

## Plebiscite's 'Choice'

# 'President' or 'Prime Minister' Marcos?

## One-Man Rule Legalized, FM Will be Stronger

By VICTORIA LUNA  
Staff Writer

The Civil Liberties Union of the Philippines denounced it as an attempt to "legalize tyranny."

The growing Manila-based labor movement called for its boycott and promised major mass actions.

The United Democratic Opposition held a protest rally 8,000-strong in historic Plaza Miranda and revived the Constitutional Convention.

But as the April 7 plebiscite drew near, the Marcos regime's political machinery moved into gear last week to insure passage, by "overwhelming popular mandate," of the President/Prime Minister's "proposed" constitutional amendments.

As the campaign to convert the country's government from a "parliamentary to a strong presidential system" rolled on, more and more details crept out revealing the precise meaning of a "strong presidential system" in Marcos' terms.

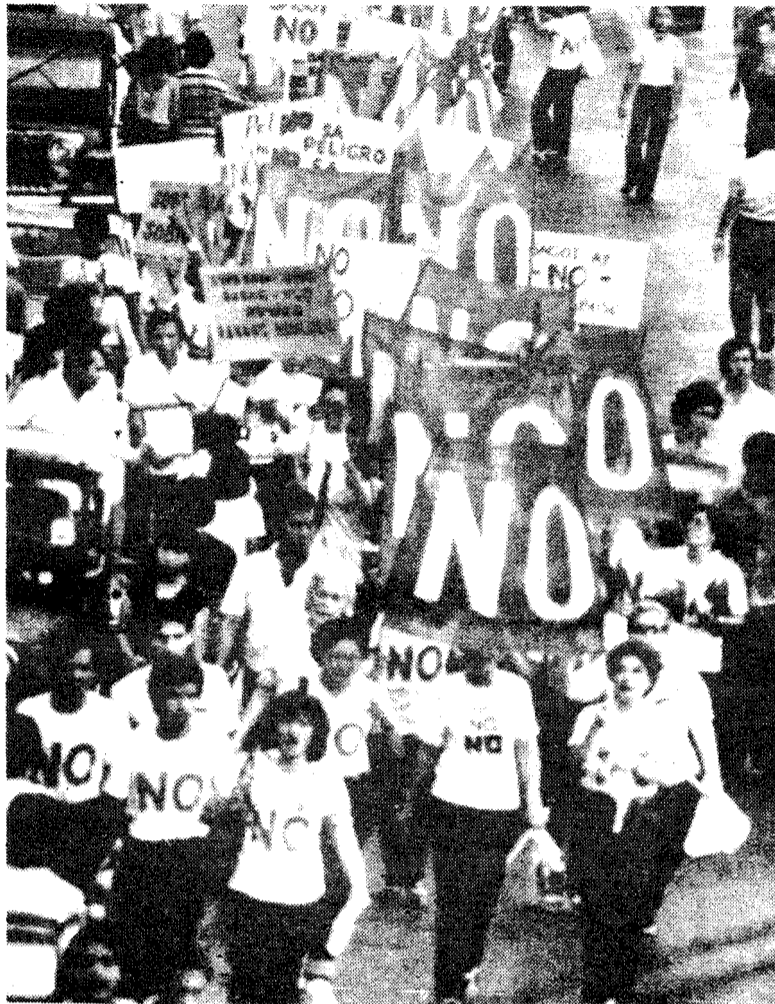
While Marcos, on nationwide T.V., insisted that the new system, with the loss of prime ministerial powers, could mean less power for him, observers pointed to the further legalization of one-man rule as the goal of the exercise. "A Stronger Strongman" was the title the *Far Eastern Economic Review* gave to its story on the plebiscite.

### Enormous Powers

Under close examination by the FEER's Shielah Ocampo and others, the powers to be vested in this "strong president" prove to be enormous. For example:

"All powers vested in the president of the Philippines under the 1935 Constitution and the laws of the land which are not herein provided for or conferred upon any official shall be deemed and are hereby vested in the president unless the *Batasang Pambansa* provides otherwise."

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Part of an estimated 8,000 people who marched through Manila streets during UNIDO rally March 21. (UPI)

## Opponents Say: 'Boycott!' 'Vote No!'

Noting that the April 7 plebiscite will institutionalize Marcos' strong-arm rule, the elite opposition called for a "no" vote on all of the proposed amendments to the 1973 constitution while more broad-based groups called for a complete boycott.

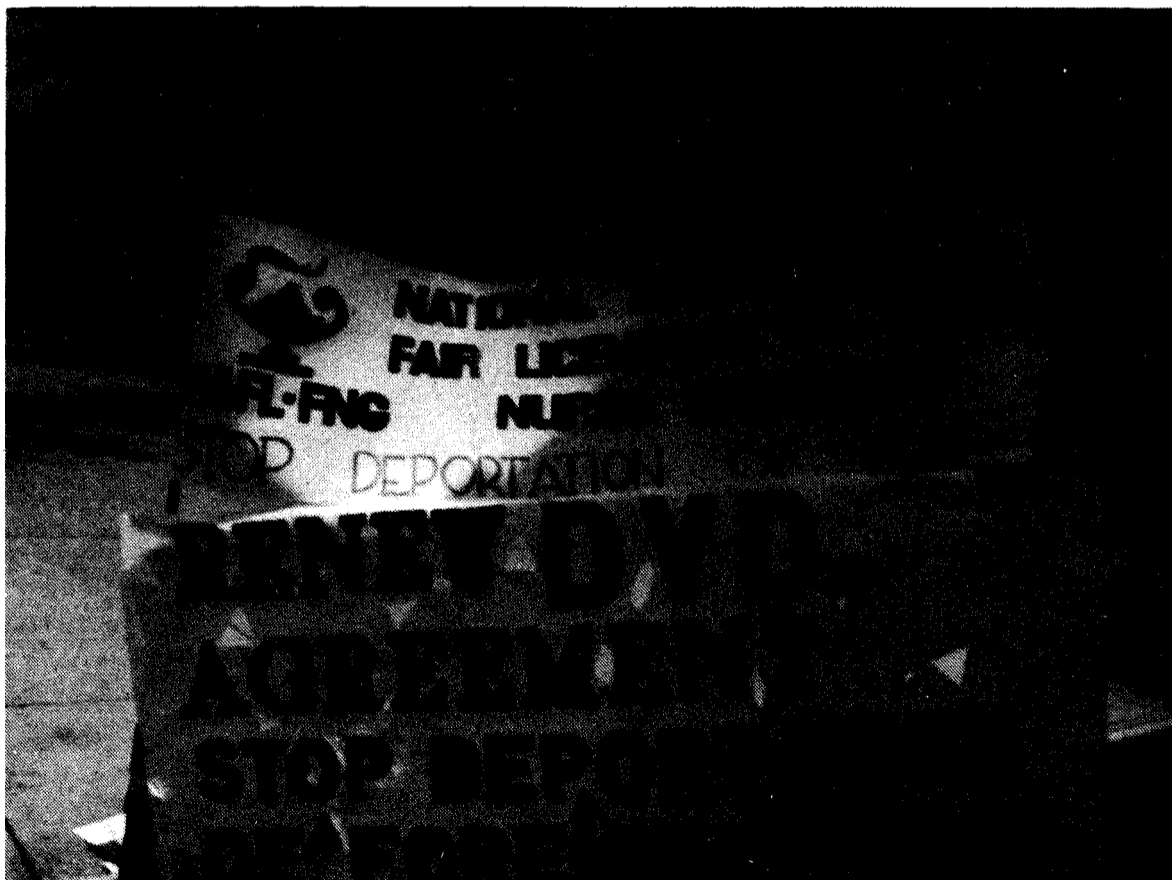
The United Democratic Opposition (UNIDO), consisting chiefly of ex-politicians and their followers, launched a "Vote No" campaign March 21 at a rally in Plaza Miranda, the first since the declaration of martial law.

Since that time, the elite group has concentrated its energies on a revival of the 1971 Constitutional Convention. Its claim: the current constitution is illegal, therefore, so is the plebiscite.

In an effort to appear lenient in the wake of the recent martial law "lifting," city officials granted UNIDO a permit to hold its rally

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## INS SEIZES H-1 NURSES IN ARIZONA



Several nurses' defense campaigns have been launched by the NAFL. Now the NFIRO has joined in to stop H-1 deportations. (AK File)

Phoenix—Three Filipina H-1 nurses were seized March 25 by immigration authorities after failing the February 1981 licensure exam in this state. Facing imminent deportation, their plight exemplifies what is in store for many H-1 nurses across the country.

A Filipino male nurse was also taken into custody by the Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS) after being fired by the sponsoring hospital. All

Nursing Home in Phoenix.

Three of the nurses who came to the U.S. in November, 1980, were compelled to take the nurse licensure exam, (an exam now under investigation in California for its adverse impact on foreign-trained nurses) at the soonest scheduled time, which was February this year.

### INS Arrest—A Set-up

On March 19, the nurses

were informed that they failed the exam. The nurses reported to their sponsoring workplace to get their last paycheck but were instructed to report on March 25 instead.

