "Oath to Freedom" is overgrown in places, particularly at the finale, when banners that drop from the flies exhort, "Develop a people's culture," "Assert national sovereignty" and "Build a self-reliant economy"—laudable goals, clumsily urged.

More important, though, PETA manages to build a sense of connection between the audience and the events depicted, with the actors as intermediaries. That this is a story they have experienced and are still living is visible in the animation of the performers—whose raised arms, flexed legs, and bare feet come to represent everything from a map of their country to the anguish of their countrymen.

As much political ritual as social drama, "Oath to Freedom" is a kind of communion with recent history. At its end, in a traditional dance, the company weaves a blanket the size of the stage, with strips representing the different ethnic and political factions that must cleave to each other for the Philippines to survive and prosper. It's a memorable scene—and proof that one great image is worth a thousand slogans. □



Book Review:

SILENT STORIES

A New Generation Asks Old Questions

Independently published by Angel Shaw
57 Highridge Road, Mount Kisco, NY 10549

By VINCE REYES

The question *Silent Stories* asks is one familiar to Americans of Asian descent: "Who am I and how do I fit in the American melting pot?" Angel Shaw doesn't try to give clinical answers, she just lets her friends speak. Shaw admits that putting together into a book 18 full-page photographic portraits and interviews of her classmates at the California Institute of the Arts was her own way of dealing with her estrangement from her own land.

Typical of her questions are: "Do you think America has influenced you in any way; are you proud to be Chinese; do you see yourself as a Filipino first, American second, or as both together?"

Shaw says she "not only wanted to confront the convergence of very distinct cultures, but also how a foreigner immigrating into this country is treated and the self-scrutiny that goes on along with the compromises necessary for survival."

All of her subjects are in the midst of coming to grips with being Asian-Americans and give candid but not surprising responses to Shaw's inquiries.

"Every once in a while, I'd hear someone call me a 'chink' or something," says one. "At first, I wouldn't understand. I'm not a 'chink!' I'd get really hurt and wonder how they would say that to me and then I'd hate myself. I'd hate my appearance and I'd want to cover my face. I'd want to get rid of my eyes."

A few, particularly the immigrants, still maintain strong identification with their home country. A young man proudly proclaims "I've a strong background. Oriental culture, so the way I act is Oriental. Even though I've become more used to American way of life, basically, I'm still strongly, faithfully Oriental."

Others either do not fully understand their situation or are trying to ignore their encounters with racism. "I've been American since I was born—that's all there is to it, that's the way I am," says one.

"I find that if I go somewhere and people are staring at me, it's not because of my race, it's because of the way I look—my physical features. It's just that I don't really look like anybody else and they freak out."

One woman, whose parents' heirlooms from Japan were confiscated upon their internment in World War II prison camps for Japanese-Americans, was so outraged she still cannot bring herself to buy kimonos, samurai swords and other Japanese artifacts.

All of Shaw's classmates yearn for acceptance and it is apparent that all of them have thought about the problem for years. Some confess to being ashamed of certain aspects of their heritage. Still, it seems none has ever been aware of the Asian-American identity movement a decade or so ago. But this lack of awareness only exposes the need for more ethnically-oriented educational materials.

Silent Stories has no evident awareness of the popular ethnic identity movements of the late 1960s and early 1970s. During that period, many Asian-Americans were awakened by the Black and Chicano

power movements. These "radical" influences moved many young "hyphenated Americans" to pry open their own buried history.

Asian-Americans searched for their "roots" in the United States and found how racism and discrimination isolated the ghettos of Chinatown, interned 120,000 innocent Japanese-Americans and relegated Filipinos to back-breaking field labor.

A popular student movement, tied to the resistance to the Vietnam War, led to the establishment of ethnic studies programs. But despite the proliferation of Asian-American research projects and numerous publications, the Asian "identity" movement lost its momentum. Budget cutbacks and the political conservatism of the Reagan years have taken their toll.

Shaw, a 22-year-old Southern California-born Filipino seems to be inadvertently picking up from where the identity movement of the '70s left off. A new generation of Asian-Americans are asking the very same questions that were posed some 10 years earlier.

It would be easy for scholars to criticize Shaw for having such a limited sample for her subjects (art students). But to simply dismiss *Silent Stories* as an unsophisticated effort worthy of the spontaneous '70s is to miss its significance. It may not be a hefty addition to the existing bibliographies on the subject of Asian-Americans but *Silent Stories* is a sobering cry for solidarity. A new generation of Asian-Americans are now grappling with, in Shaw's words, "an unfulfilled need for the acceptance and validation of the Asian-American experience," and there is no movement out there to provide a direction. □

Tony Lee



The Story of a Letter

Carlos Bulosan (1913-1956) remains the premiere Filipino-American author. His many short stories, essays and poems captured the life experiences of the early pioneer Filipino immigrants. Bulosan's major novel, *America is in the Heart*, conveyed the tenacity of Filipinos to courageously adjust to the oppressive social climate of the period which greeted them upon their arrival to these shores.

"The Story of a Letter" was first published in 1946—Ed.

By CARLOS BULOSAN

When my brother Berto was thirteen he ran away from home and went to Manila. We did not hear from him until eight years later, and he was by that time working in a little town in California. He wrote a letter in English, but we could not read it. Father carried it in his pocket all summer hoping the priest in our village would read it.

The summer ended gloriously and our work on the farm was done. We gathered firewood and cut grass on the hillsides for our animals. The heavy rains came when we were patching the walls of our house. Father and I wore palm raincoats and worked in the mud, rubbing vinegar on our foreheads and throwing it around us to keep the lightning away. The rains ceased suddenly, but the muddy water came down the mountain and flooded the river.

