



El Salvador:

Prelude to Revolution

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GOV'T RETALIATES AGAINST BANGSA MORO ARMY



(See page 3)

Subversion Charges Filed in Civilian Courts



Hearing before military tribunal prior to "lifting": Will civilian trial be any different?

By VICTORIA LUNA
Staff Writer

February 25 marked yet another step in the elaborate "normalization" scheme of Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos.

For the first time since the declaration of martial law, subversion charges were filed before a civilian court.

The reason? According to regime spokesmen, the so-called

lifting last January 17 meant the ultimate phasing out of military tribunals.

U.S. Residents Charged

Charged with conspiracy before Quezon City magistrate Ernani Cruz Pano were 90 people, many of them U.S. residents. Hearings were slated to begin March 15 in order to allow all respondents time to receive their notices.

Major Changes Due for California Nurses



Asian Law Caucus lawyer, Bill Tamayo, discusses recommendations with members of California's State Board for Nurses Licensure. (AK Photo)

Sacramento, CA—Scores of foreign-trained and minority nurses stand to benefit from a recent California State Board of Registered Nursing decision regarding the state's licensure process.

Moving on earlier findings that the licensing exam had a "adverse impact on minorities," the State Board passed a formal resolution on March 21 to extend interim work permits until October 31 for nurses who failed the February and July 1981 exams. They also voted to send a letter to the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) asking for a

halt to deportations of foreign-trained nurses who failed the exam.

Perhaps most significant of all resolutions is the one giving foreign-trained nurses 24 months from the date of their arrival to pass the licensing exam.

"This is a victory for foreign-trained and minority nurses," stated Bill Tamayo, attorney for the National Alliance for Fair Licensure of Foreign Nurse Graduates (NAFL). "These findings in California, that the licensing exam adversely affects minorities and the foreign-trained,

stand to affect the licensing process in all the other states which use the same testing and licensing procedure."

Six other recommendations were passed by the State Board affecting the licensing process, including the lifting of a two-year time period to pass all five parts of the exam, as well as conducting an investigation into the "job relatedness" of the test.

These recommendations grew out of a two-day hearing on the state's licensing process held in Sacramento on March 18-19.

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THE DEATH PENALTY: WHO GETS KILLED?

Once again the death penalty has been brought before the public.

Various Supreme Court decisions in the 1970's regarding its application had effectively put capital punishment in limbo. Recent revisions in state laws and strong public concern about crime have set the death penalty machinery back in motion.

The right wing has led in calling for restoration of the death penalty, taking advantage of public concern for safety against rising crime rates. Upon close examination, however, the death

penalty has historically been applied mainly against minorities, the poor, and the left. This explains the right's great interest in renewing capital punishment.

Only the Poor

The statistics show that rich people don't get executed. Those who do get executed are the poor. The Federal Law Enforcement Assistance Administration study in 1972 showed that 90 percent of the prisoners in jail had previous incomes below the national average and that a majority of those were below the poverty level.

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All are accused of involvement in the rash of bombings which struck Metro-Manila last summer. The explosions left one woman dead in a Makati supermarket and several injured when a bomb exploded during a conference of the American Society of Travel Agents (ASTA).

Among the accused are some of the most prominent members

Continued on page 4

EDITORIAL PAGE

White House Double-Talks; Dictators Take The Cue

The Duarte and the Marcoses have something to be happy about these days. The Reagan administration is desperately ransacking its treasure chest of official reasons for why the U.S. must continue supporting their dictatorial regimes.

We heard the White House's painful attempt to distinguish "authoritarian" regimes from "totalitarian" ones, several weeks ago. As an assembled press goaned in disbelief, a Reagan spokesman asserted that supporting authoritarian regimes is acceptable and does not contradict democratic ideas.

Well, here comes Secretary of State Alexander Haig before the Congress with more of the same. Haig claims that the cause of all the turmoil in developing nations is "Soviet illegal interventionism." America must act, he says, because this is a challenge to her belief that peace and stability must be realized "by self-determination in developing countries, freed from outside intimidation or intervention." America's concern is that nations achieve their goals through peaceful change and not through "bloodshed, terrorism and so-called wars of national liberation." These, he says, are the reasons why the U.S. should support repressive regimes (and even consider direct intervention) in countries like El Salvador.

Presumably, Haig first wants to distinguish between "illegal" and "legal intervention," implying that U.S. intervention falls under the latter category and is therefore, justifiable. Next, he wants to conveniently forget that the turmoils he blames the Russians for are caused by U.S.-sponsored repression, the only real symbol of "outside intimidation or intervention" in these countries. Lastly, reasserts rather subtly that the U.S. must see to it that peoples of other nations resort only to peaceful formulas for change—even if they have to be forced to do it. So much for Haig's commitment to self-determination. And isn't this but a rehash of the infamous "we had to destroy the [Vietnamese] village in order to save it"?

The point from all this it seems is that the more tortured Washington's line of reasoning becomes, the happier our dictators should be. The clear signal emitted here is that as long as there are imaginable excuses, there will be aid. The fascists of course have not lost the cue and they too are helping the White House find suitable justifications.

Marcos for one, is busy cloaking his regime with a mantle of "democratic legality" to facilitate the rationale that Washington is supporting a "flawed but acceptable force for good"—as compared to those who are resisting him who "stand for chaos." This is the motive behind the April 7 plebiscite which will also pave the way for a presidential election on June 7.

Expect a flurry of "democratic" activities from our dictators. South Korea's Chon Du Hwan's "election" has been concluded. Marcos' visit is next. Others may not be far behind. It hardly matters that their electoral will be obvious shams. At this point, it appears that the White House will grab any rationale for U.S. support if Haig's transparent double-talk is the best that it can currently offer. □