Also summoned to report on that date was the male nurse who is not scheduled to take the test until July, 1981.

Upon arrival at Beverly Manor, the four nurses were met by an INS officer who arrested them.

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## MORE ON NURSES' PROBLEMS

See page 5

## Anti-Abortion Movement: BORN-AGAIN RIGHTWINGERS



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## EDITORIAL PAGE

## The Aftermath of Reagan's Shooting

No one is exactly sure why John Hinckley, a right-winger, would shoot a rightwing president. For a place in history? For the love of a teenage movie actress? All sorts of experts will be debating this matter for some time. Congressional hearings will probably spend millions examining violence in America and so forth.

Meanwhile what is passing unnoticed and uncriticized is the not-so-aimless repercussion of this whole affair, a political aftermath that threatens to do violence, of a more insidious sort, to the mass of the politically powerless.

As Reagan's ratings in the polls soared, the Senate passed his controversial budget cuts (with all its bias against the poor) with hardly any opposition, and valuable economic aid to newly-liberated Nicaragua was cut off—all within one week.

Rightwingers of all denominations are shooting their mouths off calling for more repressive measures—other than gun control, of course. They unblinkingly blame progressive and liberal campaigns for penal reforms, for the civil rights of the accused and against the death penalty as being "directly responsible" for Reagan's shooting, conveniently ignoring the fact that the would-be-assassin came from their own gun-toting ranks.

Reagan's shooting is definitely being used to strengthen the continuing attempt to build a conservative consensus among Americans. "The President has been shot. Today, we are all Republicans."

No, thank you. The shooting does not change the issues the people have to face. In fact, the danger is that the sympathy this incident has generated for Reagan can be used to cover up the harshness of his administration's policies.

The facts remain that Reagan's systematic attacks on the poor and the disadvantaged are in full swing. His intervention in behalf of assassins wielding state power, namely, the U.S.-backed dictatorships in El Salvador, the Philippines and elsewhere is intensifying. Lest anyone forget, these issues remain very much still in the people's agenda. □

## Choosing Between Ferdinand and Marcos (In Two Languages)

By the time we get off the press, Marcos' April 7 plebiscite will have been concluded. The result will be a surprise to no one. (See story on page one.)

Marcos will have a constitution that allows him to "run" and be president-dictator for another six years which, of course, means indefinitely. He will be able to appoint a decorative prime minister who will most likely act as the fall guy for expected criticisms of the regime while Marcos rules "at a distance," to quote Defense Minister Enrile.

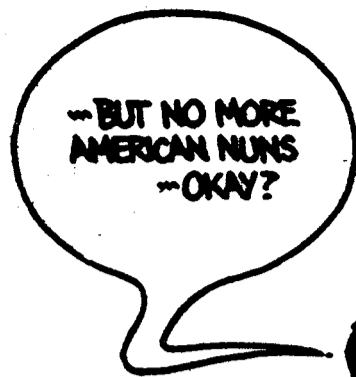
The purpose of this legal engineering was to encase the regime within a facade of legitimacy to facilitate the continued flow of support from its backers, mainly the U.S. government and the World Bank.

That is why it was somewhat unfortunate that some members of the elite opposition tended to play into Marcos' legalistic game by convening the Con-Con in an effort to prove Marcos' constitution is illegal. This was completely unnecessary. The plebiscite was so transparent an attempt to institutionalize the dictator's tyrannical rule that even the conservative *San Francisco Chronicle* headlined its report, "Filipino Voters Have a Choice: Marcos or Marcos."

The kindest word one can give this plebiscite is that it essentially gave the people a genuine choice between hanging or facing the firing squad. And they could register this choice in one of two languages: English or Arabic.

There is one curious note however, to this empty exercise: the emergence of a tell-tale sign that Marcos is very much aware of his crimes and is worried that the people might ask for retribution. Among the proposed amendments to his constitution is one that would immunize him and his underlings from prosecution even after their tenures.

He can go on believing his own legal tricks if he wants, but legalizing his own immunity will bring him nowhere. Legal or not, the people (and history, certainly) will definitely be waiting with the harshest judgement for him and his ilk. □



Ben Sargent, Austin American Statesman

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Please Send Me

Please send me a copy, if you have, of the speech on the subject "Educate the People to Organize for Our Rights" which Nonie Espiritu delivered during the 1980 Filipino Peoples Far West Convention in San Francisco. I am very interested in making 1,000 xerox copies of the speech at my own expense for distribution to Filipino immigrants and Filipino Americans. This, to awaken and encourage them to participate in our efforts to fight for our rights in this country. Enclosed is \$12.50 for my yearly AK renewal.

Engr. Bernardo C. Albano  
Los Angeles, CA

(We have forwarded your request to Ms. Lillian Galedo of the National Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization who has copies of that speech—Editor.)

### Simple Enough

Despite Reagan's sophisticated theories on how his budget cuts will solve inflation and induce private sector productivity, ergo progress, it is naively simple-minded, pardon the redundancy. As the *New Yorker Magazine* puts it, it is based entirely on faith. Like his belief that man did not evolve from apes, Reagan simplistically believes that his cuts will stimulate only positive responses from what is

in reality a very complex and troubled economy. What can definitely be expected though, as a simple result of all these cuts is that the poor will get poorer, the rich richer.

J. F. Ruiz  
UCLA, CA

### We'll Try Our Best

I have a dear cousin who died as an NPA guerrilla in our home province. Please make sure that reports of NPA activities are always printed in your newspaper. I don't want her cause to be misunderstood. Thank you very much.

Name withheld upon request  
New York, N.Y.

### It's Their Problem

It is good to know that Aquino, the KDP and the AMLC are working together even though they have many differences. Keep it up and don't worry about Manglapus or Esclamado whose egos are bigger than the cause they purport to serve. If they lose credibility it is their own problem.

Danilo Pantaleon  
Albany, NY

### Vicious Cycle

At last someone has recognized what H-1 nurses have been feeling all along. This is what I thought was good when the California Dept. of

Consumer Affairs ruled that the SBTPE licensure exam is discriminatory to foreign nurses. But after this ruling, what is going to be done about it? Hospitals still recruit a lot of nurses who will fail this exam and the Immigration still keeps on wanting to deport them. It is a vicious cycle that has to be stopped.

Marylou V., R.N.  
Detroit, MI

### It Can Be Tough

L. Marzan's article on the immigrant youth ("Facing Bad Vibes and Hard Knocks") says what we are going through. It could have been longer because we have a lot more concerns. Schools, parents, jobs, girl friends, fights, racism, it can be tough. Sometimes I wish I were back home but there's nothing there also.

Andy Canonigo  
Daly City, CA

### Forever Damned?

Reagan is willing to pour military aid to little El Salvador, even men. What does this mean for us, where two U.S. bases are located? Carter and Reagan both say they are extremely important to America. Will this mean Reagan will turn the Philippines into a Vietnam, when our revolution comes, just to save those bases? I hope we are not forever damned under a U.S.-sponsored dictator.

N. L. P.  
Jersey City, NJ

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FM Offers Workers Token Raise

# LABOR GROWS RESTLESS



Filipino workers protesting Marcos rule: Pressing for higher wages and the right to strike, breaking away from yellow unions.

By VICTORIA LUNA  
Staff Writer

"Much ado about nothing," commented an observer of the March 27-28 tripartite meeting of Philippine labor, management and government.

In response to an increasingly militant labor demand for a significant wage hike and the full restoration of the right to strike, the Marcos regime had once again offered the workers a token: ₱2 (26¢) for urban workers and ₱1.50 (19¢) for their rural counterparts.

This brought the minimum daily wage of Manila's industrial workforce up to ₱15 (\$1.95). While regime spokesmen continued to talk of an "effective daily wage of ₱31.85, few Manila workers took the term seriously. The added sum consists of cost of living allowances rarely received by the average worker.

As to the demand for full restoration of the right to strike,

the tripartite conference gave no clear answers.

## TUCP— 'Leave it to the President'

Labor Minister Blas Ople admitted that the list of vital industries in which strikes are banned must be pared down. But no concrete plans were discussed. Instead, a conference communique made vague references to limitations on strikes in industries that affect the "national interest."

Labor was represented at the meeting by the Trade Union Congress of the Philippines (TUCP) which has worked closely with the regime since the declaration of martial law.

Indicative of this organization's position was a comment by its president, Democrito Mendoza. He prefers, he said, that any exception to the right to strike be left to the discretion of the president.

Progressive labor groups who had demanded restoration

of the right to strike as a prerequisite to their participation boycotted the conference.

## New Labor Federation Formed

In the weeks prior to the conference, a number of labor confederations had joined together to support this demand. On March 9, thousands of blue and white collar workers gathered at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum to unify two of the country's major labor sectors.

The meeting saw the formation of a new umbrella labor organization, the Pagkakaisang Manggagawang Pilipino (PMP, Union of Filipino Workers).

Among the groups present at the founding congress were the Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU, May First Movement), Trade Unions of the Philippines and Allied Services (TUPAS), the National Union of Bank Employees, the Federation of Free Workers, and the Confederation of Industrial Unions.

