

ang KATIPUNAN

VOLUME II, No. 2

West Coast Supplement

February 1-15, 1980

TENSION MOUNTS OVER YOUTH SLAYING

By JESSICA ORDONA
AK Correspondent

SAN FRANCISCO—A recent shooting incident at Woodrow Wilson High School spotlighted problems among Filipino youth in this city.

Two weeks after the incident, a *San Francisco Chronicle* front page article magnified the issue by singling out "ethnic rivalry" between Filipino and Latino youths.

On Jan. 16, Arturo Duran, a Latino 9th grade student at Wilson High was allegedly shot by a Filipino youth with a .38 revolver. Duran died the following day.

Earlier that day, a Filipino student was reportedly "flirting" with a Latina student, earning the ire of her boyfriend. The Filipino youth was challenged to a fight during lunch hour in front of the schoolyard. Witnesses stated that Duran accompanied the boyfriend to the meeting place, together with another student. All of a sudden, a red Toyota emerged near the school gate, and an unidentified Filipino youth pulled out a .38 and shot Duran in the temple.

On Jan. 19, a 17-year-old Filipino youth was arrested by members of the San Francisco Police Department Gang Task Force at a South of Market neighborhood and charged with Duran's murder.

Both Latino and Filipino community people expressed grave concern over the shooting incident; phone calls flooded school and police authorities inquiring about the case. Duran's father, Arturo Sr., appealed to Arturo's friends not to seek revenge. "...If anyone else is killed, the only ones who suffer will be the parents. They are the ones who have to endure the funeral and all the sorrow that comes with losing a son," he commented.

Adding to the tension was the *Chronicle* story of Filipino and Latino youths



San Francisco's Filipino youth, such as those above, have become target of sensationalized articles by the S.F. Chronicle.

"out to get each other."

'UNFAIR' REPORTING HIT

"I felt the article in the *Chronicle* was unfair...it was a story that shouldn't have been written," said Police Officer Dan Inocencio, who is currently assigned at Wilson High. "It was something that eventually would have calmed down and everyone would have been friends again. Because of the article, it's going to take a while before things are back to normal again."

Inocencio, a Filipino-Mexican, was

assigned to Wilson High for about a year before he was pulled out a week before the incident happened. He is now reassigned at the school premises "until things quiet down."

Inocencio disputed the *Chronicle's* reporting that made it sound as if ethnic students attend school "armed to their teeth."

"I got to know those kids pretty well," he said. "I really don't think a lot of the kids carry guns and knives. That's not true. Some kids can get weapons...it's not like when I grew up, it was unheard of. But I don't think the kids at Wilson

High—the ones I know—are the type who carry guns and knives.

Inocencio did not deny there were minor "skirmishes" that happen in school occasionally.

LATINO VS FILIPINO RIVALRY A MYTH

"All kids in high school get into fights," continued Inocencio. "They break up in their little groups...Filipinos have the front of the school—that's where a lot of them stand around and hang out. Latin

Continued on page S-4

COMMENTARY:

Who is to Blame for Our Youth's Problems?

Regional Executive Board, No. Cal.

On Wednesday, Jan. 30, the *San Francisco Chronicle* printed a bold front page special report on "Latinos vs Filipinos: Ethnic Feud at Wilson High" by H.G. Reza. The article reported that racial tensions among youth gangs have flared up since the death of Arturo Duran, a Latino student at Woodrow Wilson High School, two weeks ago on Jan. 16.

Narrow ethnic allegiance in gang warfare is the thrust of Reza's Wednesday article followed by another article on Thursday, reporting on the school district's proposed repressive measures of closing campuses to control student activities.

It seems obvious that minority youth and their parents are being put on the spot by the *Chronicle* and the schools to account for the existence of crime and violence between their communities.

Filipino and Latino youth alike were

portrayed in the *Chronicle* article as defiant, carrying guns and switchblades, boasting threats of violence and shrugging off any feeling of guilt for the harm they bring one another.