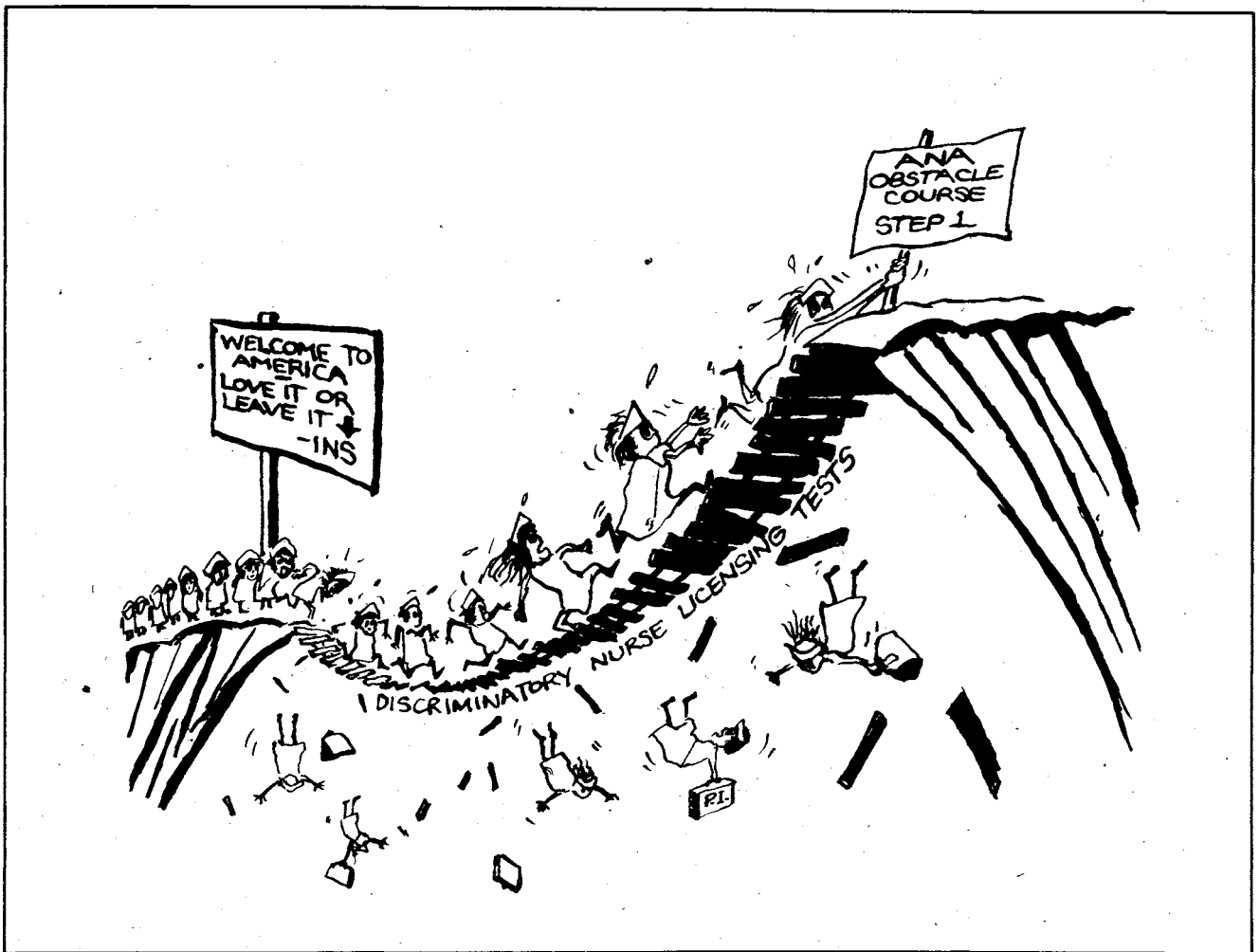
Creationism: Aping the Inquisition

Most people in America, including Filipinos, cannot be considered atheists. Even many habitual prodigals sometimes find it necessary to attend religious services when attacked by guilt or simply just to see to it that they are "sufficiently insured" should the Grim Reaper pay its unwelcome visit.

Yet as recent polls show, a substantial majority are just not quite ready to accept the religious fundamentalists' demand that the Biblical interpretation of the origins of humankind (creation) be taught as a science in public schools. Despite perspicacious fundamental attempts to give their religious assertions scientific trappings, most people are not willing to ignore the overwhelming scientific evidence proving the evolutionary origins of humankind. And rightfully so. The validity of science itself is at stake if the fundamentalist assault is not resisted.

But creationism is not merely an innocent assertion of religious belief. It carries far more dangerous political implications. As popular scientist Dr. Carl Sagan puts it, placing creationism on the same level as science would allow certain groups or individuals the authoritarian power to dictate what is truth—in complete disregard of scientific inquiry and objective scientific proof. It would resurrect, in the modern age, the ancient Inquisition that victimized the likes of Leonardo da Vinci.

The victory of creationism would be a gain for intellectual fascism, a prelude for this repressive ideology's triumph in the political realm. Creationism's bold re-emergence cannot therefore be separated from the "moral majority's" intrusions into sexual privacy; the racists' claim to white racial superiority; the attacks on the ERA and the right to reproductive choice; the American claim to national superiority, etc. It is part of the rightwing effort to turn back the clock on civil and political rights, of a resurgent fascist current in this country—and must unequivocally be opposed as such. □



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

I Like Your Paper

I have subscribed to your newspaper for about six months. I enjoy the informative articles and editorials about the opposition here and in the Philippines against the Marcos dictatorship and U.S. imperialism.

Shortly before Christmas I sent *Ang Katipunan* a money order for two K.D.P. calendars advertised in *Ang Katipunan*. It is now March 2 and I still have not received the calendars. Could you please send me the two calendars.

Thank you.
W.C.
Los Angeles, Ca.

...but I'm still waiting...

Last January 24, 1981, I sent you a check covering a year subscription to the *Katipunan* newspaper.

I already have had my check returned and yet I haven't received any copies of the paper.

Hoping to hear from you
J.O.
New York, N.Y.

As the two readers can testify, our distribution system is far from perfect. We have been trying to work out all the problems, however, and if any readers have been having similar problems, please write and let us

know. We're doing our best to get the paper out to our readership.

Why Attack Esclamado?

Your editorial on Esclamado's anti-communist attack against the KDP et al is not expected of a claimed real Marxist. It would be worth writing if your paper intends to compete with his profit oriented newspaper. I suppose it is in big contrast with AK's established aims of educating, organizing and mobilizing the freedom loving people of the United States, Filipinos in particular...

Fraternally yours,
J.M.
Chicago, Ill.

Because many of people who work with the KDP or in the progressive movement generally read *Esclamado's* newspaper, they may become confused, even intimidated, when *Esclamado* launches into one of his anti-communist tirades. We feel that such attacks must be met head on, to clarify issues and combat such backward thinking. In this way, we do compete with *Esclamado*, in the realm of people's ideas and thinking, and also in organizing. In this way, we do aim towards "educating, organizing and mobilizing" the Filipino community. Mabuhay Ka!

Errata: In the last issue of *Ang Katipunan* it was mistakenly reported that Bill Tamayo was legal counsel for the National Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization (NIFRO). Tamayo is an attorney for the Asian Law Caucus. In the same article, it was erroneously reported that the California State Board of Nurses Licensure had adopted a policy extending interim temporary permits, an action which was not taken until March 21.

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PHILIPPINE NEWS

Pata Island Conflict:

Gov't Retaliates; 14,000 Starving



Refugee from Jolo: thousands more face starvation on Pata Island.

A 15,000-strong military operation has been launched against fighters of the Bangsa Moro Army in retaliation for the ambush and killing of 124 soldiers on Pata Island February 12.

The ambush, a major BMA victory in the eight-year-old civil war, was timed for the media focus on the Philippines during the Papal visit in February.

Heightened PC atrocities and abuse against the island's women and children immediately followed the massacre.

In the recent anti-BMA operation, government reports count a total of 94 guerrillas dead. The latest encounter claimed 39 lives of Moro fighters allegedly attempting to break through the Marine blockade of the island.

Two small boats were reported sunk by the Philippine Navy in the process.

CIVILIAN LOSSES

Moro National Liberation Front spokesmen in Libya warned of possible severe government retaliation against civilians in the wake of the February 12 encounter. Recent reports by the regime have confirmed their fears.

In early March, a government press conference admitted heavy civilian losses. According to Brig. Gen. Delfin Castro of the PC Southern Command, civilian deaths cannot be avoided "because the people insist on staying with the rebels."

14,000 Face Starvation

A fact-finding mission disclosed that the island residents now face starvation. Civilian boats have been confiscated or destroyed, preventing fishermen from hauling in fish. Crops were also destroyed by soldiers trampling the fields in search for the guerrillas.

The mission concluded that the "military restrictions on civilian movement have caused food shortages." Appeals for food and medicine for the people of the island have been relayed to the local and international public.

Meanwhile, attempts of the government to relocate the people have been met with mistrust and resistance. □

Regime Gears Up for April 7 Plebiscite



Ferdinand Marcos casts ballot in 1976 referendum. Observers predict "overwhelming approval" once again.

The Interim *Batasang Pambansa* February 27 passed proposed constitutional amendments aimed at changing the country's government into a "strong presidential" system. These amendments will be placed before the Filipino people in a national plebiscite slated for April 7.

The plebiscite was originally scheduled for March 17, to be followed by presidential elections in May. With the change in the plebiscite date, the election has been pushed back to June.