The PMP proclaimed its in-

tention to stage mass actions on a variety of issues concerning workers. These included the issues of consumer prices and unemployment.

By March 26, Roberto Olalia, Chairman of the KMU, indicated that the progressive labor coalition had given up hope in the tripartite conference as a forum to press for its demands. Speaking for four labor federations with a combined membership of 500,000, he announced plans for a mass action pressing for the right to strike.

## Record Number of Strikes

The labor movement in the Philippines has been growing increasingly visible in the months since the Jan. 17 "lifting" of martial law.

The first month after Jan. 17 witnessed 23 labor stoppages in Metro-Manila, equal to an annual rate of 276. This contrasts sharply with the annual nationwide average of 150 prior to martial law.

The regime's uncharacteristic willingness to take up the question of the right to strike reflects its worry over the growing militance of Manila's workers. The yellow TUCP has witnessed a steady erosion in membership since last May's founding of the KMU.

"Management representatives...say that the government's close alliance with Mr. Mendoza's group (TUCP) can be maintained only if the Trade Union Congress continues to show it can deliver for the workers," commented the *Asian Wall Street Journal*.

But the TUCP failed to deliver at the tripartite meeting last March 28. Once the vague references and foggy language of the conference communique clear away and Philippine workers find themselves hemmed in by a variety of restrictions, nothing else can be expected but the continued growth of the militant worker's movement. □

## NPA Mauls Dreaded PC Unit

While the controlled media trumpets Marcos' claims that the country's armed revolutionary forces have been put under control, underground reports show that military victories by the New People's Army (NPA) have increased in the recent period.

The most spectacular of *Ang Bayan's* belated reports includes a victory of NPA fighters in Pambujan, Eastern Samar.

Last November, guerrilla fighters ambushed a large contingent of the notorious 60th PC Battalion, killing 11 and confiscating a number of high-powered arms. The NPA sustained no casualties in the operation.

### Complete Surprise

The PC soldiers were aboard two motorized bancas traveling along the Pambujan River. They were returning from an unsuccessful three-day strike operation against the peasants of nearby barrios.

As the pumpboats entered Pambujan, the NPA fighters suddenly opened fire from one bank of the river. The PC, taken completely by surprise, found half their number either dead or wounded in the first minute of intense fire. The rest returned fire, engaging the guerrillas for another 45 minutes. Three fled, leaving behind their firearms.

When the smoke cleared, 11 PC troopers were dead, four wounded and captured and three had surrendered. Several NPA fighters dived immediately into the river to retrieve the troopers' weapons. Others crossed over to recover arms from the other side. They were aided in the effort by peasants from the area.

### A Blow to the 60th PC Battalion

The NPA applied first aid to the wounded enemy soldiers, explaining the national democratic revolution in the process. Two surrenderees then chose to spend a day in the guerrillas' camp to understand the revolutionary movement more deeply.

The 60th Battalion gained its notoriety while stationed in Kalinga-Apayao. Suffering bitterly under the brutality of the troops, the people of the province launched a militant campaign to have the 60th removed. After repeated exposures, the government was forced to withdraw the battalion.

It was transferred to Samar, scene of some of the most intense fighting between the NPA and government troops. Here the battalion has been true to its image, continuing to sow terror among Samar's peasants.

The NPA has been equally active in other areas. In Abra,

three PC soldiers were killed by people's army guerrillas—two in October, one in December. The first two were part of a detachment stationed inside the work camp of Cellophil Resources Corp. This controversial paper company, owned by Marcos crony Herminio Disini, has displaced hundreds of the Tingguian residents of Abra.

### Victories Elsewhere

Also in October, the NPA in Pasail, Kalinga-Apayao punished two informers. Arms and ammunition were confiscated in the process.

More spectacular was last September's ambush in Piggatan, Alcala, Cagayan which left 24 members of the PC and Integrated National Police dead on the national highway.

NPA victories are most often ignored by the Marcos-controlled media. Thus, the regime can claim that the popular armed resistance is "under control."

News about the NPA's guerrilla war can only slip out to its international audience via reports from the underground press. Understandably, these reports are belated in character.

But, late or otherwise, these underground reports confirm that all is not quiet in Marcos' backyard. □

## Buod ng mga Balita

### Marcos Courts South Africa

Many Americans were shocked when newly-elected President Ronald Reagan expressed a willingness to deal with South Africa after years of that country's diplomatic isolation. But maybe Reagan was merely following the footsteps of his close ally Ferdinand E. Marcos.

A November issue of *South Africa Reports*, a journal devoted to keeping track of events in the most blatantly racist country in the world today points to a diplomatic thaw.

The Philippine government, the journal said, for the first time, had expressed willingness for some form of relationship with South Africa in its recent granting of tourist visas to South Africa citizens interested in visiting the country. □

### NPA Medics Upgrade Skills

Belated reports from the Philippines reveal that the work of the New People's Army (NPA) continues to reach higher levels of skill and specialization. In particular, the people's fighters have found it necessary to increase their capacities in the medical field.

In order to deepen their understanding of medical science, 25 revolutionary medics attended a three-week seminar in eastern Cagayan last September. The underground newspaper *Baringkas* explains that they studied the human body system, common illnesses, diagnosis, preventive medicine, herbal medicine, acupuncture, first-aid, and tooth extraction. They also formulated a guide for reporting and investigating health conditions in their respective localities.

NPA medics make use of whatever medical resources are available to them. This means combining acupuncture, western medicine and indigenous herbal remedies.

The experience of revolutionary medics throughout eastern Isabela reveals sharp similarities. No sooner does an NPA unit enter a barrio than ailing peasants, who may never have been touched by the government's limited medical resources in the countryside, arrive in droves to be examined and treated by the people's medics.

Recognizing the people's needs for medical care, the conference included only 10 medical workers actually assigned to the NPA. The other 15 were assigned generally to medical work throughout Cagayan. □

## State Dept., Congress Human Rights Reports:

## REAGAN OPTS FOR MARCOS

By JUAN CRISOSTOMO  
Phil. Liberation Courier

Hardly anyone noticed when the 1981 State Department human rights report on the Philippines was published more than a month ago.

It is no worse than reports in past years. It nominally recognizes undeniable facts while raising the same false hopes about the "improving" human rights situation in the Philippines.

If nobody listened, there was reason: in the age of Reagan, the human rights report has become a political anachronism.

**Continuing Torture and Abuse**

In fairness to the staff people who put the 1981 report together, they stuck closely to available reports of human rights violations. The work of the Task Force Detainees of the Association of Major Religious Superiors (AMRSP) figures prominently throughout. "Military abuses of civilians, including torture and summary execution, are a continuing problem, especially in insurgency areas," the report says.

Of the political process, the report says, "... Marcos has exercised virtually complete executive authority." The Interim National Assembly "provides a forum for public debate ... its role, however, has been very limited, and major laws usually are enacted by presidential decrees."

The report's "objectivity," however, has often ludicrous re-



One of the Philippines' many prisons: Human rights report attempts to see "improvements" in human rights conditions. (ALIHANI)

sults. "Assembly debates in 1980," the reports says, "featured some criticism of the government and national policies. Its views have had an effect on presidential decisions on secondary matters."

**Regime as Innocent Bystander**

This bizarre passage portrays the overall thrust of the document—an attempt to present the situation as steadily "improving."

More disturbing is the portrayal of the Marcos regime as an innocent bystander doing its best to correct random abuses by military personnel. "Government hearings, publicity, and disciplinary action," the report says,

"have had some success in curbing these abuses."

The report is littered with similar optimistic assessments. But, in contrast to the strict standards of "evidence" demanded of reports of abuses, hardly any evidence is presented to substantiate "improvements."

**Diplomacy Over "Objectivity"**

According to one of the authors of last year's report, higher-ups in the State Department insisted on "toning down" the original draft. Diplomatic considerations, it seems, took precedence over "objectivity."

Although original drafts of

past human rights reports are unavailable, a recent article by Stephen Cohen, former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Human Rights, provides a glimpse of what the unedited reports might have looked like.

In contrast to the 1981 report's optimism, Cohen's article (*Washington Post*, Feb. 21, 1981) says, "... there has been an alarming increase in reported military abuses against civilians. ..."

The human rights reports do not suggest specific policies in U.S. relations with the Marcos regime. Cohen, however, says, "Instead of seeking warmer relations, the United States should

distance itself from the Marcos regime. ..."

**No Chance With Reagan**

Cohen, however, knows that his suggested policy does not stand a chance under Reagan. "There are already signs," Cohen says, "that [the Reagan administration] will read—or choose to read—the end of martial law as genuine progress, justifying warmer relations with the Marcos regime."

If the Reagan administration chooses to replace Carter's discreet support with public affirmation, it will do so with eyes wide open. For the Reagan administration has at its disposal at least one "objective" assessment of the Marcos regime.

**Political Uncertainty**

A recent 134-page Congressional Research Service report says that the Philippines could be subject to a "good deal of political uncertainty" over the next five years. But "the most likely prospect" is that Marcos will remain in power barring declining health, accidental death, or assassination.