What has the *San Francisco Chronicle* done? It has used an unfortunate incident to point the blame of criminal activity on the ethnic group which the youth represents.

It is true that gang warfare and ethnic feuds are problems that exist among our minority youth. But wouldn't it have been more responsible reporting to have analyzed the problem in its complexities rather than foment more antagonism among the minority communities as the *Chronicle* has done?

Instead of depicting minority youth as gangsters, questions should have been raised about youth gangs in general. For instance, what possible conditions drive young people to such activity? Who is to blame for these conditions?

The underlying point being made in

the *Chronicle* article is that Filipinos and Latino youths are thugs because their up-bringing is poor. In short, it is the fault of the Filipino and Latino parents for rearing criminal elements. Not only is this implied accusation racist, but it is a distortion of reality.

Most Filipino and Latino youth who live in the Mission district, South of Market and Daly City come from families who make up a large part of the unskilled labor force that work in the city's offices, hotels restaurants and stores. Like other minorities, Filipino and Latino families are daily confronted with the struggle to survive—the hassle to compete for jobs and fight the chronic unemployment that faces so many minority families. As minority workers, they belong to the unstable, unskilled, easy-to-replace section of the working class. As such, most of them take what they can get—low pay, long hours, graveyard shifts. Oftentimes, even this is not enough. Some parents have to hold down two jobs. This

puts a great strain on the family, as more time is spent in trying to get or maintain employment and less time is spent with their families. Often both parents are not home. They are unable to deal with their children's day-to-day problems not because they care less for their children but because they are occupied with their family's primary need—survival.

The same instability and poverty impact on the minority youth. On top of this, youth is a time of alienation—of searching for one's identity, groping for one's values, trying to find one's role in society. The minority homes, preoccupied and pressed down by the need to survive, hardly offer conducive conditions for this time of alienation.

The school is the other possible source of direction for the youth. However, the school system is part of the same system that oppresses and exploits their parents. Thus, the youth is further alienated by an education that is irrelevant as

Continued on page S-4

MANONG FIGHTS FOR BENEFITS

By LENI MARIN
AK Correspondent

"Life is too short. I don't want no medals. All I want is a pension to pay my bills. I am 70 years old and I am now feeling ill and sick from the action and the terrifying way."

These were the words of Cipriano Pascua, a native of Narvacan Illocos Sur.

Cipriano is unable to receive pension benefits from the U.S. government as compensation for his services in the Merchant Marines during World War II.

Depression Era Welcomes Him to America

Reminiscent of Carlos Bulosan's documentary on the first wave Filipino immigrants, Cipriano's life in the U.S. began in 1929 when he came to Seattle via Vancouver, Canada. Just like the young men of his time, he was eager to look for work. What jobs he found were the lowest paying and most menial ones.

First, he went to the Salinas farms in California. There he encountered conditions like snakes infesting his sleeping quarters. He then went back to San Francisco and took domestic jobs. It was the beginning of the Depression Era.

"We got paid 25-35 cents an hour if one was lucky to find a job," Cipriano said. "I used to put a chair near the breadlines and give haircuts for 10¢ a head. At the end of the day I would end up with \$1.60," he remembers.

TYPICAL ALASKERO LIFE

It was also at this period that Filipino men were recruited to work in Alaska canneries. Cipriano wanted badly to sign up for the cannery jobs. "To get a job in Alaska, I had to buy clothes from the contractor and also gamble in his organized game. Otherwise, you can't go to Alaska."

There he became a member of the Local 37, the Union for cannery workers.

He recalls the early thirties. "In 1934, the unions started to strike everywhere in the main seaports and big cities of the East and West Coasts. This was also the year that Social Security became law, but it did not become effective until 1937."

During the Alaska season of 1937, Cipriano was employed in Ekuk, Bristol Bay by the McNeil and Libby Company. His work involved making wooden crates with wires for packing salmon. Because of poor lighting in the building, a wire hit his left eye. It had to be removed.