Most important—also longest and most complicated—of the three questions planned for the plebiscite is the first. It reads:

"Do you vote for the approval of an amendment to the Constitution and to Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the *Batasang Pambansa*, which in substance, calls for the establishment of a modified parliamentary system, amending for this purposes Articles VII, VIII and IX of the Constitution?"

Vague Wording—Smallest of Problems

This confusing question is followed by five major features of the "strong presidential" system proposed by President Ferdinand E. Marcos' political party the *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* (KBL, New Society Party). Among these are a six-year presidential term with no limit on reelection and a grant of presidential immunity from lawsuit for the duration of tenure.

The remaining two questions seek approval of an amendment which vaguely "institutes electoral reforms" and another which allows naturalized Filipinos abroad to own property inside the country not exceeding 1,000 square meters in the cities and three hectares in the countryside.

The vague and tortuous language of the questions is the least of the voters' many problems.

Far more difficult will be the matter of keeping track of the

off-changed Philippine Constitution. The document rushed for approval in 1973 by those members of the Constitutional Convention not in jail has undergone major changes via Marcos-staged referenda and plebiscites (see related story, p. 4).

Seal of Approval

Perhaps most serious of all is the fact that the plebiscite and the presidential election are seen by most as a no-contest issue designed to provide the seal of approval for Ferdinand Marcos.

In this light, particularly significant are rumors from the U.S. State Department confirming speculation that Marcos plans a U.S. visit following the election.

The Marcos regime, frustrated by the failure of the "lifting" of martial law to win it international legitimacy, looks to the coming election to accomplish the same end. But this means drastically altering the 1973 Constitution which calls for a Prime Minister as head of state.

Resounding Approval Expected

Observers of previous referenda and plebiscites expect a resounding approval of the KBL proposals. In the past, highly intimidating tactics have been used to insure a vote in the regime's favor. Reports of an inordinately high percentage of "yes" votes, even in areas where "nos" were known to predominate, have suggested manipulation of figures.

Why, observers ask, should things be any different in this latest exercise? Ferdinand Marcos could then arrive on American soil as the "legitimate" and "democratically-elected" ruler of the Filipino people. □

Buod ng mga Balita

DAVAO CITY TO BE SPLIT IN TWO?

"Divide and conquer" has long been the approach of Filipino politicians to the problem of too few kingdoms for petty politicians to rule. Philippine provinces have thus been repeatedly split, providing new fiefdoms for local lords to rule. But, for the first time, this formula is being contemplated for a city.

According to Henry Kamm of the *New York Times*, the potential victim of this policy is Davao, geographically the largest of Filipino cities. Its problem dates from the local election of January 1980.

At that time, Mayor Luis T. Santos, known locally as "the squatter of City Hall," running for re-election on President Ferdinand E. Marcos' *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* slate, lost the mayoral office to Elias Lopez of the Nacionalista Party by a slim 2,000 votes. But the winner has never been proclaimed because various moves before the Election Commission and the courts have kept the outcome in a protracted deadlock.

Santos retains close ties with Antonio O. Florendo, economic kingpin of Mindanao and close crony of the President. It is this tie which has apparently given birth to the new plan to satisfy everybody. Both Santos and Florendo told Kamm of the plan to split Davao into two cities thereby providing employment for both men with claims to the mayor's office.

One of the cities, according to Santos, is to be labeled New Davao. The other? Imelda City.

"I'd love to have it Imelda City," commented Mayor Santos. "It would be much easier to get funds from Manila."

Feeling toward Santos in the city are, at best, mixed. On the day of Pope John Paul II's visit to the city, the local paper appeared with photos of the Pope and the mayor side by side. Beneath Santos' photo, someone had typed in the words "an imposter" on every copy of the paper. □

Belgian Lawyers Group Condemns False 'Lifting'

The International Association of Democratic Lawyers, a consultative group to the United Nations based in Brussels, Belgium, March 9 issued a statement condemning the Marcos government.

"Even after having formally abolished martial law, the Marcos government in the Philippines continues, as before, to govern by decrees and has not ended its numerous abuses of power committed because of the lack of effectively recognized civil and social rights," pronounced the group's press statement.

The Association, recalling the October sentence issued by the Permanent People's Tribunal in Antwerp, Belgium, declared that the "lifting... calls into question the very legitimacy of the regime's power as well as the massive collusion which exists between the regime and foreign powers."

Particularly singled out was the 1979 treaty between the U.S. and the Philippines, "prolonging the abusive privileges of American citizens" and the 1979 bases agreement, which "accords to the United States the power to intervene in Philippine territory."

The Association concluded by condemning "the repression of peasants, arbitrary imprisonments and the war against and ongoing displacement of the Bangsa Moro people." □

Phil. Stock Market Plummets

Reeling from a series of shocks to the Philippine economy, the Philippine stock market March 4 plummeted to its lowest volume in eight years. The Makati and Manila stock markets combined turned over a total volume of only ₱1.74 million or \$277,000 and debts of at least ₱635 million (see *AK*, Vol. VIII, No. 4).

Brokers have urged the Philippine government to develop a rescue plan involving government investments, but the regime has so far remained cool to the request. □

ANG KATIPUNAN (AK) is the national newspaper of the Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP) and is published as a non-profit educational and informational service geared toward covering issues affecting primarily the Filipino community in the U.S. Published bi-weekly except in January and July when monthly, the AK is produced cooperatively by the AK Staff. Basic subscription rates are: \$7.50 a year for the U.S. and Canada and \$10.00 overseas. Application for second-class postage is pending at Oakland, CA. Editorial offices are located at 3600 Lincoln Blvd., Oakland, CA 94602, (415) 482-3400. Send subscriptions and correspondence to P.O. Box 23644, Oakland, CA 94623. Postmaster, send address corrections to P.O. Box 23644, Oakland, CA 94623.

THE GENUINE ALTERNATIVE: NATIONAL DEMOCRACY

(10th in a Series)

Point 10: Unite with all peoples fighting imperialism and all reaction and seek support for the Philippine revolutionary struggle.

When the hated Shah of Iran fell in 1979, people in Asia, Africa, Europe, the United States and Latin America rejoiced.

When the Nicaraguan people achieved liberation from the vicious Somoza regime, people all over the world celebrated their victory.

When the people of Zimbabwe won the right to genuine free elections liberating themselves from a thoroughly racist system of government, the reaction was the same.

Three different continents; three different struggles. Yet each time, people the world over celebrated a people's victory. Why?

Because different though all these struggles may be, they are one against U.S. imperialism.

A Common Enemy

The oppressed peoples of Iran, Nicaragua and Zimbabwe, faced as their key enemy U.S. imperialism and its various cohorts—the Shah, Somoza, and the Ian Smith regime. People everywhere rejoiced because the blows struck by each of their victories contributed to their own struggle against a common enemy.

Today the struggle against U.S. imperialism rages on—in the streets of the United States where people protest draft registration; in South Africa where people fight apartheid; in El Salvador where people battle a right-wing junta backed by the U.S. military aid and advisors.

It rages especially fierce in the Philippines where people confront the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship.

Seeking International Support

The National Democratic Revolution has stood shoulder



Demonstrators in U.S. denounce the dictatorship during Marcos' 1980 visit to Hawaii.

to shoulder with the struggles by the people of Iran, Zimbabwe and Nicaragua and has continually expressed its solidarity with the ongoing struggles waged by revolutionaries and progressives everywhere. And in this common spirit of solidarity, people everywhere have supported the revolution waged by the National Democratic Front against the U.S.-Marcos dictatorship.