We made a bamboo raft and floated slowly along on the water. Father sat in the center of the raft and took the letter from his pocket. He looked at it for a long time, as though he were committing it to memory. When we reached the village church it was midnight, but there were many people in the yard. We tied our raft to the river bank and dried our clothes on the grass.

A woman came and told us that the priest had died of overeating at a wedding. Father took our clothes off the grass and we put them on. We untied our raft and rowed



In Movement

against the slow currents back to our house. Father was compelled to carry the letter for another year, waiting for the time when my brother Nicasio would come home from school. He was the only one in our family who could read and write.

When the students returned from the cities, Father and I went to town with a sack of fresh peanuts. We stood under the arbor tree in the station and watched every bus that stopped. We heated a pile of dry sand with burning stones and roasted peanuts. At night we sat in the coffee shop and talked to the loafers and gamblers. Then the last student arrived, but my brother Nicasio was not with them. We gave up waiting and went to the village.

When summer came again we plowed the land and planted corn. Then we were informed that my brother Nicasio had gone to America. Father was greatly disappointed. He took the letter from his pocket and

locked it in a small box. We put our minds on our work and after two years the letter was forgotten.

Toward the end of my ninth year, a tubercular young man appeared in our village. He wanted to start a school for the children and the men were enthusiastic. The drummer went around the village and announced the good news. The farmers gathered in a vacant lot not far from the cemetery and started building a schoolhouse. They shouted at one another with joy and laughed aloud. The wind carried their laughter through the village.

I saw them at night lifting the grass roof on their shoulders. I ran across the fields and stood by the well, watching them place the rafters on the long bamboo posts. The men were stripped to the waist and their cotton trousers were boldly rolled up to their thighs. The women came with their earthen jars and hauled drinking water, pausing in the clear moonlight to watch the men with secret joy.

Then the schoolhouse was finished. I heard the bells ring joyfully in the village. I ran to the window and saw boys and girls going to school. I saw Father on our *carabao*, riding off toward our house. I took my straw hat off the wall and rushed to the gate.

Father bent down and reached for my hands. I sat behind him on the bare back of the animal and we drove crazily to the schoolhouse. We kicked the animal with our heels. The children shouted and slapped their bellies. When we reached the school yard the *carabao* stopped without warning. Father fell on the ground and rolled into the well, screaming aloud when he touched the water. I grabbed the animal's tail and hung on it till it rolled on its back in the dust.

I rushed to the well and lowered the wooden bucket. I tied the rope to the post and shouted for help. Father climbed slowly up the rope to the mouth of the well. The bigger boys came down and helped me pull father out. He stood in the sun and shook the water off his body. He told me to go into the schoolhouse with the other children.

We waited for the teacher to come. Father followed me inside and sat on a bench at my back. When the teacher arrived we stood as one person and waited for him to be seated. Father came to my bench and sat quietly for a long time. The teacher started talking in our dialect, but he talked so fast we could hardly understand him.

When he had distributed some little Spanish books, Father got up and asked what language we would learn. The teacher told us that it was Spanish. Father asked him if he knew English. He said he knew only Spanish and our dialect. Father took my hand and we went out of the schoolhouse. We rode the *carabao* back to our house.

Father was disappointed. He had been carrying my brother's letter for almost three years now. It was still unread. The suspense was hurting him and me, too. He wanted me to learn English so that I would be able to read it to him. It was the only letter he had received in all the years that I had known him, except some letters that came from the government once a year asking him to pay his taxes.

When the rains ceased, a strong typhoon came from the north and swept away the schoolhouse. The teacher gave up teaching and married a village girl. Then he took up farming and after two years his wife gave birth to twins. The men in the village never built a schoolhouse again.

I grew up suddenly and the desire to go see other places grew. It moved me like a flood. It was impossible to walk a kilometer away from our house without wanting to run away to the city. I tried to run away a few times, but whenever I reached the town, the farm always called me back. I could not leave Father because he was getting old.

Then our farm was taken away from us. I decided to go to town for a while and live with Mother and my two little sisters. I left the farm immediately, but Father remained in the village. He came to town once with a stack of wild tomatoes and bananas, but the village called him back again.

I left our town and travelled to other places. I went to Baguio in the northern part of the Philippines and worked in the marketplace posing in the nude for American tourists who seemed to enjoy the shameless nudity of the natives. An American woman, who claimed that she had come from Texas, took me to Manila.

She was a romantic painter. When we arrived in the capital she rented a nice large house where the sun was always shining. There were no children of my age. There were men and women who never smiled. They spoke through their noses. The painter from Texas asked me to undress every morning; she worked industriously. I had never dreamed of making my living by exposing my body to a stranger. That experience made me roar with laughter for many years.



In Movement

One time, while I was still at the woman's house, I remembered the wide ditch near our house in the village where young girls used to take a bath in the nude. A cousin of mine stole the girls' clothes and then screamed behind some bushes. The girls ran at random with their hands between their legs. I thought of this incident when I felt shy, hiding my body with my hands from the woman painter. When I had saved a little money I took a boat for America.

I forgot my village for a while. When I went to a hospital and lay in bed for two years, I started to read books with great hunger. My reading was started by a nurse who thought I had come from China. I lied to her without thinking of it, but I made a good lie. I had had no opportunity to learn when I was outside in the world but the security and warmth of the hospital had given it to me. I languished in bed for two years with great pleasure. I was no longer afraid to live in a strange world and among strange peoples.

Then at the end of the first year, I remembered the letter of my brother Berto. I crept out of bed and went to the bathroom. I wrote a letter to Father asking him to send the letter to me for translation. I wanted to translate it, so that it would be easy for him to find a man in our village to read it to him.