On Marcos' negotiations with the elite opposition, the report says, "As in the past, [Marcos] may make occasional concessions to the opposition... but he has not shown a strong inclination to restore competitive political processes and institutions that would give the opposition a

*Continued on page 8*

## One-Man Rule . . .

*Continued from front page*

\*If the *Batasang Pambansa* proves troublesome, the president may, upon the advice of the prime minister, dissolve the body "whenever the need arises."

\*The prime minister will hold no power independent of the president and, in fact, is to be nominated for the post by the president.

**1976 Amendments Remain in Force**

The 1976 amendments to the 1973 constitution are all to remain in force, further strengthening Marcos' control. These will allow the president to rule by decree if, in his judgement, "there exists a grave emergency or a threat of imminence thereof, or whenever the IBP or the regular assembly fails or is unable to act adequately..."

The president may order the preventive detention of anyone suspected of subversion. The "strong president" is actually to perform legislative functions by "formulating the guidelines of national policy."

Should Marcos die or be disabled, his policies will remain in effect. Succession is to be resolved by a 14-member Executive Committee half of which will be IBP members and the rest military officers, members of the "loyal opposition," and the private business sector—all presumably belonging to the Marcos camp.

**Pleasing the Military**

Most distressing to some observers is the proposed constitutional guarantee of immunity from lawsuits during, and even after, the president's tenure. This protects Marcos and his underlings from legal reprisals for "official acts" carried out by him "and

by others pursuant to his specific orders (our emphasis)," should he step down or be deposed.

The "others" was included specifically to placate the military, Marcos' power base. The military has won the ire of many at home and abroad for its human rights violations and may become the target of legal suits demanding damages, etc.

Even the IBP, stacked with loyal members of Marcos' *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* (KBL, New Society Party) initially balked at this provision. However, Marcos allegedly told a KBL caucus, "If we cannot agree on this, we may as well part ways."

He quickly won his point and went directly to the military. At a Feb. 27 meeting of Philippine Military Academy alumni, he announced, "I would have reestablished the crisis government all over again if the IBP had not included the subordinates," referring to the provision for immunity.

**Turning IBP into a Parliament**

To insure his victory in the presidential election tentatively slated for June 7, Marcos' KBL-sponsored constitutional amendments set the minimum age for an opposition candidate at 50. Benigno Aquino, his most popular opponent, is 48.

Finally, just in case someone else should win, a provision allows the parliament to veto a president by a two-thirds majority.

In recent days, Marcos has announced that full "normalization" will be in effect by June 30. He has indicated that after the plebiscite, the IBP will no longer be interim; i.e., it automatically becomes the parliament. Since 90 percent of its membership is Marcos' KBL, this seals his monopoly of political power. □

## 'Boycott!' 'Vote No!' . . .

*Continued from front page*

and the riot troops which usually surround such events were conspicuously absent. Only one woman was arrested for soliciting donations allegedly without a permit.

**Undecided About Elections**

The UNIDO rally received absolutely no coverage from the Marcos-controlled press, despite pledges from the National Media Production Center of ample coverage for the opposition.

But in a surprise move on March 30, Marcos suddenly announced his willingness to debate. UNIDO said it would draw lots to determine who among them should confront the dictator. However, Marcos later changed the debate format asking UNIDO to divide the time allotted for it among nine speakers. UNIDO rejected this format and withdrew from the debate when Marcos refused a one-on-one format.

**UNIDO Still Split Over Elections**

The elite opposition group remained undecided on whether it would field a presidential candidate for the election set June 7. That depends, said one spokesman vaguely, on how Marcos conducts the plebiscite. It also depends, claimed observers, on the state of on-going negotiations between the dictator and the elite opposition.

Senior UNIDO member, ex-Senator Lorenzo Tanada, speaking in the U.S., announced that his organization would consider running a candidate if Marcos agreed to extend the campaign period from 30 to 90 days. He had no illusions, he added, of winning. Tanada met with Marcos



UNIDO's Lorenzo Tanada

prior to his visit to the U.S. which was spent consulting with ex-Senator Benigno Aquino.

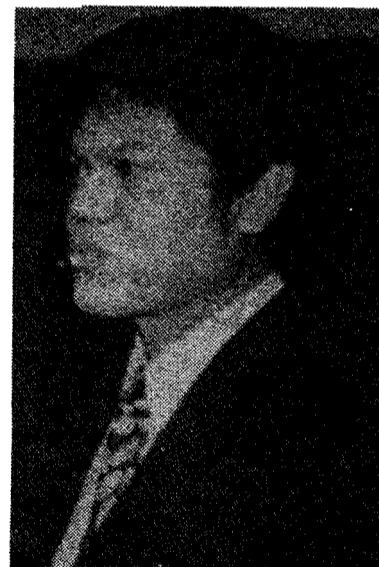
Meanwhile one group of former UNIDO members has grown too impatient with the group's indecision. On March 9, the Mindanao Alliance and the Cebu United Opposition formally broke away to form a new nationwide minority political organization. These two are determined to field a presidential candidate at all cost.

**"Democratic Facade"**

While UNIDO members campaigned for a "return to democracy," the Civil Liberties Union of the Philippines was far more direct in its denunciation of the plebiscite.

Linking the plebiscite to U.S. influence in the country, the CLUP claimed that the proposed constitutional changes are designed to present a "democratic facade" for the Marcos regime in its effort to secure U.S. support.

Also, by allowing Marcos to choose his successors, the state-



The Mindanao Alliance's Reuben Canoy.

ment declared, the proposed constitutional amendments were meant to insure that these successors would be "as accommodating to the demands of the World Bank and foreign creditors as Mr. Marcos is."

**Workers' Boycott**

One group to the left of UNIDO called for a boycott of the plebiscite. This in itself was a bold move since, even without martial law, to advocate a boycott is a crime punishable by a minimum of six months in prison.

On March 23, Roberto Olalia, 73-year-old chairman of the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (KMU, May 1st Movement), called for a workers' boycott. As spokesman for four labor federations, 500,000-strong, Olalia announced plans for a mass action pressing for the restoration of the right to strike. (See story, page 3.)

Questioned about the coming plebiscite, Olalia dismissed the entire affair as "useless" and "a waste of money." □

# FILIPINO COMMUNITY NEWS

## Nurses in Chicago:

# Treated Badly Despite the Shortage

By **EDDIE ESCULTURA**  
Chicago Correspondent

There is a bit of irony in the fact that despite the chronic nursing shortage in the city's medical institutions, nurses, especially minority nurses, still face discouraging working conditions and those on H-1 visas are under threat of deportation.

Among those who live with harassment, understaffing and slow pay hikes are an estimated 9,000 Filipino nurses—roughly half of the city's current nursing force.

Licensed nurses start at \$8 per hour on the average and increases are very slow, lagging far behind the rising cost of living. For the nurse who is on an H-1 visa the situation is much worse especially when she fails the State Board licensure examination and loses her temporary license. Then, though highly trained and with considerable experience in her home country, she gets paid \$5 an hour and is often under threat of deportation.

### Shortage Widens

As far back as 1978, according to the National League of Nursing, some cities were reporting vacancies of as much as 33 percent.

In Chicago alone there is an estimated shortage of 17,015 nurses, according to Mayee Asidao, a long-time nurse practitioner and coordinator of the National Alliance for Fair Licensure for Foreign Nurse Graduates.

This shortage is bound to get worse as more and more nurses are leaving the profession, and schools are closing

fast in the face of a 16 percent decline in applications in the last few years.

According to the American Nurses Association, 30 percent of today's 1.4 million RN's in the nation are not working in the field by choice and 40 percent of those active in the profession are working part-time. The U.S. Department of Labor projects 240,000 more nursing jobs to open by 1985 as the patient population rises at the annual rate of .5 percent.

### Despite Demand, Benefits Don't Improve

One would expect that the nursing shortage would compel the medical industry to offer better incentives in terms of improved pay and working conditions. "The opposite is true," according to Esther Simpson, another veteran nurse practitioner and an active community organizer.

"The shortage has only aggravated understaffing and hence the bad working conditions while salaries remain low," says Simpson.

Asidao readily agrees and cites the situation at St. Joseph's Hospital where she works. "There," she says, "the shortage has meant rigidity and arbitrariness in scheduling."

She points out that "Since the nurses are unorganized they can only bear the arrogance of the management and its readiness to hand down disciplinary action."

### Unionizing Begins

The start of union organizing in the city mainly by the



Service Employees International Union (SEIU) seems to have some visible though minimal effects in certain hospitals.

At St. Luke's for instance, a nurse who works two 12-hour days on a weekend is paid for the whole week. The hospital also allows flexible working hours for working mothers and gives a bonus of up to \$1,000 for each year of work. Roosevelt Hospital offers up to \$18,000 annual salary.

These developments, according to Simpson, are quite recent and appear to be designed to lure nurses away from unions.

In Columbus Hospital where there is an open union organizing drive by the Hospital Employees Labor program, the management has recently shown more flexibility in dealing with its employees. At the same time, it has hired a top union buster to counter the union drive. Columbus has 550 nurses and 1500 other employees.