The Philippine revolution actively seeks such political and material support from progressive peoples of the world. Though the Filipino people must rely principally upon themselves to win their struggle, international support and solidarity with the Philippine revolution is an important component of the National Democratic program.

Financial and medical aid are desperately needed. Political support from people abroad

is a vital component of the effort to expose and isolate the Marcos regime internationally.

Special Role for the American People

Though the Philippine revolution seek support from people internationally, history and geography mean that the people of the United States have a particularly important role to play.

Unique in the relationship between U.S. imperialism and the Philippines is the tie based on shared history and a U.S. defense strategy which places heavy emphasis on safeguarding the Pacific area under U.S. domination.

The Philippines is one of only three countries ever to have been direct U.S. colonies. This means strategic and diplomatic ties dating back to 1898.

Even more important, however, is the presence of U.S.

military bases on Philippine soil, particularly Clark Air Base and Subic Naval Base.

Keystones of U.S. Military Strategy

Imperialism considers these vital to its defense. A revolution which threatens such outposts of imperialism will be resisted far more fiercely than one occurring in an area the U.S. considers less "strategic."

In the long run, the people of the U.S. have little interest in maintaining an economic and political system which subjugates not only the U.S. working masses, but the people in Asia, Africa and Latin America.

The people of the U.S. have already demonstrated their capacity to influence U.S. foreign policy through their successful mass movement opposing the Vietnam War. An even more powerful mass movement will be required to prevent the U.S. from intervening in the strategic Philippines when the National Democratic Revolution reaches a higher stage.

Filipino Community—Catalyst

Filipinos and Filipino-Americans in the U.S. are in a unique position to popularize the National Democratic struggle. Many are recent arrivals with strong ties to the homeland. The

racism and national chauvinism suffered in this country have alienated many from the "American Dream." They are in a position to learn quickly the true character of imperialism.

The Filipino community in the United States must act as an important component to the movement which will be needed to avert U.S. intervention in the Philippine revolution. They can most easily explain to American workers, students and professionals that the interests of the American and Filipino people are one.

Education and Organization

As the scale of the National Democratic Revolution grows, so must the support movement. If progressive people are to avert intervention in a full-blown people's war, the foundations must be laid today while the level of U.S. intervention is relatively low.

Filipinos, Filipino-Americans and progressive Americans face a bold and challenging task. Actively supporting the National Democratic Revolution means educating and organizing to oppose U.S. intervention and mobilizing to aid the revolution materially and politically. Such are the internationalist duties posed before supporters of the Philippine revolution in this historical period. □

Subversion Charges . . .



Doris Baffrey

Continued from front page

of the elite opposition. They include ex-Senators Jovito Salonga, Benigno Aquino, and Raul Manglapus.

Others residing in the U.S. include Charito Planas, Eugenio Lopez, Jr., Raul Daza, Steve Psinakis, and much of the leadership of the rightist Movement for a Free Philippines (MFP).

Anti-Martial Law Coalition coordinator Rene Cruz, on the list released by the regime last August, has as yet received no notice of any charges.

FBI Questions U.S. Opposition

In a closely related development, Senator Benigno Aquino

and others close to the MFP recently revealed that MFP members have again been questioned by the FBI.

The Marcos regime last August appealed to the U.S. government for aid in tracking down the accused residing in this country. The U.S. government insisted that initial FBI questioning was aimed solely at seeing whether any U.S. laws had been violated.

But the FBI has taken a greater interest in the case than it admits.

"Name Your Price"

Reuters reports that Doris Baffrey, a New York-based Filipina who confessed to having planted the ASTA bomb, claims that three FBI agents visited her Manila cell. According to Ms. Baffrey, they asked her to "name her price" for cooperation in the prosecution of Filipino opposition members in the U.S.

Pushing her to "say something" against U.S.-based opposition figures, Ms. Baffrey revealed, the agents offered to set her up "in any place in the world" if she would return to the U.S. and testify. The FBI went so far as to bring her three-year-old son to Manila.

In a further effort to intimidate the U.S.-based opposition, two days before the new subversion charges were lodged, Foreign Minister Carlos P. Ro-

mulo announced the re-opening of discussions on a U.S.-R.P. extradition treaty early in March.

Military Trials Continue

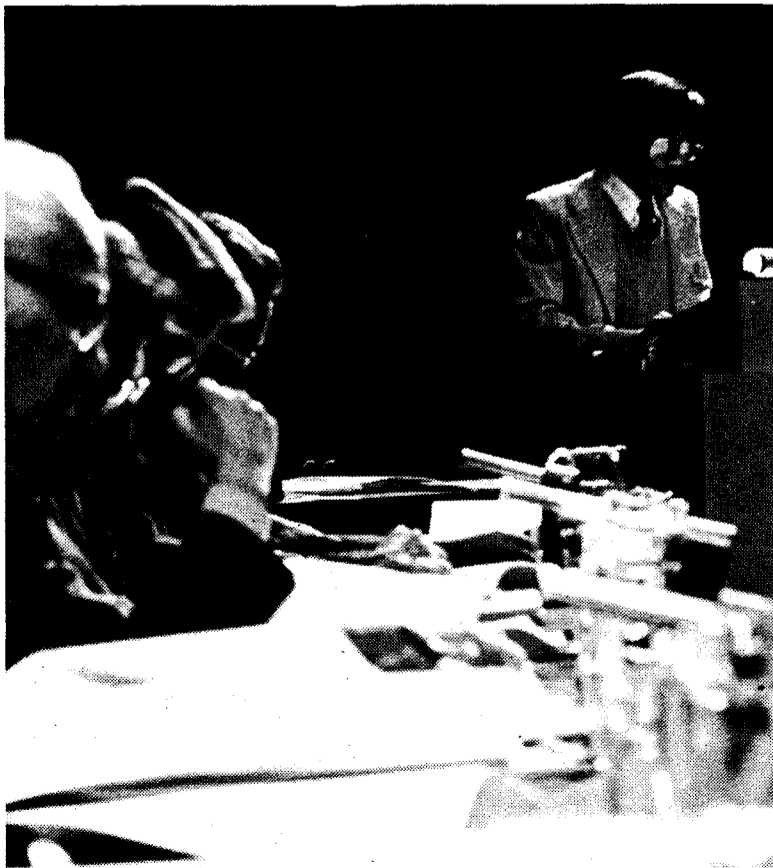
While the regime advertised the significance of the first subversion trial before a civilian court, another subversion trial rolled on before a military tribunal.

On February 26, lawyers for businessman Eduardo Olaguer, charged with leading the "Light-A-Fire Movement," cited the planned dismantling of military tribunals as reason to discontinue their client's trial. Military authorities refused, calling upon a new decree and a recent Justice Ministry decision allowing military courts to continue subversion cases in order to avoid "double jeopardy."

Resignations in Marcos' Hands

Observers remarked that the new civilian trial is likely to differ relatively little from the military tribunals. They point out that though the courtroom will no longer be packed with uniforms, the Philippine judiciary is hardly an independent branch of Marcos' "New Society" government.

One of Marcos' first acts after the imposition of martial law was to demand signed resignations from all of the country's judges. Today they remain in his hands—and he can choose to "accept" them at any time. □



Walden Bello of the Congress Task Force presents testimony before the Permanent People's Tribunal.

Canada Forum:

AMLA, Aquino Air Views on Regime



Fely Villasin Cusipag

Special to Ang Katipunan

Toronto—“It is not by a short-cut that we will regain freedom,” Toronto Anti-Martial Law Alliance (AMLA) Chairperson Fely Cusipag said. “It is not one man or one leader who will institute change in our country. It is people working together for change in their own different concerns, in their own different areas who will bring change in the Philippines.”