The letter arrived in America six months later. I translated it into our dialect and sent it back with the original. I was now better. The doctors told me that I could go out of the hospital. I used to stand by the window for hours asking myself why I had forgotten to laugh in America. I was afraid to go out into the world. I had been confined too long. I had forgotten what it was like on the outside.

I had been brought to the convalescent ward when the Civil War in Spain started some three years before. Now, after the peasants' and workers' government was crushed, I was physically ready to go out into the world and start a new life. There was some indignation against fascism in all the civilized lands. To most of us, however, it was the end of a great cause.

I stood at the gate of the hospital, hesitating. Finally, I closed my eyes and walked into the city. I wandered in Los Angeles for some time looking for my brothers.

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Breathing Space

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neutralize such a plot, if any, and to reorient any personnel involved in [your] respective commands."

But Ramos' earlier hesitation to declare himself fully and his desire to maintain a middle course won him the nickname Hamlet ("He is still deciding to be or not to be," said one government official.). Unlike Shakespeare's Prince of Denmark, however, the military chief's temporizing came not from a tragic flaw or lack of personal courage, but from a keen sense of timing possessed by any fine military tactician. He also believes genuinely in the supremacy of civilian rule.

But even if the Chief of Staff should throw his full weight behind the President, there still remained one problem. Could Ramos fully unite the military after nine months of lobbying by Enrile and his boys?

The bright young RAM colonels which formed the nucleus of the National Defense Ministry staff had recruited and expanded their following by linking up with Marcos supporters. No one knew the actual size of their network. Could Ramos isolate them if he decided to abandon his own principle of keeping the military out of politics?

CUT FROM THE SAME CLOTH

That question was answered in the affirmative during the late hours of November 22 and the early morning of the following day. Shortly after midnight the Chief of Staff instructed his commanders, "Disregard any orders from the Ministry of Defense or Col. Honasan and the Ministry of National Defense staff." His order was followed.

With Enrile out of the picture, the process of unifying the military could now be tackled. As the first step, Aquino immediately replaced her tormentor with Deputy Defense Minister Rafael Ilete. Formerly Vice Chief of Staff and Ambassador to Iran and Thailand, Ilete is a low-keyed professional highly regarded for both his military and diplomatic skills (see story, page 7). He is cut from the same cloth as Ramos and the two are personally close. In fact, when Ramos finally began making comments obliquely critical of Enrile, he went over the text with Ilete first.

300,000 MARCH FOR SLAIN LEADER

To please her military supporters, Aquino announced that she had given government peace negotiators "until the end of the month to produce a ceasefire or terminate all further discussions." She made the announcement at the same time she reported Enrile's departure.

The left had earlier called off the talks in response to the vicious murder of Rolando Olalia, leader of both the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (May First Movement) and *Partido ng Bayan* (People's Party). The Olalia slaying was seen as yet another element in the destabilization campaign perpetrated by Enrile and company.

Observers suspected that Olalia's murder was related to his pledge only days earlier to bring the ranks of the KMU into the streets to defend Aquino should a coup take place. This suggested that all cause-oriented groups of the left were preparing to mobilize in support of the President.

Olalia's funeral march brought out 300,000, reportedly the largest left-led demonstration in Manila ever, and reminded political forces of all stripes that the one group still most able to mobilize "people power" was the left.

During the march itself the group reiterated its support for Aquino. Stopping at the gates to the presidential palace, marchers presented government officials with a letter urging Aquino to "Draw your strength from the masses now at your

doorstep."

With Enrile gone, the left was quick to see that lost political ground could be regained with the signing of a ceasefire. By calling for a boycott and standing in the wings during the presidential campaign, the organized left had taken itself out of the center of the anti-Marcos opposition for the first time since 1972. Now was the time to leap back into the center of the political stage. Two days after Enrile's departure, the negotiators were at it again for a marathon eight-hour session.

The final draft of a 60-day ceasefire was signed on November 28, the 58th birthday of Aquino's late husband Benigno. Doves were released, balloons and yellow banners flew, flowers were tossed as Manila rejoiced over the peace. Incredibly, a rainbow burst over the posh Club Filipino precisely as the signatories set their names to paper.

The ceasefire goes into effect December 10, International Human Rights Day, and means that, for the first time in 19 years, Filipinos will have a Christmas without a civil war.

The terms represent concessions by both sides. In spite of military lobbying, the National Democratic Front will be allowed to set up a headquarters in Manila absolutely free from all forms of harassment. Fifty safe-conduct passes will be issued for participants in the next stage of negotiations which will begin in 30 days and take up questions related to a permanent peace (see story, page 7). The government also agreed to drop from its list of "hostile acts" the New People's Army's collection of progressive taxation in the areas over which it exercises control.

RAMOS' COUP

But while Manila rejoiced, cold-eyed observers were quick to note the fragility of the peace. It was, noted one, a glass house that a single stray shot, one gesture of bad faith, could bring it all down.

Members of the Philippine military grumbled that they could not trust the NPA. "I fear we got the short end of the stick. . ." complained Vice Chief of Staff Salvador Mison. "We got the cease and

"Ramos . . . achieved the objective of unity within the armed forces, a cabinet reshuffle and a ceasefire—all in exchange for neutralizing Enrile."

they got the fire," complained another officer.

But the NPA had its own grounds for concern as proven by comments straight from the horse's mouth. Mison worried openly with one journalist about the amount of hatred generated over the last 19 years: "If I were a soldier who lost a buddy and I see a [rebel] I suspect, I'll shoot him. I won't be thinking of the national good."

It wasn't just the fragility of the ceasefire that cast a shadow over the festivities. Aquino's forced move to the right and the new prominence of the non-fascist military elements in her government were impossible to ignore.