### Unorganized, Nurses are Defenseless

"While the new development on salaries and scheduling flexibility is encouraging," says Asidao, "there won't be dramatic

improvement in working conditions of nurses as long as they are not organized."

Especially for minority nurses, there is intimidation and the feeling of helplessness under the awesome power of the management. "With a union, at least the employees acquire some power in dealing with grievances and job situation," observes Asidao.

She admits however, that sentiments of "professionalism," which equates joining unions as a "demotion to the level of ordinary workers" and racism on the job are strong obstacles to the unionization of nurses. □

## Hawaii Legislation Pending:

# Bill to Aid Foreign Nurses



Nurses from the Philippines comprise most of the foreign nurses in Hawaii. (AK File)

**Hawaii**—A bill to provide formal training and review to enable nurses to pass the licensure exam is being considered by the State House of Representatives.

Rep. Connie Chun, a recently-elected Filipina legislator introduced House Bill 370 mainly to give opportunities to foreign-trained nurses with permanent resident status to practice their professions, and to alleviate the critical nursing shortage in Hawaii hospitals.

The original bill called for on-the-job training for foreign-trained

nurses, and for formal classroom training to prepare for the licensure exam. In order to qualify, the nurse necessarily has to have failed a first exam, or the license must have expired.

### Bill Supported Widely

The bill was widely supported in a public hearing. Only the Hawaii Government Employees Association did not agree with the bill.

However, supporters of the bill suggested refinements so that provisions could be extended

to domestically-trained nurses as well, i.e. newly-graduated nurses or out-of-practice nurses who have failed the exam. The refined bill also dropped out on-the-job training. It emphasizes formal classroom training in English as a Second Language and Psychiatric Mental Health.

Supporters of the bill include: United Public Workers, Hawaii Nurses Association, State Department of Mental Health, and the State Board of Nursing Licensure.

Opposition from the Hawaii Government Employees Association is anchored on a position questioning why state taxes should be used on foreigners.

### Seen as Solution to Shortage

Though the bill is still up for discussion in the House of Representatives, a current of optimism supports its passage.

Chun notes that most foreign-trained nurses in Hawaii are from the Philippines. Many of the nurses work below their professional training (e.g. as nurses' aides) because they have not passed the test.

Chun sees licensing these nurses as a more productive measure than the stop-gap measure Hawaii has implemented for years which is, to recruit nurses from the mainland for one-year work contracts. This measure recreates the shortage problem once the nurses leave after their contracts expire. □

## INS Seizes Nurses . . .

*Continued from front page*

The male nurse was fired on the spot for "negligence," thus ending his contract too. Without a contracted employer, all four are considered undocumented and therefore deportable.

All four were charged with having an "illegal status" (after some initial confusion among police officers) and were detained without being apprised of their legal rights. The INS told them to sign letters of voluntary departure. They promptly refused realizing that they would be jailed whether they signed or not.

### Community Support

Knowledge of the nurses' crisis did not reach the Filipino community until after the nurses had spent two nights in jail.

Barbara and Chris Alcaro, friends of one of the nurses, notified the Filipino Club of Arizona, the largest Filipino organization in the Phoenix/Tempe area. The club called an emergency meeting and raised \$500 to bail the nurses out.

"The community was very upset," said Luxmi Cruz, secretary of the Filipino Club. "The civil rights of the four nurses have been violated."

Community support for the four nurses is mounting in the Phoenix/Tempe area. Officers of the Filipino Club will be meeting soon to consider follow-up action.

Through the efforts of community people, another nursing home in Safford, Arizona (almost 200 miles away from Phoenix) has indicated an interest in sponsoring the nurses if their stay can be extended.

It is the intention of the nurses' lawyer, Roxanne Bacon, to at least get their temporary work permits extended. Meanwhile, the nurses await a hearing on April 7, when their cases will be reviewed by a deportation judge.

### Nationwide Campaign to Stop Deportations

This case is not an isolated one. Filipinos make up over half of all foreign nurses who immigrate to the U.S. yearly and who are victimized by the exam and the INS.

Anticipating more INS harassment and deportation threats, a joint campaign to stop deportation of H-1 nurses is being launched by the National Alliance for Fair Licensure—Foreign Nurse Graduates (NAFL-FNG), and the National Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization.

The campaign targeting the INS seeks a stop to all H-1 deportations until a fair and non-discriminatory exam is developed.

Community education, a petition drive and letter-writing campaign are being launched in seven cities nationwide: New York, Chicago, Seattle, Honolulu, San Francisco Bay Area, San Jose, and Los Angeles.

Legal action challenging the use of a culturally-biased exam for licensure is being prepared in California by the Asian Law Caucus of Oakland. □

## Movie Review:

# 'Julian Makabayan': A Refreshing Surprise

By **CRIS TAGAM**  
Staff Writer

Celso Ad. Castillo's film *Alamat ni Julian Makabayan* shown recently in San Francisco, proves more than a surprise given the present state of Filipino movies.

In a society where strict self-censorship ordinarily prevents

film-makers from raising any but the most trivial of issues, the movie examines a slice of the history of the Filipino revolutionary movement.

Even more surprising in a Philippine commercial film is the sharp sense of class differences and antagonisms the film presents.

The film's historical focus is

a far cry from the standard "boy meets girl, loses girl, gets her back again" fare, often liberally spiced with the latest hit songs from the U.S.

### Peasant Activist

Set in Nueva Ecija during the 1920s and 30s, *Julian Makabayan* revolves around a poor peasant family which chooses to fight for its basic rights and dignity in the face of adversity.

The *Kapisanan*, a secret peasant organization established by the old Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas figures prominently in the plot.

Julian Makabayan is an activist in the *Kapisanan*. The dedication of the activist and the vicious repression of the state are themes threaded through the film and through the generations of the Makabayan family.

### Joy Turns to Grief

The film opens with sharp juxtapositions, cutting up and back between the colorfully idyllic wedding of Julian and Mina and the ominously dark *bodega* where a farmer is being brutally tortured to extract information about Julian's activities in the *Kapisanan*.

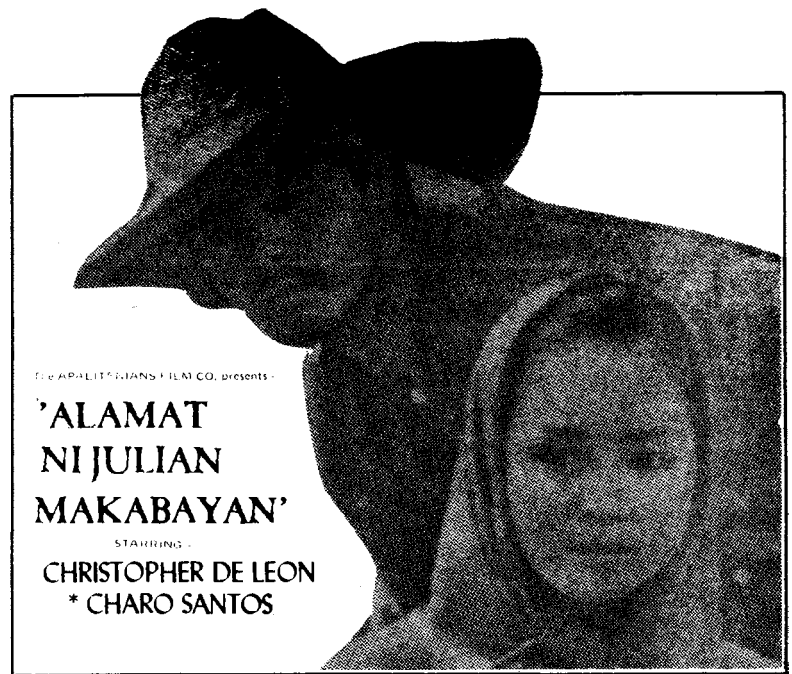
As the joyous wedding procession arrives at the river, it finds the farmer left there to die. Joy turns to grief; the wedding procession into a funeral procession.

Returning to the barrio with the body, the wedding party finds Julian's house almost burned to the ground. Constabulary forces close in, arresting Julian.

Distraught, Mina seeks the parish priest's help. Fr. Matias, a typical remnant of the corrupt Spanish colonial friars, assures Mina that he will negotiate with the authorities for Julian's quick release. But in exchange for this favor, Mina must pay a debt herself and succumb to the priest's lust.

### 'The Friar's Son'

Months pass and Mina delivers a son, also named Julian Makabayan. A mestizo, young



Julian becomes the brunt of other children's jokes: "Julian, the friar's son."

But the older Julian takes the boy as his own and instills in the child his ideas and hopes for a better future.

Continuing his organizing activities, the older Julian again becomes target of the Constabulary. In a dramatic raid during harvest, Julian is dragged away as the young child cries out for his father.

Julian is sent back, but only after heavy torture. Explaining to the little boy the tasks he faces, Julian leaves to join the armed peasants in the mountains.

### Class Differences Interfere

Young Julian grows up and a chance meeting with a young woman from town grows into a deeper relationship. But their class differences—Julian, a peasant rebel's son and Celia, a PC lieutenant's daughter—are only too sharp.