Cusipag's remarks, made at a forum March 14 featuring former senator Benigno Aquino, marked yet another step in the process of presenting the contrasting positions of the AMLC and the elite anti-Marcos opposition.

The forum in Toronto, site of the largest Filipino community in

Canada, was jointly sponsored by the AMLA, the Canada-Asia Working Group, and the Canadian Council of Churches.

An estimated 400 people, mostly Filipinos, attended the forum.

Elections, Plebiscite 'Ridiculous'

Aquino denounced the forthcoming plebiscite to amend the 1973 Constitution as “ridiculous.” The 1973 Constitution, he pointed out, was expressly tailored to suit Marcos' political needs. While he never implemented the British-style parliamentary system that it called for, he now wants to change to the French system.

Aquino also discounted the possibility of his running against Marcos in the presidential election, scheduled for June this year. “How can one run against someone who makes his own rules?” Aquino asked. Even if Marcos lowered the age requirement so that he would qualify, Aquino said he would still not run.

The lively open forum that followed the Cusipag and Aquino speeches further highlighted their contrasting political positions. While Cusipag pushed strongly for the removal of U.S. bases, Aquino called for a “pragmatic approach.”



Ex-Senator Benigno Aquino

“The bases,” Aquino said, “are an infringement on Philippine sovereignty but if we push for removal now it will just increase U.S. support for Marcos.”

During his Toronto visit, Aquino also spoke at the Association for Asian Studies convention and at a forum sponsored by the Filipino community newspaper *Atin Ito*. His appearance at the latter forum generated controversy in the Filipino community because *Atin Ito* is considered a pro-Marcos newspaper.

In response to Aquino's call for unity in the community, Cusipag said yes, “but not with pro-Marcos people, only with those against the dictatorship.” □

Anti-Martial Law Critic Blasts Marcos Apologist

By FLORANTE IBANEZ
Los Angeles Correspondent

Los Angeles—Local Anti-Martial Law Alliance (AMLA) Coordinator Alan Constantino recently blasted pro-Marcos spokesman Jerry Montemayor as “an inept spokesperson of a teetering regime.”

Constantino faced the Philippine National Assemblyman in a debate carried live by the mid-afternoon television program “Let's Rap” in Los Angeles last February 23.

Firing his opening salvo, Constantino charged that President Marcos' January 17th lifting of martial law as “an action to appease the growing internal opposition against his regime, and to gain international support.”

Continuing his attack, he cited the Pope's recent visit as “just another one of the long list of Marcos' P.R. stunts to paint a pretty picture of martial law and its fake lifting.”

“Unfortunately,” Constantino remarked in an interview with this reporter, “his ploy backfired, evidenced by the Pope's stinging attacks on Marcos' violation of human rights, and headlined on most major newspapers here in the U.S.”

During the debate, Montemayor's weak defense of the regime was limited to questioning Constantino's facts and documents.

The numerous resource materials Constantino presented included a secret report from the World Bank leaked December 3 by the AMLC's Congress Task Force, revealing that the Marcos regime was “becoming more increasingly precarious,” and would soon be forced to lift martial law (see *AK, Vol. IV, No. 19*). A month after this expose, Mar-



Alan Constantino of the Anti-Martial Law Alliance. (AMLA-LA)

cos announced the lifting of martial law January 17, denounced by the AMLC as fake in nationwide demonstrations held in the U.S. and in Canada.

At best, Montemayor countered by saying that “They [the Marcos regime] had their own version of the report.”

On the issue of political prisoners, Constantino cited the documentation of the Association of Major Religious Superiors (AMRSP), a group of nuns and priests who have consistently exposed the political detainees' situation in the Philippines.

Montemayor refuted the reports saying there were no political prisoners, and accused the religious group of “lying.” He ignored the U.S. State Department's inability to find faults with the AMRSP and Amnesty International's findings of torture and abuses of prisoners.

When asked how the AMLA fared on the debate, Constantino remarked: “Jerry's statements were both shallow and unsubstantiated. I think we provided more than enough documentation and evidence to indict the regime for its numerous crimes against the Filipino people.” □

Cheap Labor Brings Wealth to Silicon Valley

By BECKY VILLONES
San Jose Correspondent

San Jose—California's Silicon Valley, a boomtown for the fast growing electronics industry, yields many “rags-to-riches” tales and various other instant success stories of “bright, enterprising young men.”

But hardly anything has been told of the thousands of immigrant workers whose cheap labor gave rise to the rapid expansion of the electronics industry, and brought enormous prosperity to a select few.

Of the 100,000 workers involved in the production work, 80% are women, the majority of whom are minorities. The largest immigrant group are Filipinos, who number some 20,000 workers, followed by Vietnamese, Mexican, Korean, and Portuguese. Many of these Filipinos are recent immigrants who arrived in the U.S. in the past ten years.

“Minority and immigrant workers are situated in the most dangerous and lowest paying jobs,” says Dave Bacon, Chairperson of the United Electrical Union Organizing Committee.

“The electronic corporations,” continued Bacon, “hire disproportionately large numbers of immigrant workers because they accept lower wages. Because they are new in the country, immigrants tend to compare their present wages with what they get back home in their country. The companies exercise control by using the immigrant status of the workers to frighten them, and threaten them with loss of their jobs if they organize themselves.”

Work Conditions: Hazardous to Health

Closely working with Bacon in organizing immigrant workers into the union is Romy Manan, a

Filipino who also works in the electronics industry.

According to Bacon and Manan, the 100,000 production workers are in jobs where there are many dangers to their health. Workers in the production of the integrated circuits dip the silicon chips into chemical baths, inhale fumes from the chemicals and solvents used in the cleaning of the plants.

Chemicals are the source of many health problems for workers. Health problems caused by carcinogenic chemicals, hydrofluoric leaks, arsine gas leaks and chemical spills make workers complain of constant headaches, sinus problems, repeated miscarriages, and skin allergies.



National Semi-Conductor, an electronics firm, employs close to 2,000 Filipinos. (AK Photo)

Doctors untrained in diagnosing the problems caused by constant exposure to dangerous chemicals often pass off symptoms as simple allergies. Management have made little efforts to comply with the demands imposed by California OSHA officials.

Main Complaints

Because of low wages, many Filipino workers work two jobs in an effort to meet their families'

needs. Starting pay at most electronic plants is \$4.00 an hour, with \$7.00 as top wage for most production workers. Unionized companies like General Electric pay \$9.00 per hour to start, with the top wage for skilled production workers at \$15.00 per hour.

Bacon and Manan report that companies maintain a dual employment system, which is essentially sexist and racist. Men and white workers are paid higher because they can advance to higher positions, while women and minority workers are paid less and are relegated to production jobs. In many companies, women are even discouraged from entering training programs to higher positions and more

pay.

Divide and Rule Tactics

Bacon reports that “the employment practices of the corporations keep workers segregated.”

“Companies specialize in workers of different races,” noted Bacon. “One company will only hire Filipinos for swing shifts, and only Vietnamese workers for other shifts. Or they will keep a whole department Vietnamese

or Korean.

“Because of their inability to speak English plus attempts by companies to keep them segregated, immigrant workers cannot communicate with other workers.

“The companies use divide and conquer techniques to fuel the racism of the white workers. They tell white workers they are better than immigrant workers, and that they ‘better watch out for their jobs because the immigrants want them.’”

Unionizing Gains Ground

From patient work, according to Bacon and Manan, the movement to organize the industry is gaining more and more support. In fact, corporations are stepping up their efforts to sabotage the movement to unionize the industry.

Workers are threatened with loss of jobs “if they talk with union people.” Many workers trying to unionize their fellow workers have been fired, and

others have been threatened for passing out union literature.