By the early 1940's, excitement about the war in Europe was in every young man's mind. His job prospects dim because of his disability, and unaware of his right to Workman's Compensation, Cipriano left Alaska. He signed up with the Merchant Marines.

During the early part of World War II, Cipriano served as a pantryman in vari-



Cipriano (second from left) in earlier times. Now he is fighting for his retirement pension.

ous ships bringing American soldiers to different parts of the Pacific. His ship was in Hawaii when Pearl Harbor was attacked. In 1944 he was transferred to the ship, "Sea Train" on the East Coast. It sailed from New York to England. It was this time when the U.S. was bringing

huge amounts of supplies and soldiers to Europe. "My ship was badly damaged by Germans in the English Channel. I was hospitalized in England."

Soon the war ended. By 1947, the Merchant Marines like the rest of the military had excess personnel. It was a

Manong

*An old man in a three piece suit
Made four decades ago
Bows courteously as I pass by
(And the wilted carnation
Pinned to his chest, bows with him)
I catch the smiling eyes
Embracing imaginary ladies
In smoky taxi-dance halls
Escorting them down to borrowed
limousines for the night
I see the mangled arthritic hands
Deformed by years of picking vegetables
in farm camps,
from washing dishes and cleaning
table tops
In dingy restaurants
From packing fish in Alaska
canneries . . .
I see those tattered shoes
That walked miles from farm to farm
That ran from the shrieking crowds
That sought to skin his hide
And send him back to the 'jungles'
I saw the pain and weariness
Etched upon his brow
And caught a glimpse of a smile
That captured women in a fantasy
A lifetime dream of 'making it'
In America . . .
An old man in a three piece suit
Bows courteously at passing women
At the corner in Mission Street*

time when a lot of people were being discharged. Cipriano was fired in Feb. 1947. "I was accused of gambling in the ship. This was not true. They did this because I always refused to join the storekeeper and Chief Steward's games. I was no longer needed. The war was over."

THE BITTER PRICE OF HIS SERVICE

Desperately searching for a job, Cipriano went to the employment office for Veterans. There, he was handed a paper to fill out. Cipriano had only gone up to the 6th grade in the Philippines and his English comprehension was poor. He did not notice that he was filling out an application for a refund of his retirement benefits. This refund meant that he would waive pension benefits when he reached the age of retirement.

Soon after that, he landed a job with the Moore McCormack Company, a shipping company doing business with the U.S. government. Cipriano worked with this company until 1965. Then he joined another private shipping firm during the Vietnam War. "My ship was delivering bombs to Vietnam. I watched with disbelief as planes bombed Vietnamese barrios." He left that company in 1972.

It was in 1974 when Cipriano decided to apply for his pension benefits at the Civil Service Commission. To his surprise, a reply came stating that he was ineligible to receive pension since he had already obtained a refund. According to the Commission, checks were sent to him in the amount of \$38.84 dated May 17, 1950 and another for \$301.07 dated June 6, 1950.

Cipriano never received those checks. And he insists that he was never told that he was applying for a refund in 1950. All along, he thought he was applying for a job. His lawyer demanded copies of the refunded checks, but since the checks were sent several years ago, the records have already been destroyed.

For five years now, Cipriano has been seeking help from legal services and community workers to see if the Commission would reconsider his case. At this point, his problem is being taken up by the Social Concerns Committee of the Filipino Community of Seattle.

Meanwhile, his battle to survive continues. Cipriano is living alone on \$400 a month from his Social Security benefits. But the rising cost of food, housing and medicine eat up all of his income. This year will be his last season in Alaska too.

"All my life, I have experienced racial discrimination in this country. I've worked hard and have made a lot of contributions to this country. Back home, the American companies are enjoying the wealth of the Philippines. I think I am also entitled to benefits, especially after serving America in time of war and peace."

Filipino Immigrant Rights Task Force Formed in Seattle

SEATTLE—"We can no longer sit back and let the harassment of Filipino Immigrants go on. We must unite as a community to take up this issue," stated Connie Pacis, an active member of Seattle's Filipino community.