"Ramos really got what he wanted," complained one liberal government official. "It was almost his own coup. He achieved



Left flexes its muscle in record mobilization for Olalia funeral.

the objective of unity within the armed forces, a cabinet reshuffle and a ceasefire—all in exchange for neutralizing Enrile."

PRESSURE FROM ALL SIDES

Indeed the day after the peace accord was signed, Aquino accepted the resignations of two more cabinet members, Minister of Natural Resources and Public Works Ernesto Maceda and Rogaciano Mercado. Although they were targeted for corruption rather than questionable political loyalty, still they were replaced by technocrats of the Jaime Ongpin/Jose Conception stripe. This meant two more cabinet votes likely to go along with the will of Washington and the IMF-World Bank on economic matters.

Several days later, Aquino "demoted" prime rightwing target Aquilino Pimentel from his position as Minister of Local Governments to National Affairs Adviser. Brought in to replace Pimentel was Jaime Ferrer, a businessman and former Undersecretary of Agriculture under President Ramon Magsaysay with one-time ties to the Central Intelligence Agency. Word continued to circulate that left-leaning Augusto Sanchez was about to lose his position as Labor Minister.

Clearly Aquino was trying to resist the rightward thrust by keeping Pimentel in her cabinet and dragging her feet on Sanchez' replacement. But the pressure was strong and not just from the military. The right end of her spectrum of advisers, in particular the clerical reformers of the organization *Opus Dei* such as Christian Monsod and Fr. Joaquin Bernas, S.J., were pushing for the cabinet shakeup. The coup crisis provided an ideal opportunity to position themselves against the radical reformers within Aquino's cabinet and larger circle of supporters.

Washington threw in its two cents early on. Having decided that, despite her mildly independent tendencies, Aquino was the only force that could unite the Philippines, U.S. representatives used a variety of means to let Enrile know his plans were absolutely unacceptable. Reportedly, representatives of a U.S. military think tank met with the Defense Minister to inform him that troops from Clark and Subic would be deployed if necessary to protect Aquino from a coup attempt.

Within weeks "Contragate" burst wide open upon the Reagan administration leaving the time ripe for allies with nationalistic tendencies such as Aquino to strike more in-

dependent notes as usual. Unfortunately, at precisely that moment the Philippine President found herself so besieged by her own domestic right that she was unable to take advantage of the opportunity.

BY INVITATION ONLY

Philippine centrists—those who orchestrated Aquino's presidential campaign—have become increasingly worried about the growing strength of the right and the newly legitimized left. "Whatever became of people's power?" a number of observers asked.

But now in office, Aquino's elite stripes have begun to show as she chooses to rely on established politicians and professionals rather than the faceless masses who brought her to power. Mistrust for those whose spontaneous uprising against Marcos brought the dictator down makes it difficult for the President and her staff to maintain their support.

Nowhere is this clearer than in the attempt by centrists forces to build a new mass movement to ratify the proposed Constitution. Organizers of the Coalition for Constitutional Approval deliberately named their organization so that its initials would correspond to those of the President. Its attempt to mobilize 285,000 for a November 30 rally produced 70,000.

Explained Nikki Coseteng, leader of an all-women's party, "Not everyone can join CCA. They choose who are the members." She and others fret over the centrists' inability to organize. The left, on the other hand, recently proved with the Olalia march that its tremendous organizing capacity remains.

Bringing people's power back to life remains a tremendously important issue. Juan Ponce Enrile may be out of the government for the first time in 20 years, but he is by no means out of the picture. He has already announced that he will resume the leadership of the Nacionalista Party. Marcos' old *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* (New Society Party) offered him their leadership. Although he turned it down, he remains ideally suited to unite the most backward elements in Philippine society against Aquino and continue to destabilize the fledgling democracy.

Enrile has announced that he intends to campaign against ratification of the Constitution. It will take a great deal more than a by-invitation-only movement to isolate him and keep him on the sidelines where he belongs. □

Constitution

Continued from page 3

elite democracy which limited participation in the legislature to members of the political elite, the new Constitution reserves 50 seats out of 250 in the House of Representatives according to a party-list system. The party-list system includes individuals or organizational representatives who are elected or selected on the basis of a declared political platform. Half of the 50 seats are allocated to sectoral representatives from labor, urban poor, indigenous cultural minorities, women, youth, and other sectors as provided by law.

According to Consul Ric Marasigan of the Philippine Embassy's Legal Section, the intent of the party-list system is to provide under-represented groups who lack the party machinery and financial means to run in an election with a guaranteed voice in the House of Representatives.

Another attempt to enlist public input in the formulation of policies is the recognition of non-governmental, independent people's organizations. "The state shall by law facilitate the establishment of adequate consultation mechanisms," the Constitution mandates.

Article X, Section 15 on Local Government provides for the creation of autonomous regions in the tribal minority areas of Mindanao and the Cordilleras "within the framework of the territorial integrity of the Republic of the Philippines." While the extent of autonomy has yet to be defined, the Constitution charges the Congress, assisted by regional consultative councils drawn from a list of multisectoral nominees appointed by the president, with legislating "organic acts."

The "organic acts" shall define the basic structure of the government for a region. Both Houses are responsible for the formulation of the organic acts 18 months from the commencement of Congress.

FILIPINIZATION OF RESOURCES

In the economic realm, the Constitution includes

provisions designed to strengthen Filipino equity and protect Filipino nationals' exclusive rights to the nation's natural resources and marine life.

As with the '35 and '73 constitutions, the 1986 charter asserts that all natural resources are owned by the Philippine state, but adds that only the state can undertake the development, exploration, or exploitation of natural resources. The private sector can participate jointly. For large-scale mineral and oil exploration and exploitation, the President may engage the services of foreign-owned corporations with the provision that the state promote the development and use of local scientific and technical resources.