Runaway Shop Tactic

“With recent developments,” reports Romy Manan, “workers are faced with another threat.” Last year, several of the major electronic corporations have come up with the product development plan, which would move all of the production jobs out of Santa Clara County. Taking advantage of the unorganized labor forces in states like Oregon, Utah, Texas, and Arizona, they can hire workers at wages even lower than the ones now paid in the Silicon Valley. The National Semi-Conductors Company has already moved 600 jobs to Arizona.

“Minority communities will be hit hard by these moves,” laments Manan. “The impact will be devastating, especially in the Filipino community because of the 20,000 Filipinos are employed in the industry.”

“We must stop these corporations from running away,” Bacon states firmly. “One reason why they are running away is that the unionizing movement is gaining strength, and these corporations don't want to deal with the demands of unionized workers.”

These demands include safe working conditions within plant premises—the use of chemicals which are not a threat to the health and safety of workers. Wages must be in line with what unionized plants pay.

Lastly, they are demanding that plants not be allowed to run away, and leave in its wake thousands of displaced workers. □

Kunia Parents Win Demand to Oust Principal

By HELEN C. TORIBIO
Hawaii Correspondent

The Concerned Parents of Kunia won their demand to remove William Wong as principal of Kunia Elementary School after a three-year struggle against what the parents perceived as the arbitrary and abusive use of his authority and his chauvinist attitude towards Filipino immigrants.

Liberato Viduya, Dept. of Education (DOE) District Superintendent, announced at a community meeting on February 22, that Wong had been transferred and had taken a "voluntary demotion" to vice-principal at another school.

The parents' battle against Wong's abusive use of authority began in 1977 but it was not until the issue of retention and the lack of adequate bilingual services at Kunia school that the parents sought to have Wong replaced.

In March 1980, Wong threatened to retain 43 of the 78



Kunia Elementary School.

students from promotion to the next grade level, utilizing the California Achievement Test (CAT) as the sole criterion for his decision. The parents charged

that Wong did not consider the teachers' recommendations and the students' performance in class. The CAT has been known to be culturally biased against

children raised in Hawaii.

Media Sympathizes With Ousted Principal

Immediately after his removal, Wong spoke to the media. He defended his position on retention as upholding the "standards for promotion" and preventing "social promotions," i.e.

promotion by social and age standards, rather than educational standards. News coverage implied that the parents did not understand the need to uphold the educational standards in the placement and promotion of their children.

The parents held a press conference in which they said: "Improper retention was only one of the many issues." They urged the DOE to "make a full disclosure of the factors" that led to Wong's transfer and demotion.

"We want our children to meet the educational standards to promotion. We do not want social promotions for our children," said the parents in their public statement. "Many of our children have special language needs. Mr. Wong and the DOE did not provide our children the needed programs to advance the quality of education at our school."

The parents are planning to submit their recommended qualifications to the DOE for a new principal and intend to maintain an active role in the Parent-Teachers Organization (PTO) to ensure the children receive the proper educational services. □

State Board . . .

Continued from front page

During that time, advocates for fair licensing testified before the State Board and offered testimony substantiating a January 1981 report by the California Department of Consumer Affairs stating that the examination has an "adverse impact" on minorities—Black, Asian, Filipino, and Hispanic.

The Hearings

On March 18, 1981 the Asian Law Caucus, legal counsel for the National Alliance for Fair Licensure of Foreign Nurse Graduates (NAFL), and the National Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization met with the licensing subcommittee of the Board of Registered Nursing.

Realizing the importance of the adverse impact report, the committee members recommended that a new exam be developed and that the "job-relatedness" of the current exam be studied.

The committee also recommended that the Interim Permits of nurses who took the February 1981 exam and who will take the July 1981 exam not be terminated until October 1, 1981, when the results of the job-relatedness study should be issued.

Should the study prove that the test is not job-related, the interim permits would be in effect indefinitely, or until a new, fair examination is developed.

The licensing committee also recommended extending the time that a nurse has to take an exam before her interim permit terminates. Currently, the interim permit terminates once the nurse received the results of the first licensing examination she takes.

Foreign nurses on H-1 visas are required to take the first exam available—usually two to six months from the date of arrival, leaving little time to study and adjust to U.S. hospitals and life.

INS—Stop Deportations

The Asian Law Caucus recommended that the permit be effective for at least 18 months since, according to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (1976 report), over 60% of the FNGs pass the exam before or on their third try.

Perhaps the most important recommendation was that the board take a stand in opposition to the deportation of the nurses who failed the exam. Under the current rule, if a nurse fails the exam her interim permit is revoked and her contract with the hospital is terminated—resulting in her H-1 immigration visa being withdrawn by the INS, thus making her deportable. The committee noted that the nurses' immigration status is contingent on her passing a discriminatory examination.

On March 9, 1981, the Asian Law Caucus, NFIRO and the Service Employees International Union, Local 400 of the San Francisco-Bay Area testified before the Board at its monthly meeting. The organizations supported the recommendations to extend the interim permits of nurses who took the examination and to extend the time a nurse can take the exam before her

and for the defense of foreign-trained nurses.

One member of the Board, Abby Haight, noted that nurses must join the strongest and most progressive union to counter the exploitation and bad working conditions that nurses face. The timely statement of Elliot to express the concern of the union to take up the defense of foreign nurses gave added support to the issue.

Ayda Lucero of the National Staff of the NFIRO testified on exploitative conditions of the nurses and the concerns of the Filipino community to stop the deportations. She stated that concrete action must be taken by the Board not only to stop the deportations but to also insure that the nurses are not abused by the hospitals because of their tenuous immigration status.

All present Board members—Jose Bernardo, Abby Haight, Pat Norris, Patty Majcher, Jean Colls,



"Adverse impact" of nursing licensure exam discriminately affects the foreign-trained and minority nurses. (AK Photo)

permit is terminated.

Bill Tamayo stated that the Board must take a strong position against the INS deportations and that it should send a letter to the INS to convey its concern. Furthermore, he recommended that the Board contact Congresspeople to put pressure on the INS to stop deportations of the nurses until the test is straightened out.

Nurses—Need to Unionize

Nancy Elliot, Business Representative of SEIU 400, stated her support for the ALC position

and expressed concern about the plight of the foreign nurses.

With the decision of the Board to protest the deportations because of the discriminatory nature of the test, the NAFL and supporting organizations will demand that the INS stop the deportations until the test is found to be "non-discriminatory." The Board findings and position sets a precedent for other states, to discontinue use of the test and to pressure the INS to stop deportations of nurses who failed the exam. □

A PLACE IN THE BIG CITY

By L. MARZAN
New York Correspondent

"We just want a place to go to—where Filipinos can gather and stop being too distant from one another."

This was the overriding concern that made Severino Foronda and Albert Fabro, both in their 70s, seek out the officers of the Filipino Community Center of New York (FCC-NY) and the New York Chapter of the National Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization (NFIRO).

Fabro and Foronda are both active members of the Senior Citizen Center of the Filipino Community. They met with the younger FCC and NFIRO activists February 14 to unburden themselves. The two have been trying to rebuild a center they lost to the city and wanted support for their endeavors.

Center Demolished

In 1959, Fabro and his American wife Maryann, were involved with the Gran Oriente Filipino, Inc. The organization started a community center in Brooklyn where Filipinos from all five New York boroughs could congregate and socialize.

"Filipinos felt they had a place to go to whenever they wanted to see other Filipinos. It gave them a sense of belonging, and a sense of being part of a community," said Maryann who is in her late 60s.

