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'Freedom Constitution': Next Step to Democracy



By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

President Corazon Aquino, after a month of well-publicized debate, signed an interim "freedom constitution" March 25, disbanding the *Batasang Pambansa* and granting all legislative powers to herself. Aquino promised, however, a "swift and safe" return to democratic government within a year and insisted that the transition document guarantees human rights. Government actions, she added, remain subject to judicial review.

Aquino chose her words carefully. The question as to whether her government was to be considered "revolutionary" or "constitutional" in nature emerged as early as her first week in office as well as the obvious fact that working within the infrastructure of the Marcos era to build democracy was a self-defeating proposition.

Many of her supporters realized from the start that the Batasan was an albatross around the new president's neck, a supreme court packed with Ferdinand Marcos' law school classmates was more likely to obstruct than dispense justice and local governments manned largely by warlords and feudal cronies of the deposed dictator had no interest in breaking up a system of hanging on to power via "guns, goons and gold." Further, much—if not all—of Marcos' hand-tailored 1973 constitution stood as an impediment to the process of getting democracy on track.

But there were people in sensitive posi-

tions who didn't quite see it that way. The president thus had to proceed with caution. And what appeared to the western press as a month of indecision leading up to the March 25 proclamation in fact masked an extremely complex process. Some of those who objected to the notion of a revolutionary government were won over, others neutralized or outflanked by popular opinion and the strength of the Aquino following. Nonetheless, when she finally announced her new charter, the president deliberately called it "interim" rather than "revolutionary."

'REVOLUTIONARY IN CHARACTER'

The seeming semantic distinction reflected an important division. For some of the differences of opinion were within the government itself. In particular Vice President Salvador Laurel and his following seemed to find even the formulation of the new government as "revolutionary in origin and nature, democratic in essence and transitory in character," put forward in the constitution's initial draft somehow offensive.

"In my opinion, it is actually revolutionary in character," Laurel told reporters. But he continued to push for a more conservative approach to legitimizing the administration.

Specifically, Laurel hoped to retain the Batasan, where his United Nationalist Democratic Opposition held a significant

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Accepting a Reality

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The *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan*, still the majority party in the *Batasang Pambansa*, has announced that it "is considering the legitimization of the Aquino government" but conditioned on the "promise that the Aquino government will act in accordance with the rule of the law and the Constitution."

It is strange that a party, which for the last 14 years has made a travesty of the rule of law and the Constitution, not only by its amoral subservience to one man, but also by its legislative reinforcement of the mockery of the law by this man, should now have the intestinal fortitude to gratuitously offer conditional constitutionality to the new government brought into power by the popular will.

For despite its reluctance to identify itself as such, the new government, as observed correctly by Justice Minister Neptali Gonzales, is one which has been swept into office by the revolution of the people. Any attempt to deodorize the dark connotations of a revolution-

ary government by acquiescence to the provisions of the present Constitution would be a rejection of the people's reason for manning the barricades which was the removal of a dictatorship which drew its sustenance from the mantle of legalese which its own 1973 Constitution and Parliament draped it with.

It is to the credit of the new government that while it has the capability to do otherwise, it has chosen to work within the framework of existing law to dismantle the onerous impositions of the previous regime even though the people's mandate expects the speedy but just destruction of the political and social structures which gave muscle to an ignominious chapter of our history.

We do not speak out to favor the perpetuation of a revolutionary government but for its acceptance as a reality as the first and necessary step in the transition from one-man rule to a democracy. The 1973 Constitution and its legal progeny were spawned for tyranny and the breeding of dynasties. And unless the regime is resigned to emulate the vagaries of its predecessors, it should remove the constraints to a swift swing towards normalcy which only a revolutionary government can

hasten.

After this first step has been taken, it is imperative that a new organic law or charter can be drawn up which will govern the conduct and affairs of those who govern and those who are governed, taking care to breathe into it the safeguards that will never allow any one man, or group of men ever to rule us without our consent. Once the rules for the game have been spelled out, we strongly suggest that elections be held immediately both for the local governments and the national assembly or congress as the case may be.

We understand that the proposal for the drafting of a new charter and the subsequent holding of elections have already been made by the vice president. Whatever the merits, or the lack of it, of the Laurel proposal, this does not detract from the validity of both exercises. For we must return to an environment of law and order guaranteed and administered by those whom we have chosen freely without fraud and intimidation before we can face in earnest the staggering but not impossible task of lifting our nation from the ruins. □



LETTERS

The events of our Revolution went so fast, even as I tried to record my feelings of being a Filipino in San Francisco in poetry. Please accept these poems as my contribution to your excellent publication and you may publish them as you see fit. (See poems in *VOCIES—Ed.*) Thank you very much for all your heroic efforts toward our freedom. I'm on my way home on PAL Freedom Flight—after 11 years. *Mabuhay ang kalayaan ng Pilipinas!*

Marie C. Pruden
San Francisco, CA

Your paper is very necessary and perhaps even more now that rapidly moving events in the P.I. are stirring the pot and the solutions unclear. With the U.S. government ready to seize every opportunity to persist in maintaining strings of control, the resistance must continue in readiness since we all know there are still some bad eggs astride high seats of the new regime. I will be assured of being informed by your efforts and thank you for your fine publications.

Harvey Halvorson
San Francisco, CA

This donation of \$40 and subscription of \$10 I know is long overdue. But longer overdue is my congratulations to all of you at *Katipunan* for your great newspaper. *Maraming salamat!*

Fr. Rey Culaba
San Francisco, CA

Ang Katipunan

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Editor: Rene Cruz

Philippines: Christine Araneta, Wicks Geaga, Nancy F. Rocamora

Filipino Community: Madge Bello, Vicky Perez, Vince Reyes

U.S./International: Eddie Escultura

Art and Production: Wicks Geaga, Nene Ojeda, Vince Reyes

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Letter from Manila Home Again



By RENE CIRIA CRUZ

March 13
Pandacan, Manila

On his first morning home, the exile is jolted awake at five a.m. by sounds he hasn't heard for more than a decade. Roosters crowing at the first hint of light, backed by the furious chirping of hungry sparrows. All over the crowded neighborhood infants wailed for milk, throats hacked away last night's cigarettes and exhaust fumes, yawns escaped from rested lungs, more cocks crowed, dogs yelped, toilets flushed and finally, near the open market, jeepneys revved up to begin connecting Pandacan to the rest of old, crowded and dusty Manila. The proletarian symphony rolls to a thundering climax and then plunges to an almost imperceptible hum the moment the sky turns completely silver. The hard working day has begun.

Pandacan is one of Manila's oldest quarters. Its Roman Catholic church, built in the 1700s and twice battered by legendary earthquakes, sits a respectful stone's throw away from a grand Spanish house whose interior was refurbished to jet-set splendor by Imelda Marcos—for some of her legendary jet-set parties.

Some of Pandacan's houses are only a grenade's throw away from Malacañang Park where Ferdinand Marcos billeted his praetorian guards. A mortar round could have effectively covered the distance between the

church and the Marcoses' sumptuous lair across the Pasig River. In truth, the magnificent Palace was always surrounded on all sides by grimy plebian quarters like Pandacan.

And Pandaqueños have a lot of stories to tell. The exile's visits with relatives quickly turned into political discussions with aunts and uncles holding forth on memorable incidents that for them summed up the Marcos years. Some of the stories are undoubtedly true. Like when Imelda's sister died and lay in state at the mansion near the church. To rival the crowds that turned out for Benigno Aquino's funeral, Imelda offered free food and 30 pesos for everyone who was willing to pay (sell?) their last respects. Manila's poor and hungry came by the thousands—day and night. But when the food was late, they would start chanting "Ninoy! Ninoy!" until the First Lady's caterers pacified them with the foods of the rich.

Some stories about the uprisings are also true. For example, many people spoke of the loyalist tanks manned by starving teenage soldiers from Mindanao that came to guard Imelda's Spanish mansion and to block a small bridge. The young soldiers didn't know why they were there until some Pandaqueños gave them food and a quick "political education." When everything was over, the tanks were engulfed by hundreds of thousands of cheering and dancing people from all over, jubilantly marching across Nagtahan Bridge to take over the deserted Palace. It was like the end of WWII, said one aunt. It was like New Year's Eve, only better, said another.

Some of the tales are patently tall, possibly half truths embellished by the popular imagination. After years of being fed official fantasy, the people—the Pandaqueños included—are entitled to their own brand of fantasy. Who would want to check the veracity of stories such as the following?

- The Bongbong seen in the regime's last broadcasts and who is now exiled in Hawaii is not the *real* Bongbong. *Aling P.* swears the present Bongbong

"definitely looks younger and shorter" than the *real one* who, she said, killed a rich boy in Oxford and was in turn killed in a vendetta.

- "That shameless Tommy Manotoc" (Imee Marcos' husband), according to Aunt N., "ate nothing but apples all day." The fruit had become inaccessible at the price of 40 pesos each. After the overthrow, the price suddenly went down to 30 pesos "because Tommy Manotoc is no longer around to eat all of them."

- There were so many diaper boxes in the Palace, not because of Marcos' grandchildren, but because the dictator himself had taken to wearing diapers. His kidneys, like his subjects, had become uncontrollable. (This may not be a tall tale after all.)

- The first hundred men who stormed the Palace all came out wearing *Barong Tagalogs*—from FM's extensive collection.

- Even better than finding the Treasure of the Sierra Madre was to have been among the few "who were able to grab suitcases left behind" by the fleeing Marcoses. *Mang T.* swears the duo weren't able to take all their baggage and that many who were first to get to the Palace "became instant millionaires."

- There were cobwebs in the corridor that connected Imelda and Ferdinand's separate bedrooms.

A neighborhood boy comes in the middle of one conversation to spin the latest People's Power joke: "What's the new name of Meralco (the electric company)?" Answer: "Cory-ente." (*Corriente*, get it?)

It's great to be home. □

P.S. Teodoro Valencia is back in circulation after a prolonged retreat from public view. Or at least his ghost writer is. No word however from his distant cousin Inodoro Delihencia who used to send "Litter from Manila" to this newsmagazine. Like Valencia, Delihencia was also hospitalized and sent to the Intensive Scare Unit at the height of Cory's campaign.

KBL Scrambles to Save Its Hide



KBL Caucus: political survivalism, the new game in town.

By CHRISTINE ARANETA

Since the curtain fell on the once powerful patronage machine behind the Marcos regime, political lieutenants of the deposed dictator have been scurrying about to save their careers, and in some cases, their necks.

The *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan*, in a party caucus held March 15, declared qualified support for the Aquino administration. Despite active counsel to the contrary from their exiled leader, there was wide agreement that distancing themselves from Mr. Marcos would be in their best interests. The KBL gathering, the first ever held without the party's moving force, Mr. Marcos, was a revealing study in political survivalism, demoralization and for some, a surprising sense of "liberation."

"Our caucus was different—everybody can talk now," enthused MP Orlando Dulay. "When we used to meet in caucus, everything was pre-cooked," he added, confirming what the public and opposition groups charged all along. Mr. Dulay's new-found "freedom," however, may be short-lived. He is under investigation for the killings of 11 Aquino election workers in Quirino province.

OPLE IN CHARGE

Now that Marcos is gone, his former Labor Minister, Blas Ople, is setting the agenda for the disenfranchised cadre of the New Society. Ople quickly moved as much of the KBL as possible into his newly formed Philippine Nationalist Party and enumerated 10 points of cooperation with the new government. But this limited support for Aquino was conditioned on her compliance with the provisions of the Marcos constitution that incumbent local officials retain their posts until local elections are held in June of this year.

This demand was intended to provide breathing space for incumbent KBL officials and appointees, and for the 44 members PNP claimed within the 200-member National Assembly. But Aquino will not give the KBL remnants that respite; she proclaimed a new freedom constitution March 25, giving her the power to replace local officials from the Marcos regime and abolishing the *Batasang Pambansa*.

While Ople protested the new powers, the overriding tone of his statements was defensive and contrite. "There now exists a critical mass of evidence to show that the deposed president betrayed the trust not only of his nation but his political party," he said.

The sense of betrayal shared by Ople and his colleagues stemmed less from the now legendary plunder of the economy by Marcos and his cronies, than from a sense of abandonment. KBL loyalists were reportedly morose as they pored over the fleeing Marcos party passenger list. The ex-president brought a coterie of servants, gardeners and assorted aides, but only two of his most trusted allies—Gen. Fabian Ver and Eduardo Cojuangco.

The caucus also displayed pathetic per-

formances from former Marcos stalwarts. "We can deliver to her on a silver platter—anytime day or night," boasted former Minister of Local Governments Jose Roño, convinced that sycophancy would still serve him just as well under the new order. Former Prime Minister Cesar Virata, once favored by the U.S. to succeed Marcos, asserted that he had been distancing himself from Marcos even before his flight and did not even attend the inauguration at Malacañang.

Ople was in command, however, seizing on the change in governments to settle scores with old KBL rivals. He has discredited Roño and Virata, portraying them as Marcos' closest allies with whom the ousted dictator still keeps in constant touch. Ople himself often receiving numerous calls from Marcos about how to run the show, finally told his old boss to stop calling. He is in charge now.

All this, it seems, has gotten to Mr. Virata, who has joined the ranks of recently infirmed Marcos loyalists and is confined to a hospital for abdominal ailments. Virata is in good company. Presidential apologist Teodoro Valencia was also rumored to have been ill, while diehard Makati Mayor Nemesio Yabut, succumbed after suffering massive heart attacks during the four-day revolt last month.

SAVIOUR LAUREL

Other KBL politicians are discovering a faster and less painful route to political redemption. Arturo Barbero disclosed that between 50 and 60 KBL members "are strongly predisposed" to join forces with Vice President Salvador Laurel's United Nationalist Democratic Opposition. UNIDO secretary-general Rene Espina, miffed that the Aquino government would preempt opposition MPs in its anticipated purge of KBL loyalists and threaten the UNIDO machine, welcomed the defections, once again giving evidence of UNIDO's instability as an anti-fascist force.

An unholy alliance between UNIDO and KBL remnants would undercut the PDP-LABAN wing of Aquino's coalition government, which is discharged with the powerful authority to retain, dismiss and replace incumbent officials through the office of Minister of Local Government Aquilino Pimentel.

RESISTANCE

The massive and immediate disenfranchisement of officials closely identified with the Marcos regime, is the burning issue now confronting Aquino. Many of the incumbent officials are local warlords who command both entrenched bureaucracies and private armies. Some who are determined to hold onto power have barricaded themselves in municipal halls in San Carlos, Cavite; San Juan, Rizal; Quezon City, Metro-Manila; and Rosales, Cavite. Others boast that they still have a few cards to deal. "Seventy percent of the government is local government," smirked Cavite Governor Johnny Romulla. "Maybe the government can run the country without governors, but the delivery of services will be seriously affected. The people are realistic. They know who provides the

services."

But there is another realism which haunts Romulla, and that is the recognition that his days are numbered. Anticipating an Aquino move to push him out, Romulla threatened: "If they do, we will have hundreds of thousands here. There will be barricades everywhere. The people will not allow anybody to take this office. It will be very dangerous." Romulla may be right about his ouster bringing thousands of people into the streets, but he forgets that they will more likely be cheering his ouster, not opposing it.

