

Nursing Test Controversy:

State Board Bends, INS Says No



H-1 nurses protesting deportations: Under fire and "living in suitcases." (AK Photo)

By ANITA BORJA
Staff Writer

Pressured by pending lawsuits and Department of Consumer Affairs findings that current nurse licensing tests are discriminatory, the State Board for Nurses in California has adopted a lenient policy towards nurses

who recently failed the exam. However, the immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is not honoring the board's policy and intends to deport failing nurses anyway.

The California State Board has adopted a policy allowing nurses who failed the February 1981 licensing exam to seek

extension of their temporary licenses. This lenient policy will remain in effect until the issue of the board's authority is settled. Normally, nurses lose their temporary licenses when they fail the exam. With the loss of these licenses they also lose

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To Pave Way for Elections:

Marcos to Hold Plebiscite

By VICTORIA LUNA
Staff Writer

President Ferdinand E. Marcos, moving faster than expected in his "normalization" drive announced last month that a plebiscite will be held March 17. Its topic—a major "constitutional overhaul" to accommodate a presidential election set in May.

Both announcements for a plebiscite next month and a May election come in the wake of the now widely-discredited "lifting" of martial law.

Why the Plebiscite

Observers in Manila say that the plebiscite is aimed at paving the way for Marcos' attempt to

stamp his regime with a seal of public approval via a presidential election.

This attempt comes as a reaction to a skeptical international response to his lifting of martial law. International press reports pointed repeatedly at his continuing dictatorial powers despite the lifting.

To prove his desire for normalcy, Marcos then has to take a step further—legitimize his continuing rule through a popular vote.

However, his search for quick electoral legitimacy is bogged down by a legal problem—his own 1973 constitution.

Continued on page 4

More Arms, Advisor Sent to El Salvador:

U.S. Meddling Heightens

By DEBY ARMANDO
Staff Writer

"Our ministers accredited to the five little republics...have been advisors whose advice has been accepted virtually as law...we do control the destinies of Central America and we do so for the simple reason that the national interest absolutely dictates such a course...Until now Central America has always understood that governments which we recognize and support stay in power, while those we do not recognize and support fall."
-State Dept. Memorandum, 1927

Little has changed in the U.S. government's policy toward Central America since the above-quoted memorandum was issued 54 years ago.

Presently this policy is being visibly implemented in El Salvador, where President Ronald Reagan recently authorized sending 20 more men to bolster the 25 military advisers already there.

These advisers train the ruling dictatorial junta in counter-insurgency, intelligence gathering, and whatever may be necessary to quell the mounting revolutionary movement in that country.

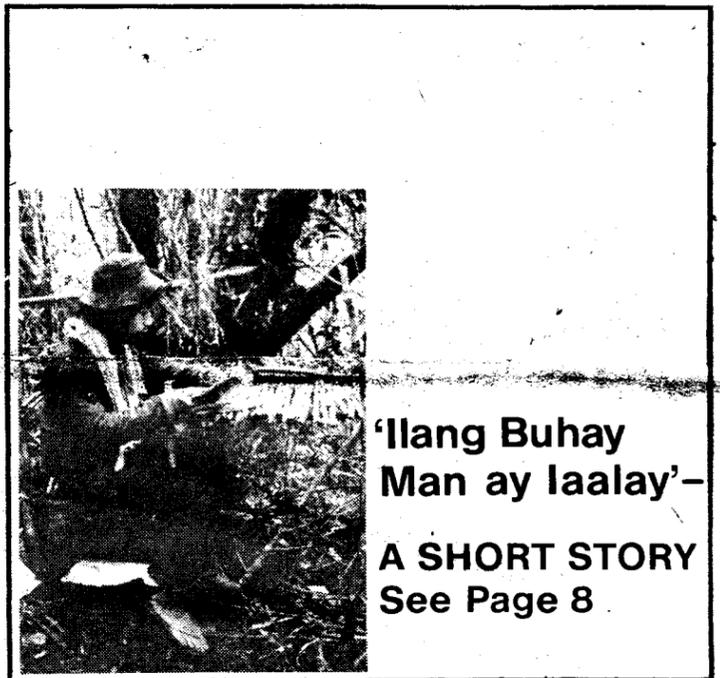
The additional U.S. personnel are to be accompanied by a \$25 million increase in arms, bringing

Continued on page 7



Slain woman draped with protest banner: Shot by the junta's snipers. (AP)

What You Ought to Know About El Salvador . . . See page 7



'Ilang Buhay Man ay laalay'—
A SHORT STORY
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AQUINO/CRUZ FORUM AT PRINCETON . . . See page 5



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EDITORIAL PAGE

On the 12th Year of the New People's Army

Twelve years of sacrifice and accumulating victories for national liberation. This is what the New People's Army will mark on March 29th, the day it was founded with a handful of fighters who lacked weapons but not determination.

If this event did not transpire, the people's resistance to the U.S.-sponsored Marcos dictatorship would now find itself completely defenseless against a ruthless enemy. Without the NPA and the national democratic program guiding it, workers, peasants, and patriotic intellectuals would have nothing but sufferings with no recourse and dreams that cannot be made real.

The NPA's growth as the most influential political force in the Philippine countryside is a testimony to the correctness of the national democratic analysis of the Philippine condition: that the Filipino people's salvation lies in dismantling the U.S. and Marcos' exploitative and oppressive hold on the national patrimony; that a political and social revolution is necessary to break this grip and to establish a just society dedicated to the needs of the overwhelming majority. With these goals too, the NPA places itself in the same ranks as the revolutionary armies in El Salvador, Thailand, South Africa and elsewhere.

As this people's army grows in influence, its enemies' ferocity will intensify even more. The U.S., Marcos, and puppets who may replace him, will heighten their attempts to crush it militarily. They will cry louder about the "specter of communism" as they are now doing in El Salvador and in other countries in revolution. For Filipinos especially, such juncture will demand every ounce of determination to defend our people's right to a better future, and every volt of intellectual strength to free ourselves of political superstitions.

There is no need to wait, however. No need to ask when the revolution will come. It is already there. Even now, all Filipinos in the U.S. and elsewhere have to take stock of themselves to determine which side they are on. Will they be part of the problem or the solution? The future or the past?

On the NPA's 12th anniversary March 29, the chapters of the Union of Democratic Filipinos will hold commemorative events in cities we work in. We are eager to see the U.S. Filipinos who are deciding in favor of the solution and the future. □



El Salvador: The Next Vietnam

The Butter Will Grease the Guns

To a working population hungry for work, economic security and peace, the Reagan administration has an imperious message: there will be more guns and less butter. The government will raise the military budget by \$32.6 billion while slashing social spending by \$41.4 billion.

Social service spending, Reagan says without flinching, is draining the nation's resources. He conveniently glosses over the fact that from 1970 to 1979 alone, the U.S. spent \$1,048,700,000,000 (over one trillion dollars) on the military. If this is not the drain, then people must be getting rich on their social security pensions.

The bloated arms budget is justified, officials say, because the U.S. has to keep up with the Russians. But how can the Soviets whose economy is only two-thirds the size of the U.S.' not only match U.S. arms spending but surpass it by some \$300 billion as well, as officials claim?

Simple. Just hide the fact that U.S. intelligence computes Soviet arms spending on a misleading basis. It does not compute Soviet spending in rubles spent within the vastly different Russian economy. It compares the dollars the U.S. spends for arms with how much the Soviets would spend in dollars if they also bought everything in dollars in the U.S. (and of course, they do not). With this simple move, the U.S. is made to appear spending less for arms yearly than the Russians. The Pentagon plays this game every budget year to convince the public that the U.S. has to spend more to defend itself. JFK used this game to beat Nixon only to admit, once in office, that there had been no "missile gap" after all.

But Reagan's arms budget hike is offensive, not defensive, in character. Most of it will finance the MX missile to the tune of \$106 billion (to the arms industry's glee). Some \$17 billion will go to the Rapid Deployment Force, a strike force trained to intervene in defense of U.S. economic interests abroad. Not to mention the billions meant for U.S.-sponsored dictators like Marcos and the Salvadoran junta whose task is to protect these interests against their own people's desire for political and economic independence.

The guns have the day. The butter...? Reagan's arms budget will enrich the military-industrial complex. It will provide the big corporations the protection they want for their exploitative operations abroad. It will come from the pockets of poor and working people and will be spent to violently suppress working peoples elsewhere. This is how imperialism milks us and chokes us in our own curd. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Does He Have a Secret?