Discovering the growing fondness between the two, the PC lieutenant confronts Julian with a weeping Celia and tells him that they are not to see each other again.

Soon after, the elder Julian's body is found. In a touching scene, young Julian promises to continue his father's fight and urges everyone to join the *Kapisanan*. Julian, together with Celia who has rebelled against her father, joins the other peasants in the mountains to wage an armed uprising.

Julian's young life is cut short, however, in an encounter with the PC led by Celia's father. But

Julian Makabayan will live on—his infant son will be the next Julian Makabayan and the struggle will continue.

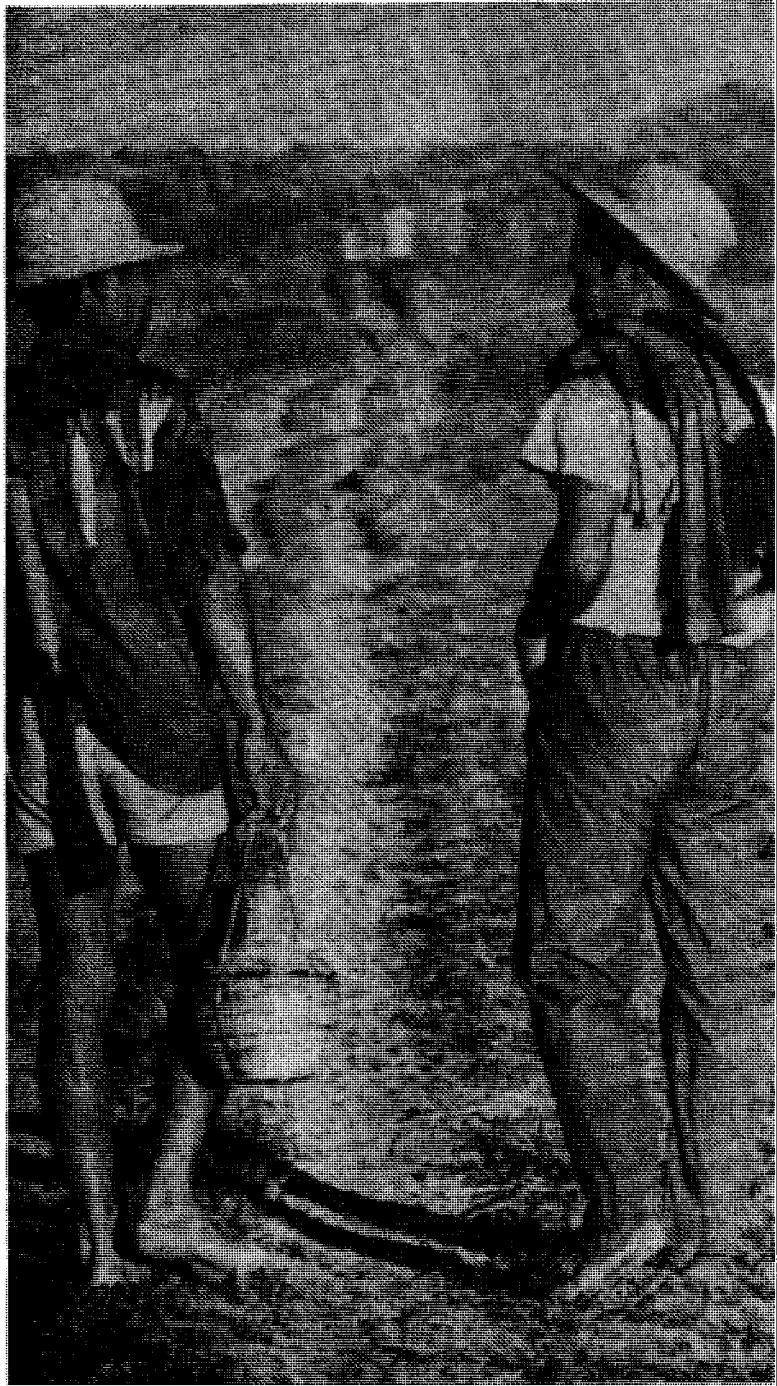
### Strengths and Weaknesses

The almost flawless cinematography of *Julian Makabayan* places it well above most Filipino movies. But this is a weakness as well as a strength. Village scenes can be so pastoral and idyllic, almost like an Amorsolo painting, as to seriously distort the harshness of country life.

The script is deliberately vague as to how exactly peasants organize and wage armed struggle. The link with the secret organization, although alluded to, remains remote. This is probably due to the political realities under the Marcos dictatorship that the film makers have to pay respect to.

Also confusing are the mixed terms used: "guardia civil" later becomes "constabulary;" the presence of a Spanish friar also contributes to historical confusion. If these scenes were meant as flashbacks into the Spanish period, it did not come across very well.

Based on a story by Maria Feleo-Gonzales, daughter of former PKP leader Juan Feleo, the movie provides a refreshing change of pace from the standard Nora/Tirso melodramas. For Filipinos and Filipino Americans seeking samples of Philippine culture which deal with their genuine heritage, *Julian Makabayan*, in spite of its flaws, delivers. □



## Black Veils of Protest

# U.N. Women Workers Hit Sex Bias

By **L. MARZAN**  
N.Y. Correspondent

**New York**—A dramatic protest action organized by the UN Staff Union broke the usual calm at the United Nation's Secretariat March 9.

On the occasion of International Women's Day, close to 50 percent of the women employees in the Secretariat wore black to protest sex discrimination in the U.N. system. Some of the women also wore black veils over their faces to symbolize the "facelessness and powerlessness of women in this society, especially the workplace."

The U.N. Staff Union said that sex discrimination is particularly rampant in the areas of hiring and promotions. To express their unity with the action, over 2,000 employees, both men and women, signed a petition demanding the U.N. Administration to offer better career opportunities and use more innovative

approaches to problems faced by women.

Asked why only 50 percent of the women joined the protest, Staff Union President Lowell Flanders stated that "not everybody is an activist in character. Some people just choose not to make an open stand for many different reasons." Flanders pointed out that a large number of the women employees are, for instance, on the G-4 (diplomatic) visa, which they would lose if their employment in the U.N. were terminated.

A Filipina, who has been with the U.N. for over six years, expressed her disappointment at the lack of publicity given to the protest. "Had I known ahead of time, I would definitely have worn black, too," she said. "It's about time we women expressed our dissatisfaction at how we are treated so shabbily around here. We are just viewed as second class compared to men."

The protest action signified a change in the attitudes of many



The UN Secretariat: Women are second-class citizens.

(AK File)

U.N. workers. More aware of their rights and the need to defend them, they are beginning to discard the illusion that they are more privileged among clerical

workers and are therefore, immune from such common problems as discrimination, alienation in the workplace, and difficult working conditions. The si-

lence which used to prevail among U.N. employees even when faced with problems is fast being shattered by a new-found activism. □

## DOMESTIC/INTERNATIONAL NEWS

# The Anti-Abortion Movement: 'Pro-Lifers': Born-Again Rightwingers

By WALTER YONN  
Staff Writer

Anti-abortion legislation, sponsored by Republican senators Jesse Helms of North Carolina and Representative Henry Hyde of Illinois, has moved to the center of national politics.

Their proposed law would essentially entitle a fertilized egg full rights under the 14th amendment, making all abortions (including those in cases of rape and incest) illegal and equivalent to murder.

## Turning Back the Clock

The Helms-Hyde bill would completely reverse what is seen as the most important gain of the women's rights movement of the 60s—control of one's own body and reproductive system.