Delusions of "people's power" coming to the rescue also afflict Quezon City Mayor Adelina Rodriguez and San Juan Mayor Joseph Estrada, both in power since the declaration of martial law in 1972.

WARLORDS DISARMED

But the tumbling of top dominoes may be giving the diehards second thoughts. Laoag Mayor Rodolfo Fariñas was the first warlord to be disarmed and arrested when an assassination plot targeting Defence Minister Juan Ponce Enrile was foiled. Rumours that loyalists were massing in the north were dispelled by the capitulation of feared warlord Roquito Ablan. In the south, former congressman and appointed Governor Armando Gustillo sent surrender feelers after military authorities disarmed CHDF forces under his command. Gustillo and his goons have been accused in the Escalante massacre which killed 21 protestors last September. But he and other officials of the newly created Negros del Norte conditioned their surrender on an "accept one, accept all" policy which carried the implied threat that Aquino would risk a unified resistance if she engaged in selective prosecution of Marcos-era criminals.

Cebuano, meanwhile, awoke to the surprise surrender of former Congressman Ramon Durano, who reigned supreme

said that two of the 26 defendants have admitted their involvement and implicated Marcos and Imelda in the murders. Others also implicated were Tourism Minister Jose Aspiras, Justice Minister Estelito Mendoza, Information Minister Gregorio Cendaña, and another minister who Lazaro declined to name because "he is in a delicate position."

Manuel Herrera, *Sandiganbayan* prosecutor, was less reticent. He identified Blas Ople as the fourth minister, charging that Ople served as intermediary between the civilian investigation board and the prosecution panel. Herrera recounted specific meetings which took place between Sandigan court officials and the president who monitored the proceedings and coached the prosecution and trial judges on every move. Only Herrera, who drafted the resolution of charges and produced key witness Rebecca Quijano, resisted pressures. Towards the end of the trial when a "not guilty" verdict became a foregone conclusion, Herrera dropped out of the trial altogether.

In addition to the two soldier defendants, four airport employees have signified their willingness to testify if and when the Aquino case is re-tried.

THE SOLID NORTH

Almost alone, the Ilocos region continues to mourn the exit of its favorite son, whom most Ilocanos regarded as a virtual demigod. Visitors to the once politically forbidding "solid north" are now beginning to see why. The barren and isolated Ilocos region was dominated by the Marcos family since Mr. Marcos was elected to Congress in 1949, and was literally made over to ensure loyalty to the self-appointed royal family. Virtually every public edifice, and numerous roads and parks are named after members of the Marcos family. Only the Marcos mansions themselves surpass in scale and grandeur the rash of public works Marcos built in the region.

These years of manipulation and domination will not be erased overnight. Despite



Ali Dimaporo (second from right) with surrendered firearms.

over much of the island for well over 20 years. Ali Dimaporo, Lanao del Sur governor, confiscated and surrendered firearms of his followers.

The military largesse of cronies Commodore Alfredo Romualdez, brother of Imelda Marcos, and Eduardo Cojuangco was uncovered and seized in separate operations. Wooden crates containing \$50 million and firearms were intercepted from a shipment bound for the Leyte home of Romualdez. Fifty-nine high-powered firearms were confiscated at Cojuangco's Hacienda Candelaria, San Enrique, Negros Occidental.

CONFESSIONS

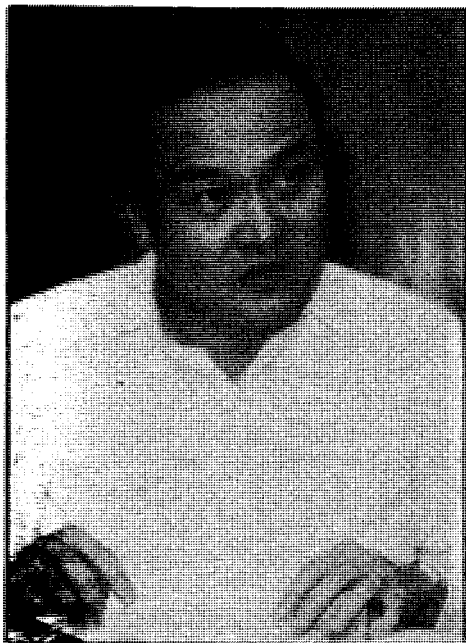
The changing of the guard has also prompted quick confessions from co-conspirators in the assassination of former senator Benigno Aquino and the murder of scapegoat Rolando Galman. Lupino Lazaro, attorney for the Galman family,

visible and rapid signs of modernization, Ilocanos remain suspicious of outsiders and superstitions die hard among the people. One such superstition was that Marcos was immortal, his rule eternal, and his influence, in the words of son Governor Bong-Bong Marcos, "destined to set the stage for the next four centuries."

That infallibility began to shake loose two years ago, when a series of strong earthquakes hit the province. Locals, convinced that the earthquakes were a sign of God's wrath, note ominously that the last one struck two weeks before their "Da Apo" fled. Marcos' few enemies in the region reportedly prayed: "He whom you seek Lord, is in Manila."

Now "Da Apo" is in the U.S., still searching for a permanent home. And the Ilocanos who still speak of the deposed leader in reverential tones, have the basis to shed the hatched, self-serving superstitions imposed on them during the Marcos era. □

New Government Inherits Economic Woes



Jaime Ongpin

By WICKS GEAGA

With world attention focused on Ferdinand Marcos' plunder of the Philippine treasury, understandably little blame has been pinned on the role of international capital in dragging the country's economy into its current unprecedented depths. It is hardly in the interest of the U.S., still patting itself on the back for its diplomatic coup in Manila, to fess up to its role in sucking the profits—and lifeblood—out of its former colony.

But achieving egalitarian economic relations with the U.S. and the other lender nations represented by the International Monetary Fund will ultimately provide an even greater challenge to President Corazon Aquino than recovering Marcos' millions.

With a \$26 billion foreign debt, the Philippines functions financially at the mercy of the IMF, which has demanded acute austerity and wider and wider penetration of the local market in exchange for continuing loans. In a nation of starving people, with 60% of the population unemployed or underemployed, such policies are not only unpopular, but in the long run, destined to create a social powder keg for any government that chooses to comply.

The Aquino administration's posture toward the IMF remains far from militant. Nonetheless, its emphasis on "food first" and other new policies may place it ultimately on a collision course with international capital and end up further polarizing opinion within the government on the economic front.

"I didn't create the foreign debt," claims the country's new finance minister Jaime Ongpin. "The lenders are equally responsible."

Topping the Aquino government's list of problems is a foreign debt whose annual interest payments alone will devour one-half of the country's export earnings. Adherence to this debt commitment will deprive the agricultural and industrial sectors of badly needed revenue (\$2.8 billion this year alone) for investment and growth.

The gross national product declined 10% during Marcos' last two years in power and is not expected to reverse its negative slide until next year. Essentially, the country's foreign debt picture will worsen before it turns for the better.

Local industries are currently operating at a mere 40% of capacity. With the staggering unemployment figure and the resulting contraction of domestic buying power, immediate recovery prospects for industrial output are not bright. Despite heavy investment in new industrial projects over the past few years, the prevalence of graft and corruption has turned them into losing ventures.

Locked into the export-led growth model prescribed by the IMF over the last decade, the Philippines suffers inevitably in the international market where it trades sugar,

coconut oil, copper, and timber for highly processed manufactured goods. Some economists fear that due to increasingly stiff foreign competition, prices for these commodities will remain depressed for the next decade.

Unemployment increased during the Marcos era. Two-thirds of Filipinos are now malnourished and as many families live below the poverty level. During the last two years, the average Filipino income dropped over 15% to below \$700 annually.

FOOD AND JOBS FIRST

To allow itself breathing room from its detractors—many of them former supporters of Marcos—the Aquino government has beseeched the nation for a 100-day grace period to get its economic program on the move.

In an economic policy speech before the election, Aquino outlined the general agenda of a government under her leadership: "My government will move to undo the evils institutionalized by the Marcos regime and build a peaceful, progressive and equitable future."

Much of the government's initial effort is aimed at repairing the wreckage left by Marcos. Ongpin said the new government will first dismantle the notorious agricultural monopolies that flourished under the old regime. Aquino has also created a Commission on Good Government to recover the billions that Marcos siphoned out of the country during his rule. (See story, page 5.)

Representing a major shift in economic direction from the previous regime, Ongpin announced that domestic food production, job creation and rural development will take precedence over export and industrialization programs. "We want to be able to feed ourselves and do that efficiently," explained Ongpin. "The primary obligation is to feed our people. I worry far more about that than paying off the debt."

ATTRACTING CAPITAL, LAND REFORM

By directing investments toward the rural areas the government also aims "to develop the purchasing power of two-thirds of our population, who live in those rural areas," said Mr. Ongpin. Agricultural investments will also favor food for local consumption over export crops.

Because of the depression in the world market the government is investigating alternative uses of its main agricultural products and may encourage growers to switch to more profitable crops.

While industrial development will for a while take a back seat to agricultural growth, the government plans at least to tap existing manufacturing capacity. The government is especially interested in attracting Filipino capital invested abroad. Ongpin believes that as much as \$10 billion was sent overseas by Filipino entrepreneurs before and especially after the Benigno Aquino assassination in 1983. The finance minister is confident that foreign investment will automatically follow the repatriation of Filipino capital.

While Ongpin has repeatedly stressed his aversion to government intervention in the domain of private enterprise, he concedes that, for the interim, the government will have to formulate and implement an extensive land reform program to alleviate widespread economic stagnation and poverty in the countryside. The program, he claims, will be patterned after a Malaysian model in which the government organizes agricultural cooperatives and parcels out land to the small farmer for keeps "as long as he is willing to till it."

IMF HONEYMOON

Questioned about talks with the IMF, the finance minister says, "Now that the IMF isn't dealing with a bunch of thieves, we hope we won't be treated like a bunch of thieves." Despite the comment's con-

frontational appearance, the IMF is expected to overlook some of the new government's aggressive policies at least for a while.

Ongpin says the government will ask the IMF and 483 commercial banks for some "breathing space" in the repayment of the debt. Ongpin quickly adds, however, that he does not favor any unilateral action or Peruvian-like militancy.

However, the change of economic direction adopted by the Aquino government appears to challenge the export-dependent development strategy. To protect weak domestic industries, the new government plans to also indefinitely shelve an IMF-mandated trade liberalization policy that would open up the Philippine market to foreign goods by lowering tariffs.

For its part, IMF is maintaining a very conciliatory and accommodating posture toward the new government. Soon after the leadership changeover, U.S. and IMF officials announced the likelihood of increased aid to the new government and the relaxation of IMF requirements.

BALANCING ACT

Ongpin represents something of a contradiction in terms. A disciple of free Market, free trade, hands-off-business capitalist philosophy, he seems determined to direct investment where he wants it—the rural areas. At the same time, he treads a delicate line for some of his policies fly directly in the face of IMF priorities.

"We don't want to be seen as favoring the capitalists, the businessmen, and neglecting the commitment to the farmers and the poor," the finance minister told one interviewer. Yet, while criticizing the long-standing "incestuous relationship between the Philippines and the U.S.," he says that the Aquino government will not violate the current austerity measures and IMF-dictated economic "reforms."

The views being advanced by Ongpin

But that was only the beginning. The road ahead promises to be difficult and even the most basic of the new government's promised reforms will prove far easier to promise than to implement.

CRONIES IN THE CABINET

A case in point is the pledge to dismantle the agricultural monopolies. While many Marcos cronies fled with the dictator leaving the sugar, banana and beef export industries open to reform and rationalization, at least one stayed behind.

Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile not only once served as an intimate link in Ferdinand Marcos' fascist infrastructure, he shared the country's coconut monopoly with foremost crony Eduardo Cojuangco as well. With Cojuangco's departure, he now has the coconut business to himself—and few who have followed Enrile expect him to relinquish it.

Just as his presence in the new government serves as an obstacle to democratization, Enrile's position will make it equally difficult to break up at least this one crucial monopoly. After all, a man potentially backed by the nation's military is not one to be toyed with, as he has pointed out more than once.

As if to demonstrate his ongoing clout, the defense minister recently named a new president for the United Coconut Planters Bank, a key link in the monopoly. The bank's books have never been audited and the new boss is expected to try to ensure that they stay that way. This is bound to provoke an angry reaction from the bulk of the Aquino government.

Then there are landlord/warlords who are likely to balk at any form of land reform. Within the government itself, eager supporters of foreign capital sit side-by-side with progressive nationalists. Meanwhile, little has been said about workers' rights and interests. The possibilities for conflict over economic policy, in other words, are endless.



and like-minded colleagues are clearly a progressive turn from the crony-first and everybody-last policy of the Marcos years. But the real test will be the government's ability to tackle and resolve the nation's formidable economic problems without further mortgaging its productive output to foreign banks.

For the time being, the Aquino presidency has sparked some life into the ailing economy. In the first weeks, the peso gained strength against the dollar, reversing overnight a 20-year downward trend under Marcos. The Manila stock market experienced its heaviest trading in years and the real estate market showed signs of revival.

STRUGGLING ON ANOTHER FRONT

The broad people's movement which brought Aquino to power has, to date, had to focus most of its attention on political questions—in particular isolating the remaining fascists in the country and destroying the fascist infrastructure.

But as the pieces of the new Philippines fall into place, it becomes clear that economic matters pose as great a challenge. The cadre of the people's movement will have to fight just as hard on the economic front to break the remaining crony control and beat back the tyranny of the IMF if they are to spread democracy and achieve a decent way of life for all Filipinos. □

In Search of the Marcos Megabucks

By HILARY CROSBY

Next to Imelda, Marie Antoinette was a bag lady," commented U.S. congressional critic to Marcos, Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-NY), after viewing Malacañang in early March. But unlike the guillotined French queen, Imelda still holds on to much of her wealth (as well as her head) since fleeing the Philippines February 25.

That wealth, the fruit of over 20 years of plunder of the Filipino people, has become a significant political football as well as a monumental scandal. For the Marcos family, the billions in loot have given rise to a tangle of lawsuits denying them the "dignified haven" they still seek. The Aquino government—intent on dismantling every facet of the Marcos dictatorship—has embarked on a relentless campaign to expose the personal decadence of the fascist government and pursue restitution of this stolen national wealth.

And the U.S. government is faced with a difficult conflict: to continue its pose as champion of Philippine democracy, the Reagan administration has to offer some cooperation to the Aquino restitution effort. But the White House also feels compelled to be nice to retired dictators, and furthermore wants to use the Marcos money as a pressure point on Manila to take a pro-U.S. course, especially on the issue of U.S. military bases.

SALONGA IN PURSUIT

Leading the way in tracking down Marcos' fortune is the Aquino government's Commission on Good Government chaired by attorney, former senator and political prisoner Jovito Salonga. Executive Order 1 empowered the Salonga Commission to pursue the dictator's "hidden wealth" through every legal and diplomatic channel available.