After seeing Marcos on TV with Ted Koppel last month I became convinced that he is finished. He contradicted himself so often it was so embarrassing. He also looked sick and this is very important because I remember the Shah of Iran kept his disease a secret so the U.S. would not think of replacing him.

M. R. K.
Brooklyn, NY

Is He, Isn't He, Will He What?

Is Ninoy Aquino going home, running for president, quitting politics, or what? I am getting confused with what I read in the papers. Is he pro-U.S. intervention, anti-multinationals, for peaceful or violent revolution? He says many things at the same time. Please update your readers.

Ruben Martinez
Union City, CA

Daring But Short We Can Be Bought!

Your articles on Pople John Paul II's visit to the Philippines have been excellent and daring although they tended to be too short. The analysis of the politics of the visit were refreshing. Congratulations to your staff.

Rob Meisner
Philadelphia, PA

I read your newspaper while I was visiting my sister in Los Angeles. Do you sell it here in Baltimore? I have not found it in Filipino stores and I have not seen activists selling it.

M. T. Pantig
Baltimore, MD

(We have no activists in Baltimore to sell the AK there. The best way for you is to get a subscription—Ed.)

A Living Fossil

Alex Esclamado's anti-communist hysterics remind me of the Committee on Un-Filipino Activities in the Philippine Congress during the '60s. I have always considered his *Philippine News* as a cheap, sensational trivia-monger. No wonder. Its publisher is a fossil when it comes to serious politics. Unfortunately, there are still Filipinos who buy the red scare tactic. When will they ever learn?

Teo Vizcarra
Pasadena, CA

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Anti-FM Protests Surrounded Pope's Visit



Demonstrators rally February 19: Pope's visit provided opportunity to voice opposition to Marcos regime. (AK File Photo)

While the international press covered Pope John Paul II's Philippine visit extensively, one aspect of the trip got scant attention namely, the actions of the anti-Marcos resistance movement.

Employing one creative form or another, the anti-dictatorship movement was everywhere. Just as pervasive were regime efforts to repress it.

The various protest activities were organized by a broad alliance of religious and community groups called "People's Assembly for the Pope's Arrival" or P.A.P.A. "Papa" is the local term for "Pope."

Not Anti-Pope

P.A.P.A., its leaders pointed out, "is not an anti-Pope assembly . . . Its main objective is to present the 'burning' issues of the day that are directly affecting our life as a people and as a nation, particularly what it believes is the fake lifting of martial law."

The first major mass action

organized by P.A.P.A. was held in Manila on February 13, four days before the Pope's arrival (See AK, Vol. VII, No. 4). Contrary to reports in the western press, as many as 7,000 students, workers and professionals, plus a 200-person delegation of peasants from as far away as the Cagayan Valley in Northern Luzon protested for four hours at Liwasang Bonifacio, a public square in Manila.

February 19th Demonstration

Inspired by the success of the February 13th rally, P.A.P.A. launched ambitious plans for a people's mass in Quezon City on February 19. The day before, 1,000 students gathered at the nearby University of the Philippines campus for an all-night vigil.

The next day, they were joined by 9,000 peasants and workers at the papal mass. They put up over 100 streamers in front of the altar, in full view of both the Pope and the press.

After the mass, the demonstrators marched around the large crowd and the foreign press.

Bacolod and Davao

Some 3,000 demonstrators in Davao City were not so lucky. Police using truncheons and tear gas dispersed them before the arrival of the Pope.

In Bacolod, however, as noted by the foreign press, an active crowd of sugar workers cheered wildly as the Pope spoke of injustice "leaving in poverty and destitution those who have only the work of their hands to offer." At the end of his address, the entire crowd broke into the resistance song "Ang Bayan Kong Pilipinas," which compares the country to a caged bird in need of liberation.

Political Prisoner Actions

Perhaps most poignant were the efforts of 17 political prisoners in Cebu City.

Denied permission to present a letter to the Pope, they banged on the bars of their cells which were near the site of the huge open-air papal mass. In response, authorities put up sandbags to prevent the noise from disrupting the ceremony.

But if political prisoners in Cebu had a difficult time making their presence felt by the papal party, those in Manila were more successful.

Detainees at the national penitentiary and the army's Maximum Security Unit began a hunger strike the day the Pope arrived.

Although the Marcos regime vetoed a planned papal visit to one of the prisons, the detainees could not be ignored. The Vatican's Secretary of State, a member of the Pope's entourage, thus visited the striking prisoners and said mass, creating what can only have been an acute embarrassment to the Marcos regime. □

To Run or Not to Run:

Elite Opposition Splits Over Elections

"We would grant it the mantle of legality by our participation," intoned ex-Senator Gerardo Roxas at an opposition forum February 5. "This we cannot do. Mr. Marcos will have to run alone."

One week later, ex-Senator Salvador Laurel, joint leader with Roxas of the United Democratic Opposition (UNIDO), a loose coalition of elite opposition groups, told the press a different story.

His organization, Laurel said, was "ready to face Mr. Marcos and his ruling party" in the presidential elections slated for May. All UNIDO sought, he claimed, was "a fair field and a fighting chance."

Some Want to, Some Won't

It has become very obvious that the ranks of the elite opposition are split over what to do with Marcos' planned presidential elections in May. The ex-politicians have been making contradictory declarations in rapid-fire succession much to the delight of the Marcos-controlled media.

As early as Feb. 7, two days after Roxas' initial statement, the local press began reporting a split in UNIDO. The question facing the elite opposition is simple enough: "Is this electoral ex-

ercise—doomed under Marcos' continuing dictatorial rule to be manipulated into an endorsement of martial law—worth participating in?"

While initial reaction said, "No," it is clear that some of the politicians, after eight years on the political back burner, are willing to try anything.

Both the Mindanao Alliance, whose chief Ruben Canoy holds a seat in the Interim *Batasang Pambansa*, and the Nacionalista Party said they are willing to put up presidential candidates.

The Aquino Question

But the biggest question-mark is ex-Senator Benigno Aquino. Aquino, currently residing in the U.S., is giving off signals as mixed as those emitted by the opposition at home.

In a widely-publicized phone call to Gen. Carmelo Z. Barbero, Aquino had declared himself "finished with politics forever." On Feb. 2, he reiterated his determination to stay in the U.S. until next June.

However, less than two weeks later, via a Feb. 12 UNIDO press release, Aquino declared himself on the verge of returning home—possibly within a matter of days!

His purpose, according to

Laurel, is to campaign for a single common UNIDO candidate to run against Marcos. There was no comment as to whether Aquino hoped to be that candidate himself.

'Too Much a Politician'

Meanwhile ex-Senator Lorenzo Tanada left for the U.S. early in February. His trip's purpose, he told the press, was to convince Aquino not to run. His reason: it is futile to oppose Marcos in any election while his dictatorship remains.

But Tanada himself as well as Aquino's close friends expect his visit to prove fruitless. "I'll try," Tanada told *Asiaweek*, but he's too much a politician not to run. "He'll run," concurred another ex-Senator, Ramon Mitra.

Aquino today remains in the U.S. and continues to issue contradictory statements. He even issued a new warning to Marcos. He said bombings are likely to resume in Metro-Manila by mid-March.

Though Aquino remains on American soil, no one is ruling out the possibility of a sudden return and entry into electoral politics as defined by Marcos. "At this point," remarked one observer, "anything can happen." □

AFP Admits 124 Troops Died in Combat

Recent Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) reports disclosed that the ambush of 124 AFP personnel January 12 in the island of Pata Mata was the result of an encounter in Bangsa Moro Army (BMA) territory. Earlier reports said that the government troops were helplessly massacred when BMA guerrillas, posing as surrenderees, lured them into the trap.

The ambush, considered one of the BMA's biggest victory, occurred in time for the wide local and international media coverage on the Philippines because of the Pope's visit. (See AK, Vol. VIII, No. 4.)

The Mindanao conflict has been cited by the Marcos government as stabilized. This was supposedly a factor in the "lifting" of martial law. However, BMA assaults have continued as well as the government's counter-insurgency programs. □

Marcos to Visit the U.S.?

The sometimes reliable rumor mill of *Asiaweek* hinted of a possible U.S. visit by Marcos the middle of this year. First Lady Imelda Marcos apparently discussed this while visiting with the Ronald Reagans in California last December.

June 1981 will of course be the month following the presidential elections scheduled for May. The electorate would have by then "chosen" Marcos president again, giving Reagan the opportunity to host a "democratically-elected" dictator. □

FM's Papal Extravaganza a Flop

"During one motorcade," reported *Time* magazine, "a phalanx of trained water buffalo knelt in reverence just as the pontifical car swept by..."