As to marine wealth, its use is exclusively appropriated for Filipino citizens. Foreigners, however, can own up to 40% equity in corporations and also receive franchises for the operation of public utilities. Although the equity ratio of Filipino vs. foreign capital remains the same (60 Filipino and 40 foreign owned), additional provisions designed to protect Filipino business, trade and local manpower, are included.

At best, the economic provisions seek to develop Filipino entrepreneurship and domestic industries against the comparative advantage of foreign investors. The Constitution, however, falls short of addressing the fundamental causes of the country's economic dependence on foreign investment.

This reflects the economic philosophy of the new administration which chooses to minimize state intervention and maximize the free play of market forces. Under this approach, foreign capital is viewed as a partner in economic development especially in large-scale projects. The possibility that state-owned industries, particularly public utilities and heavy industry, might flourish and thereby break dependence on foreign capital is not seriously entertained.

SOCIAL JUSTICE/SPECIAL SECTORS

The Constitution does not spell out its policy in detail regarding traditional demands of labor and the peasantry. Labor is accorded protection and guaranteed the right to organize, conduct collective bargaining and negotiate. It is also encouraged to participate in forming the policies affecting them.

The state, however, will promote the use of voluntary modes in the settling of disputes and places equal

burden on labor and management for maintaining industrial peace.

While espousing a policy of democratic land reform, the charter does not spell out its agrarian policy, deferring the matter to the future Congress: "The state shall undertake the just redistribution of all agricultural lands, subject to such priorities and reasonable retention limits as Congress may prescribe." Small landowners will be given special consideration in determining land retention limits. Agricultural cooperatives however, are promoted, and landowners provided with incentives to invest in rural development.

As to the urban poor, a rapidly expanding sector, the state will cooperate with the private sector in making affordable housing available. Eviction and arbitrary resettlement are forbidden without consulting the affected communities.

The new charter marks some advances on the subject of women's rights. It recognizes their special needs in child-bearing and rearing and affirms state support for their participation in nation-building. But other provisions discriminate against women by "protecting the rights of the unborn," and regarding marriage as an inviolable institution. Women still have no control over their reproductive rights and are denied the right to divorce.

The provisions concerning women reflect the continuing influence of the Catholic hierarchy on the Aquino government, a force which supported the February revolution, but has now returned to its more commonly conservative character.

RATIFICATION ASSURED

An all-out drive for new voter registration has already been quite successful and the public seems eager to consolidate the gains of the February revolution via the new Constitution.

Forces on the right, under the leadership of former Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, have announced their intention to campaign actively against the charter. Some members of the organized left intend to remain neutral. But the leftwing *Partido ng Bayan* has endorsed the Constitution and Aquino supporters have launched a massive drive to see it ratified. Observers thus suspect that it will pass with some room to spare. □

Tokyo Visit

import of intermediate goods, such as preprocessed materials, in order to leave the most profitable aspects of the production process for Japanese factories.

MARCOS ERA

Under Marcos' rule, Japanese penetration of the Philippine economy only intensified. During the first five years of martial law, Japanese investments dramatically multiplied from \$2.5 million in 1972 to \$203 million by the end of 1977. In the process, Japan became the second largest foreign investor in the country, second only to the U.S., and further surpassed the U.S. as the Philippines' largest trading partner.

Marcos' warm welcome to Japanese business was no doubt influenced by the extension of hefty loans to Manila by the

Japanese government. Between 1971 and 1985, Tokyo delivered to Malacañang through the Economic Corporation Fund \$2.25 billion in loans and credits.

A probe initiated last summer by the Aquino government uncovered evidence of Marcos' misuse of the Japanese aid money. Marcos reportedly used Japanese yen loans to line his pocket and those of his cronies through such schemes as over-priced contracts with private Japanese companies.

Further evidence suggested that a portion of the kickbacks acquired by Marcos and his cronies from such schemes went back to Japan in the form of Marcos' political contributions to leading Japanese politicians. Japanese law prohibits political contributions from foreign sources.

Not surprisingly, the Manila probe and

consequent revelations sparked strong tensions between the two governments, barely avoiding a crisis in relations.

Fearing the loss of its badly-needed loans from Tokyo, the Aquino government probe has since adopted a quiet approach to the matter, preferring instead to tend to more urgent needs.

Malacañang apparently realizes the stabilization of the country's financial and economic situation presently takes precedence above all other concerns. While the Philippines must justifiably continue to avail of aid from Japan as well as other developed Western countries in order to bail itself out of its foreign debt crisis, it is becoming increasingly clear that the only viable long-term avenue for economic development and independence is through the more all-sided diversification of its trade relations. □

Continued from page 4

also secured a highly beneficial trade outlet with a country richly endowed with natural resources that Japan sorely lacked. The inevitable result was an uneven trade relationship in which Japanese finished products netted considerably higher profits than Philippine raw materials.

Further heightening an already huge advantage over its Philippine trading partner, the Japanese government erected protectionist measures that banned the

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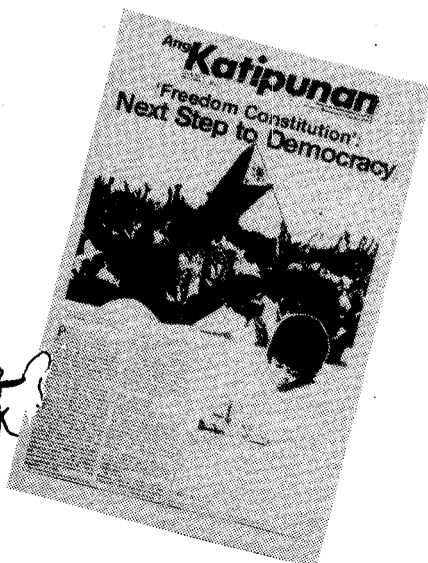
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Story of a Letter

Continued from page 11

They had been separated from me since childhood. We had, separately and together, a bitter fight for existence. I had heard that my brother Nicasio was in Santa Barbara, where he was attending college. Berto, who never stayed in one place for more than three months at a time, was rumored to be in Bakersfield waiting for the grape season.