Salonga began his scrutiny of Marcos' financial wrongdoings almost 20 years ago—at the beginning of Marcos' presidency when he accused Marcos of manipulating the Philippine Security and Exchange Commission. Long a part of the opposition movement, he lost the hearing of one ear and the sight of one eye in the infamous Plaza Miranda bombing at an anti-Marcos election rally—the last such event before martial law was declared in September 1972. Salonga also represented Benigno Aquino, and subsequently occupied the same cell in solitary confinement.

So far, the Salonga commission, trying to trace wealth which belongs to the Philippines but ended up on Marcos' private track, has turned up:

- \$800 million in one Swiss bank

account;

- \$88 million in other accounts in Switzerland, the U.S. and Brazil;
- \$35 million in deposits not yet credited to Marcos' account.
- \$350 million in New York City real estate;
- \$500 million in Texas;
- \$11 million in real estate in Southern California;
- \$33 million in the 212 Stockton St. project in San Francisco;
- One month's flower bill for \$25,000 incurred by Velma Bautista, Imelda's personal secretary in New York City;
- 48 square feet of pearls.

GANGSTERISM CONTINUES

With Salonga on his heels, Marcos has apparently resorted to some of his old tricks. On March 20, an "unidentified Asian male" pulled a "divert and grab" maneuver on the Salonga family as they dined the evening after Salonga submitted copies of handwritten notes from Manila to a U.S. Federal Court. The man made off with Salonga's briefcase and his wife's handbag. The briefcase contained \$6,300 in cash and traveller's checks, their tickets back to the Philippines, and copies of documents found in Marcos' desk in Malacañang.

Those documents, along with 1,500 others which Marcos took with him to Hawaii, provide details of 20 years of financial wheeling and dealing. U.S. customs had confiscated the documents in Marcos' luggage—in addition to 22 crates of freshly minted cash, gems, and a statue believed to be a Philippine national treasure—and a U.S. federal judge had released them into Salonga's custody. They included a printout of cash payments to candidates in the U.S.

ORGANIZED THEFT

The means employed by Marcos to amass his now besieged fortune all stemmed from the iron control he exercised over the Philippine administrative apparatus. His tax return for 1966—the year of his election to the presidency—shows that his assets at the time were only \$30,000, making nonsense of his contention that income from a "lucrative law practice" underwrote the lavish lifestyle embraced by the first family.

During the first year of martial law, when Marcos established a national gold refinery by decree, roughly 45% of the country's gold reserve disappeared. During the remaining years of his reign, over 14,000 more pounds disappeared. The total cost to the Filipino people was \$338 million.

Marcos wrote checks against the national



Jovito Salonga

treasury, embezzled aid intended for victims of cyclones and typhoons, used the intelligence budget to send Imelda on several international tours, and looted the national museum of art works for his own and his families' homes, in a manner reminiscent of the Nazi air force chief Hermann Goering, who absconded with half the art treasures of Europe.

The Aquino government is hot on the trail to recover this property and determine what other riches Marcos has sequestered around the world. Executive Order No. 2 froze Marcos' domestic assets and those of 31 others closely associated with the Marcoses. The government also issued a plea to the international community to do likewise. This also has had an unprecedented effect. For the first time in history, the Swiss Banking Commission issued a statement that "information on freezing of illegally obtained assets may be granted under certain circumstances within the framework of a legal assistance request." This is a radical departure from the policy which protected the assets of the Shah, convicted syndicated gangsters and even Nazis in the face of international pressure.

PRESSURE IN U.S.

Within the U.S., Marcos faces mounting pressure from numerous lawsuits and from a congressional investigation by the House Committee on Asian-Pacific Affairs chaired by Rep. Solarz. In Texas, where the Salonga commission found \$500 million in Marcos holdings, the dictator is the target of a suit brought by the Philippine government alleging that he engaged in illegal real estate dealings; \$1 billion in restitution and damages is sought. In San Francisco, pressure by local activists and the city government has already forced the owner of Marcos' \$33 million Stockton Street project to recognize it as property of the Philippines.

Lawsuits regarding stolen property have been filed in two other states as well. And Marcos also has to defend himself from the San Francisco suit by 13 victims of martial law and the Seattle law suit seeking damages in the June 1, 1981 murders of anti-Marcos activists and trade union officials Gene Viernes and Silme Domingo.

The Solarz investigation, meanwhile, has focused on the degree to which Marcos diverted U.S. aid to amass his personal fortune. It has especially targeted the shady history of Marcos' extensive real estate holdings in New York City.

The investigation began even before Marcos' ouster and was then criticized by the dictator's U.S. supporters as "meddling." But now it has picked up new momentum. In part this is due to evidence brought from the Philippines by Salonga

definitely linking Marcos to four New York City properties. But it is also due to the climate of enthusiastic cooperation with the Aquino government. Solarz greeted the new proof of Marcos' perfidy by dubbing the dictatorship a "kleptocracy that existed for the sole purpose of plundering the wealth of the country."

REAGAN POLICY

The constant probing and repeated court actions to reveal and freeze Marcos' U.S. assets make some of Reagan's rightwing supporters uneasy. Martin Lasater of the rightwing Heritage Foundation said, "We offered [Marcos] a safe haven and security. To hold him hostage to these inquiries about his property creates a bad precedent. The next dictator may think, 'I might as well fight it out to the bitter end because what have I got to lose?'"

Such cautions get short shrift from the Center for Constitutional Rights (CCR)—a progressive legal foundation retained by the Philippine government to act for it in the U.S. Their spokesperson, David Lerner, said, "We don't want dictators to come to the U.S. and live off their ill-gotten gains. We think that's an important principle for the U.S. to uphold."

The extent to which Marcos can be held accountable for his crimes now depends to a large degree on Reagan administration policy. So far, the administration has tried to walk a tightrope: the State Department has extended "immunity for official acts while in office, but not for his private or business dealings."

Such a position gives the White House substantial room to maneuver as the suits against Marcos wind their way through the courts. And that maneuvering room will be used, like every other weapon in the Reagan administration arsenal, in the attempt to exert greater control over the Philippines. Open support for the dictator is not politically tenable for an administration that has tried to paint itself as the world's biggest booster of Philippine democracy. But the White House is perfectly prepared to use the Marcos plunder as a bargaining chip in the effort to secure Washington's "strategic interests" in the Philippines.

Those interests are concentrated in Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay Naval Station—the two largest U.S. military installations outside U.S. borders. The lease on these bases expires in 1991, and Aquino promised during her campaign not to renew the agreement without a national plebiscite. Under those circumstances, the Reagan administration sees Marcos' money in the U.S. not just as an embarrassment, but an opportunity, a multi-billion dollar prize to be offered in exchange for a pro-U.S. line. □

Wandering Pinoy

Where Do You Homeport A Used Dictator?

Hounded from Malacañang by the victorious masses, barred from his home province of Ilocos Norte by the new government, Ferdinand Marcos continues to have trouble finding a permanent residence. Like Haiti's Baby Doc, Marcos is discovering that very few countries are currently in the market for used dictators.

When the former first family and its entourage were flown out of Manila, loot and all, by the U.S. Air Force, the prospects for early retirement didn't look all that bad. Marcos landed in Honolulu at Hickam

Air Force Base with a guarantee of asylum in the U.S., and with the reported promise from President Reagan that he would be treated with the "honor and dignity" due a former head of state and a reliable anti-communist ally.

REAGAN'S 'BETRAYAL'

Much of the security Marcos thought would be his in the U.S. turned out to be illusory. As the stream of revelations about the corruption, brutality and decadence of Marcos' rule turned into a

Continued on page 15

BUOD NG MGA BALITA

Strikers Barricade Subic, Clark

A violent confrontation between striking Filipino workers and U.S. servicemen March 21 marked the first day of the strike called by the 23,000-strong Federation of Filipino Civilian Employees Association against the Subic Naval Base, Clark Air Base and six smaller U.S. military installations in the Philippines.

Five picketing Filipino workers at Subic suffered knife wounds after they were allegedly stabbed and hacked in scuffles with eight U.S. marines who tried to drive their jeep through the picket line at the main gate to the base. The victims are recovering at a hospital in Olongapo, which adjoins the base 50 miles northwest of Manila. Seven Americans reportedly suffered minor injuries in separate incidents outside the base.

At Clark March 28, a bus carrying U.S. military personnel was stoned as it passed by the base's front gate.

The confrontations took place as thousands of striking workers blockaded the gates with logs, rocks and metal grilles. Base commanders sidestepped the barricades by using barges to ferry about 300 military personnel and their families from designated rendezvous points on the beaches along Subic Bay. Officials of the federation charged that Philippine strikebreakers were also brought in.

The strike stems from a pay dispute that has been deadlocked after eight months of negotiations. Although some issues have been resolved, the questions of severance pay for workers who resign and bonuses remain unsettled.

Federation officials claim that Filipinos are the lowest paid among civilians employed at American bases overseas. This cheap labor, U.S. officials are quick to admit, is one key factor that makes the Philippines such an attractive location for military bases. Federation executive vice president Primo Galvez, 51, a base worker for 31 years, said that an average Filipino base worker is paid \$90 a month.

Clark and Subic are the largest overseas U.S. military installations and are major links in the worldwide

chain of what President Ronald Reagan calls choke points. The 16,000 U.S. military personnel are supported by 45,000 Filipino civilian employees, making the U.S. the third largest employer in the country, after the Philippine government and the San Miguel Corporation. □

For Sale: 5,000 Tons of Gold

A San Francisco gold broker was asked to oversee the transfer of more than 5,000 metric tons of gold bullion allegedly connected to the Marcos government, according to an official of the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

The broker received a telex late last year calling for the transfer of more than 160 million troy ounces of gold bullion from a servicing bank in Hong Kong. The gold broker turned to the Archdiocese of San Francisco's Justice and Peace Commission to help decide a personal and moral dilemma over whether to report the transaction to authorities.

Following the advice of the Philippine Catholic Conference of Bishops, which was alerted to the matter by Archdiocese on Justice and Peace Director George Wesolek, the information was turned over last month to Philippine Senator Jovito Salonga, head of President Corazon Aquino's Commission on Good Government. Wesolek also sent the material to John Maisto, director of the U.S. State Department's Office of Philippine Affairs.

If such a transaction had been carried through, the brokerage fee involved, according to Steve Symanovich of the *San Francisco Business Journal*, would have exceeded \$9 billion. Even by Marcos government standards, this would have been the deal of a lifetime and it has led to speculation about where that much gold could possibly have come from.

One of the most intriguing theories is that the alleged bullion could be part of the treasure amassed by General Yamashita, who directed the Japanese occupation of the Philippines during World War II. According to longstanding rumor, the general hid a large amount of gold brought from various parts of Asia in the Philippines. From time to time, *tsismis* held that the Marcos government had found Yamashita's treasure and claimed it for its own.

In the early '70s treasure hunter Rogelio Roxas found Yamashita's sword and a large golden Buddha believed to be part of the cache. (Yamashita was executed by MacArthur in the Philippines as a war

criminal.) Marcos' brother, Judge Pio Marcos, ordered the statue and the sword seized. A fake statue was returned and the golden original was never seen again, touching off the golden Buddha scandal of the '70s.

If the new allegations about the attempted unloading of 5,000 tons of bullion prove accurate, the Golden Buddha may turn out to be nothing but chicken feed. □

Probe Sought On Aquino's Journey Home

The attempt to track and intercept the plane that carried Benigno Aquino home on August 21, 1983—reported by the *San Francisco Examiner* last July—is back in the news.

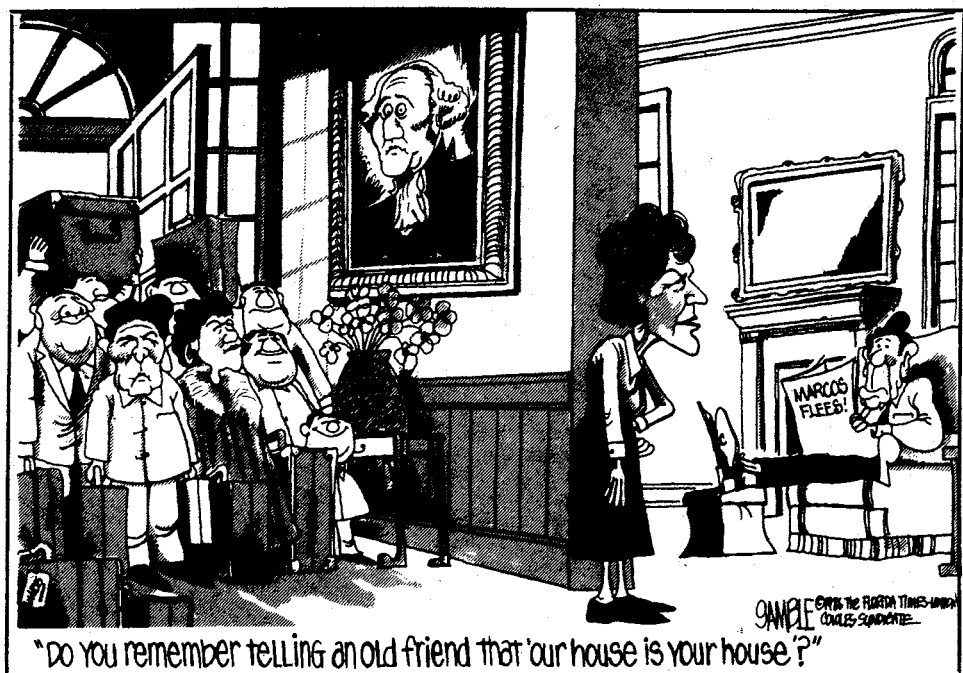
This time questions are being raised and a new probe sought by the Armed Services Military Installations subcommittee chaired by Ron Dellums (D-CA). During an unrelated trip to the Far East last month, William Fleshman of the subcommittee interviewed both U.S. and Philippine military personnel about the jet scrambling that apparently aimed at intercepting Aquino's commercial airliner and diverting it from the Manila International Airport to a nearby military base. A "full battle staff" of Philippine military personnel was involved in the operation.

In his report Fleshman concluded:

- U.S. equipment was used to track Aquino's plane;
- Philippine jets were scrambled for the intercept;
- U.S. personnel were aware that Aquino's plane was the target;
- no U.S. investigation of the incident was conducted; and
- the Aquino case prosecutors were provided details of the incident but refused to use them.

Damaging as it is, some congressional staffers have criticized the report as insufficient. "The report clearly raises significant questions it does not answer," said Bob Brauer, a staff member of the subcommittee. Among the questions, he said, is "why the information only came to light two years later," when it was revealed in the *Examiner* story, and why the U.S. armed services didn't do anything at the time.

Rep. Dellums also wrote House Armed Services Committee chairman Rep. Les Aspin last week and urged "very strongly" that the report "and any other material we may have" be turned over to the Philippine government. Armed Services Committee sources said Aspin would comply with Dellums' request. □



ODDS AND ENDS

See You at the Movies. If the Marcoses' grand lives were worth videotaping, why not come up with grander pictures? Luis Nepomuceno is keen on reviving his dormant Nepomuceno Productions with a film chronicling the martial law years. The film, "for international release," will end with the events of February 1986. Lea Productions, meanwhile, is reportedly interested in doing "Kumander Dante." Rumors abound too of the next Broadway musical offering of the Evita duo, Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Weber. It will be called "Imelda."