What had been intended to impress the Pope and the more than 2000 international correspondents following in his wake ended up as objects of ridicule. The "kneeling carabaos" episode showed the often outlandish—and ultimately embarrassing—efforts of the Marcos regime to cash in on the Pope's visit.

Prelude to Disaster

Marcos' failure to gain wide-political mileage from the visit was evidently forthcoming. Prior to the Pope's arrival, the international press had already been reporting on Marcos' maneuvers and the Church's attempts to keep John Paul II safe from Malacanang's manipulations.

For example, the *Washington Post* made a point of retelling the embarrassing quarrel last year between Imelda and Cardinal Sin over who invited the Pope.

Marcos' attempts to elbow the Church into a secondary role during the visit often degenerated into pettiness.

Because the regime was paying for it, the reception platform at the Manila International Airport was made just big enough to hold the Pope, Cardinal Sin and the Marcoses. Church officials had wanted other bishops on the platform to diffuse the focus on the first family.

There was also constant haggling over the Pontiff's itinerary. The Pope's scheduled visit to a slum area, the tense sugar-producing region of Negros, and tribal areas in northern Luzon showed that the Church intended to project the Pope's "concern over the poor." This of course, did not go well with Malacanang.

In response to government complaints that the Pope was not going to see the "nicer" spots in the country, Cardinal Sin retorted that the Pope was not a tourist.

An Expensive Flop

The visit itself must have been like an expensive party that flopped. Indeed, the First Family got the visual association with the Pope that they craved.

Also, the Pope's warnings against violence and class struggle were zealously played up in the controlled local media. But to Marcos' dismay, the international press chose to zero in on the Pope's comments on the regime's human rights record.

To the regime's embarrassment, the headlines screamed: "Pope, With Marcos Beside Him, Delivers Human Rights Talk" (*New York Times*, Feb. 18); "Pope Tells Marcos About Human Rights," (*San Francisco Examiner*, Feb. 17); "Pope Has Strong Words for Marcos on Human Rights" (*Oakland Tribune*, Feb. 17); "Pope in Manila Declares Rights Must Be Upheld" (*Washington Post*, Feb. 18).

Grabbing the Limelight

The moment the Pontiff stepped off his jet at the Manila International Airport, Marcos paid the price for trying too hard: the Pope, "a man of peace," winced visibly as cannons boomed a 21-gun salute and jet-fighters zoomed noisily overhead. Obviously, the regime had not given up on its insistence that this was a state, not a pastoral visit.

Media coverage of John Paul's inter-island stops also became a source of further embarrassment. Most reports focused on the regime's failure to do anything substantial to solve the social problems exposed in the various papal stops.

At the same time, the regime's frenzied efforts to grab the limelight became very obvious. *Newsweek*, for example, said: "The President's wife, Imelda—along with a coterie of European jetsetters—ostentatiously leapfrogged from island to island to greet the papal party at each stop."

The *Asian Wall Street Journal* pointed out that at the presidential palace reception for the Pope, "Mrs. Marcos instructed all the ladies...to wear white (and sent them the material to do so) and then appeared in pink herself. As a result, she stood out on color (TV) screens."

The Philippine Solidarity Network's Elaine Elinson summed it all up by saying, "The Pope's visit was a media disaster for the Marcos regime. Marcos himself must now be wondering if it was worth 'lifting' martial law just in time for the visit." □

Ninth in a Series

THE REAL ALTERNATIVE: NATIONAL DEMOCRACY

Point 9: Punish, after public trial, the ringleaders of the Marcos fascist gang for their crimes against the people and confiscate their ill-gotten wealth.

The crimes of Ferdinand Marcos and the cronies who help maintain his regime fall into two essential categories:

- 1) Violation of the Filipino people's fundamental democratic rights; and
- 2) Plunder of the people's natural resources, land, and the fruits of their labor.

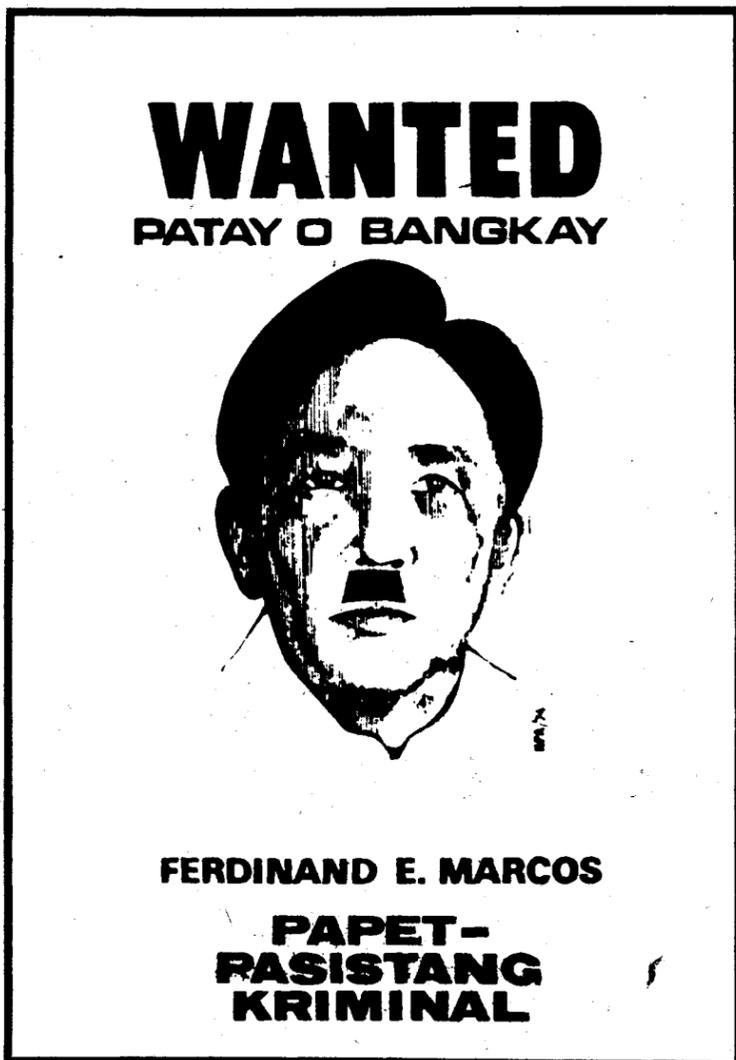
Suppression of People's Basic Rights

Most blatant and horrifying crimes committed by the dictatorship are the massacres, torture, "salvaging," detentions without trial and military abuses which have become features of Philippine life.

These crimes are directly committed by military, paramilitary and police forces under general and specific orders by Marcos himself.

A more insidious crime however, is perpetrated by a corps of political henchmen working in air-conditioned offices to execute Marcos' "laws."

These top accomplices are responsible for maintaining the fascist political bureaucracy that lords over the daily life of the Filipino people. They are responsible for deprivation of the people's rights, defending and justifying dictatorial rule, the denial of the right to strike, and the right to free expression and assembly. These puppet assembly-



A 1974 Anti-Marcos poster by the Philippine's Union of Progressive Artists and Architects decries Marcos as 'Puppet, Fascist, Criminal.'

men, propagandists, cabinetmen, technocrats, etc. will have to reckon with the people's justice

when their master is overthrown. The most abusive of them will definitely be meted appropriate

punishment.

Economic Plunder

Theft of the Filipino people's land and resources by the Marcos gang, working hand in hand with U.S. and Japanese multinationals, has become a common tale.

Marcos, it is true, has carried out his crimes against the Filipino people in the interest of U.S. imperialism. An authoritarian government was needed to create necessary conditions that would facilitate imperialism's exploitation of Philippine cheap labor and raw materials. But serving imperialism has also been profitable for Marcos and his cronies. Tied in with the multinationals' business activities, they too reap handsome profits from plundering the country's social wealth.

While Ferdinand Marcos has served U.S. interests well, he has tried to serve his own even better. His insatiable greed has bred corruption previously unheard-of in scale. He has decided not merely to regulate the economy, but to own entire segments of it as well. No one will ever know precisely how much of the Filipino people's wealth he has stashed away in banks and real estate abroad.

Guilt Already Established

The guilt of the Marcos gang has, in a sense, already been established before a court of law. On November 3, 1980, the Permanent People's Tribunal, meeting in Antwerp, Belgium, found "the Marcos regime . . . deprived of legitimate standing in government."