I packed my suitcase and took a bus to Santa Barbara. I did not find my brother there. I went to Bakersfield and wandered in the streets asking for my other brother. I went to Chinatown and stood in line for the free chop suey that was served in the gambling houses to the loafers and gamblers. I could not find my brother in either town. I went to the vineyards looking for him. I was convinced that he was not in that valley. I took a bus for Seattle.

The hiring halls were full of men waiting to be shipped to the canneries in Alaska. I went to the dance halls and poolrooms. But I could not find my brothers. I took the last boat to Alaska and worked there for three months. I wanted to save my money so that I could have something to spend when I returned to the mainland.

When I came back to the United States, I took a bus to Portland. Beyond Tacoma, near the district where Indians used to force the hop pickers into marriage, I looked out the window and saw my brother Berto in a beer tavern. I knew it was my brother although I had not seen him for many years. There was something in the way he had turned his head toward the bus that made me think I was right. I stopped at the next town and took another bus back to Tacoma. But he was already gone.

I took another bus and went to California. I stopped in Delano. The grape season was in full swing. There were many workers in town. I stood in the poolrooms and watched the players. I went to a beer place and sat in a booth. I ordered several bottles and pondered over my life in America.

Toward midnight a man in a big overcoat came in and sat beside me. I asked him to drink beer with me without looking at his face. We started drinking together and then, suddenly, I saw a familiar face in the dirty mirror on the wall. I almost screamed. He was my brother Nicasio—but he had grown old and emaciated. We went outside and walked to my hotel.

The landlady met me with a letter from the Philippines. In my room I found that my letter to Father, when I was in the hospital, and the translation of my brother Berto's letter to him had been returned to me. It was the strangest thing that ever happened to me. I had never lived in Delano before. I had never given my forwarding address to anybody. The letter was addressed to me at a hotel I had never seen before.

It was now ten years since my brother Berto had written the letter to Father. It was eighteen years since he had run away from home. I stood in the center of my room and opened it. The note attached to it said that Father had died some years before. It was signed by the postmaster of my town.

I bent down and read the letter—the letter that had driven me away from my village and had sent me half way around the world—read it the very day a letter came from the government telling me that my brother Berto was already serving in the Navy—and the same day that my brother Nicasio was waiting to be inducted into the Army. I held the letter in my hand and, suddenly, I started to laugh—choking with tears at the mystery and wonder of it all.

"Dear Father (my brother wrote): America is a great country. Tall buildings. Wide good land. The people are walking. But I feel sad. I am writing you this hour of my sentimental. Your son.—Berto."

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Contragate

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fine details.

Since no one in the White House has admitted to having been at the helm of the operation, the public has asked, then "What did the President know and when did he know it?" This same question was asked over and over again at the start of the Watergate scandal.

The refusal of all responsible individuals to admit to knowing the score leads inevitably to the conclusion that the administration is either lying or out of control. If the President does not make the decisions in the White House, who does? Non-professionals with little accountability to the President? This is hardly the picture Reagan tried to paint when he came to power as an advocate of national and presidential strength out to shake the U.S. from the doldrums and inflict mortal wounds on all its enemies.

With the unfolding of his own Watergate and two more years to his term, President Reagan faces the bleak prospect of his agenda going down the drain. There is no question that the scandals have affected his ability to govern.

His popularity has ebbed dramatically. The recent *New York Times*/CBS News poll showed Reagan's public approval rating down by 21 points, the sharpest one-month drop ever recorded in measuring presidential job performance.

DEMOCRATS ITCH TO MAKE POLITICAL HAY

Republicans are worried about the rapid decline of the President's popularity. It has been said that Vice President Bush's long period of silence on the matter came from his attempt to unhitch his star from Reagan's wagon.

But without a doubt, the Republicans' loss of Senate control has contributed to the crisis. As Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.),



U.S. News and World Report

Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, put it, "The Republican Senate gave [the White House] a good deal of protection these past six years but that shield is gone."

How far an investigating committee will go, and what will result from its findings are still uncertain. While Watergate is on everyone's mind and lips, no one has mentioned the possibility of a Reagan downfall. So far, the media have been careful to parallel but not equate Reagan with Richard Nixon.

The clearest and greatest impact of the scandal will be on U.S. foreign policy. Many members of Congress are getting ready to shorten the President's tether in this department. Most seriously threatened of Reagan's policy points is military aid to the contras. Other proposals under consideration by Congress are curtailment of the activities of the NSC, limiting the CIA's role in covert operations, and restricting private arms dealers. Also, Con-

gress is less willing to go along with the President on the issue of "Star Wars."

In the light of the Iran-Contra affair, a direct U.S. military invasion of Nicaragua now seems less likely. More significantly, the elaborate undercover network of government and "private" operatives who are abetting the contras are now in considerable disarray. Adolfo Calero of the United Nicaraguan Opposition, the umbrella organization leading the contra insurgency, has admitted that Contragate may have doomed them.

In Europe, a rebellious note has crept into U.S. relations with its allies. Already contemplating the possibility of a crippled Reagan administration, the Western Europeans are voicing unhappiness at Reagan's decision to break the SALT II nuclear arms treaty. *Le Monde* in Paris put it succinctly: "With the Iran affair and now with regards to arms, one has more and more difficulty seeing the logic of American policy."