But for sure Malaya Productions will be doing the Ninoy Aquino Story. Award-winning director and filmmaker Lino Brocka and screenwriter Ricky Lee are finishing up the plans for the film and casting will start

soon. A current game in Manila is guessing who will play who. No one for Ninoy and Cory yet, but some names have come up: Luis Gonzales, the perennial FM and Elvira Manahan as the First Lady. And for Prospero Olivares? Balut, of course!

Do Stones Bleed? The five-storey bust must not be blown to pieces. It will remain a symbol of the 20 years of Marcos tyranny. But to the 81 Ibaloi tribal families, the head reeks of an evil spirit. The tribe was displaced when the stone bust was erected nine years ago to oversee an 876-acre park and golf course. Now the land will be returned, including the 50-meter head. Cleansing the statue of the evil spirit called for the pouring of pig's blood. By the end of the ceremony, Marcos' head looked like it was experiencing a massive nosebleed. □

Give me your tired, your poor . . . Ferdinand Marcos may not be poor but he is tired and homeless. So when three well-known comics decided to raise funds for America's hundreds of thousands of homeless, special attention was given to one of the nation's newest and homeless refugees. To Marcos, Robin Williams of Mork fame extended a generous offer. "Mr. Marcos is now homeless and we'll try to help him if we can." Mr. Marcos can stay at "Club Fled," Williams proposed. The offer also extends to

Marcos' co-deposed, Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier. □

Iowa ♥ Imelda. WXP disc jockey Gene Olson was just musing out loud and the next thing he knew, he was collecting shoes to replace the 3,000 pairs Imelda Marcos left behind in their hurried flight out of the Philippines. The Davenport, Iowa station was soon deluged with shoes. Not Guccis, Ungaros or Charles Jourdans but tennis shoes, fuzzy bunny bedroom slippers and other footwear Iowans usually wear. In a matter of days, 1,500 pairs were deposited at the station's conference room and Olson had to put a stop to the project. And because mailing the shoes to Hawaii would cost a fortune, Olson will just send Imelda a representative selection of Iowa's show of concern. The rest—whatever is usable—will just go to charity. Bless the Iowans' hearts. □

Speaking of Shoes. A report came over a Honolulu radio about a local boy who unexpectedly died of dehydration. His distraught mother told a reporter that her son came home extremely wasted after having gone to the nearby air base to do his weekly round of shoeshine. The lad had just one customer, a *malihine* who had him spit shine all her shoes. The woman was identified only by a name everyone at the base was calling her—Ma'am. □

Cory Moves to De-Fang the Military



PMA graduation ceremony: 'Turn swords into plowshares.'

By WICKS GEAGA

Molded for years as the instrument of a corrupt and repressive dictatorship, the "reformed" Philippine military can hardly be considered a reliable guardian of the nation's new-found democracy.

Underscoring the problem, President Aquino declared early on, "We must purge our armed forces of all that has dishonored them in recent years." Initial indications are that Aquino is not only aware of the importance of this objective, but of the dangers and delicacy of de-fanging the military as well.

The military establishment is currently headed by two holdovers from the Marcos era: Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, a leading crony who served as chief administrator of the martial law regime, and Chief of Staff Gen. Fidel Ramos, whose reputation as a "professional" was maintained despite the notorious abuses of the Philippine Constabulary he oversaw.

While claiming unequivocal support for the new government, Enrile has also issued a less-than-subtle warning to President Aquino, observing that the military still holds the power to drive out "another Marcos" if it deems such action necessary.

Compounding the problem, the military, which has always been powerful, is suddenly popular as well. By switching sides just in time to catch up with mass sentiment, it rehabilitated its image overnight. As a result, Aquino's task of overhauling the armed forces has become much more complex.

The military's facelift poses a particularly knotty dilemma for the left. After years of winning respect in the countryside, the New People's Army finds the tables turned, with the military hailed as heroes rather than despised as goons.

AQUINO'S STRATEGY

Unimpressed by Enrile's bravado, Aquino is proceeding steadily with her three-pronged strategy of purging the dregs of the military, instituting wide-ranging reforms and asserting democratic civilian control.

As part of the Campaign to Cleanse the Armed Forces of its "goons, warlords and cronies," Aquino created a Presidential Commission on Human Rights to investigate past military atrocities. "Past abuses will be investigated and any officers and men guilty of crimes or serious misconduct will be dealt with appropriately," Aquino warned.

Former Senator Jose Diokno, chairman of the commission, said the inquiry may ultimately implicate Enrile and Ramos. So far, five generals—all staunch Marcos loyalists—are currently under house arrest: Antonio Palafox, Angel Sadang, Luther Custodio, Artemio Tadiar and Tomas Dumpit.

At President Aquino's request, Ramos launched a series of reforms:

- 23 of 29 "overstaying" generals—most of them extended in office for their loyalty to Marcos—were immediately retired;
- 14 other generals holding key posts under Marcos were demoted and reassigned to the office of the vice chief of staff;
- the dreaded National Intelligence and Security Authority, formerly headed by ousted Chief of Staff Fabian Ver, was dismantled; and
- the Presidential Security Command, a private army also headed by Ver and exclusively assigned to guard Marcos, was also disbanded.

In addition, plans are underway to replace the regional unified command system—introduced by Ver in 1983 to strategically position his loyalist officers—with the old zone system.

CIVILIAN CONTROL

Aquino's campaign to bring guilty military personnel to justice is only one part of her effort to assert civilian authority over the armed forces. In order to effectively gain the command and allegiance of the military, Aquino plans to launch a broad constitutionalist movement within the rank and file. By sparking such a movement, Aquino aims to undo the deeply entrenched warlord system under which the soldier's loyalty was pledged not to the nation's constitution, but to the local warlord, who in turn maintained loyalty to the ruling dictator.

As a further indication of the new style in military affairs, Aquino sponsored a free-form gripe session with junior officers when they objected to her naming Lt. Col. Adelberto Yap as her personal military aide, promoting him to full colonel in the process. When bypassed officers grumbled that skipping over the seniority system smacked of Marcosian tactics, she broadened her populist approach to the military—but she brought Yap along with her just to let them know who's boss.

FACTIONS

The delicate task of reining in the military will require great tactical flexibility, a combination of sparring and striking alliances with the different factions within the armed forces.

Because of his role in toppling Marcos, Enrile and his supporters presently appear to be the dominant force in the military. An opportunist whose longstanding ambition to become president is well known, Enrile is already busy consolidating his power base. In a meeting with dozens of former ministers and Marcos hacks, shortly after the dictator's ouster, Enrile reportedly boasted to the group, "We have toppled one government and we can topple another if reforms aren't made."

While unquestionably another holdover from the old order, Chief of Staff Ramos nonetheless represents a somewhat different problem. Ramos' career has not shown the same hunger for political power and prestige that has distinguished the defense minister. Many observers believe that Ramos, with his West Point background and U.S. connections, may be a more reliable reformer and a possible supporter of a constitutionalist campaign.

Boosting the potential pro-reform camp is the appointment of retired Lieutenant General Rafael Ileta as one of two deputy defense ministers charged with "cutting out the fat" from the Philippine military. A former army commander and vice-chief of staff, Ileta was effectively exiled overseas by Marcos in 1975 for his opposition to



martial law. Because of his past close ties to Benigno Aquino, Ileta is reportedly trusted by the new president.

Like Ramos, Ileta comes from the West Point professional soldier mold. And like the Aquino supporters appointed to look over the shoulder of Vice President Laurel's followers in the government, Ileta's placement serves as a form of check on Enrile.

REFORM MOVEMENT

Within the officer corps, the Reform the Armed Forces Movement, whose members claim a pivotal role in the military rebellion against Marcos, is itself divided into conservative and nationalist camps. While Enrile is apparently pressuring the conservative forces to disband the organization, the activists continue to press their claims for reform.

Some are seeking the military prosecution of senior Ver loyalists in the AFP such as former army commander Maj. Gen. Josephus Ramas, former air force chief Maj. Gen. Vicente Piccio, and former navy commander Rear Admiral Brillante Ochoco, as well as several other regional commanders. "We are asking President Aquino to set up a military court quickly to try these people in what you could call a semblance of justice," said one senior RAM officer.

A more recent phenomenon is the emergence of a distinct—if not entirely organized—nationalist trend in the armed forces. "We're hooked on the U.S. system," said mathematics instructor Lt. Eduardo Punay. "I hope we become independent."

Though not yet widespread, neither does such sentiment appear to be isolated. Comments Air Force Col. Hector Tarrazona, "The U.S. system has been transplanted to the Philippines. . . . Nationalism should be strengthened. Readings [about Philippine culture and history in the military curriculum] should be encouraged."

The more politically advanced officers recognize that self-reliance and independence from U.S. military aid will be prerequisites to the establishment of a truly national military. And while this current is still in formation, its growth could have far-reaching implications—for example, on the question of the U.S. bases.

LEFT PERSPECTIVES

Given the altered conditions within the military, some sections of the left are seriously considering involvement in its process of change. "We want to join the reform movement in the military," says recently released political prisoner Victor Corpuz.

Before he was captured in 1977 by Marcos' troopers, Corpuz had defected from the Philippine Air Force to the New People's Army.

Like Corpuz, Horacio Morales—reputed former head of the National Democratic Front and also released by Aquino—believes an important opportunity now exists to inject and develop a progressive strain in the armed forces.

In the final days of the revolution, as hundreds of thousands of Aquino supporters faced off with the Marcos military, and as military defectors continued to pour into the Aquino camp, a profound process of political transformation swept through the military ranks. This undermining of the

fascist grip on the military, however, largely occurred in Manila where the major uprising took place. In the countryside, the private armies of warlords continue to roam, and military abuses reportedly have not abated.

In part, this continuing situation in the countryside helps explain the armed actions being waged by the NPA. But other observers sympathetic to the insurgents, have expressed concern that in the areas where the military has gained a decisive propaganda advantage, the rebels' confrontational stance in the face of the new government's call for dialogue is beginning to erode their painstakingly-won base of support.

The military has begun a sophisticated public relations campaign to boost its image in the countryside and thus retake the initiative from the rebels. Its dramatic high point came March 18, Ramos' birthday, when Ramos and a team of 60 specially-trained paratroopers descended on a remote northern corner of Negros island by parachutes, bearing loads of medicine on their backs.

"In every way, General Ramos felt this was a perfect place to spend his birthday," said an aide. Far from just celebrating, however, Ramos took the occasion to order an infantry division to saturate the island's three provinces in a counteroffensive against recent NPA attacks. □

MNLF Chairman Misuari:

Peace Initiatives Welcome

For the past 14 years, the Bangsa Moro Army, the military arm of the Moro National Liberation Front, has tied down two-thirds of the Philippine military in the southern islands of Mindanao and Sulu.

Marcos attempted to resolve the Moro problem by giving it "autonomy" in an agreement with the MNLF that was signed in Tripoli, Libya in 1977. But Marcos never complied with the agreement.

With the ushering in of a new era in Philippine politics, the resolution of the Moro question will be a challenge to the new government of Corazon Aquino.

AK correspondent Madge Bello conducted a special interview with MNLF chairman Nur Misuari on February 27 while he was in Saudi Arabia.

AK: What is your opinion of the new government? What are the chances of negotiations?

Misuari: All of this depends on Mrs. Aquino. I cannot say at the moment. Whatever initiatives they may have on the issue will be considered by us, after we have reached consensus among the leaders.

What would you consider reasonable things for her to do?

We are not engaged in any negotiations yet. Even the contacts have not been made as yet. At the moment, I would rather wait until things would be clearer to us. I cannot make any preemptive statement at the moment, you know, it may not be good for us. We still have to gather all the leaders to see how they would react to any initiatives from Manila.

AK: Do you think it would be the same as the Tripoli Agreement?

No, no, certainly not. The Tripoli Agreement is out of the question. That agreement ended with the end of the Marcos era.

Would your demands be the same or close to that?

No, no, no. At the moment, we are not in any position to define what kind of direction we may take. We will keep this to ourselves for the moment. I am very sorry.

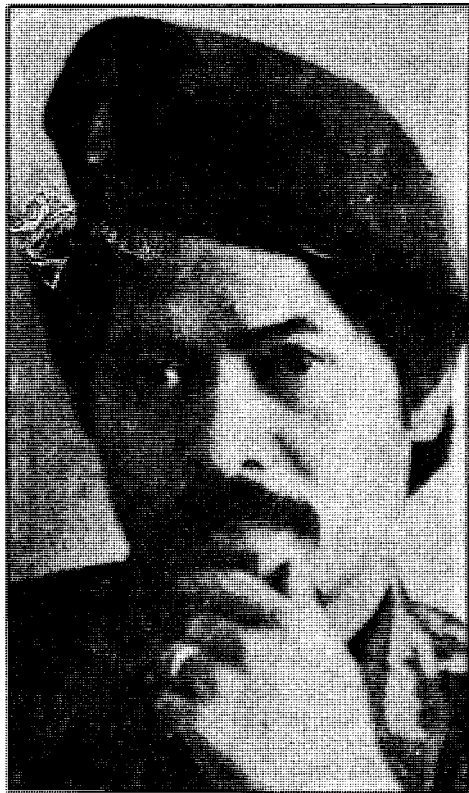
How about the election? The NPA/ CPP/ NDF boycotted the elections. What was your position on the election?

I thought we had clarified our position on the election. It was very clear it had become a subject of debate and discussion in some quarters in the Philippines. We said basically it was an internal problem of the Filipino nation, we had nothing to do with that. We are a different nation. However, we did not stop people from voting. In fact, we said that the people would certainly vote Aquino. We just did not want to interfere with the internal affairs of the Filipino nation.

Do you view her election as a positive change from the previous government, or don't you perceive any changes?

Well, you know we spent 130,000 lives, freedom fighters and innocent civilians, to help get rid of that tyrannical regime. And now, even Mrs. Aquino has acknowledged that the Bangsa Moro People were the first ones to stand up against Marcos tyranny. No one can dispute this fact to show that we did not think that any alternative to the Marcos regime would be a more acceptable and welcome change? At the same time, we have to see just exactly how Mrs. Aquino will handle her policies toward specific issues, for instance, our problem.

As to the policies that the new administration might adopt in restructuring and re-establishing Filipino societies, economy, politics, etc. that is all none of our business.



MNLF Chairman Nur Misuari

Our main concern is how they will deal with the problem in the South. She had promised to end the genocidal war in our homeland. We welcome any initiatives from any quarters, particularly from the administration, to put an end to the colonial war of genocide in our homeland. Otherwise, we cannot see how the future will be different from the Marcos era.

How do you view Ramos and Enrile?

Well, Ramos and Enrile can be considered part of the, you know, of a process, which was beyond the expectations of many people. You know very well that these two gentlemen were very much a part of the previous regime of Marcos. And, with respect to our problem, we believe they were very much involved in definition or drawing up of policies and especially in the execution of such policies which brought untold sufferings upon our people.