The decision of this respected body, including Nobel prize winner George Wald, theologian Harvey Cox and international law expert Richard Falk, further elaborated:

"The Tribunal finds Ferdinand Marcos guilty of grave and numerous economic and political crimes against his own people and the Bangsa Moro people and declares him . . . subject to severe punishment for his past wrongs.

"The tribunal finds the corrupt and plundering Marcos 'entourage' guilty as accomplices and perpetrators of numerous political and economic crimes and declares them subject to punishment by an appropriate criminal tribunal."

The Harshest Penalty for Most Vicious Crimes

The NDF demands that Ferdinand Marcos and the closest of his cronies be held accountable for their crimes against the people.

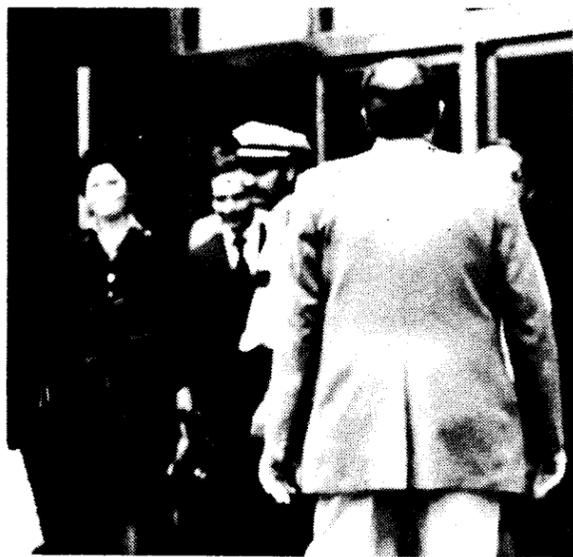
A public trial will be needed to expose as thoroughly as possible each act of brutality or greed and to pinpoint the most vicious perpetrators for the harshest punishment.

The stolen wealth of the Marcos gang must be confiscated and utilized in the public effort to build a society that will serve the genuine interests of the majority.

The NDF certainly looks forward to the day when Marcos, et. al., will be forced to answer to that "appropriate criminal tribunal" that is the liberated Filipino people themselves. □

Another Memo Leaked:

WB Rejects FM's Energy Plan



World Bank headquarters in Washington, D.C.: Recent WB report questions require energy policy.

Findings made by a recent World Bank survey mission may drastically spoil the Marcos regime's chances of getting international financing for its ambitious Five Year Energy Program. The mission recommended against a loan to support the program.

The survey team's secret memorandum was disclosed by the Congress Task Force (CTF) of the Anti-Martial Law Coalition. Previous CTF disclosures of confidential World Bank documents revealing distress over the political and economic situation have severely shaken international business confidence in the Philippine government.

Lessen Oil Imports

The regime claims that its energy program is designed to lessen the country's dependence on imported oil and thereby im-

prove its balance of payments situation. Under the program, oil exploration is to be intensified, and the production of coal, geothermal power and alcogas (alcohol to replace gasoline) is to be promoted.

The mission disputed the regime's estimate of the potential for developing alternate energy sources. It projects, for example, that oil imports will be 10 million barrels higher in 1989 than in 1979 instead of lower as the government says.

Allaying Fears of Creditors

"Besides putting considerable strain on the government's resources and the balance of payments," the memo said, "we also feel that the accelerated program might be beyond the government's implementation capacity and might lead to excess capacity and large unproductive resources."

The World Bank's doubts have even increased as a result of the regime's decision to shorten the program's goals from 10 to five years. Sources in the Philippine Ministry of Energy admitted to the CTF that the regime's decision to shorten the program's schedule was based more on the desire to allay the fears of international creditors than realistic planning.

"Marcos thinks that the hesitance of foreign creditors to continue financing him is based on their belief that he is too dependent on expensive foreign oil," Walden Bello, CTF's director commented.

"By presenting an energy program that he says can succeed within five years, he thinks he can convince creditors to keep financing him. This is not an energy program. Its a public relations effort," Bello concluded. □

Marcos to Hold Plebiscite . . .

Continued from front page

However, instant election as prime minister would be too complicated. It would entail the election of an entire parliament first, in accordance with the 1973 constitution. It is this parliament which is supposed to select the prime minister.

It is much simpler for Marcos then to call for the election-at-large of a president even though the 1973 constitution calls for a prime minister as head of state and a president as figurehead. Reversing this and making the president the more powerful position only requires changing the constitution instead of a whole parliamentary election. The March plebiscite can easily take care of this legal knot much more quickly.

A Sure Winner

After the plebiscite has changed the constitution, Marcos can quickly call for a presidential election. He is assured of victory since the opposition has remained fragmented and disorganized.

In addition, any opposition either to a Marcos candidacy or to a plebiscite—can be easily dealt with. The Marcos regime has had a good deal of experience managing plebiscites, referenda and elections under martial law.

With the right people herding voters to the poles, counting the

ballots and brandishing weapons, Marcos has discovered, he can be a winner every time.

Changes—Then and Now

The 1973 Constitution has itself undergone significant changes through a series of plebiscites that were marked with coercion and fraud.

The result of these "plebiscites" has been an indefinite period of limbo with no genuine parliament—merely the advisory Interim *Batasang Pambansa*—and a chief of state who is both president and prime minister at the same time.

Marcos, through his loyal party, the *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan*, (KBL—New Society Party) hopes to change all this more drastically to suit Marcos' planned maneuver. The KBL has proposed a president elected at large for a six-year term and open for unlimited re-election.

"We would like to approach the stability seen in monarchies," commented Justice Minister Ricardo Puno, chair of a seven-member Special Committee on Amendments.

The new proposal, according to Puno, incorporates the best ideas of the British, French and Egyptian parliamentary systems. The prominence of the president, however, places it closest to the French model. It also assures Marcos continued powers that are guaranteed by an amended constitution. □

FILIPINO COMMUNITY NEWS

Joint Appearance at Princeton:

Aquino and Cruz: Toward a Nationalist Consensus?

"We are not asking America to switch in our favor. We are only asking America not to stand in the way of our resolving our own problems."

Thus declared ex-senator Benigno Aquino, widely acknowledged as the premier figure in the elite opposition to President Marcos, in a joint appearance with Aimee Cruz, spokesperson of the left-wing Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP), at Princeton University February 26.

"The U.S. provided Marcos with \$1.7 billion between 1976 and 1980," noted Aquino. "Instead of sending us farmers from Iowa to help us grow corn or pigs, it sent police advisers, bugging equipment, and red dye to mark demonstrators. This, we say, has to stop. We're not asking you for one bloody cent. We are only asking you to stay out."

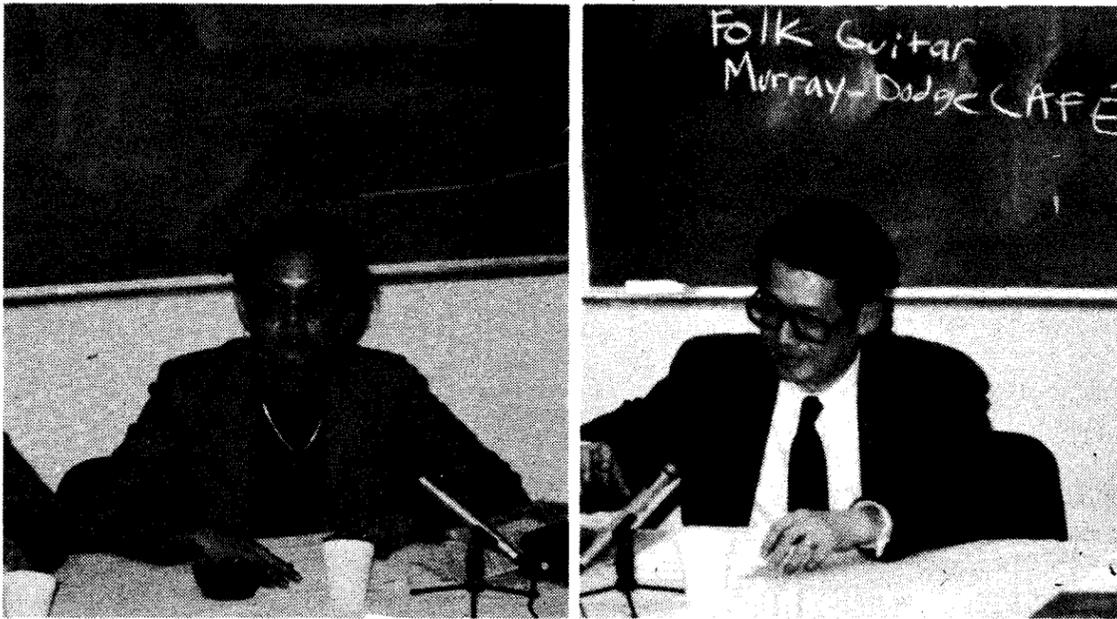
Observers remarked on the convergence toward a "nationalist" stance on the part of Aquino and Cruz, who articulated the position of the National Democratic Front (NDF), the mass-based opposition to the Marcos regime.