Mrs. Pacis was part of a group of concerned community people who recently met to discuss the growing problems facing Filipino immigrants' rights and the need to organize a Task Force in Seattle. The group, all of whom are active around various social concerns in the community met with Abe Ignacio from the National Task Force in Defense of Filipino Immigrant Rights. The meet-

ing discussed ways and means for Seattle to participate in the national network.

The Seattle Task Force will be one of the many task forces to be launched nationwide in cities where there is a large Filipino immigrant population. "Immigration problems are not just particular to one city or one part of the country. It is part of a growing anti-alien trend nationwide," Abe told the Seattle group. He added, "Because of this, we need a nationwide network that can link Filipino communities into a cohesive political force to counteract this trend."

This is not the first time the Seattle Filipino community has taken up the

defense of immigrant rights. Examples include: the threatened deportation of Filipino union leaders in the 1950's; and recently, the Carcellar SSI case. However, efforts to defend such cases remained scattered and isolated. A local Task Force can take up the issue of immigrant rights more systematically. It can also link itself to a national network of similarly concerned individuals and groups.

"It's about time that a group like this formed in Seattle, for we have many cases that go unattended," stated Zenaida Guerzon, who also attended the meeting.

At the conclusion of the meeting the participants all agreed that the Task Force has a lot of work to do to become an established and recognized group in the community. Accordingly, the following plans were outlined:

- 1) investigation of SSI legislation and SSI cases;
- 2) calling for a broader community meeting to allow other members of the community to participate; and
- 3) calling for a local conference in March or April. □

COMMUNITY LAUDS SSI WORK

By **WILLY BRIONES**
AK Correspondent

SAN FRANCISCO—An elderly Filipina hurriedly looked for change in her purse to buy an issue of the *Ang Katipunan*. She wanted to read the article on INS harassment of SSI recipients.

Upon getting her copy, she hurried back quickly to her friends, also elderly, and flipped through the paper. Their feelings over the news article were very obvious. When asked about their thoughts on the SSI issue, their only replies were grim silent looks at one another. When told that a Task Force has been organized to take on this issue, they were not sure how to respond.

The most recent targets of the INS are the Filipino elderly. And like the elderly described above, they have been shaken by the experience. Those affected are ages 62 to 85 who have come to the U.S. in the last four years. Their recent problems with the INS have come as a result of an attempt to exclude Filipino elderly who receive public benefits such as SSI. Exclusion has become a threat to many elderly who went back to the Philippines for a short stay because of a death or sickness in the family or for a "final visit."

The initial findings of the Bay Area Task Force for the Defense of Filipino Immigrant Rights showed most of them physically and emotionally shaken by their grueling experience with the INS inspectors.

Nonie Espiritu, co-coordinator of the Task Force and member of KDP, points out that "the INS questions their funda-

mental right to a decent living, to receive care through public assistance."

These elderly go through inhuman treatment when examined by INS officers. The elderly feel so intimidated that they lose their self-respect and self-confidence. "From the port of entry to their hearings, the INS belittles them in their line of questioning," said Llorete Tamayo, a task force co-coordinator and a social worker at the International Institute.

Take the case of Lola Carmen. "I have

not had enough sleep since they took my documents (alien registration card and passport) early last year. I cannot help but worry. My recently widowed daughter-in-law cannot really support me now. Even the INS officer who took the affidavit of support realized that. She has to support my grandchildren too." She whispered almost apologetically during an interview conducted by the Task Force with the elderly and their families.

Even Lola Onyang, sitting across from

Lola Carmen during the interview, is at a loss as to how she can financially manage, especially at her age. Quietly and intensely listening while rubbing her palms against each other, almost on the verge of tears, she blurted, "Yes, they also took my green card."

She continued in a quivering voice, "I have not heard from the INS since they took my card almost a year ago and suspended my SSI benefits." Lola Onyang mentioned that her insecurity is greater now that her son has three children, a different situation from when he first signed the affidavit of support for her.