But, I am one who does not want to preclude any change. At the moment, that's all I know about them. But human beings that they are, they could change, given certain impetus or climate, you know.

With respect to our problem, it would be Mrs. Aquino's responsibility because she has inherited a legacy from her husband. We have had a lot of contacts with her husband, and I believe that the wisdom of her husband would dominate her thinking with respect to the restructuring, reorganizing of Philippine society in an effort to restore democracy and more importantly, to establish a favorable climate for a stable and durable regime.

But all of them, including Ramos and Enrile, realize that first of all, we were the main factor that led to the incessant crisis that afflicted the regime and as a matter of fact, we were the principal factor that the opposition was able to exploit, to bring about the final downfall of the regime. For the new administration to follow the same old path, the same old policies of Marcos would not be to its interest.

When we started our opposition and resistance against the Marcos regime, we were literally alone. There was no serious threat from the northern and central part of the archipelago. The New People's Army was able to start military activities effectively only after the 1980s. I mean, you know, with the start of the war in Samar and some other major encounters with the government of Marcos.

But we were from the very start the ones who opposed and resisted the regime. I believe all the opposition groups and organizations, including the NPA, NDF, CPP, were able to exploit to the maximum the situation in the South because the main concentration of Marcos and his

men and collaborators were in the South. And, the correct strategy that we followed in dealing with the Marcos dictatorship and the Bangsa Moro homeland was very much favorable to the emergence of the opposition in the North.

That's exactly what happened. In fact, I have received communication from one top leader of the CPP who is still in prison. He acknowledged the correctness of the MNLF strategy when we treated the Marcos regime as a monster with two legs spread apart.

In the final confrontation with the rebels at Camp Crame, you know very well that it was the Marines deployed from our homeland that were used by Marcos in his attempt to suppress the rebellion. Had they not been utilized in our homeland, they could have been used to prevent the emergence of the opposition.

What were some of your discussions with Ninoy Aquino? Were they favorable to the MNLF?

Even in some of his pronouncements in the press, one could easily glean the direction of his thinking on the problems in the South. Basically, it is a question of the right of our people to self-determination.

But at the moment, in order not to create unnecessary misinterpretations and because I also cannot make presumptions about the direction of the present administration, suffice it to say that the centerpiece of our talk was the right of our people to self-determination. And you know very well, even in the Asian magazines where Ninoy got a lot of publicity, the trend of his thoughts were already quite definitive about the subject.

Of course, we know very well that the administration is a mixture of different personalities and we were not quite familiar with some of them, or with the thinking of the new prime minister on how he would approach the problem. Unless Mrs. Aquino takes care to protect her regime from unnecessary difficulties I think a lot depends on how these elements will influence the definition of the policies towards our problem.

How is the MNLF? Can you elaborate on the recent developments in the struggle in Mindanao and Sulu?

Well, before this cataclysmic change in Manila, the MNLF had a meeting of the political, military and other members of the leadership, and we decided to launch the second phase of the Bangsa Moro revolution.

According to our analysis, the first phase of the Bangsa Moro revolution has been achieved quite successfully despite all the sacrifices, difficulties, brought upon our people. But the conditions for the launching of the second phase of the revolution have arisen. We specifically noted the rise of both the armed opposition and the liberal democratic or peaceful opposition in the urban centers, you know what I mean. We noted that the Philippine government could no longer, as in the past, concentrate 80% or so of the entire armed forces and their resources in the South to liquidate our struggle. This is favorable to the second phase of the Bangsa Moro revolution.

We believed that if we launched the second phase of the revolution, the Philippine government under Marcos would have to face two revolutions simultaneously. That's lumping the peaceful revolution in the urban areas and the armed struggle in the countryside as one revolution, which the government had to face, and our struggle in the South. That was the kind of situation that Marcos and his political advisers wanted to avoid.

We are now on the second phase despite the fact that Marcos' tyrannical regime has already come to an end.

The end of Marcos does not necessarily mean the end of the problem in the South. It is awaiting a final solution. Meanwhile, we have to continue. Our people are instructed to continue with their preparedness, their mobilization as usual. There will be no let up, or interruption in our struggle until we hear from the new administration, how it will handle the South.

By "second phase," do you mean a new stage in the struggle or a new way the struggle will be waged? I am trying to understand if you mean a shift to political organizing, demonstrations or rallies, while toning down the armed struggle.

Basically, our strategy and tactics will be the same, as in previous activities, but we would be operating under an entirely different environment. We have already gone through the ordeal, and we have proven to the whole world the resilience, the durability of our struggle. Marcos and all his military men tried to destroy our military organization and our political infrastructure everywhere. They failed miserably. Because of this failure, his regime easily played into the hands of the

MILF, MNLF

All three major organized sections of the Moro liberation forces have expressed a willingness to try and reach a negotiated political settlement of the problem of the South with Aquino's government.

A spokesman for Hashim Salamat, head of the largest grouping, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) said, "We believe that Cory compared to Marcos is very sincere, and his sincerity has been shown," referring to the release of detainees and the restoration of habeas corpus in the Muslim regions.

On March 14, four leaders of the reformist wing of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) arrived in Manila to pursue discussions with President Aquino. According to spokesman Macapanton Abbas, other representatives of the group, including chairmen

opposition. And so, where do you find Marcos now? Literally with his tail between his legs. He had to run away ignominiously as we predicted.

How about the other factions within and without the Moro struggle?

Some of them have fallen with the fall of Marcos. They were agents of Marcos. I don't know of any groups except maybe the Salamat group. They have lost their grip because even their contact was with the government, according to our information, so I don't know how the new government will treat them. On our part, we have lost our policies of handling our own brothers. But those whose policies were dictated by the Philippine colonial administration in our homeland and in Manila, we are certainly wary of them and we don't want to have anything to do with them.

But those who left the fold of the MNLF out of misunderstanding, out of anger, or out of some other reasons, we are always ready to welcome them, just like we have welcomed a lot of them. Some important leaders have just rejoined the fold of the MNLF after learning that other leaders have abandoned the MNLF and Bangsa Moro revolution just to get some kind of concessions from the government.

In some areas of Mindanao, the NPA has also been operating, like in Davao. How do you view their presence in an area you consider Moro territory?

We define our territory as embracing

CPP & NPA Contemplate Ceasefire

By CHRISTINE ARANETA

In its most official policy utterance to date, the organized Philippine left recently expressed an openness to at least limited cooperation with the new government of President Corazon Aquino.

Meeting with the press at an undisclosed location March 24, National Democratic Front spokesman Antonio Zumel released two separate statements, one by the NDF and the other by the military commission of the Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army general staff. Both indicated a willingness to negotiate a nationwide ceasefire and Zumel held out the possibility that "more than just a ceasefire can be pursued afterwards."

The statement came about as a result of leadership deliberations known to have taken place in early March. The new CPP/NDF positions marked a distinct departure both from the skepticism of members on the eve of the Aquino victory and the "wait-and-see" posture initially adopted toward the new government.

STRICT CONDITIONS

The NDF/CPP, however, conditioned ceasefire negotiations on progress towards the elimination of "fascist structures," a reference to the retention of senior military officials from the Marcos era and the continued existence of private rightwing armies. "The objective conditions at the present time do not permit the surrender of the people's right to bear arms," one statement insisted.

Both, however, acknowledged Mrs. Aquino's popular support and lauded her for the restoration of civil liberties and other democratization measures. Presidential spokesman Rene Saguisag, reacting to the statements, commented, "We will have to evaluate the development," but, he added, "It is a welcome one."

The CPP position was an important albeit fragile first step towards what observers project will be a delicate and tortuous trek to the negotiating table. Jose Ma. Sison, former chairman of the Communist Party who was released by special intervention from the president, said: "There are a lot of things to do first before that could happen. But certainly release of political prisoners is a major act of goodwill on the part of the administration."

TESTING THE NEW GOVERNMENT

One such obstacle is the retention of senior military officials, including a sprinkling of documented torturers. While many Marcos loyalists have been demoted, retired or sacked, human rights activists contend that officers guilty of human rights violations continue with "business as usual."

Former senator Jose Diokno, head of a commission to investigate human rights abuses, reports that violations still occur especially in far-flung areas where the authority of the current administration is not felt and where the polarization between military and paramilitary groups on the one hand, and the civilian populace on the other threatens to explode in open violence. The left is watching carefully just how rigorously the current administration cracks down on these groups.

The need to bring past torturers and violators to justice provides yet another test. A vigorous prosecution threatens the delicate balance between Aquino and ranking officers.

Finally, the military establishment and its purported promises to reform and professionalize are being closely monitored. Aquino's declared goal of maintaining civilian supremacy has yet to display the teeth and tactics required to transform the most powerful force in the country from a fascist to a constitutionalist operation.

FIGHTING CONTINUES

But while the latest word from the CPP/NPA may be "ceasefire," in the



NPA cadres survey captured firearms.

month between Aquino's inauguration and the recent statements, the NPA has hardly been idle. Company-sized guerrilla forces have assaulted military convoys, depots and sentries in at least 173 known encounters provoking a "get-tough" stand from Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Armed Forces chief of staff Fidel Ramos.

Given the new popularity of the military following its role in kicking Marcos out, some of these encounters have proven politically costly. The ambush of 15 officers in Guinobatan, Albay in late February, which received full behind-the-scenes coverage by a western reporter, was calculated to be a show of armed strength. Supporters of the NPA in the area expressed anger and dismay at the action which instead reaped a windfall of good will for the regional military command.

Fighting slowed down appreciably after Marcos fled. But, with fresh deployments of troops in rural hotspots, reportedly to disarm abusive paramilitary troops, coax NPA to surrender and go after guerrillas who continue their hit-and-run attacks, the situation in the contested areas is bound to remain tense.

The lesson it appears was not lost on the Party's leadership. Party spokesman Andres del Fiero speaking at a Manila gathering March 14 commented, "Large scale military action is not feasible as long as the armed forces, 'our fascist leaders,' are viewed as saviours." Political, rather than military activity, is primary at this period, Fiero added, but quickly qualified that "this is not official policy but is one line of action currently being discussed."

HOW MANY LINES OF ACTION?

Fiero's oblique reference to what he concedes are "varying views" within the party, reveals continuing discussion and debate over the nature of the post-Marcos order and the corresponding tactics and strategy which flow from that assessment. While there is apparent unanimity that the social revolution is far from over, the left faces more questions than answers in dealing with the current situation.

The CPP/NDF predict that the *de facto* anti-Marcos alliance which catapulted Aquino and a civilian government into power will soon face rifts which will weaken the president's popular rule. Specifically, the military and the government faction associated with Vice President Salvador Laurel are seen as untrustworthy members of the anti-fascist alliance. Exploiting these contradictions appears to be high on the party's agenda but to what end remains unclear.

OTHER VIEWPOINTS

Meanwhile, other voices on the left have put forward other policies and proposals apart from the recent statements. Former political prisoner Horacio Morales advocates "critical collaboration," which envisions communist participation at all levels in the building of the new government—drafting of the new constitution, legalization of the Party and the ultimate integration of NPA fighters into the national armed forces.

Father Edicio de la Torre, also a former prisoner, is busy developing social programs

which he considers progressive and feasible under the present administration. Morales and De la Torre see the appointment of progressives and forces with anti-fascist and nationalist credentials to government posts as precursors to "new opportunities" under the new administration.

Many progressives, including a number previously associated with the CPP have gravitated towards the "Cory Aquino People's Power"—*Lakas ng Sambayanan* movement, the grassroots infrastructure that constituted Aquino's election campaign machine.

Still unsettled, however, is the continuing debate over whether the Party's decision to boycott the presidential election was the correct course of action.

AWESOME TASK

In Manila, groups previously associated with the NDF and the alliance BAYAN reportedly have openly dissociated themselves. KADENA, an urban poor mass organization advanced a self-criticism for its advocacy of the boycott and the historic *Kabataang Makabayan*, source of many of the country's foremost activists, is reportedly putting distance between itself and the NDF.

This is not the first time there has been debate within the Party's ranks over elections as appropriate tactics and the broader question of urban united front strategy. It is, however, the most serious and the Party's refusal to comment on the failed line has led to disorientation and demoralization. This leaves observers wondering whether the leadership's decision to negotiate a ceasefire will be adhered to by all CPP/NPA members.

The Cebu Party regional leadership has announced that it will not lay down its arms and will continue the armed struggle. Yet reports continue about NPA fighters surrendering to military or religious leaders in Cagayan, Cebu and Mindanao in what appear to be local, unsanctioned decisions.

What faces the left is clearly not only a period of "reflection and regroupment" as Mr. del Fiero put it, but concurrently a period of political recovery as well. In this latter task, the party leadership faces the awesome task of regaining the confidence and trust of party members who remain committed to genuine social revolution but have been burned in the wake of repeated political errors.

The conditions for revolution, for the moment politically mitigated, remain, however, far from eradicated. The most disenfranchised sectors of society—landless peasants and urban poor workers—require a voice and meaningful participation in the present order.

As one human rights activist, Fr. Gernias of Negros, put it, "If the military were justified to rebel against Marcos, how much more justified are the victims of Marcos' repression?"

These are the people who seek the direction of the CPP and the NDF—and it will take more than hopes for rifts in the Aquino government to reconstruct a movement that can lead the unfinished social revolution under changing political conditions. □

Newsweek

the entire island of Mindanao, Basilan, Sulu, and Palawan, including the territorial waters as well as the air spaces. This also includes our continental shelves. We have not hidden our views on this subject. But speaking of Filipino organizations like the CPP and NPA, we look at them as foreign or alien organizations. They should respect our right to self-determination. In fact, the National Democratic Front has unilaterally declared its position respecting our right to self-determination and independence. They look at us as a people. Every nation has its attribute of sovereignty. Sovereignty is the main foundation, the fountainhead of any independent nation. So we have issued a statement a few years back welcoming the position of the NDF because that's the only permanent and durable solution to the problem.

As to their presence, this is a problem to us. As a matter of fact, we had serious problems in the past, particularly in Davao. While our commanders were facing the colonial armed forces of Marcos, some elements of the NPA in the area also hit us from behind. In between, we didn't know how to deal with the problem, until our brothers sought a way out of it.

But these are the things we wanted to avoid from the beginning. At the time that the NPA/CPP were relatively weak and the MNLF was at the peak of its strength, we were a bit tolerant of the presence of all the revolutionary movements in our homeland because we thought their policy towards

Willing to Talk

Dimas Pundato, were holding meetings with other sections of the liberation forces concerning the new situation.

The wing of the MNLF headed by chairman Nur Misuari, while expressing an openness to negotiations, maintains reservations (see interview this page).

President Aquino has pledged to implement the 1976 Tripoli agreement, which calls for extensive autonomy for the 13 Muslim areas in the southern Philippines, except for matters of foreign affairs and national defense. Regional autonomy is the central demand of the MILF and the Pundato-Abbas wing of the MNLF, while Misuari remains committed to the demand for self-determination and independence. The influential Islamic Conference has urged the three Moro factions to forge a united front in dealing with the Aquino government. □

us was based on, as they said, their Marxist-Leninist doctrine. So we took it that way. To violate this would not speak well of them. So, until now we still believe the stand or position vis-a-vis our people's struggle is the same. We have always said that to the world—it's not a secret. Our people have been resisting colonialism and imperialism for the last 400 years. And now, we are ready to carry on. Our children and grandchildren will certainly carry on should we fail in our present struggle. Therefore, we would like very much to see that we are left alone to face our problem in our sacred homeland.