Remove the U.S. Bases

In what many described as a "moving" and "eloquent" anti-imperialist appeal, Cruz called for the dismantling of the two huge U.S. military bases in the Philippines on the ground that "they represent a violation of Philippine sovereignty and territorial integrity."

Aquino supported Cruz, stating that "we do not want those bases permanently. We want those bases out." He qualified his stance, however, by saying that as "a pragmatist," he did not expect the U.S. to heed nationalist opinion and "leave tomorrow." As an alternative to the status quo, Aquino proposed the establishment of "a zone of neutrality, such as that floated by Malaysia, to be respected to by both superpowers."

He also revealed that high U.S. officials had earlier warned him that acceptance of the "indispensability" of the bases was one condition for the U.S. not to stand in the way of the Philippine



KDP's Aimee Cruz and ex-Senator Benigno Aquino at a Princeton University forum February 26.

opposition.

Despite basic agreement on the issue of U.S. bases however, differences emerged between the two speakers on other issues like the role of multinational firms in the Philippine economy.

The Multinationals Issue

Multinationals, asserted Aquino, can be brought under government regulation, in order to avoid the current situation in which "the multinationals dictate to the government." Ultimately, however, competition, in Aquino's view, was the solution to the problem. "We should encourage multinationals from Europe, Japan, the socialist community to clash, and in the process of competition, the best will come out."

Cruz, on the other hand, stated that solutions could not be discussed without first considering the nature of multinationals. "Multinationals are inherently exploitative," she asserted. "They take advantage of Third World economies and cheap labor in order to rack up huge profits."

"There are a lot of myths about multinationals," Cruz continued. "For instance, that they bring in much-needed capital. This is partly the reason some people think they are indispen-

sable and that they only need to be controlled. Why, recent research has shown that 84% of foreign capital invested in the Philippines is raised from domestic sources, and that for every dollar invested, the multinationals repatriate \$2 in profits."

Cruz concluded, "Only after we have settled the fundamental question of whether they are exploitative or not can we know how to deal with them. If we keep thinking they are indispensable, we will always be at their mercy. Only after this can we afford to be practical. If some of them are willing to deal, then we can talk about 10, 15, even 25-year phase-out programs and the transfer of technology. If they don't like that, they should be kicked out."

The Moro Question

The issue that led to the greatest controversy, however, was the Muslim struggle in the southern Philippines. Aquino compared the position of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) to that of "the 300,000 American Indians today laying claim to all of the U.S. west of the Mississippi."

On the MNLF's claim to the islands of Mindanao and Palawan, Aquino stated, "If the four predominantly Muslim provinces wish to secede, fine, but don't apply

the same principle to the predominantly Christian provinces or you will create a greater mess than now exists." He proposed, instead, a situation of genuine regional autonomy and an "affirmative action program" that would aim at eliminating the income differences between Christians and Muslims by the year 2000.

In contrast, Cruz stressed the Moro people's historical rights to Mindanao and pointed to the role of American agribusiness firms like Del Monte and Dole in exacerbating the conflict, which she termed a "land conflict instead of a religious conflict."

Cruz' position was backed up from the audience by Walden Bello, director of the Congress Task Force (CTF), who stated that the process whereby the Muslims have become a minority in their historic homeland was relatively recent, "beginning in the 1920s and 30s with the colusion of the American colonial authorities."

"Thus," he noted, "the Muslim struggle must be viewed in the same way that we view the PLO's claim to Palestine—the right to a homeland for those who have been dispossessed." He added, "Besides, like the PLO, the MNLF does not seek to drive out the Christian settlers. It would only

ask them to shift their allegiance to a new state."

The National Democratic Front, Cruz stated, "defends the right of the Moro people to self-determination, including the right to divorce, "which not every married couple has to exercise," she expressed the hope that the Moro people would elect to be part of a genuinely free Philippine state.

Unity Stressed

Both Cruz and Aquino continually stressed the need to unite now beyond their differences in order to overthrow Marcos. "There are moderates and extremes in the opposition coalition," he asserted, "but our common goal is freedom. As long as Marcos is there, we cannot have the free market of ideas, we cannot have the necessary clash of thesis and anti-thesis so that the Filipino people will have the synthesis."

Asked for his opinion of the National Democratic Front and its military arm, the New People's Army, by the moderator, Dr. Richard Falk, Aquino answered: "It is a movement. It is a political struggle. It has conscientized people, a great many farmers. And, I might add, they have been able to bring about social legislation over the years. In the end the Filipino people will have to make their own decision, and the decision can only come when freedom has been restored and ideas can be sold in the market place."

Cruz described the NDF as proposing a political program "based on wresting our political and economic sovereignty from the United States and satisfying the most democratic popular demand at this juncture: land reform." The NPA, she informed the audience, "presently operates in 26 guerrilla fronts in 11 regions. Its cadres function in 4,000 barrios, 300 towns, and 40 provinces."

The event elicited very favorable comments from the predominantly student and faculty audience. According to Prof. Stanley Stein, noted specialist in Latin American history, "It was the most stimulating political exchange Princeton had seen in a long time." □

Filipino Vets Harassed in U.S. Bases

By BECKY VILLONES
San Jose Correspondent

"It is sad that after giving so much of your life serving this country, that you are treated like trash when trying to get exchange privileges at the bases," lamented Frank Melchor, a resident of San Jose, California and a 22-year U.S. Navy veteran.

Melchor, who recently returned from the Philippines, is enraged at the treatment of Filipino veterans in U.S. military installations back home. The blatant racist treatment of retired Filipino U.S. servicemen in the bases appears to be provoking sentiments of "anti-Americanism" usually not expected from Filipino veterans living here.

Commenting on his experiences during his recent visit to the islands, Melchor said, "Filipino vets were victims of racism and harassment when on active duty, and this further harassment is a real slap in the face to those

of us who served this country and would have died for it if necessary."

PX Privileges at Issue

At issue are the much-coveted commissary privileges enjoyed by Filipino ex-servicemen, one of the few and diminishing benefits relished by veterans residing in the Philippines.

Providing this reporter an eyewitness account of his experiences, Melchor said that retirees have difficulty in even gaining entrance to the bases. According to him, the military identification that vets carry "is of no value for entrance to the bases."

"To obtain a pass," Melchor noted, "vets have to state their reasons for going inside the base. Military guards are rude and question the vets in a condescending manner. Waiting in line for two and a half hours is common."

"However, white veterans



Ex-Navyman Frank Melchor: Outraged over the treatment of Filipino U.S. veterans in Uncle Sam's bases. (AK Photo)

have an easier time getting in that the Filipino vets," Melchor shared with much controlled anger.

Humiliating Abuse on Base

"We are not allowed to bring our cars in the bases. It's a common sight to see 60 and 70-

year-old Filipino vets struggling to push their carts a half mile or more to their cars.

"There's no fresh meat, produce or dairy products at the retiree commissary—only damaged canned goods, rejects from the active duty commissary. There

is also a \$50 limit on food purchases because of fears that they are actively involved in the black market.

"Upon leaving the base, one is questioned intensively as to what he did, how he got in and where he went. Shopping bags full of groceries are searched, and the vets feel like thieves instead of persons with rights and privileges to use the base services."

Racism in all the Bases

Melchor observed that racist treatment of vets was evident at Subic Bay, Camp John Hay and Clark Air Force Base, three of the biggest military U.S. installations in Asia.

Having returned to the U.S., Melchor is still indignant. He is spearheading a move to organize veterans and active duty personnel "in obtaining the basic rights and privileges they should have at U.S. military bases overseas." □

Blue Shield Strike Update:

Union Rejects Offer; Company Runs Out of Town

San Francisco—Despite Blue Shield's threat to move major parts of its operations out of the city, 1,100 members of the striking Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 3, voted overwhelmingly against the latest company offer.

The offer is basically similar to the one given by management

changes sick leave provisions.

Strike Brought to City Hall

On February 27, just five days before the union voted to reject the company's proposal, Blue Shield strikers and supporters packed to capacity the San Francisco City Hall Board Chambers.