Unfortunately, the city of New York demolished the center in 1970 to give way to a rehabilitation center. The worst part of this loss, Fabros explained, was that the city did not even build right at the site of the old center. Instead, it is now just an empty lot.

No Harm in Trying

At present, Fabros and Foronda are trying to rebuild a community center for Filipinos but open to other nationalities as well. "If we want a community center, we can't rely on other

existing organizations who are still waiting until they have \$150,000 in cash before they start anything."

"Besides, a lot of these organizations are essentially discriminatory. You have to be a doctor, a lawyer or someone big to be accepted. All the leaders really want is to have their names in the limelight."

At the same time, the goals of these senior citizens are tempered by an accurate assessment of the situation in this country today.

"We realize," Foronda said, "that this is not the best time to seek federal funding. President Reagan keeps talking of budget cuts. For sure, services such as this will be the first to be axed. But we'll never get anything until we try, right?"

The elderly leaders do have an informal promise of funding from some government agency. They are now in the process of looking for a site—one that is easily accessible to any Filipino living in the greater New York area.

"We keep telling ourselves and other members that we should not look for a place near our doorstep," Fabro explained. "We are looking for a place that is convenient to the majority of Filipinos in New York."

"We've Got to Get Together"

As early as the 1920's when they first came to the U.S. as part of the first wave of Filipino immigrants, the two have been active trying to organize Filipinos.

Fabro recalled his experiences in California:

"In the early years, we Filipinos always stuck together. Because of our common hardship, we had to unite. Ilocanos, Tagalogs, Visayans—we were Filipinos facing poverty and instability together. So when one of us had ten dollars, we would all get together and share a feast. Now, times are getting harder. We need to get together fast." □

DOMESTIC/INTERNATIONAL NEWS

El Salvador: Prelude to Revolution

In the last issue we provided a brief sketch of El Salvador's political history from its colonial period up from the 1950s. This article will give a more current account of the political and economic developments since the 1960s—Editor.

Entering the 1960s the U.S. government and El Salvador's ruling classes, the land owning oligarchy and business sector, were faced with continuing problems. They needed to develop and diversify El Salvador's backward economy. The large and severely exploited peasantry was a virtual time-bomb waiting to go off. At the same time however, this form of agriculture was the main stay of the landed oligarchy (14 families) which in turn was the strongest influence in the army.

A coalition of the largest landowners and the strong fascist wing in the military formed the Party of National Conciliation (PNC) in 1962.

This party ruled El Salvador through various military presidents until the 1970s.

A broadly composed "legal" opposition camp continued to pin its hopes on eventual victory through elections. Christian Democrats, Social Democrats, the Communist Party, trade unionists, peasant organizations, small businesses, and a liberal wing in the military, formed and supported various electoral parties.

Repression and Poverty Grow

By 1972 the economic and political developments were making it clear that the decade of "liberalization," economic reform and political opposition was a failure.

While non-agricultural industry increased by 24% in 1961-1971, this only increased available jobs by 6%. The coffee, cotton and sugar estates still accounted for 50% of the nation's employment. Half of these agricultural workers and peasants were without work eight months of the year. This meant that at any given time the unemployed and underemployed represented 80% of the working population.

It was clear, as it was in the

arte, a Christian Democrat. This coalition, National Opposition Union (UNO), defeated the PCN at the ballot box. The army stepped in however, and overturned the elections, driving Duarte into exile and killing many others in a wave of terror.

Failure of Electoral Strategy

In the 1970's an alternative to the electoral strategy emerged from the opposition camp. The General Secretary of the Com-

the United People's Action (FAPU).

The new organizations and their strategies were quickly proved with an amazing growth in membership and political activity. Where the government said unions were illegal they formed large illegal unions that openly conducted strikes. Where the military terrorized the peasants, the guerillas struck back.

Civil War

By 1979 there was no longer

Gen. Romero in October of 1979. The new junta headed by a liberal Col. Majano appealed for cooperation from the opposition and promised reform.

The junta was not able to control the rightists in the military, however, and murder and terror continued to grow. When an attempt was made to remove the arch-rightist and Defense Minister Col. Jose Garcia, the junta collapsed, the liberal Col. Majano was purged and control was once again fully in the hands of Garcia, the 14 families and their army. It was also at this time that U.S. aid dramatically increased.

Under U.S. pressure Duarte was summoned from exile to give a civilian and reform image to the military junta. Duarte has no credibility internally or internationally, especially since his present masters were also the murderers of his own Christian Democratic party and a large number of his former colleagues.

Washington vs. Latin America

In April of 1980, significant opposition organizations established the Democratic Revolutionary Front with the armed struggle commonly coordinated under the Farabundo Marti Front for National Liberation (FMLN).

U.S. aid, however, is having serious effect on the democratic forces. Overt U.S. intervention now openly threatens not only El Salvador but also Nicaragua and Cuba.

For the vast majority of Latin America's people, it has become increasingly clear that their fight for basic human dignities stands in opposition to not only their own repressive oligarchs, but Washington and the present Reagan Administration as well. □



Duarte, second from right, sits alongside his military masters.

1932 revolution led by Marti that progress for the majority of El Salvador's people was not in the interest of the 2% that owned 60% of the productive land. This 2% was also the U.S.'s strongest allies in Salvadoran society.

In 1972 the opposition camp fielded a common presidential candidate, Jose Napoleon Du-

munist Party led a split in that party and established an armed organization, the Popular Liberation Forces (FPL) and the People's Revolutionary Bloc (BPR), an open mass organization. Amongst the Christian and Social Democrats, a group formed the People's Revolutionary Army (ERP) and a mass organization,

any "legal" opposition. The army had declared full war against any political opposition, murdering over 10,000 people. Demonstrations and strikes against the government continued to grow and it became clear that the government was in crisis.

In desperation a group of young army officers overthrew

Death Penalty . . .

Continued from front page

A study in California revealed that nearly half of those convicted for murder from non-professional jobs were condemned to die, while only five percent of those holding professional jobs who were convicted were sentenced to death.

It is clear, those who can afford private attorneys and the costly appeal and investigation process have little chance of facing execution. A former Ohio governor admitted, "the fact that they (the condemned) had no money was a principal factor in their being condemned to death..."

Racist Weapon

Half of the people executed for murder in this country since 1930 have been Black, where as Blacks constitute only 10 percent of the total population. Similarly, when the state of Hawaii had a death penalty about 40 percent of those sentenced to death were Filipinos. Filipinos constitute only 10 percent of that state's population.

Minorities are not only affected in this way because of their economic situations but also because of blatantly exercised racism. One can safely assume that a large portion of the minority people condemned to death be-



fore white judges and juries were in fact innocent.

Where racism is most appa-

rent is in the use of the death penalty in non-murder offenses. About 90 percent of those exe-

cuted for rape in the U.S. since 1930 have been Black. Statistics show that in the South, white people are not executed for the rape or murder of Black people.

Unofficial Death Sentence

There is of course a death penalty that has been administered outside the courts. Lynchings of Blacks and other non-whites would easily number in the thousands. During the Great Depression of the 30's there were as many as 50 reported lynchings a year. In the West, various vigilante actions against Chinese, Filipinos, and Indians accounted for thousands more killed.

Against the Left

Although not officially acknowledged, the death penalty has been used politically. The selective execution of leftists has been utilized to defuse and confront various movements.

In the 1880's, the U.S. witnessed the growth of a huge labor movement led by socialists. This prompted the frame-up and execution of four socialist labor leaders—Parsons, Spys, Fischer, and Engles—who were leading marches for the 8 hour work day in Chicago.