How would you evaluate the current strength of the MNLF and the BMLF?

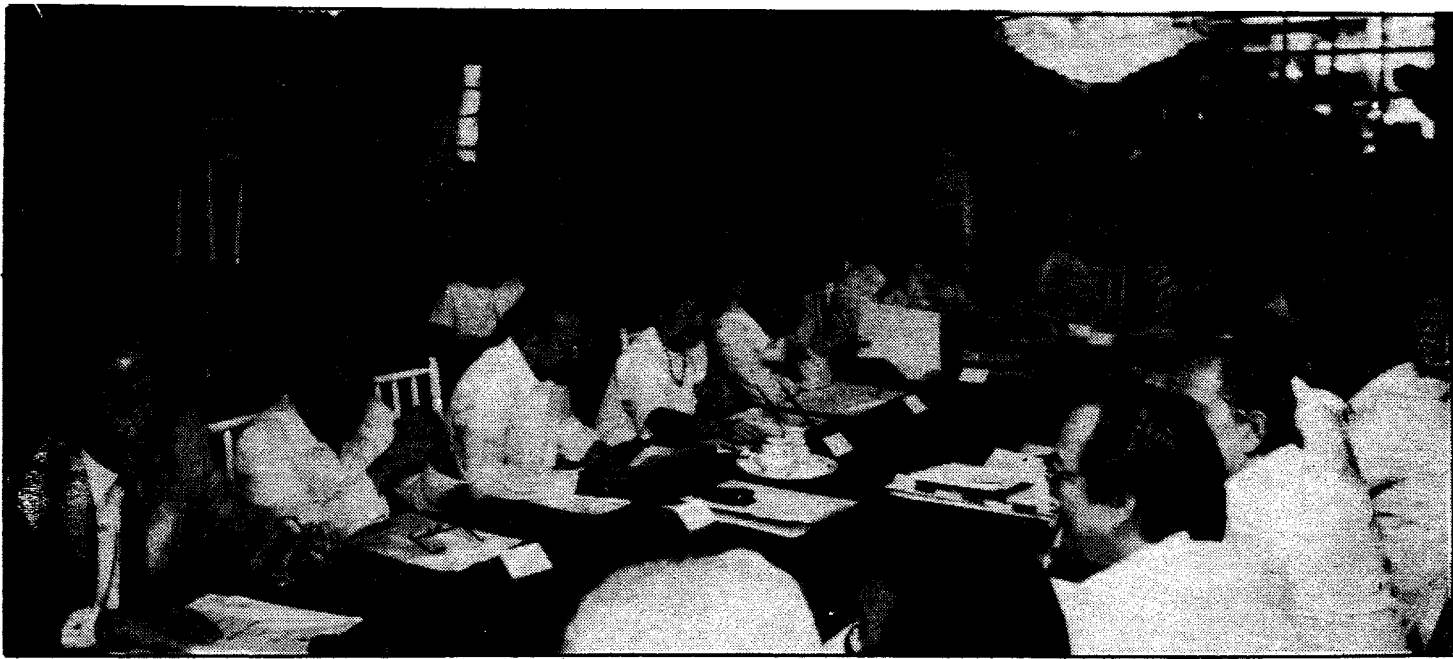
The strength? Well, this is a secret that our people cannot divulge. It would be giving a lot of advantage to our enemy. We are more discreet nowadays unlike in the past, when it was not difficult for anyone to guess just how many tens of thousands of forces we have had. Now, we are utilizing our 17 or 18 years of hard and bitter struggle to conduct our activities in a way that would minimize unnecessary blunders and errors.

Any changes in your overall program? Your strategy has been heavy on the military side, do you plan to do more educational/organizing work in urban areas?

The program is nothing new. From the very beginning, we have been engaged in

Continued on page 12

Aquino's Presidency and Bayan's Dilemma



Cory presides over cabinet meeting.

By P.N. ABINALES
Reprinted from *Veritas*

Appraising the political climate prior to the February 7 snap polls, a political analyst commented half-seriously and half in jest, "A Cory Aquino win will become Lean Alejandro's biggest nightmare."

That statement has now come true as Cory Aquino, through massive popular support and a military revolt, ascended to power to become the 7th president of the Philippine Republic. Cory's victory, according to some quarters, proved all predictions of the *Bagong Alyansang Makabayan* (BAYAN) false; that a Marcos win was a foregone conclusion in the polls, leaving the people no choice but to boycott the February 7 event.

When BAYAN, the largest left-leaning alliance in the country proclaimed its stand to boycott the election, not a few who had initially sympathized with its political views questioned the wisdom of its decision. Radicals within and outside the academe viewed the BAYAN position with apprehension, warning that a sectarian stand would isolate the alliance from the desire of the majority of Filipinos to electorally challenge Marcos power; thus it ran the risk of depriving itself of an opportunity to expand its influence and advance its militant politics. Some criticized BAYAN's non-appreciation of the value of tactical politics while others saw in the boycott position indications of ideological atrophy on the part of what was presumably a left organization. The popular reaction was one of surprise and concern as BAYAN, which definitely owed part of its growth to

the 1983 Aquino assassination and its aftermath, appeared in most people's mind as an organization most willing to allow Marcos to win hands-down against a badly-splintered opposition.

The alliance itself unwittingly abetted the unpopularity of its call. When it initially entertained the idea of critically participating in the polls, it advanced a number of demands to Mr. Marcos which, apart from addressing them to an isolated dictator, were also impossible to fulfill. When the regime chose to ignore BAYAN, it countered by making the same demands to Cory Aquino. An offer by non-BAYAN yet left-leaning groups to consolidate a "nationalist bloc" within the Cory camp was refused by the alliance on the grounds that the "bloc's" political line was unclear.

The BAYAN leadership did not help much either in explaining to the public the boycott position. The arguments of Lean Alejandro, BAYAN Secretary-General, were found wanting on the level of principles forcing him to argue along pragmatic grounds. In an interview with the magazine *Midweek*, Alejandro stressed more the pragmatic considerations involving the electoral battles against a well-prepared Marcos and dwelt less on the principles that premised the boycott position. J.V. Bautista, in a forum at the UP Faculty Center, impressed the crowd with his warnings about the role of the United States in the election. While he virtually accused the majority of Filipinos of having a wrong political perception, he also categorically predicted a Marcos victory through fraud and terrorism. The publicized comments of Etta Rosales, especially her accusations of Cory Aquino as an "American tool," only served to antagonize more people.

The confusion brought about by the boycott stand logically led to tensions within the alliance. The call prompted a series of resignations and leaves-of-absence by known leaders like Lorenzo Tañada, Ambrosio Padilla and BAYAN director Firmo Tripon. Organizations like GABRIELA were wracked by resignations of leaders and affiliate organizations. Even Mita Pardo de Tavera reportedly resigned from GABRIELA due to alleged manipulation of certain people supporting the boycott position. There were complaints and dissension from regional chapters. Some chapters like BAYAN-Mindanao opted to support Cory Aquino and turned their provincial headquarters into Cory and UNIDO centers overnight. A last-minute press report of a unified national executive committee stand in favor of boycott could not hide the dissension within the alliance's purported two million-strong membership.

The boycott position of BAYAN placed it outside the mainstream of political activity. Many feel that it lost its political initiative as an anti-Marcos opposition with groups like the social democrats and the liberal opposition which, in the past years, had been organizationally inferior groups. In spite of efforts to portray boycott as essentially parallel and non-contradictory to that of participatory opposition, BAYAN suffered a loss of political credibility. Some say the much-publicized Lakbayan ended a dismal propaganda flop when the people refused to support it. Other BAYAN-sponsored mass campaigns suffered in comparison to the huge numbers that attended Aquino rallies. In my hometown, for example, BAYAN rallies could muster, at best, only about 1,000 people with considerable participation from the

outlying villages. But the Aquino visit brought 6,000 people to see and hear Cory present her candidacy and political position. A pitiful sight was witnessed on the day of Marcos' proclamation when boycott vans were stoned along with pro-Marcos caravans by an enraged populace. The popular mind seemed to equate the boycott position with a pro-Marcos stand.

The popular effort to defend the ballot amidst widespread terrorism by the Marcos dictatorship caught BAYAN by surprise. The alliance, and even some of those who rallied to the call of "critical participation," never expected the fervor, enthusiasm and sacrifice, the people were willing to go through to ensure fair and honest elections. Never in the history of the 14-year rule of Marcos did so many people, from different classes and sectors, unite to prevent Marcos from pulling off another one of his shams.

Still BAYAN refused to recognize the folly of its boycott position. Acting BAYAN chairman Rolando Olalia's immediate post-election pronouncement—a sugar-coated version of a "we told you so!" argument—only enraged Aquino supporters and forced other BAYAN leaders to publicly rebuke the lawyer leader of the militant labor federation, KMU.

The new situation has placed BAYAN in a dilemma. Its militant project to transform Philippine society through active opposition to the Marcos dictatorship lost its steam with the downfall of Marcos. Moreover, Marcos fell because a political process which BAYAN has consistently called a "sham"—the elections—had actually worked.

BAYAN faces a new regime that is unquestionably leaning towards a revival of certain aspects of pre-martial law politics but which commands massive popular support. While BAYAN may raise such issues like the so-called "elitist" composition of the Aquino government and the influence of the United States, it still cannot confront the new government. For the Left to attack the new government as a "U.S.-Aquino dictatorship" (already there are sporadic comments that the February "revolution" was nothing but an American-sponsored *zarzuela*) will merely alienate more the moderate forces as well as isolate the left from the mass of Cory Aquino supporters.

The continuing controversies that hound BAYAN since its inception in May 1985 are looked upon by most analysts sympathetic to the Left as mere manifestations of deeper problems within the Philippine revolutionary movement itself. Will BAYAN ideologically survive the events of February? Shall it set aside its need for an ideological re-examination of both the past and the present so it can better determine the more appropriate political strategy and tactics in the new period?

All these are questions which BAYAN alone cannot answer. They might as well be addressed to the entire Left Opposition that now faces a new regime that has vowed to restore liberal democracy after 14 years of dictatorship. □

Boycott—A Tragic Mistake

KABATAAN PARA SA DEMOKRASYA AT NASYONALISMO

(The article below was sent to the AK as we went to press. It was authenticated by KADENA's national chairperson, Joey Flora—Ed.)

The National Council of the 20,000-strong *Kabataan para sa Demokrasya at Nasyonalismo* (KADENA), the largest nationalist youth organization in the Philippines admitted that the decision to boycott the February 7 snap presidential election was "a tragic mistake." They acknowledged that the boycott position was a "stand against the people's will," and as such, "made it difficult for the KADENA to propagate and argue our case before the people."

The KADENA National Council admitted that during their discussions on the issue [of the election], they either missed out or ignored major developments in the Philippine political situation, citing as their errors the following points:

1. Miscalculation of the uncompromising stand of the electoral opposition and their ability to lead the people into militant forms of struggle.
 2. Failure to see the widening cracks within the Marcos fascist dictatorship, especially the growing disenchantment of the reformist elements, which eventually led to their February revolt.
 3. Miscalculation of the growing militance of the very influential Church hierarchy which condemned the sham Marcos re-election and which supported the civil disobedience campaign.
 4. Ignored the fact that the extreme isolation of the Marcos regime and the growing opposition to its fascist rule may lead to a major shift of U.S. policy towards the Marcos regime.
 5. Last but not most important of all, aside from shunning the popular will of the Filipino masses, we underestimated their level of political consciousness and their ability to engage in a popular uprising.
- "Our analysis of the national situation was way off the mark, thus our policy on the issue was expectedly incorrect." This, according to the KADENA, was

mainly due to "our insistence on a single inflexible analysis that the Marcos regime will continue to hold on to power and that the White House is not about to abandon its faithful fascist puppet."

The National Council also pointed out that by taking on the very unpopular boycott position, "we reneged on our commitment to the principles of mass line." It was, according to them, "borne from our tendency to be inflexible, to be very rigid in applying our democratic principles."

The Council said that since its inception in 1984, "the KADENA has been consistent in upholding the aspirations and the will of the people." They are making this self-criticism public "so that the Filipino people may know that the KADENA recognizes its mistakes and that it is willing to rectify."

The KADENA's repudiation of the boycott stand came even as the leftist *Bagong Alyansang Makabayan* (BAYAN), of which KADENA is a member, has yet to come up with its own assessment of the boycott position. □

Hawaii: Too Hot for Marcos

By DEAN ALEGADO

HONOLULU—Hawaii was supposed to be an ideal location for Ferdinand Marcos to recuperate from his ignominious departure from the Philippines. However, the ex-dictator is finding little aloha here, and the rising political heat is becoming almost unbearable for Marcos and his entourage of 89.

Scandal and controversy enveloped the Marcoses upon their arrival, growing as their stay has been prolonged. Almost every sector of Hawaii's society—including state and local politicians, the police and military, native Hawaiians and even the rich suburbanites—has been thrown into the controversy surrounding the ex-dictator.

Despite the warm welcome extended by Hawaii governor and Marcos' close friend, George Ariyoshi, the reaction by the local community to Marcos' stay has been overwhelmingly negative.

During Marcos' first week on the islands, four Honolulu radio and two TV stations conducted polls asking their listening and viewing audiences whether Marcos and his party should be allowed asylum in Hawaii. Thousands responded to the radio and TV polls. Three of the four radio stations, K-59, KIKI and KGU, reported that more than 75% of the callers didn't want Hawaii to become a haven for the dictator and his entourage. The fourth station, KISA radio, whose listening audience is predominantly Filipino, claimed that Marcos supporters won a narrow victory.

In the poll conducted by ABC-affiliate KITV-4, die-hard pro-Marcos loyalists organized their statewide network among the large Ilokano community to call the station. As a result, the pro-asylum scored 37,642 votes to the anti-asylum's 33,121. The other TV station that conducted a poll, CBS-affiliate KGMB-9, announced that the anti-asylum forces won a narrow victory.

SENATE RESOLUTION

The public controversy was also fueled by the introduction of a senate resolution in the state legislature by senator Duke Kawasaki calling for the denial of asylum to Marcos and his entourage. The public hearing on the resolution, held on the day of Marcos' arrival at Hickam Air Force Base, drew an overflow crowd. Under pressure from the Ariyoshi-dominated Democratic Party leadership, the resolution, despite wide support from the public and



legislators, has been holed up in a committee.

The mayor of Honolulu, Frank Fasi, joined the imbroglio when he adamantly rejected the chief of the secret service's request to provide extra security for the Marcos party. His action was widely applauded by the city's people.

When rumors circulated that Marcos was considering buying Coconut Island, the location of the TV series Gilligan's Island, it created a stir in the native Hawaiian community. Various Hawaiian community groups bombarded local legislators and talk shows with calls denouncing governor Ariyoshi and mayor Fasi for the proposal. The Office of Hawaiian Affairs, the state agency responsible for looking after the welfare of native Hawaiians, passed a strong resolution criticizing Ronald Reagan and George Ariyoshi for giving asylum to Marcos and his entourage in Hawaii.