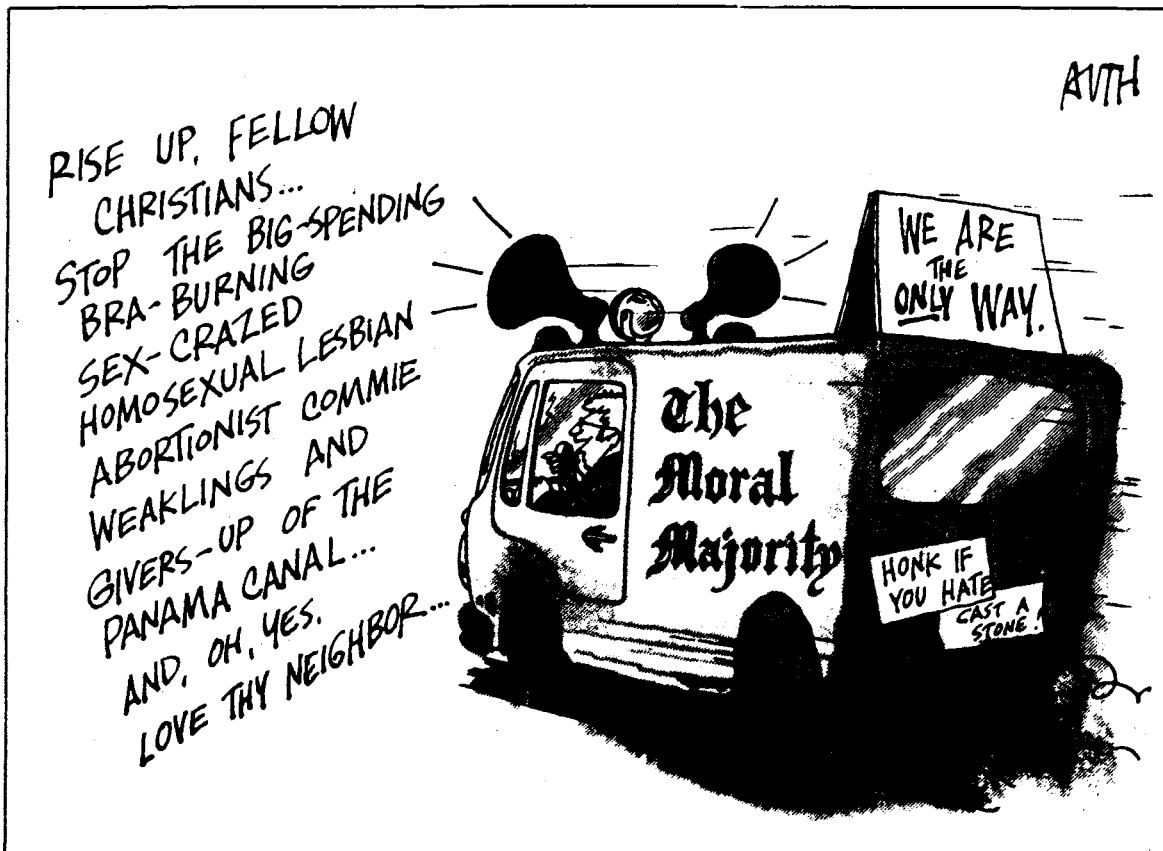
Having the legally protected right to choose to bear children or not, has had a profoundly positive effect on women's social, political and economic role in society. For the poor it has meant the right to exercise a choice based on their economic realities, although it is evident no one has yet granted them the right to choose not to be poor.

In 1973 the U.S. Supreme Court decided in *Roe vs. Wade* that women had the right to discontinue a pregnancy up to six months. Then in 1976 this right was extended to all regardless of economic status in *McRae vs. Califano* with the Supreme Court deciding that federal Medicaid funds could not be denied for abortions. The court stated: "The 14th amendment includes freedom of women to terminate a pregnancy. . . a denial of federal funds specifically for abortions in effect denies the exercise of this right."

## Court Joins "Pro-Lifers"

Since 1973 many things have changed. The 70s have witnessed the conspicuous growth of the rightwing as well as a shift to the right in the nation's highest court with the majority of the Supreme Court justices having been appointed by Nixon.

In 1980 the Supreme Court upheld the Hyde amendment which had been passed by Congress cutting off federal funds for abortions. The court stated: "It does not follow that a woman's freedom of choice carries with it a constitutional entitlement to financial resources to avail herself of the full range of protected choices."



This essentially says, the right to abortions belongs only to those who can pay. The decision directly contradicts the court's own 1976 *McRae* decision.

The denial of federal funds for abortions has already profoundly affected the poor woman's choice. In 1976 295,000 women used federal funds for abortions; by 1979 only 2,400 exercised this right due to denial of federal funds.

## Unholy Alliance

It is ironic that the political forces that back this movement against women's foremost right claim such a great reverence for life.

Jesse Helms is acknowledged as the most conservative member of the Senate. He is the main proponent of re-establishment of full diplomatic and economic ties with racist South Africa, which is presently under United Nations sanctions due to its practical enslavement of its black population. Helms, whose home state has one of the largest potential black electorate, has opposed every piece of civil rights legislation that has come his way and makes a point of having no blacks on his staff.

The most significant groups in the anti-abortion camp are the National Right to Life Coalition

(NRLC) and the Life Amendment Political Action Committee (LAPAC). NRLC claims a 13 million membership and LAPAC has a multi-million dollar fund for the defeat of pro-choice candidates. Both organizations are under the umbrella of the New Right and the Moral Majority, both centered in the Republican Party.

The Catholic church has taken an official position not only against abortion but also against all "artificial" methods of contraception. It has contributed its huge organizational capacities and approximately \$1 million to the crusade.

## Reagan's Anti-Abortion Appointees

The ideological godfather of this holy crusade is no less than the president of the United States. Reagan made clear his commitment to abolishing women's right to choose by his cabinet appointments.

Dr. Everett Koop, the Surgeon General, is a fundamentalist Christian who toured 20 cities in 1979 speaking on the "anti-family trends in our society." Marjorie Mecklenberg, director of adolescent pregnancy programs was president of the American Citizens Concerned with Life. Richard Schweiker, Secretary of Health and Human Services, has not only gone on record against abortion but also against sex education and birth control!

## The "Pro-Life" Ideal

There is an ideal that holds the anti-abortion movement together.

Its framework is essentially this: a woman's role is to serve her husband and to have children; the family is the main source of morality and guidance (not to mention the Republican Party, the Pope, and Jerry Falwell); the purpose of sex is only to make children; sex outside the sanctity of marriage and not for reproductive purposes is ridden with sin. This ideal also explains this movement's opposition to homosexual relationships.

The anti-abortionists believe that a woman once pregnant must bear the child regardless of circumstances or the consequence. Thus, for them to oppose sex education and contraceptives on the one hand, yet oppose the right to terminate pregnancy on the other, can only be seen as a form of punishment for those who don't comply with their moral code.

## Imperfect Gods on Earth

The anti-abortionists' ideal however, is a poor answer to the facts of life in the U.S. today. Imposing this ideal on present reality will lead only to extremely repressive results. Consider the facts:

There are approximately 1.5 million abortions performed each

year in the U.S., 474,000 of these are women in their teens. Altogether there will be at least one million reported teenage pregnancies this year alone. At the present rate, 40% of the young women in the U.S. will become pregnant before their 20th birthday. The "pro-life" response to this complex social phenomenon is simple social punishment.

According to federal figures there are 2.6 million women who, for economic and medical reasons are not in a position to have children and must have the option to terminate an unplanned pregnancy. Of these, 90% should receive federal or state assistance. The "pro-life" response? Cut off money for these "sinners."

Ironically, the anti-abortionists themselves are not immune from these social realities. They are imperfect gods on earth. A reporter attending the 1980 national conference of LAPAC noted that many women leading anti-abortion workshops have had abortions themselves. Recently two of the moral majority's most prominent male congressmen were arrested for soliciting young men for sex.

## Low Regard for Women

Characteristically, the anti-abortionists display a disturbing, almost psychotic dedication to the myth of female inferiority.

The Catholic Church for one, has held a doctrinaire policy upholding male supremacy for centuries—reflecting its primitive, feudal origins. Its rituals for example, have borrowed greatly from Mitratism, a religion involving a blood sacrifice very popular among Roman soldiers during the waning days of the empire.

In the 13th century, a pope was stoned to death upon discovery that "he" was a woman bearing a child. To this day it is still not clear if this pope was killed because she was a woman or because she was pregnant or both.

Among the more secular leadership of the movement, this anti-woman obsession is perhaps best reflected by LAPAC national spokesperson Paul Brown. Brown once said publicly of Karen Mulhauser, a leading pro-choice activist, "I hear that Karen was raped. Well, let me tell you, Karen is not the most beautiful creature in the world. So when I hear her say she was raped, I say, 'You wish!'" (Mulhauser had been raped by two men at gunpoint. The two were tried and convicted.)□

## L.A. Scraps Integration Plan:

# The Bus Stops Here—So Does Equal Education?

By DEBY ARMANDO  
Staff Writer and  
MARIA ABADESCO  
L.A. Correspondent

The Los Angeles Board of Education scrapped mandatory busing March 12, overturning civil rights gains against school racial segregation. The decision is seen as a victory for anti-busing and pro-segregation forces who welcomed it with jubilation.

The board's decision will take effect April 10 when all parents who want to do so may pull their children out of the busing program and transfer them into neighborhood schools.

Directly affected by the program's dismantling will be some

58,000 students. The United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA) point to the tremendous disruption which will result from the dismantling. Some 23,000 students from grades one to nine alone will transfer mid-semester, interrupting classroom curriculum and jeopardizing bilingual education for those who need it.

## Court Joins Anti-Busing Forces

The board's decision followed a complicated series of legal battles which eventually saw the California Supreme Court ruling that Proposition I, an anti-busing initiative passed in the state to the accompaniment of campaigns with barely hidden racist thrusts,

was not unconstitutional. Subsequent court appeals to reconsider this ruling which were lodged by minority and civil rights groups have been rejected.

Proposition I amended the state's hitherto liberal busing law which called for mandatory busing where there is intentional or unintentional segregation.

The proposition trimmed this law to suit more limited federal standards which call for busing only in cases where a school district practiced intentional segregation.

The American Civil Liberties Union, protesting the Supreme Court ruling that Proposition I is constitutional, said the proposition itself constituted intentional

segregation. The L.A. School Board based its decision to dismantle busing on the proposition.

## Bitter Protests

Pro-busing forces protested bitterly the board's decision. Rita Walters, the only black member of the L.A. School Board said to the *L.A. Times*: "I am appalled by the jubilation displayed by anti-busing board members . . . this builds the walls of segregation even higher and pulls us further apart." Walters added that the decision is based on "bigotry [being] ahead of the interests of the children."