Taking it to City Hall: Blue Shield striker testifies before San Francisco Board of Supervisors' Committee. (AK Photo)

on January 15. The January 15 offer proposed to give employees a cost-of-living raise of 9.5% this year (which is not retroactive), 8% next November, and 7.5% in November of 1982.

The recent offer also eliminates a daily 15-minute break; proposes to implement tests for promotions, instead of basing promotions on seniority; and

Prominent speakers from labor unions, community groups and academics backed the strikers' demands and alerted city supervisors on Blue Shield's intention to move major parts of its operations out of San Francisco since the strike began on December 9, 1980.

Walter Johnson, president of Department Store Retail Clerks

Union Local 1100 criticized Blue Shield's "profits before people approach."

He told the supervisors, "We expect all of the elected officials of San Francisco to fulfill their responsibilities to advocate for the people against the large companies that are trying to destroy the principles of labor relations."

The Board's Community Affairs Subcommittee passed a resolution recommending a "meaningful and timely" negotiation of the labor dispute. The resolution will be brought to the full Board for final approval on March 16.

That the strike is now on the agenda of city government is a victory for the strikers.

Blue Shield Running Away

A few days after the hearing at City Hall, Blue Shield announced its plans to move more jobs out of San Francisco to 12 more small towns in Northern California.

Blue Shield has already moved jobs to non-unionized areas in Colton-San Bernardino, Woodland and Los Angeles.

This latest move will affect some 500 jobs. Even those who are scabbing while the strike is on are not guaranteed their jobs.

Larry Corbett, the company's labor counsel says "Blue Shield is not announcing this consideration as a threat to be used in collective bargaining." High costs of claims processing, office space and labor are what prompted the company to make these transfers,



Striking Blue Shield employees: Pressing on against management's tricks.

according to company representatives.

But the union views the moves differently. OPEIU Local 3 spokeswoman Reeva Olson said the transfers to other areas are

clearly a form of "union-busting" by a runaway shop. Blue Shield has so far, the largest, and the only concentration of unionized clerical workers in San Francisco. □

State Board Bends But . . .

Continued from front page

their H-1 visas. The State Board's reprieve could therefore prevent the deportation of failing H-1 nurses, many of whom are Filipinos. But the INS still says "no."

The INS decision to disregard the extended licenses is being protested by nurses' defense groups as "arbitrary and heartless."

"It constitutes undue interference in licensing procedures and is based only on the anti-alien and racist sentiments in the INS," a spokesperson from the National Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization (NFIRO) said.

Suits Readied

In the midst of these developments, the NFIRO and the National Alliance for Fair Licensure (NAFL) are filing a lawsuit at the end of March challenging the use of the current licensing exam in California. A similar suit is being considered by the Asian American Legal Defense Fund (AALDEF) in New York.

"Pending the unsettled issue of the discriminatory nursing licensure test, the suing parties will demand that the INS halt any deportation crackdown," stated Bill Tamayo, legal counsel for NFIRO.

An Exclusionary Device

Recent studies by the testing unit of the California Department of Consumer Affairs found the exam to have "massive adverse impact" particularly on foreign-trained nurses. It was also found to have no occupational relevance which amounts to a violation of State and Federal civil rights law.

The American Nurses Association (ANA), the National League

of Nursing (NLN) and the National Council of State Boards of Nursing devise the exam.

Their interest, the NAFL charges, is to maintain what they view as the "elite standards" of nursing at the exclusion of foreign-trained and disadvantaged minority nurses.

Particularly hard hit by the exam are H-1 nurses whose visas rest on passing it.

To stop the use of the discriminatory exam and replace it with a fairer one could require filing lawsuits in every state of the union. This is because the exam is administered by autonomous state boards of nursing even though its original source is the ANA-NLN combine.

Plight of the H-1 Nurse

Approximately 6,000 Filipino nurses are recruited each year. The East Coast, notably New

The plight of an H-1 nurse begins when she is recruited fresh from her graduating class in the Philippines. Recruiters have made a lucrative business out of H-1 recruiting. The nurse is given a one-year contract in a U.S. hospital, during which she must pass licensure to maintain her H-1 status and contract.

In the hospitals, she is assigned to tasks often shunned by her American counterparts. She is there to fill the "nursing shortage."

But her visa and the licensing exam keep her employment unstable. Fearful, she can then be vulnerable to the whims of her employers. If she protests her exploitation or joins unionizing efforts, the very hospital that recruited her can turn her over to the INS by not renewing the contract.

When she fails the exam (as



Florida Filipino Nurses Association picket demanding a halt to the deportation of H-1 nurses. (AK Photo)

York and New Jersey have large concentrations of H-1 nurses. Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Missouri, Michigan, Tennessee, and Texas also recruit heavily. California does not recruit directly but siphons nurses from other states.

do 87% of foreign nurses), she flees to other states—as an illegal, desperately looking for another work contract, hoping to extend her stay. "Living in a suitcase," as nurses themselves describe it.

Danger in Illinois:

Anti-Alien Bills Loom in State Assembly

Chicago—Three bills termed repressive and discriminatory to immigrants by a coalition of community groups have been filed in the General Assembly of the State of Illinois.

House Bill No. 0005 would prohibit employment in the state of Illinois of aliens who are in the U.S. illegally. An employer or legal contractor or their agent would be fined \$1,000 for the first offense and \$2,000-\$10,000 for subsequent offenses.

Observers believe this would make undocumented aliens even more vulnerable to exploitation as they would be compelled to accept employment on any term in exchange for the risks taken by the employer hiring them.

It would also subject all immigrants to undue suspicion in applying for jobs just by virtue of their physical features.

No Driver's License; No Public Benefits

Another bill numbered 0006 seeks to deny Illinois driver's licenses or permits to undocumented aliens. A similar bill was vetoed by Gov. James Thompson two years ago under strong public pressure. It has now been reintroduced as House Bill No. 0006.

Bill 0006 also requires proof of citizenship or legal residence before licenses can be issued. This legislation would allow traffic policemen to arbitrarily check drivers for violation of this law and thus serve as an excuse for harassment of all foreign-born.

Another controversial bill, House Bill 0008, would deny

public money, services or benefits to an undocumented alien. Penalty for an alien in violation of this law is high: a maximum fine of \$5,000 for the first offense and \$1,000-\$10,000 for subsequent offenses.

The vagueness of the bill could mean denial of such basic services as public education, unemployment benefits, etc.

Grassroots Opposition Forms

The bills may be deliberated on by the state Assembly in late March or early April. If passed, some 1.5 million people will be affected.

Among them are Latinos, Filipino H-1 nurses, and a new wave of Polish immigrants. The INS estimates 1,000 aliens enter Illinois each month.

Atty. Juan Soliz, spokesperson of the Midwest Coalition, a group opposing the bills, said that a position paper against these bills is being drafted.

Soliz believes the bills are discriminatory to undocumented workers "who, after all, are contributing to their communities in terms of services, payment of taxes, etc."

The Midwest Coalition has called for a citywide meeting of various organizations and has created committees for publicity and lobby work.

Coalition members find it particularly significant that these bills were introduced upon the inauguration of Ronald Reagan to the presidency in January. The bills were introduced by Republican state representative Pechous. □

DOMESTIC/INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Profile of El Salvador:

Ruled by '14 Families' and the U.S.

By Walter Yonn
Staff Writer

El Salvador has received a great deal of attention in recent months. However many people have been kept misinformed of the historic roots of the raging conflict wracking this small Central American nation.

The following is part I of a two-part series. It will give a broad historical sketch of El Salvador. Part II will summarize the background of the current political movement in that country since 1970. This will be based on an interview with a Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) representative.

Revolution Against Spain

Like the Philippines, El Salvador suffered hundreds of years under the colonial rule of Spain and the *encomienda* system.

In the early 1800's Mexico, Central America, and much of South America waged bitter and eventually victorious wars of independence against Spain. Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Honduras and El Salvador waged this war together as the United Provinces of Central America.

The revolution, however, meant little change for the peasantry, many of whom were the native Indian people. Their Spanish masters were replaced by rulers of their own nationality—the propertied and educated classes similar to the *Ilustrados* or *mestizos* in the Philippines.

'14 Families' and the Economy

Around 1850, the *encomienda* system collapsed with the decline of indigo, El Salvador's main export. Commercial coffee farming became the country's major economic activity. It built the fortunes of the ruling (and notorious) "fourteen families" and made wage-earners of a large portion of the peasantry.

Although coffee would eventually give way to cotton, sugar and manufacturing, it remains a central feature of the country's economy. As late as 1950 coffee

was 90 percent of total exports, and in 1980 it still accounted for 44 percent of total exports.