The prolonged stay of the former dictator at Hickam Air Force Base also left a residue of resentment among residents and workers on the base. Tight security measures and road blocks have created traffic jams and forced people travelling in or out of the military base to change routes. Many military personnel publicly criticized, through letters to the local dailies, the \$500,000 it costs the U.S. to pay for the transportation, "upkeep" and security of the Marcos party.

'NOT WANTED'

While Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos were not too anxious about leaving their well-secured and rent-free lodgings at Hick-

am Air Force Base, the neighbors of their prospective residences in Honolulu were not overly happy about the prospects of having the dictator and his entourage as next-door neighbors.

Petitions were circulated by worried residents opposing the move by Marcos and his large party into residences in their neighborhoods including the exclusive and posh Makiki Heights, Manoa Valley and Waialae Kahala. The two Makiki Heights estates, each valued at about \$1 million, are believed to have been bought for Marcos by two cronies, Bienvenido Tantoco and Antonio Floirendo. The Manoa Valley hillside estate is also valued at more than \$1 million. The 1.8 acre Waialae Kahala estate, located at the edge of the 11th green of the Waialae Country Club, has been the site of the Hawaii Open golf tournament and is valued at more than \$700,000.

Meetings have been organized by residents of these wealthy neighborhoods and resolutions have been passed expressing their opposition to having Marcos in their midst. A number of neighboring homes have even displayed their displeasure by putting up "Marcos and Co. not welcome here" signs in front of their well-groomed lawns.

Marcos finally moved to an exclusive \$1.5 million beachfront residence in Niu Valley on March 24. It has taken the appearance of a high-class prison, surrounded by secret service agents and a host of television cameras and reporters.

FILIPINO COMMUNITY REFUSES RECONCILIATION

The controversy over Marcos' presence in Hawaii continues to be heated in the Filipino community. With the widespread popular support for the new government of president Cory Aquino not only among the people in the Philippines but also among the people in Hawaii, the pro-Marcos die-hards have been thrown on the defensive. Once bold and arrogant as mouthpieces for the Marcos regime in the Filipino community, Joe Lazo, a former Baptist minister and now a wealthy travel agent, and Francisco Ugale, the president of the United Filipino Council of Hawaii, the umbrella organization for all the community councils throughout the state, are now calling on the anti-Marcos movement for "reconciliation" and to "forgive and forget."

Leaders of the anti-Marcos movement in Hawaii, however, rejected Lazo and Ugale's appeal. According to Horacio "Ducky" Paredes, a member of the Movement for a Free Philippines (MFP), there can be "no reconciliation with the criminal Marcos and his cronies." Romeo Ramos of the Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines (CHRP) said, "We want justice for the Filipino people. Marcos murdered thousands of Filipinos. He bled the country and left the nation's treasury literally empty."

Under severe criticism from many quarters in the Filipino community and fearing further isolation, Lazo and Ugale were forced to cancel a planned welcome march and rally for Marcos and his entourage. Criticism became so intense that the two leaders of the 'Filipinos for Marcos' tried to transform their original plans into a "reconciliation parade." Their proposal was firmly rejected by the anti-Marcos movement in Hawaii.

With their traditional base of support from the large Ilocano community distancing themselves from any overt expression of support for the deposed dictator, Ugale and Lazo were forced to cancel the planned parade altogether, saving themselves from a potentially embarrassing situation.

With Panama, Spain, Singapore and Indonesia rejecting his request for asylum, it looks like Marcos and his entourage may have to weather the hot political climate that they have found in Hawaii. Originally, Hawaii did not seem too bad as a temporary "haven" for the ailing ex-dictator. With a sizable and seemingly loyal Filipino community, the majority of whom are from the so-called "solid north," the Ilocos region, it was an attractive place for regrouping his loyal forces and contemplate a victorious return home to take back power.

However, instead of being able to enjoy the tropical paradise and the warm "aloha" spirit of Hawaii's people, Ferdinand Marcos is finding that his "refuge" is becoming more and more like a prison. With the political climate getting hotter day-by-day, Marcos and his entourage are anxious to find themselves a new sanctuary. □

N.Y. Volunteers Assist Recovery of Wealth

By OFFIE VILLERO

The recovery of the Marcos' loot is well underway in New York where part of the millions was carefully hidden. In large part this is due to a group of volunteer workers from the Filipino community who have been staffing the overseas office of the Philippine Commission on Good Government.

Already, the inventory of the Marcos' East 66th Street townhouse in Manhattan has been finished. A fully furnished five-story building, the townhouse contained evidence of the Marcoses' lavish spending of the Filipino people's money, as well as the hasty departure of its residents.

Volunteers were able to inventory the contents of the townhouse—from discarded used clothes to important financial documents of the dictator. As a result, the commission has been able to uncover leads pointing towards other hidden wealth as well as the tactics that were used to amass the millions.

Right now, the commission has focused

on what would appear to be merely paperwork. Willie Cornelio, the deputy of the commission's overseas representative Bonifacio Gillego, states, "We are doing purely documentation and some inventory. We are going through some of the documents brought by Salonga from Manila, the Hawaii documents, and some other documents which were volunteered by other groups to assist us in recovering the wealth."

However, the impact of this paperwork is far-reaching. Aside from purely clerical duties like xeroxing and filing, the documentation process involves the computerization of data as well as actual research into the maze of deceit that the Marcoses weaved around themselves. This data is then being made available by the commission to the new Philippine government, the press, and most important, to the Center for Constitutional Rights which has taken up the legal cudgels for the Philippines. So while not directly involved in the hunt, the commission smokes out the crime.

Community volunteers have been working for the commission since its formation in

New York. Their enthusiasm and concern spilled over from the election campaign and on to the final overthrow of the regime. "In the long-run, of course, volunteer work cannot keep the commission going, but the initial steps have been taken," Cornelio adds.

Most of the daily volunteers have come from the Coordinating Committee of Opposition groups which led many of the anti-Marcos protest activities in New York during the critical days of the Philippine presidential elections.

Himself a volunteer, although officially designated afterwards, Cornelio sees the commission as a model for unity towards a common endeavor in the community. "People were so outraged that they started coming here and volunteering not only their services but also bits and pieces of information that are helpful to the recovery. By offering their services, the community feels that it is contributing to the process of change that the new government is undertaking in the Philippines. They feel that they are helping the government cope with the situation."

It is expected that in the future, the scope of the commission's work will widen to include a "watchdog role" over government processes. But for now, Cornelio admits that the emphasis is going after the Marcos assets. He explains, "The commission has to move very fast. Time is of the essence if we have to get our hands on the loot. And the Aquino government formed the commission precisely as a division of functions. There are other areas that require the immediate attention of the government—like rebuilding the economy and businesses, not to mention reorganization of political structures. At the same time, the government would also like to signal that Marcos and his cronies cannot get away with it. So the commission serves the purpose of letting the government do other things while concretely running after the stolen wealth."

Beyond the present, Cornelio foresees the commission's work will "include looking into some more past anomalies, and seeking ways and means to prevent the occurrence of another Marcos in the Philippines. □

U.S. Filipinos to Aid Homeland Reconstruction

By MADGE BELLO

There's a burst of energy and enthusiasm within the Filipino community across the U.S., an energy sparked by a burning desire to aid in the reconstruction of the Philippine homeland.

Some have already gone home for good. But others, staying behind, are beginning to envision their new tasks. "Marcos is out. But the struggle to rebuild the country has just begun," said Robert Rous, a member of the Philippine Reconstruction Corps.

Even before Marcos was forced to flee the country, attorneys, both Filipino and American, began to look for ways to retrieve Marcos' ill-gotten wealth. Many of them have linked up with Jovito Salonga's Commission on Good Government.

Others have begun organizing on a grassroots level to generate material aid to rebuild the country. They are aware that the U.S. is pouring in millions to help the Aquino government but "ours is different," stated Rous. "Although we will work closely with the new government, we want to develop and maintain the people-to-people relationship. It is very important to establish the deep friendship and solidarity needed to keep the project going."

In two meetings held in San Francisco,

close to 150 people, including nurses, doctors, engineers and even marketing executives, were there to lend their hand.

Fuellen Ortigas, the group's coordinator, said that when the group's plans are established, he will leave the U.S. for good and assist the project on the Philippine end. "The coordination is important, otherwise it becomes meaningless."

Suggestions at the meetings included raising funds from U.S. institutions for a "Peace Corps"-type of project where skilled and technically-trained individuals will spend two to 12 months donating their services to residents of rural areas.

MORE HELP COMING

Rodney Garcia, a 31-year old Filipino American lawyer in Washington, D.C., said his group *Angkan* will continue to send aid to the Philippines. "The changes there have given us more inspiration. We will double our efforts."

"We can ask the embassy to help us. Before they offered but we refused them," he said referring to the wide-ranging possibilities of cooperation between the community and consular offices.

Garcia's group was formed in 1983 to help fledgling institutions in the Philippines with an injection of monetary or in-kind contributions. Taken from the Filipino

word *angkan*, which means filial support, the group's focus has been on education and training. With the help of liaison groups there, they've sent either books or scholarship funds to at least a dozen groups in the Philippines. Their most recent accomplishments include a donation to a project in Virac, Catanduanes, where people were trained in rattan-weaving and a scholarship fund for a dozen students to the Samson Technical School in Davao.

Even with only 40 active members in Angkan, Garcia said they have been able to generate quite a bit of support. Garcia's garage is again filled with books donated by libraries and schools to be shipped home. Their next project is to send microscopes to several rural clinics.

Garcia appealed to *AK* readers to form their own charitable groups. "This is the most meaningful way that we can help the country," he said. Having worked three years in this type of project, Garcia wants to help others who are starting out. Those interested can call him at: (301) 839-7179 (evenings) or (703) 243-0210.

SISTER CITY RELATIONSHIPS

Through the newly created Foundation to Aid the Philippines, Sonie Florendo, a 49-year old restaurateur in Baltimore, Maryland, says that her group is going to

find a Philippine city that could be a sister city of Baltimore.

"An aide of the city's mayor was present at our victory celebration when we announced our new foundation," she said, "and he became enthused at the idea." The aide told her the city wants to do its own fundraising to help the Philippines. "This is apparently a first for the city," she said.

Florendo told the *AK* that when she was on the Sister City Committee, then prime-minister Cesar Virata had asked her to make Baltimore a sister city of Legaspi. She said she did not pursue it because "I did not believe it would work then." She has not found a port city yet but said "Now I think it will work."

"Sonie's," a two-floor restaurant in Baltimore, became a headquarter for activists during the February flow of events. She said she often had to close it to accommodate meetings and banner-making.

Members of her foundation are looking for ways to help the Philippines. Ideas such as economic development and a health project were floated at their March 19 meeting. Florendo wants to see co-operative ventures, such as a poultry or a pig farm, started in the Philippine rural areas. "This is one way to help our people gain economic self-sufficiency." □

Deposition Scheduled

Marcos Subpoenaed in Seattle Murders

Marcos is finding that his exile home in Hawaii is no safe haven for past crimes.

The Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes (CJDV) subpoenaed the dictator for a deposition on March 26. The committee is continuing an almost five-year effort to uncover the role of the Marcos government in the murders of Seattle KDP activists and ILWU officers Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes.

"We have no illusions that Marcos will cooperate. The U.S. government may eventually try to protect Marcos by finding him a home outside the U.S.," said Cindy Domingo, sister of slain activist and spokesperson for the group. "But while he is on U.S. territory, we will not let him get away."

Domingo and Viernes were gunned down in their union hall by a hitman of the Tulisan gang, allegedly hired by Tony Baruso, then president of the ILWU and a close friend of Marcos. The murder weapon was traced to Baruso but he was never charged in the crime.

A civil suit filed by the families of Domingo and Viernes in September 1982 charged that the Marcos regime conspired to murder the activists as part of a larger effort to intimidate anti-Marcos activists in the U.S.. The U.S. government and its intelligence agencies have likewise been charged for their role in the conspiracy and the coverup of the murders.

By prosecuting those responsible for the murders and dismantling the spy network, which the committee believes is still



intact, the committee hopes that Filipinos will be protected from further harassment and intimidation by Marcos and his agents.

The committee expects full cooperation from U.S. Customs which seized a plane-load of crates containing documents, \$1.2 million in Philippine pesos, and other valuable items brought by the Marcoses and their entourage from the Philippines. It is believed that the crates contain documents related to Marcos intelligence agents and their operations against the anti-Marcos opposition in the United States from 1973 until 1986. Included with the documents are the files of the National

Intelligence Security Authority (NISA) formerly headed by General Fabian Ver.

Both the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1979 and the Defense Intelligence Agency in 1982 have disclosed the presence of a Marcos intelligence apparatus in the United States with the task of "monitoring and operating against anti-Marcos Philippine dissidents in the U.S.."

NISA files are missing from their storage place at Malacañang Palace, according to Joker Arroyo, Executive Secretary of Philippine President Cory Aquino. "There is no trace of NISA, no trace of the funds

and no traces of the papers; nothing at all," said Arroyo.

It is widely believed that General Ver removed the NISA files from Malacañang Palace and that they are now in the custody of the U.S. Customs Service. The Marcos regime had admitted, in response to interrogatories submitted by the plaintiffs, that NISA was one of the agencies that collected information on anti-Marcos activities in the United States. It also admitted that the key murder conspirator, Baruso, met with Philippine agents in the Bay Area and Seattle.

The subpoena requests documents related to events leading up to the Domingo/Viernes murders including:

- surveillance on Viernes' trip to the Philippines in March, 1981;
- the receipt by NISA of false intelligence information that Viernes had carried a large sum of money to aid the anti-Marcos movement in the Philippines;
- surveillance on Domingo and Viernes at the ILWU convention in April, 1981, where a resolution critical of Marcos' anti-labor decrees was passed;
- the travel of key military officials to Seattle and the Bay Area in May 1981, to plan the June 1, 1981 murders of Domingo and Viernes; and
- the identity of key NISA agents who operated in Seattle and in the U.S. at the time of the murders.

Plaintiffs have until February 1987 to gather more evidence before the trial begins in April 1987 in Seattle's Federal District Court. □

Misuari . . .

Continued from page 8

this. What we are trying to do now is consistent with the second phase of the Bangsa Moro revolution, to strengthen and expand our political infrastructure. You know, we are organizing our provinces into states. Instead of provinces, we call them states, instead of provincial revolutionary committees, we call them state revolutionary committees.

And, as a follow-up of our political program of action, which we implemented on the eve of the ceasefire in 1977 and up until the Tripoli Agreement, we are strengthening our democratic institutions,

like the congresses, where the people would decide for themselves the laws they want to be applied in their own societies. The right to make the law will be in the hands of our people and the best place for them is the congresses. So everywhere, the people will try to establish their congresses. In fact, some of the regions have already come out with these. And, these are preparatory to the reconvening of the national congress of the Bangsa Moro Republic.