"The predicament of SSI victims is similar throughout," reports Espiritu, based on interviews conducted all over the Bay Area, including Vallejo and Union City. "But there is no single organization or group that is handling cases before the INS. There is no coordinated effort to resist the harassment. That is why the Filipino People's Far West Convention launched the nationwide Task Force last year."

TASK FORCE WILL BUILD HARASSMENT RESISTENCE

"It is very timely," asserts Tamayo "that the Task Force be formed now. They (SSI recipients) are not aware of what they can do...We should make this issue well-known in the community because many are affected."

Tamayo also feels that the issue is largely a "responsibility of the whole community to take up." The strength of the community can mobilize a united force that will show the INS that they cannot do this to us. □

If you know of any Filipino elderly who have withdrawn from receiving SSI benefits because they went home to the Philippines for a visit, contact the coordinators of the San Francisco-Bay Area Task Force to Defend Filipino Immigrant Rights: Llorete Tamayo—221-7564 Nonie Espiritu—861-4476

The task force is also mobilizing the community to study this issue and determine the necessary action to resist the INS attacks. This will be in the form of a one-day conference. Those affected by this issue are especially invited.

"EDUCATE TO ORGANIZE"

A conference on Filipino Immigrant Rights Problems:

- Immigration exclusion of Filipino Elderlies receiving SSI
- Pending legislation that will affect rights of aliens to public assistance
- Other immigration issues (harassment of third preference visa professionals, H-1 visas for nurses, etc.)
- Role of Pres. Carter's Select Commission on Immigration

When: MARCH 1, Saturday
9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
6 to 7 p.m. (cultural presentation)

Where: Mission Cultural Center
2868 Mission Street (bet. 24th & 25th) San Francisco

clip and mail to Filipino Immigrant Services, 164 11th St., Oakland, CA 94607

- ☐ Yes I would like to attend the Conference, please register my name. I am enclosing my fee.
☐ No, I cannot attend but please send me more information on this issue.

Name _____

Address _____ Zip _____

Phone () _____ Organizational Membership _____

FEES: Individual \$3.00, Family \$1.50/adult, Senior Citizens donation only. Make checks payable to Bay Area Task Force.

INS MOVES TO STOP SSI BENEFITS

By **JESSICA ORDONA**
AK Correspondent

Filipino Senior Citizens returning from the Philippines are being harassed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) examiners at the airport. Filipino elderly who receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are singled out and questioned. This INS practice has created a stir in the community that is fast growing into an organized stand against the INS.

This correspondent interviewed Bill Tamayo, staff attorney at the Asian Law Caucus and member of the Immigrant Rights Task Force, about the current INS harassment against SSI beneficiaries.

AK: Do you know why the INS is questioning elderly Filipinos returning from the Philippines about their SSI benefits? Tamayo: I feel there are two reasons why this is being done. In a meeting with David Ilchert, the INS District Director in San Francisco, he admitted that there is a general public hysteria that aliens are eating up welfare and jobs. Also, Congress is looking at this problem seriously. Ilchert feels that the public and Congress want the immigration office to limit the people who are receiving SSI.

Why is Ilchert so interested in SSI? Isn't that something the Social Security Administration should deal with?

Tamayo: We should take note that the Social Security Administration has not yet changed the rules which allow permanent alien residents to get SSI benefits as long as they have been here for 30 days.

Actually, the INS has its own reasons for its actions. I don't think they are that concerned about aliens getting public benefits. Look at the 450 SSI cases that have emerged; 70 percent are Filipino and the rest are other Asians. Filipinos are one of the largest migrating groups,

next to Mexicans. The INS has admitted that they have to curtail Filipino immigration into this country.

Now, the practice that the INS wants to stop is the legal petitioning of parents. That is, when a third preference professional comes here and stays for five years, gains U.S. citizenship and petitions for the mother and father. Thereafter, the parents can petition for the other sons and daughters in the Philippines.

Is it obvious to you that Filipinos are being singled out by the INS?