Marti's Revolution

El Salvador, and other countries tied to U.S. and European economies, were hit hard by the Great Depression of the 1930's. While in 1928 coffee exports

killed, many of them Indians.

The "fourteen families" and the military were to rule without serious challenge for the next forty years.

U.S. Presence in the Region Grows

U.S. intervention has a long history in Latin America. In the

labeled into Spanish. (This was the origin of the present term "gunboat diplomacy." The last major example of "gunboat diplomacy" was the U.S. invasion of the Dominican Republic in 1965.)

During this time, U.S. influence in El Salvador was exercised indirectly, mainly through neighboring countries. El Salvador's

financial institutions and utilities and appeared determined not to stop there.

A military takeover however, brought down the government and in 1954 Col. Castillo Armas, a graduate of the U.S. Army General Staff School in Kansas, was installed by the CIA. Armas and some of his men actually trained on a Somoza ranch in Nicaragua. Armas was even flown into Guatemala in the U.S. Ambassador's private plane.

Meanwhile, in Cuba, Fidel Castro led his countrymen in an armed seizure of the Cuban government in 1959. Castro dismantled the previous police and military apparatus of the U.S.-supported Batista regime and successfully repulsed a U.S.-sponsored invasion in 1961 at the Bay of Pigs.

Today Guatemala is known as one of the most repressive governments in Latin America—illiteracy and starvation are rampant. Amnesty International reported 20,000 government murders between 1966-76, with 3,000 reported in 1980 alone.

In Cuba, United Nations reports have confirmed the elimination of illiteracy and the achievement of the lowest infant mortality rate in Latin America. Numerous other social reforms have greatly benefitted the Cuban masses.

For revolutionaries and reformers in Latin America, the examples of Cuba and Guatemala have provided clear alternatives or strategies for independence. The U.S.' attempts to suppress the Cuban alternative also indicated clearly that it would be an enemy of independence and social change in Latin America.

Nicaragua knew this lesson well and is still fighting off Washington's continued efforts to undermine its victory. El Salvador is still suffering the violent impact of the U.S.' commitment to neo-colonialism, exploitation and dictatorship. □

(Next issue: Roots of the present Salvadoran conflict.)



totalled \$16 million, by 1932 they plummeted to \$4.8 million. Coffee workers' wages were reduced from 50 to 20 cents per day and starvation was widespread.

This same period also saw the growth of organized labor. Leading the largest labor union was Farabundo Marti, who was also the founder of the Communist Party of El Salvador.

Marti traveled widely, was educated in the international socialist movement, and fought the U.S. Marines in Nicaragua with Sandino. (The successful Sandinista movement of Nicaragua was named after Sandino.)

A general uprising shook El Salvador in 1932. The revolution however, was defeated and Marti was murdered, along with 30,000 others. In less than a month, four percent of the population were

1840's the U.S. took large portions of Mexico and occupied its capital. These areas included California, New Mexico, Arizona and Texas.

Several years later, the construction of a trans-ocean canal in Nicaragua posed a threat to the U.S.-controlled Panama canal. The U.S. government promptly sponsored a coup in Nicaragua to stop the construction. An American adventurer by the name of Walker from New Orleans declared himself president. One of Walker's first official acts was to reinstitute slavery.

Through the early decades of the 1900's U.S. warships and Marines became a regular feature of Latin American life, occasionally invading and forcing treaties and new governments on the people of the region. Often times the treaties were not even trans-

military, for example, was being trained by Argentina.

Following WWII however, the U.S. decided to take a more direct hand in El Salvador, mainly through the military. From 1941 to 1953 a U.S. Army officer supervised El Salvador's military academy. Since 1950 over 2,000 Salvadorean officers have completed training in Military facilities in the United States.

The Lessons of Guatemala and Cuba

In the late 1950's there were two important events that profoundly affected politics in El Salvador and other Latin American countries.

In Guatemala, a progressive nationalist movement won the elections in 1945 and held office until 1954. This government nationalized the country's

U.S. Meddling . . .

Continued from front page

ing the total authorized military aid up to \$35.4 million. In terms of "unofficial" aid however, the Democratic Revolutionary Front (FDR) and the Farabundo Marti Forces of National Liberation (FMLN) insist that the U.S. already has at least 200 advisors in the country assisting the junta.

Reagan Policy Protested

In immediate response to Reagan's actions, 44 congressmen sent a telegram registering their disapproval of the military moves.

The telegram urged Reagan to encourage dialogue between the junta and the opposition, rather than seek a military solution.

It also expressed concern that some of the U.S. advisers could be killed and that the deaths could result in accelerated U.S. intervention such as occurred in Vietnam.

Longshoremen on the U.S. west coast and dockworkers around the world (in Canada, West

Germany, Spain, Panama, Columbia and Venezuela) are refusing to load military aid going to El Salvador's junta.

In addition, representatives of the U.S. State Department have not been very successful in swaying European nations (including Holland, West Germany and Sweden) from their supportive stance towards the FDR.

Mexico's Lopez Portillo declared that U.S. support of the Salvadoran dictatorship, rather than the revolutionary movement, was jeopardizing the region's stability.

A Country Sharply Polarized

The FDR represents an alliance of all the popular organizations, all the political and military organizations of the left, and forces involved with the previous junta. As noted in a recent article in *Foreign Affairs*, this union "includes everyone but the government and the far right."

In response to the growing influence of the left, the junta has escalated its terrorism against the peasantry.

According to a letter to Reagan by congress Democrats Barbara Mikulski, Rober Edgar and Gerry Studds, who visited the Salvadoran-Honduran border. "Murder, rape, torture and the

no case did the refugees...report that they had been attacked or harassed by the guerilla forces..."

Because of broad mass support for the FMLN guerillas, the junta has not been able to crush



Salvadoran National Guards rounding up anti-government demonstrators.

burning of crops are being inflicted upon the Salvadoran people by the very troops now receiving U.S. military aid."

The report went on to say, "In

the revolutionary movement. One indication of the opposition's support was the widespread response to the FMLN's call for a general strike, which was belittled in the

U.S. press. Half the shops in San Salvador closed down and 20,000 government workers walked off their jobs.

Negotiations Discussed

Although war continues to rage in El Salvador, the FMLN and the junta President Jose Napoleon Duarte have tentatively agreed to mediation by representatives of the Socialist International.

Bert Carlson, Secretary General of the Socialist International will meet with the State Department in Washington to suggest that former West Germany Chancellor Willy Brandt begin talks with Reagan.

With talks of negotiations only beginning, Duarte has already stated that he will not "sell out the present government."

However for people of El Salvador, having had bitter experiences in past negotiations where the right-wing junta refused to cooperate in implementing agreed-upon reforms, negotiations do not hold much promise. □

Short Story:

ILANG BUHAY MAN AY IAALAY

Translated from KAMAO
No. 1, 1980

In commemoration of the 12th anniversary of the New People's Army, we offer our readers a glance at another aspect of the life-and-death revolutionary struggle taking shape in the Philippines.

This short story, translated from Filipino by our staff writer Cris Tagam, is a specimen of the new cultural movement that is weaving the growing ranks of the national democratic revolution into one cohesive force.

"Ilang Buhay..." was published in KAMAO, an underground mass literary publication dedicated to a readership of workers, peasants and urban poor. It is one guerrilla fighter's love story. His love is inextricably meshed with the flowering of his own revolutionary ideals. Read on. Editor

The song piercing through the darkness covering Barrio Tudling was sweet but it burned like a fire. Near the sari-sari store, townfolks sat with the guerrillas listening attentively to Ka. Lerma's singing. Ka. Lerma is a "Red fighter."

It was harvest time but the hard day's work in the fields did not show in their faces.

Under a tree Ka. Totoy held a child on his lap. Some children played nearby while others sat contented by his feet. Totoy could feel the merging of Ka. Lerma's voice with the smell of newly winnowed rice. The song carried painful memories now flowing and tearing through his soul.

Kung may buhay akong higit sa isa, Lahat ng ito'y ihahandog sa masa. Mapugto man baw't isa sa pakikibaka Muli't muling ibubuhay ng layong lumaya

Totoy closed his eyes tightly. Perhaps he did not notice the words "Ka. Anna" pass through his lips. The child, startled, looked up at him. Not saying anything, the child continued staring as if wanting to know what was going through the mind of the pre-occupied guerrilla.

"Ka. Anna," slowly whispered Totoy.

The unnerving sound, like that of a giant beast's laughter, suddenly stopped. The enormous wheels stopped turning. One by one the lights went off. A moment passed and like a great wave the workers rushed out of the factory. Angry faces. Clenched fists. Placards held firmly.