In an effort to repair some of the damage, George Shultz and the experts at the State Department have been placed back in charge of foreign policy. The cowboys in the NSC and the chief cowboy himself have been forced to come to grips with the fact that the world is just a wee bit more complicated than they would like to think.

Professionals in Congress and the various departments dealing with international relations are likely to keep their eyes glued on Reagan for the remainder of his term. It is not so much that they disagree with the President's objectives. They too would like to see U.S. imperialism back in charge of a world becoming more independent by the day.

But it has now become fairly clear that Reagan and his California ideologues form a fairly dangerous bunch. And as long as their fingers are on the trigger, they will require some close monitoring by cooler heads. □

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Contragate: Reagan Reined In?

By OFELIA O. VILLERO

President Ronald Reagan's "give-em-hell" foreign policy is in trouble, in the wake of disclosures of U.S. secret dealings with Iran and the diversion of funds to the Nicaraguan contras from the Iranian arms sales.

Despite some controversial foreign policy moves in recent months, criticisms did not seem to stick to the "teflon" President. But this time they are: the administration has been caught red-handed, violating its own stated policy prohibiting arms sales to "terrorist" countries and financing the military operations of the Nicaraguan contras in direct violation of congressional restrictions.

With Congress now firmly in the hands of the Democrats, the revelations have created—at least in the short run—a very unfavorable political situation for Reagan, and the possibility of a lame-duck presidency now looms much larger.

REAGAN ISSUES DENIAL

Already being dubbed "Irangate" or "Contragate," the scandal has taken on an ominous similarity to Watergate, minus the charges of a cover-up like the one masterminded by former President Richard Nixon. Attorney General Edwin Meese's acquiescence to the call for an independent counsel and President Reagan's pledge to get to the bottom of the sordid affair have lessened the sting. Nevertheless, the daily flow of facts coming out of the Senate Intelligence Committee investigations and the media's exposés threaten to make the impact of the Iran-Contra affair as damaging as Watergate.

While Congress has not yet come out with formal charges of violations of U.S.



Reagan and his "cowboys": bucking an unpopular foreign policy landed them in trouble.

ceived string of Ronald Reagan's foreign policy bloopers. In an editorial entitled "What's Wrong in the White House?" the *New York Times* stated that "the signs remain unmistakable: The Reagan Administration's foreign policy is coming unglued."

"Look back over the last three months. The deal with Iran, which still has the odor of a hasty swap of arms for hostages, follows closely on the ill-prepared negotiations with the Russians in Reykjavik. That followed the Hasenfus arms-supply affair in Nicaragua, which came only days

that the arms shipments were miniscule—"it could fit in a small cargo plane." They were actually substantial and could affect the turn of events in the Iran-Iraq war. As *Newsweek* put it, 2,008 TOW anti-tank missiles, along with parts for Hawk anti-aircraft missiles and Phoenix air-to-air missiles are more than enough to overload the biggest cargo plane in the world.

In addition, according to a senior White House official, the replacement of the TOWs alone was nearly \$20 million. "So far as we can tell, as much as \$50 million worth [of supplies] appears to have been sent out to Iran directly from the U.S. When you add the quantities shipped from Third World countries, primarily Israel, [and paid for by Washington] the total could be \$100 million or more."

The lies about the quantity of arms shipment paled in comparison to the later revelation that the arms shipments were so secret that the joint chiefs of staff, Secretary of State George Shultz, Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, and the U.S. Congress did not know anything about them. Only a handful of "cowboys"

implication, criticized Reagan's decision. With Shultz out of the picture, the full responsibility for the mess was laid at the doorstep of Reagan and his NSC aides.

Pressured from all sides to undo his blunder, Reagan tried to blame it on the underlings and fired both North and Poindexter whom he labelled "national heroes." Neither one was deprived of his office key for several days, however, and it was later found that they returned to shred documents.

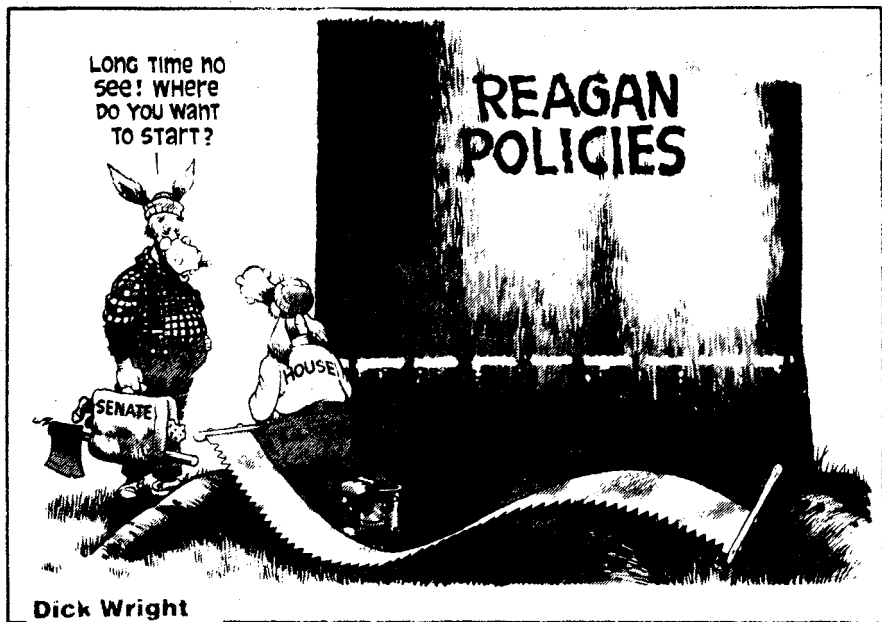
PROVIDING ILLEGAL CONTRA AID

The President admitted that, in direct violation of the highly sensitive Boland Amendment, the funds that came from the sale of arms to Iran, about \$30 million, were diverted for use by the anti-Sandinista rebels in Nicaragua. The Central Intelligence Agency opened a Swiss bank account into which Iran paid money for the purchase of U.S. arms. The bank account was then used to accumulate arms money for the contras. The planes and crews contracted by the State Department to carry "humanitarian aid" to the contras were used to supply them with weapons.