Tamayo: Yes, and it is mainly to curtail immigration. By excluding the parent, the INS can stop the whole family chain. Also, if they force people to get off SSI, then the son or daughter is forced to support the elderly parent and cannot help support other brothers or sisters who may still want to come over.

Can you describe a typical SSI case that comes to you?

Tamayo: A typical SSI case is when an elderly person has to go back to the Philippines because of an emergency such as a death or sickness in the family. The person is usually a permanent resident and has been receiving SSI.

After the person comes back from the Philippines, upon return at the Hawaii airport he or she is asked whether he has received SSI benefits. When the answer is "yes" the immigration inspector says, "We find you excludable. But we'll give you three options. You either post a \$5,000 bond, go back to the Philippines, or you can go to an exclusion hearing."

Most families become terrified because the INS also confiscates the green card and passport of the elderly Filipino and holds the documents until the exclusion hearing. Usually people choose to go to the hearing because they do not have \$5,000 and cannot feasibly turn around and go back to the Philippines since their family is now in the U.S.

I understand that the case of Pablo



Filipino senior citizens: INS' target of harassment.

Atanacio put a stop to those hearings.

Tamayo: The Atanacio case merely suspended the exclusion hearings until his case reached a decision.

What happened with the Atanacio case?

Tamayo: In the Atanacio case, the elderly Filipino was a 73 year old man who went back to the Philippines mainly because his family was also going and he would have been left alone without care.

He came here in the early part of 1976. He was petitioned by his daughter who is an American citizen. After some time she was not able to support him because she was laid off from her job. Mr. Atanacio became ill, and was told by a social worker that because he is aged and has no other source of income, he should apply for SSI benefits. He applied and had been receiving the benefits up to and after the time of his departure to the Philippines.

He went back to the Philippines for a month. Upon his return he went through questioning from the INS with a good deal of distress and confusion about why they took his travel documents and why he had to report to a hearing.

His attorney, Bill Hing, argued that in this case the exclusion law should not be applied because Mr. Atanacio was a permanent resident and was not making an "entry." He had merely gone out of the country for a short trip. He had no intention of abandoning his residency in the U.S. His children were here. His wife was coming to join him. So Bill Hing argued that there was no "entry", meaning Mr. Atanacio should not be subject to immigration entry requirements and exclusion laws again.

However, the immigration judge, applying various immigration cases, decided that Atanacio was excludable. Bill Hing appealed the case to the Board of Immigration Appeals. The Board ruled in Atanacio's favor because his travel arrangements showed intent to return and keep his permanent residency. All travel arrangements (including a round trip ticket) were made by his children and he had little choice but to go to the Philippines.

When this ruling came out, we thought that it would protect all those cases of

[Continued on page S-4]

Who is to blame . . .

Continued from page S-1

well as racist.

Their color, cultural and linguistic differences are seen as impediments to succeeding in school. Moreover, based on these characteristics, they are tracked into vocational courses to prepare them for their future role in this society—to join that mass of unskilled, unstable easily-replaceable workers.

Is it any wonder then that our youth instinctively rebel against this directionless, futureless existence? They vent their frustrations in different ways. Involvement in youth gangs is one way angry youth channel their resentment. Some end up in fights, stealing, defacing property and vandalism—all activities that are essentially anti-social.

Many of these youth gangs tend to divide along ethnic lines. For instance at Wilson High, youth are seen in groups of Latinos, Filipinos, Blacks, Samoans. In response to their experiences of racial and national discrimination, they tend to hang around with those who share a common language, cultural interest, a common oppression.

But this phenomena of racial splits is also a reflection of the prevailing thinking encouraged in this society. Workers are made to compete with one another for the few jobs, the few crumbs that are available to them. All too often, the demarcating line as to which worker gets their share last—those who are pushed to the bottom rung of the economic ladder—is based on one's race or color, or whether one is a "native" or an "immigrant" worker.

Ethnic gangs and rivalries are a reflection of this racial division carried to an extreme among our youth. Thus, the Filipino youth fight the Latino youth for their turf in the ghetto neighborhoods.