In 1915 Joe Hill, a songwriter and labor organizer, was executed by firing squad in Utah. In 1927, two poor immigrants, Sacco and Vanzetti, were executed. Their crime was alleged to be a payroll robbery, while their real crime was that they were anarchists. In 1953, Julius

and Ethel Rosenberg were electrocuted for "stealing the atom bomb."

There were three things all of these people had in common; they were socialist, their executions were protested worldwide, and they have all been proven innocent of their alleged crimes.

An Effective Deterrent?

Death penalty proponents supporting facts for the effectiveness of the death penalty as a deterrent to crime are either non-existent or highly suspect.

A 1974 study revealed that the murder rate for death penalty states was actually higher than those without the death penalty.

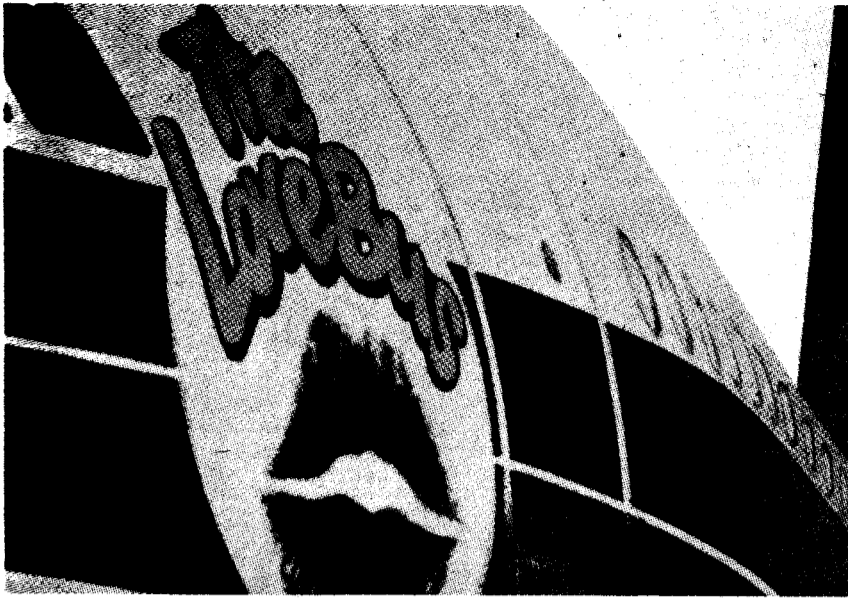
It was also estimated that 75 percent of murders committed are "crimes of passion," occurring amongst family and friends and committed in financially desperate times.

Society's Concern

Should there be a death penalty in this society, with its economic inequalities and rampant racism? No. In fact if the protection of society is the main concern, it is hard to imagine any civil situation where the death penalty is any more than vengeance.

In the U.S. the new movement behind the death penalty is under the leadership of the racist and anti-communist movements, and their motives are racial and political. This calls for unqualified opposition to the death penalty. □

Private Safari Club Takes Over Philippine Island



An Invitation to the World to Come



When Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki of Japan visited the Philippines early this year, he received a letter signed by some 50 Philippine religious and human rights

groups protesting Japanese "sex tours." These organized "sex tours" entice clients with promises of prostitutes' services in first class

hotels in Southeast Asia, particularly in the Philippines. The letter appealed to the Prime Minister to ban these tours and take "concrete measures"

against Japanese airlines, hotels, travel agencies, and tour operators involved in these package deals.

that "trespassers" would have no right to complain if shot.

There is indiscriminate shooting of the area's wildlife. WSC, however, claims that ecological considerations have been studied.

Several Lubang areas have been recommended by authorities as candidate sites for marine parks or preserves where no fishing or hunting is to be allowed.

As to the prey, residents say that there are no deer on the island and wild boars are seldom seen. WSC actually buys domesticated pigs which are released "upon signal" for the unsuspecting hunter to shoot.

"Supporting the Recreational Enterprise of Another Country"

The irony of this prostitution of a country's natural resources is the complete approval and assistance of its government.

"The original idea came from the Philippines," says Masiashi Kato, WSC vice-chairman. WSC reports that it has the rights and plans to further develop tourism in the island.

"This is the first case in the world that the President or Ministry of Tourism of a country is supporting a recreational enterprise of another country," adds Mr. Kato.

"Guaranteed by Marcos"

WSC's honorary chairman is Ryoichi Sasagawa, a Japanese millionaire and philanthropist. He is reportedly a close friend of President Marcos. Sasagawa has donated medical equipment to Manila hospitals and has been awarded the Golden Heart Award, the highest civilian honor in the Philippines.

"President Marcos himself is guaranteeing the security of the Japanese hunters," Mr. Kato told a Japanese newspaper last year. Bicol as a possible tourist spot has been excluded because of guerrilla operations in that area. □

Digest of Constitutional Changes:

Bringing Constitution Into Line With Dictatorship

By CRIS TAGAM
Staff Writer

An even tighter rein by Marcos over the now "martial law-free" Philippines is guaranteed if the coming April 7 plebiscite questions are ratified.

"Adoption of a modified parliamentary form of government under the leadership of a president to be elected by a direct vote of the people" could be interpreted as a mere return to the pre-1973 presidential system. But a look at the series of referenda and plebiscites since martial law was declared will give a much clearer picture.

1973 Constitution

The 1973 Constitution, passed hastily after the declaration of martial law, drastically changed the legislative and executive bodies of the country.

With its quick "ratification" executive powers were transferred to a Prime Minister, with the President as a mere figurehead. A National Assembly was to replace the Congress, which had already been abolished by President Marcos, as the legislative body.

The country at that time, however, was under one-man rule. Though the Constitution created a new form of government it was never enacted. This new form remained suspended—in some sort of limbo—while Marcos continued his dictatorial rule.

As this legal situation be-

came increasingly uncomfortable, Marcos called for new referenda. In these, he was "mandated" by the "approving" public to maintain martial law and to postpone the convening of the National Assembly.

1976 Amendments

By 1976, it had become necessary to bring the lofty-sounding Constitution into line with the reality of one-man rule. In order to justify the current state of affairs, a new set of amendments was proposed and a plebiscite held to ratify them.

The "passage" of the 1976 Amendments served to transfer even more power to Marcos.

They read in part: "The incumbent President shall be the Prime Minister and he shall continue to exercise all his powers."

So President/Prime Minister Marcos promised to "continue to exercise legislative powers until martial law is lifted," and "whenever [in his judgment] there exists a grave emergency or a threat . . . issue necessary decrees, orders or letters of instructions which shall be part of the law of the land."

Interim Batasang Pambansa

In place of the National Assembly, an Interim *Batasang Pambansa* (IBP) was to be called by the President/Prime Minister.

This was done two years later, after yet another "mandate" from the people. But the IBP remained dependent on the President/Prime Minister for the formulation of all national programs.

It could be dissolved at any time. Its function remained purely cosmetic.

1981 Plebiscite

Now, five years later, another adjustment is needed.

Once again the law of the land must be brought into line with reality and a ruler who wants to retain indefinite power. An image of democracy must be maintained internationally and a restless elite opposition needs a degree of pacification.

Modifications

The current change is billed as a move toward the French parliamentary system. But the similarity ends with the direct election by the people.

Proposed amendments for the modified parliamentary system extend the powers vested in President/Prime Minister in the 1976 amendments.

The coming election of Ferdinand Marcos, of course, will not mean a "diminution of powers" as Marcos reassured the people in a March 12 speech. It will simply provide another "mandate" to continue one-man rule, another cosmetic step towards "normalization."

When, several years from now, even this highly-modified Constitution has revealed itself to be too out-of-line with the reality of the Philippine government, count on Ferdinand Marcos to come up with new amendments and new temporary solutions to the problem. □