The Boland Amendment, attached to U.S. foreign aid appropriations, prohibited any form of aid or involvement by the U.S. government in support of the contra war. The diversion of funds occurred while the Boland Amendment was in force, well before Congress finally voted \$100 million for contra aid in its last session.

Other laws violated in the Iran-Contra affair include the Arms Export Control Act and the National Security Act. The former governs the transfer of U.S. military weapons to any foreign buyer—even when the weapons are actually sold by a third country acting as a middleman. The act says all commercial arms sales must be licensed by the State Department, cleared by the Department of Defense and the President must notify Congress in advance of any sale of more than \$14 million worth of U.S. arms.

The National Security Act requires "timely" notification to Congress of covert operations such as the Iranian weapons deal. The findings in the investigations show that the President violated both laws.



Dick Wright
Providence Journal
Bulletin

law, the disclosures alone have been enough to create a scandal of international proportions. Shock and dismay are being expressed not only by the President's consistent critics, but also by his own Republican Party and U.S. allies around the world.

The first disclosure appeared in the pages of a pro-Syrian newspaper in Beirut which exposed the connection between U.S.-endorsed secret arms shipment to Iran, either directly from the United States or through Israel, and the release of American hostages.

Reagan immediately issued a denial, saying that the arms supply to Iran was done to show "good faith" to a "moderate faction" in the Ayatollah Khomeini's government. But subsequent investigations proved that the release of the hostages came after the arms shipment to Iran and it was doubtful whether a moderate faction existed at all.

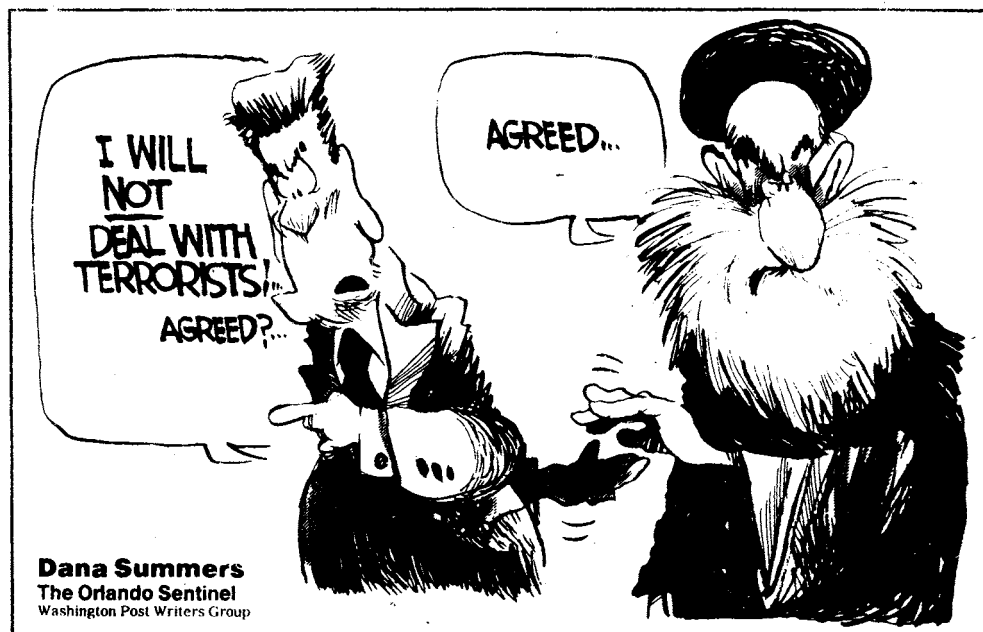
The Iranian disclosures capped the per-

after exposure of the administration's disinformation policy of lying on Libya." Then too there was the administration's little-believed insistence that it was not trading Soviet scientist Gennady Zakharov for journalist Nicholas Daniloff.

The secret dealings with Iran struck a raw nerve within the public and among U.S. Western allies. After internalizing the Reagan administration's moralistic hype about terrorism, the American public could not comprehend the contradiction posed by the arms shipment to Iran. The allies, on the other hand, were aghast at the U.S. violation of its own policy even while the Reagan administration was pressuring them to toughen their stand on terrorism.

More important, the Iran-Contra deal undermined the U.S. "anti-terrorist" stand—the moral and ideological rationale used by the administration for military intervention.

Soon after the initial disclosure, a pattern of lies began to emerge. Reagan insisted



in the National Security Council, notably Admiral John Poindexter, Lt. Col. Oliver North, and former National Security Adviser Robert McFarlane, knew what was happening. In his testimony before the Senate Intelligence Committee, McFarlane claimed that the President knew about the shipments and had given the go-ahead to the scheme.

Secretary of State Shultz deliberately distanced himself from the affair and, by

PRESIDENT'S POPULARITY PLUNGES

Reagan insists that he too was kept in the dark about the diversion of funds to the Nicaraguan rebels. The same tune is being sung by Chief of Staff Donald Regan and Vice President George Bush who claim to have been informed of the generalities of the operation but not the

Continued on page 14