To say the least, the *Chronicle* is superficial in its portrayal of ethnic feuds when it states: "Language and cultural differences drive a wedge between the two groups and mutual suspicions and ethnic pride prohibit them from having contact with each other."

This puts the blame of race division on the Filipino and Latino youth when they are actually the victims of racism. Furthermore, it makes the language and



Woodrow Wilson High School, scene of recent youth tension.

cultural differences between those two communities as insurmountable.

In reality, there is more that unites the Filipino and Latino community and all other minority communities than divides them. The class experience of these communities run parallel. We find the majority of Filipinos and Latinos working in the low paying clerical positions as hospital aides, laborers, in the domestic and service work throughout San Francisco. Both groups have also encountered discrimination based on their color and national origin. In the 1920's, Filipinos faced violent attacks from racist vigilante groups who shot and lynched them. Today, the discrimination remains though it has taken a more subtle form, such as on-the-job discrimination or harassment by the INS. The experience of the Latino is essentially the same. The blatant labor exploitation, social injustices and national chauvinism towards the Spanish-speaking communities in this country is long-standing.

What then should our response be to this incident which has sparked some enmity between the Filipino and Latino communities and which has been fanned by the irresponsible reporting of the *Chronicle*?

First, the Filipino and Latino communities—youth and parents alike—

should register their protests at this slander of our communities by the *Chronicle* which has depicted our troubled youth as gangsters and points blame and projects guilt on our communities.

Moreover, we should reject this racial animosity being fanned between our communities and establish a unity based on our common problems and struggles. We should unite and address the common problems of our youth.

What is the solution to our youths' problems? One solution being proposed is the creation of more government-funded programs and the opening up of career opportunities for them through on-the-job training programs. We agree that special programs can help improve our youths' conditions and, to some extent, give them useful activities. But this solution is short-term. The fundamental problem of their class oppression as a minority youth will not change. The long-term resolution of our youths' problems—and our community as well—lies in a fundamental change in the society that breeds these problems.

Our task at hand is to deepen our understanding of these problems that confront our youth and our communities. □

nese immigration.

What can the community do to keep updated about developments?

Tamayo: There is now a developing National Task Force for the Defense of Filipino Immigrant Rights. I'm working with this group. It is an organization that was formed at the Filipino People's Far West Convention in Sacramento last September.

The Task Force is the foundation for building a formal immigrants rights organization in the Filipino community.

Does this task force have a local chapter or group?

Tamayo: Yes, there is a core developing in the San Francisco Bay Area. Also, there are chapters growing in New York, Chicago, San Jose, Hawaii and Seattle. Soon we will be forming chapters in Los Angeles and Sacramento.

We are encouraging many Filipinos to join the task force in their area. People who are U.S. citizens, second generation and others who are relatively more stable should take an active part in the Task Force.

How do people find out about the task force activities?

Tamayo: During February, March and April, each city will be hosting local conferences to formally launch the local Task Force. The one in San Francisco will be held on March 1 at the Mission Cultural Center. People should contact either of the co-coordinators: Llorette Tamayo of the San Francisco International Institute at 673-1720 or Nonie Espiritu at 861-4476. □

TENSION . . .

Continued from page S-1

kids stay in the backyard, white kids have their spot and Indian kids keep their spot in the soccer field. Sure, these kids get into fights among each other, but it's not particular to Latino and Filipino kids alone."

Inocencio reiterated that "he does not believe there is a feud between these 'ethnic groups per se like the paper made it sound.'"

Johnny (not his real name), a 14-year-old Filipino San Francisco student agreed with much of what Inocencio said.

In a separate interview, Johnny remarked:

"It's not just Filipinos and Chicanos fighting each other...there's Chicanos fighting Chicanos, Filipinos fighting each other. If the fight is with another race, they get together and help each other. But after that's over, they go back to fighting each other again!"

Johnny, a former gang member himself, has been arrested twice for stealing cars. He explained that the "need to belong" is a strong factor why Filipino kids get into gangs.