"Raise workers' wages!" "Down with foreign capitalists!" "Strike! Strike! Strike!" In a flash the factory grounds were filled with striking workers. Passers-by, ignorant of what was behind the factory gates were taken aback. The factory walls—barracks of oppression.

Totoy was there. A young worker; the son of a peasant. He has learned about hardship early. As a young child, he rose each day before dawn to dig on the hug coconut plantation owned by Don Anselmo. He dug the earth up to his chest. For 50 *sentimos* a hole. Totoy felt lucky when he earned ₱2.50 working from dawn to dusk.

He cannot forget Ka. Bino, an older peasant, crying in anger, rushing into Don Anselmo's house. Bino whose landholding has been taken away. Bino, dragged out by armed goons. Could anyone forget that sight? And the next day, the corpse of the old

farmer was found in the middle of the copra mill. Face down, impaled by the sharp coconut husker. Riddled with wounds and bruises. The old farmer was still holding his sharp *itak* tightly. Flies feasted on the blood all over his body, the earth and the shiny metal.

That afternoon at the town's *kamposanto*, the funeral was attended by quietly simmering peasants. Don Anselmo was there trying to comfort the bereaved. "Bino threatened my men. They have to defend themselves you know." Searching his pockets for a few pesos, Don Anselmo told them "You can use this until you find another place to stay."

Totoy could see the blood of many others in that tiny wad of money—the many others enslaved by the landlord. Could he forget the widow Ba. Goring's anger and shame as she accepted the landlord's alms?

Not long after, Totoy escaped to Manila, thinking he would find the comforts not found in the countryside. But the city proved more ruthless. He was

production.

3 There were many hirelings called to suppress that first day of the strike. Each one carried a long gun, a truncheon and riot shield. All were fitted with helmets as if going off to war. Totoy had not expected this. Faces of Don Anselmo's men flashed through his mind.

The workers did not waver. The police and goons started clubbing them without mercy. Some ran to the safety of the factory walls. Older workers could only crouch to protect their heads. Many others, including Totoy, boldly faced the troops, shouting disgust at their blind obedience to the exploiters.

Seeing an older worker wounded and lying on the ground, Totoy rushed to help him. Before he could reach him Totoy suddenly felt a rifle butt hit his neck. Another strike on his forehead and his vision went blank. He felt blood spurting from his head as he fell forward. The buzzing sounds in his head screamed louder than the approaching police sirens.



like dust in that harsh wind. Stevedore, bus conductor, peon, plumber's help, factory hand—he tried everything.

He soon found out that he had not gone far from where he came. The textile factory was just like the copra mill. The loom was the coconut husker. The threads spun out by the workers were the copra. The factory and the mill were one. Around him Totoy saw the many faces of Ka. Bino. A worker swallowed by the giant churning machines was but an ordinary event here. Only in the form of exploitation was there a difference.

And then the thoughts and feelings of the workers became one. A raised fist became many raised fists. All anger burst forth. That day, hundreds and hundreds of workers' hands became the one hand that pulled the gears down, stopping

4 His bandaged head was still throbbing with dull pain as Totoy opened his eyes. A young woman, Ka. Anna, was smiling as she straightened the hospital sheets.

That was the start of a new friendship. Anna and a few activists supporting the strike came to visit the wounded everyday. Often they brought them food and other necessities. More importantly they talked to them. In these many conversations, Totoy found that Anna was a student at a Manila university and came from an ordinary family.

When Totoy went back to the ranks of the strikers Anna and her friends were there. They found time to stage skits and teach songs. Their songs spoke of rights and freedom. They spoke of love for the country. Anna taught him one particularly

beautiful song she had written herself on commitment to that goal of freedom.

From these activists Totoy first heard of the basic problems of Philippine society. Why it is semi-colonial and semi-feudal. Totoy became an active "student." Slowly he came to understand the link between the problems of rural peasants and city workers: that all were victimized—each in different ways—by American imperialism, landlord rule and bureaucrat capitalism.

The solidarity of the workers ensured the strike's success. The fascist troops, the hired goons and scabs failed. The looms started spinning. The factory was alive again.

But Totoy now knew that a few economic gains could not solve the problems of the Filipino workers. He had wholeheartedly accepted that only a revolution can free the oppressed.

It was then that Totoy started drawing other workers into serious conversations. He became one with the thousands of workers, peasants and students openly waving the red flags and declaring their goals in the streets.

Totoy experienced the many forms of fascism. But the tears brought on by the sting of teargas could not wipe out the years of hardship and exploitation. And the truncheon could not beat out his anger against deceit and oppression.

5 "I've made up my mind to become a full-time activist," Totoy told Anna one day as they happened to be together. "I would rather devote my time and life serving the people than work for those leeches."

Anna did not say a word. Her smile as she gazed at Totoy was one of complete approval.

After that the pair hardly saw each other. Totoy was consumed by his task organizing the poor in Caloocan. Anna was given another area of work in Manila.

Totoy discovered that full-time work with the ranks of the masses brought him a sense of fulfillment. Like him, these people were peasants who migrated to the city seeking some form of livelihood which the countryside could not provide.

To these people Totoy gave all of his time and energy. After explaining to them the roots of their conditions Totoy succeeded in organizing them.

When a rich businessman attempted to demolish the slum-dwellers' homes, hired goons and government police stood unable to enter the community. Frustrated, they resorted to threatening residents.

6 Two months before martial law Totoy entered a new phase. He returned to the countryside to become a "Red fighter," a guerrilla of the New People's Army.

Totoy and other guerrillas worked in Quezon province organizing the peasants to armed struggle. It had been years since he left such dismal conditions but there had been little progress. In fact, exploitation was worse.

In the barrio where Totoy and his comrades worked, the people were in full unity with the New People's Army's goals. They saw the NPA as their hope and a reflection of their strength. Their warm acceptance enabled Totoy and his comrades to work—plow the field for planting, harvest or winnow rice. And without fail the NPAs discussed with people why their conditions

were such and what they could do to change them.

Criminals began to fear the guerrillas. The NPA gathered all the bad elements, along with the abusive soldiers from the neighboring barrio, and after public trial, eliminated them. The "Red fighters" earned the deep respect and friendship of the masses.

7 With the declaration of martial law, Totoy learned that Anna was one of the thousands of activists and workers picked up, tortured and detained by the regime. Despite this he managed to send her a letter. It was one of greetings, a show of support.

It was also a declaration of his true feelings for Anna. Feelings he thought he could not tell her when they were working together in the city. It was a declaration of love, sweet but fiery. Like their love for the country.

Totoy was overjoyed to receive a response from Anna. Anna wrote of her detention and that of others. That it was a small action implemented by a crazed regime. Small compared to the sufferings of millions of Filipinos all over the country. Anna's reply to Totoy's proposal was short but its warmth and affection were enough to keep the fire burning in one "Red fighter."

8 The following months saw the tightening grip of military campaigns. From nearby barrios, the guerrillas received news of the atrocities suffered by people suspected of supporting the NPA. Many young men and women were jailed or executed by the fascist state when they refused to point out the NPA. Still Totoy's unit continued to grow and expand its influence. With the help of the masses they acquired new guns and ammunition.

A few months passed. Totoy learned of Anna's and two other comrades' successful escape from jail. Joy overwhelmed him and the other fighters. But this joy was shortlived. After two months, news filtered down the mountains that Anna was among a group of guerrillas slain in an encounter with the PC company dispatched to hunt them.

Grief over the loss of a beloved comrade remained deep in Totoy's heart. But the understanding that her death was for a greater goal—that of a nation's liberation—eased this grief. Totoy knew that death is part of the struggle. And that if Anna had two, or three, or a hundred lives, like the song she once sang to him, she would wholeheartedly offer these lives again. And he knew too that the masses would not forget.

9 "Ka. Totoy, Ka. Totoy," the child softly said. He had been gently stroking the Red fighter's face, seemingly to ease his grief. "I'm getting sleepy. I have to go to sleep now," he said, smiling. Totoy playfully brushed the child's hair off his face. He lifted the little boy to bring him home and the other children followed.

The moon shone brightly, lighting the path for Totoy and the children. Their shadows were cast against the golden rice, ready for harvest the next morning. At the edge of the field the wild flowers danced to the sweet music of the wind.

Back in the barrio store, the townfolks of Bo. Tudling sat with eyes half-closed, listening to Ka. Lerma singing the song she had learned from Ka. Totoy—the song of a Red fighter's commitment. □