The National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (NAACP) had previously

criticized the state Supreme Court for "succumbing" to political pressures from anti-busing and racist organizations.

In addition to the NAACP, groups supporting busing include the Community Relations Conference of Southern California, the Black Leadership Coalition, the Association of Mexican-American Educators, the school board's advisory Mexican-American Education Commission and various other latino groups.

Additionally, the UTLA tried to delay busing's dismantling by requesting an injunction that would bar the board from sending students back to their neighbor-

Continued on page 8

## FOCUS: CAGAYAN PEASANTS

# Two Hundred Years of Landlessness

Adapted from  
ANG BAYAN and  
Iligan COURIER

What becomes of the sharecropping farmers when the hacienda they till is sold to a corporation? Where will they fit in that company's plans of developing the farmland into a huge agricultural complex? Will they benefit from "guaranteed" jobs as farmworkers in soon-to-be established farm industries?

For the 21,000 sharecroppers of Haciendas San Antonio and Santa Isabel in Iligan, Cagayan, such a transfer has meant only a continuation of their 200-

nance the Spanish government's Galleon Trade.

Spontaneous and sporadic revolts soon were waged by tenant farmers forced to pay high rents and render corvee labor.

In 1881, Haciendas San Antonio and Santa Isabel were sold to the Compañia General de Tabaco de Filipinas (Tabacalera). This Spanish-owned company, as a result, acquired the two most lucrative properties in the tobacco industry. For almost a century, a single family, the Manahans, controlled both haciendas.

Sharecropping was maintained as the form of farm produc-

ment attempts to "equalize" land distribution, San Antonio and Santa Isabel farmers remained not much different from their forefathers.

Land reform measures such as Presidential Decree No. 27 contained sufficient loopholes to exempt the Tabacalera from the program.

### Tabacalera-ANCA Transaction

Now, another transaction has transferred ownership to yet another private company.

Newly-formed ANCA, Inc., bought the two haciendas from the Manahans for a reported ₱80 million. ANCA's principal owners are Eduardo Cojuangco, Jr. and Antonio Carag. Cojuangco is a well-known coconut baron and sugar landlord. Carag, a lawyer, has been linked to another coconut baron, Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile.

### An Advance?

Media announcements on the sale spoke of the benefits the farmers would receive. Projected to become the largest multi-crop agricultural complex in the country, the farmlands were to produce coconut, corn, cotton, and mongo beans. Jobs were to be offered the farmers on plantations and the related farm industries that would be established.

An added and highlighted incentive for the sale was the promise of land to the tenants. Highly praised by the Ministry of Agrarian Reform, the sale was seen as a positive step towards the transfer of ownership of the land to the peasants at "no cost to the government."

### Farmers Evicted, Crowded Together

Despite these incentives, the Tabacalera-ANCA transaction surfaced again as a media issue, six months after the sale.

This time the news was the mounting opposition waged by the tenant-farmers. More farmers



were getting eviction notices than land titles.

ANCA's plans to increase and consolidate production had required the relocation of Hacienda residents. This meant the crowding of 22 barrios' residents into five occupied barrios in Hacienda San Antonio and residents of 18 barrios into one barrio in Santa Isabel.

The increase in barrio population meant dividing the already small and relatively less fertile farmlands among far more people.

### Bribery and Intimidation

Negotiations for the sale were marked by bribery and intimidation. After wining and dining barrio officials in Manila, the new company did not hesitate to enlist the help of the Philippine Constabulary in pushing through first the agreement to sell and later the relocation of the farmers. This was not surprising since the sale had the overwhelming approval of the Marcos government.

Taking advantage of the calamity-stricken farmers after typhoons ravaged the crops, Cojuangco reportedly gave away rations of rice with promises of more if the farmers agreed to relocate.

Rumors spread by the military of impending government operations, terrified many residents to evacuate.

### Alyansa Formed

But the farmers of Haciendas San Antonio and Santa Isabel did not forget their forebears' tradition of resistance. Forming the *Alyansa ti Mannalon ti Asyenda San Antonio-Santa Isabel*, the farmers' unity has already impacted development plans.

Sponsoring a series of symposia and other mass actions the Alyansa in late November and early December succeeded in bringing together some 2,800 farmers, students and religious to voice protest to the sale and plans.

The regime quickly responded by arresting several farmers. Once again the issue, now the farmers' plight, began hitting even the government papers.

For the farmers of Haciendas San Antonio and Santa Isabel, the struggle continues. Believing that the crop shares they have paid for two centuries are more than enough to pay for the land they till, the farmers will not stop until they achieve legal ownership of their lands. □



year-old struggle for ownership of the land they have tilled for generations.

Haciendas San Antonio and Santa Isabel occupy 11,000 and 2,805 hectares respectively. Both were originally land grants to loyal civil servants during the Spanish colonial period.

### Beginnings of the Haciendas

With the establishment of the state tobacco monopoly in 1782, hacienda farmers in Cagayan were forced to grow tobacco. As a highly exportable crop, tobacco sales helped fi-

tion. The Tabacalera required, as land rent, one-third of the farmers' crop. The rest of the harvest, however, could be sold only to the company.

### Intolerable Conditions for Bodega Workers

Underpaid bodega workers, mostly women and children, were made to work long hours arranging and piling leaves. Often conditions in the bodegas were intolerable.

Even with the slow progress towards the industrialization of Philippine agriculture and govern-

## The Bus Stops Here . . .

Continued from page 7

hood schools. The UTLA claims that the school board has continually undermined the desegregation program.

### Racism Behind Anti-Busing

Most prominent anti-busing spokesmen deny that racism is at the root of their opposition. Anti-busing groups like Bus Stop claim mainly that busing is an "inconvenience." Thus, they refuse to bus their children from the predominantly white districts of San Fernando Valley to the all-black and latino district of Southeast Los Angeles. This has prompted non-white minority activists to say, "It's not the bus, it's us."

Anthony Trias, the only Filipino member of the school board voted with the majority against busing. Trias defends his position claiming he is against busing "only because the community is against it . . . this is a democracy and everyone can send their children where they want to."

Trias however, reflected

mainly the sentiments of many white middle-class anti-busing forces when he said: "If I had a home in San Fernando Valley, nice home, nice neighborhood, I wouldn't want my children bused to a school in East Los Angeles where their lives may be in danger."

When asked about racial integration and the role of busing in minimally overcoming racial barriers, Trias responded: "Integration should be on a voluntary basis, no one should be forced to do it."

Criticizing Trias' position, Jaime Geaga of the L.A. Filipino Immigrant Rights Organization said, "That is like saying respect for equal rights should be on a voluntary basis, that no one has to be forced to respect equal rights for all races."

Leslie Santos, a 17-year-old junior at Schurr High School in Montebello bared his feelings about the controversy: "The main problem about the busing issue is how the school board has handled it. They never intended to see the busing plan succeed." Santos continued, "I am not

totally for busing, it has its advantages and disadvantages. The main point or the main issue here however, is quality education for everyone. I don't think the school board is committed to that goal."

### Ghetto Schools to Continue

Upgrading the level of education in the minority neighborhood schools seems unlikely in the foreseeable future since plans for that purpose have been left in limbo with the dismantling of the desegregation plan.

Although funds were earmarked for the improvement of these schools, it is uncertain whether any plans will be implemented since they were all part of the desegregation plan to provide quality education in minority schools.

The busing program will be terminated entirely by June of this year—sending students, white and non-white, back to the schools from where they came. This will leave the racial composition and the uneven levels of education in the segregated schools intact. □

## U.S. Opts for FM . . .

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fair chance to compete."

The elite opposition, the report concludes, is not strong enough to topple Marcos. It remains divided over strategy and lacks a national political organization.

### Policy Options

The report outlines four policy options:

1) A *pro-government* strategy would strengthen personal ties between the U.S. and Philippine presidents and increase "visible" diplomatic and material support.

2) A strategy of *equilibrium* would avoid "symbols" indicating U.S. support for Marcos' internal political policies. Discreet contacts with the opposition would be maintained.

3) A strategy of *distancing* would entail open, public diplomacy to pressure the government on issues of democratic political development and human rights.

4) A strategy of *confrontation* would put the Philippine government on notice that failure to alter policies affecting democratic

political development and human rights would result in significant cuts in U.S. security assistance.

### Flawed Perception

These four policies define the only possible options under the contemporary American political system. Though anything might be better than the "pro-government" strategy chosen by the Reagan administration, all four are limited by a flawed perception of Philippine reality.

The study's analysis of relations of the Marcos regime and the elite opposition is relatively accurate. In underestimating the strength of the mass resistance, however, the study excludes one of the most important aspects of contemporary Philippine reality.

For all of its pretense at "objectivity," the study remains restricted by U.S. imperialist interests in the Philippines.

Liberal distaste for Marcos may require options other than Reagan's open support. But as long as the elite opposition remains in disarray, even anti-Reagan liberals will continue to opt for Marcos. □