"They join a gang to be part of something. A lot of Flips I know—they came here around 1973-1974—they still don't know much about America and they think gangs are the thing to be in."

Johnny noted that the "gang mentality" is not limited to one ethnic group alone. "There's all kinds of gangs," he said, "...Whites, Blacks, Latinos, Filipinos, Samoans. There's this White gang from the avenues called the WPOD's or White Punks on Dope; and a Filipino gang called TIG's—Tagalog Ilocano Gang. Latinos, they have a gang called Cortland Homeboys... Duran, the guy who got shot—he was a Cortland Homeboy. That's why in the paper (*Chronicle*), it said 'No one shoots a homeboy and gets away with it.'"

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTOR A BIG PROBLEM WITH MINORITIES

Both Dan Inocencio and Johnny think parents are a big factor in the youth problem. Johnny noted that "their fathers and mothers are never home... they're always at work—I guess to pay the rent, the bills and all that stuff."

Inocencio implied in his comments that cultural differences or adjustments are major causes why families break down: "I think that as these kids become more Americanized and see the way we act here, they lose the respect they had of their parents...it's a shame that's happening and it's sad parents don't have the control they used to have."

He shared Johnny's opinion that a lot of parents don't know what their children are doing because "they're working all the time."

According to Hoover Liddell, Wilson High principal, a great number of minority students (they comprise 95 percent of Wilson's student population) are "well below the district's socio-economic levels."

"Many of them come from poverty-stricken families whose economic condition inhibits the student from doing well in school."

To date, there are approximately 2,670 Filipinos, out of 30,000 students at San Francisco secondary schools. They comprise 8.9 percent of the total student population, the second largest ethnic group after the Chinese.

A dialogue between the Filipino and Latino communities is being called by concerned members of both communities. In the Filipino community of Mission, the KDP is holding a mass meeting for parents and youth to address the problem. The meeting is scheduled for Friday, Feb. 8. Anyone interested should call: Wilma Cadorna (239-5449) or Nonie Espiritu (861-4476). □

Interview. . .

Continued from page S-3

people who went back to the Philippines because of an emergency. But this is not how the INS has been interpreting it. District Director Ilchert is not reading the decision the way he should. He is reading it backwards. He is requiring that people have proof that they are no longer receiving SSI and they must issue new affidavits of support. He assumes that there is no "entry" issue to be resolved.

Also, by making people file new affidavits of support and forcing them to get off SSI, then the children who petition have to pay for the parent and cannot support anyone else. As I mentioned before, this is what the INS really wants to do—curtail immigration, even if they have to keep families separated.

Are these affidavits of support legally binding?

Tamayo: An affidavit of support is at best a commitment to try to support the person.

In the past affidavits of support were signed but not enforced as legally binding. However, there is new legislation that will make affidavits of support legally binding. This will discourage anyone from petitioning for their parents unless they are very sure they can support them.

The problem here is that one can't really control the economic factors that affect one's financial stability—inflation, recession, etc. In other words, at the time of filing, you may be financially stable and willing to support your parent. But a few years later, when the parent is here, you may be out of a job and unable to maintain this support.

When will this legislation be acted on?

Tamayo: The bill, HR 4904, passed the House of Representatives in Nov. 1979. It is now in the Senate Finance Committee. This bill is the result of discussions of several previous bills to limit the number of aliens who can receive public benefits and will make affidavits of support legally binding.

How will this impact on the Filipino community?

Tamayo: It impacts on Filipinos in a very serious way because people are very hesitant to go back to the Philippines. The community can become intimidated and people will not petition for their relatives.

We have to equip the community to fight these restrictive actions of the INS. Already, we have seen the INS go after the H-1 nurses, harass third preference professionals, foreign medical graduates and now, they are attacking elderly Filipinos and denying them SSI benefits, which many use for their basic human needs. All these incidents serve to exclude or limit the number of Filipinos in the U.S.—similar to the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the Gentlemen's Agreement of 1907 which limited Japa-