We are now trying to propagate as widely as possible the existence of the Bangsa Moro Republic and seeking recognition not only inside our homeland, but outside. And we are popularizing our national flag in order to distinguish us from the rest of the world, and of course, the Philippines. □

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Ex-Detainees File Suit Against Marcos

By VINCE REYES

Fruellen Ortigas was a law student at the University of the Philippines in early 1972 when he was imprisoned on trumped-up charges by the Marcos government. After brutal torture and incarceration for four and a half years, he managed to escape to the U.S.

Now, he is going back to help rebuild the country. But before he leaves, Ortigas wants to begin the process of seeking retribution for other ex-political prisoners like himself. Along with several other former detainees, he has filed suit against the deposed president.

"The idea for a lawsuit originated from Dr. Jerrold Garcia, an ex-detainee who now lives in Syracuse," said Ortigas. "When Marcos fell, we could not let the issue of political prisoners go neglected—he was allowed to leave the country—the only way left to get to him now is to sue him," he added.

During the aftermath of Marcos' departure from the Philippines, the group approached noted attorney Melvin Belli to take on their case. Belli, who met Marcos some years ago, agreed and filed the suit last March 4. Since then, another similar suit was filed by Belli's office on March 12.

Getting the case off the ground has not been an easy task. According to Attorney Randall Scarlet of Belli's office, the process of serving Marcos with depositions was hindered by the U.S. State Department which imposed the tightest of security precautions on Hickam Air Force Base in Hawaii.

"Although we had the Deputy Sheriff ready to serve Marcos with depositions, both Marcos' attorney, Burt Kobayashi and the State Department were not very cooperative at first," explained Scarlet. "It was during this time that Marcos was trying to skip the country. We were worried that if he got out, the basis for the suits would be lost because he has to be served in the country the suits originated from."

In Hawaii, Kobayashi was not returning calls and Hickam was denying entrance to anyone attempting to serve Marcos with depositions, including deputy sheriff officers. "Our position was that no one is above the law while they are here," said

Scarlet. "The base claimed they were not shielding Marcos, yet we were having problems getting to him . . . we were not trying to harass Marcos, but were taking care of the rights of our clients—Marcos is not immune from the law while he is in the U.S."

Finally on March 22, Patrick Norton, a State Department representative escorted in a deputy and a representative for Marcos accepted the papers.

On March 25, Marcos, working through his San Francisco-based attorneys was able to delay the deposition hearing. But the postponement may backfire on Marcos.

"Marcos' attorneys tried a typical defense ploy to argue jurisdictional and venue issues rather than getting straight to any of the wrongdoing," explained Scarlet. "These issues are totally without merit and just aggravated the judge to get on with the case," Scarlet continued. "The judge granted a short timetable for Marcos to get his arguments together—until May 25." Belli will use the interim period before the depositions to make Marcos answer to "interrogatories," written questionnaires, which may reveal more details.

"We are going to ask Marcos what connections, property, etc. he has in the U.S.," explained Scarlet, and now he has to answer under penalty of perjury. "An answer like 'I can't remember' won't be good enough," noted Scarlet, "he'll have to disclose everything. . . we will be able to locate all of his assets."

Additionally, the American Civil Liberties Union has filed suit against Marcos on behalf of four ex-detainees.

MORE SUITS TO FOLLOW?

Ortigas, now 37 years old, said that Belli will figure out a formula for restitution which will translate into a dollar amount. A class action suit on behalf of all prisoners who can prove a legitimate claim may follow.

Besides Ortigas and Garcia, other plaintiffs include Dr. Esther Albano Garcia, Ramon Veluz, Crispin Aranda, Alphonso King, George Gaddi, Lino de Leon, Ramon Castañeda, Emmanuel Umali, and Jerry Socco. Most were detainees at the same time in the Youth Rehabilitation Center at Fort Bonifacio.

Ortigas recalled his ordeal noting that his was but one story among many hundreds of people. "I was one of 66 people on a



Melvin Belli (l) discusses suit against Marcos with ex-political prisoners

Marcos list. In July 1972 I was working with student groups and was an assistant to senator Benigno Aquino," Ortigas recounted. "When I was arrested, they were building a case against Aquino and tried to squeeze information from me and even offered me freedom if I would speak against him."

When he did not cooperate, he was tortured. "They threw a typewriter at me and I was punched and kicked—I still didn't answer any questions."

He was imprisoned a total of four and a half years. Amnesty International took up Ortigas' case and he was able to get a temporary release, which was actually mandatory house arrest. He had to report once a week to Ft. Bonifacio and had to agree not to speak to any media.

Ortigas managed to make a dramatic escape. "I escaped by airplane to Cebu, then to Jolo, then took a small boat to Tawi Tawi, in Bongao," recalled Ortigas. "I got connected to an underground route and landed in Borneo. I then made a connection with the United Nations and Senator Raul Manglapus, who represented me to the State Department." Eventually, Ortigas was granted political asylum.

Now, Ortigas is ready to leave on April 15. "It was always my motivation to conduct anti-Marcos activities and go back behind the lines. Now I can go back home and help rebuild the country," explained Ortigas.

He has joined what has become known as the Reconstruction Corps here in the U.S. "We will work to establish 'Economic Self-Sufficiency Zones,'" said Ortigas. "If we are successful, we will develop and duplicate our efforts in other areas." The main target will be rural areas although the corps will also look at depressed urban areas such as Tondo.

"The key is to get people to identify with the movement," commented Ortigas. "People Power can be a force to help the country, to bring about change."

If successful, the suits may succeed in being the first to claim damages for political prisoners who suffered repression under a dictatorial regime. Last year, a political prisoner from Paraguay sued his military torturer and won a U.S. court ruling. However, restitution for damages could not be collected because Gen. Stroessner, strong-arm president of Paraguay, refuses to recognize the court decision. □

English Proposed as Official Language

By MADGE BELLO

Proponents of an "English Only" policy anticipate overwhelming success in gathering the required signatures to place the initiative on California's November ballot. If passed, it would designate English as the state's official language.

Opponents of the initiative view the move detrimental to immigrants, especially those from Asia and Latin America. "It is not a wise decision," chided Reina Bautista, a bilingual education specialist in San Francisco. "It's not even a good idea at all. It downplays the fact that we are a multicultural society."

The California initiative is linked to a national effort spearheaded by the former senator from California, S.I. Hayakawa, whose group U.S. English has been lobbying to make English the official language of the U.S.

The California English Campaign, the group spearheading the petition, announced it has set a goal of collecting 800,000 signatures although only 630,136 signatures are needed by June 2 to qualify for the November ballot.

Banking on its previous success with a similar statewide proposition, Stanley Dia-

mond, the group's chairperson, said that he doesn't anticipate any problem acquiring the needed signatures.

Proposition 38, which passed overwhelmingly in November 1983, was a policy statement telling the U.S. Congress that Californians prefer to have English only language voter materials. If acted upon by the U.S. legislature, bilingual ballots will be eliminated in areas such as San Francisco and Los Angeles where Chinese and Spanish ballots have been made available to limited-English speaking voters.

Although the state proposition is merely a policy statement by voters, it mandates the state legislature to pass laws to implement the intent of the measure.

Diamond said the amendment would not affect federal guarantees of bilingual ballots and education or private businesses' right to advertise in languages other than English. But Lillian Galedo of the Filipino Immigrant Services in Oakland disagreed. She said that resolutions and propositions to make English an official language is "insidious."

Most immigrants, she said, are eager to learn English but the amendment would set a dangerous precedent in dismantling bilingual services.

"It has the effect of making immigrants feel unwelcomed. Immigrants would be

intimidated and would be discouraged from speaking their native languages," she added. "Pretty soon workplaces would be regulating such a policy, which is prohibited now."

Bautista expressed optimism that despite the stronger push among "English only" proponents the ballot may not pass because those fighting it are also linking up. 'ENGLISH ONLY' GAINING GROUND

The English only movement is gaining ground as the city of Los Altos joined two other California cities in making English its official language. The other two include Alameda and Fillmore. A similar resolution is expected to pass in St. Petersburg Beach in Florida. The Los Altos resolution, which had the very same thrust as the English only movement, said it wants the English language "to preserve the internal unity required for political stability and cohesion. . . ."

The proposal was unfortunately introduced by an immigrant from India, Dinesh Desai, whose intention was to help immigrants succeed. He felt that minorities who do not learn English are disadvantaged in the job market.

During the deliberations of the resolution, Dr. Allan Seid of Asian Americans for Community Involvement was given five minutes to argue against the resolution.

But other civil rights groups such as Chinese for Affirmative Action and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund were denied the forum.

Robin Wu of CAA called the passage a subtle form of racism. She said the council is ignoring the city's strong Spanish heritage.

In 1985, the California cities of Monterey Park and Alhambra, two suburbs of Los Angeles with significant Asian population, voted down a similar resolution. San Francisco supervisor Quintin Kopp has been trying to have the same resolution passed in his city.

Lily Chen, the mayor of Monterey Park who vehemently opposed the English-only initiative in her city, said that if the intent of the ordinances is to assist new immigrants speak the English language, then "more funding should be given to English language classes and other means which would facilitate the full participation of immigrants in all aspects of our society." About 40% of Monterey Park's 60,000 population are Asian, 37% Hispanic and 22% white.

But Chen felt these measures are a far cry from serving as a unifying force. These measures are the groundwork to undermine all gains made by limited English-speaking persons, she charged. "The punitive tone of these measures threaten the future of civil rights in this country," she added. □

Voices

Tulâ para sa Eleksiyon sa Pilipinas, 1986

Bayang magiliw
 Kanino ka ba panig?
 Nagmamasid sa iyo ang buong daigdig
 Sa pagkakalugmok, sana'y tumayo ka
 Sa paninindigan
 mo nasasalalay ang aming pag-asa.

Bangon, Inang Bayan,
 Perlas ng Silangan
 Alam naming ika'y matagal ng manhid
 Ang mga luha mo'y natuyong hinagpis
 Kamay ng dayuhang sa iyo'y pumiit
 Huwag nang bayaan pang muling humigpit.

Ang masakit nito: Di na kamay-puti
 Ang nakapulupot sa leeg ng lahi
 Kundi mga anak mor ring kayumanggi
 Ang sa kalupita'y naghaharing uri.
 Kaliwa man or kanan
 Ay ating tanggihan.

Masdam mo ang langit, kay talim ng kidlat
 Malakas ang kulog, ulang pumapatak
 Ang tigang na lupa ngayo'y nagagalak
 Na ang katarunga'y muling bubukadkad.

Sa ating pagtindig na walang alalay
 Ay makakamtan din mithing kalayaan.

Subalit anuman ang iyong pasiya
 Kaming mga anak ay lingkod mo, Ina
 Kumunista ka man or kapitalista
 Mamamalagi kang —
 Duyan ng magiting
 sa tuwa at dusa.

At tulad ng aming laging inaawit
 Kami'y kapiling mo saan man sumapit
 Sa butihing palad mo matatagpuan
 Ang pangarap naming kaluwalhatian

Alab ng puso
 Sa dibdib mo'y buhay.

Filipina 1986

Noli me tangere,
 you can not touch me now.
 I have earned this freedom
 over years of terror
 sitting in a darkened cell,
 praying would I ever
 see the light
 of your leaving.

Goodbye, don't look back,
 leave hurriedly like a surgeon
 washing his hands
 after an operation.
 And please close the door
 as you go.

Now I can dance
 in the streets and scatter
 flowers among the islands,
 Oh, to give my
 left-over sandwich
 to my brother for his gun,
 and clasp the beads
 to my bosom
 like a nest.

Let me now drink
 my champagne,
 recite my poem,
 and listen as my children
 march to the beat
 of the song
 they have learned
 a long, long time
 ago.

Marie C. Pruden
 San Francisco, 1985

Marie Pruden is a frequent contributor to VOICES. She has returned to the Philippines after 11 years of exile.

Maligayang Bati (Hintay Muna)

Maligayang bati sa inyong lahat
 Kayong mga naglamay at nagsiganap
 Sa unos na umuga sa puno ng diktadura
 Hayun at bali na ang mga dupok na sanga
 Bunga ay bumagsak na kayakap ang mga uod.

Binabati ko kayong lahat
 Kayong mga nangagsigising sa umaalingawngaw na hudyat
 Kayong mga binigkis ng mabangis na dekada
 Kayong mga nag-aklasan mula sa paaralan, palengke
 pabrika at opisina
 Kayong mga humulagpos mula sa kumbento at kuta
 Kayong lahat na walang pangalan na naghasik
 ng dakilang aral at kamalayan sa mga iskinita
 lansangan, plaza, bayan-bayan at sa buong daigdig.
 Binabati ko kayo sa inyong taglay na katapangan
 Kapit-bisig ninyong itinaboy ang mga tangke at
 machine gun.

Sige, at dapat lamang na pakawalan ang bulkan
 na nakabinlaok sa dibdib
 Pasasaan ba at ang mga eroplano at helikopter
 ay sasaliw na rin sa mga confetti at ibon
 na nagpapaligsahang sumayaw sa alapaap
 Hapustin ang usbong na tinakasan ng taglagas
 Langhapin ang samyo at halimuyak ng mga bulaklak.

Ngunit hintay muna bayan at sa isisilang pang angkan
 Ang pangil at kamandag ng lahat ng kapangitan
 at kabangisan ay malalim pa rin na nakatarak
 at dumadaloy sa ugat
 Huwag, huwag munang humimlay at humimbing
 Pagkat ikaw, ako at tayong lahat-lahat ang siyang
 bubungkal sa ating hardin.

R.C. Dacquel
 Vallejo, CA

R.C. Dacquel is a frequent contributor to VOICES.



Used Dictator . . .

Continued from page 6

flood, Reagan and the State Department began to backtrack, starting with the decision to allow the documents and valuables seized by U.S. Customs agents to be turned over to the Aquino government, the U.S. Congress and the press.

Even worse, the State Department made a point of redefining what it meant by the "immunity" granted to Marcos. While maintaining the shield against prosecution for actions Marcos may have taken as head of state, the U.S. announced that it was not protecting its notorious new resident with regard to any of his or Imelda's private business dealings or for any illegal acts.

The narrow meaning of immunity which remained leaves Marcos open to an endless string of lawsuits and subpoenas. The first taste of what might be in store for the ex-dictator came when fellow exile Fabian Ver was compelled to testify before a federal grand jury in Arlington, Virginia in mid-March in connection with charges of payoffs by U.S. defense contractors to Philippine military officials.

By moving on, Marcos hopes to place roadblocks in the way of civil or criminal actions brought against him directly; such proceedings would require an extradition agreement between the U.S. and whatever country took him in.

Preferring to keep Marcos pinned down in a fairly accessible place, the Aquino government revoked the passports of the Marcos entourage. As a final gesture of "honor and dignity," however, the U.S. is willing to provide whatever travel documents are needed to relocate the party—a small price to pay for relieving the discomfort that currently afflicts both host and visitor.

NO VACANCY

The problem is finding someone to take him. First in line to turn Marcos down were Singapore and Indonesia, which expressed their disinterest while Marcos was still packing his bags at the palace. Like the other ASEAN countries, these two nations in the region had no interest in creating an instant irritant in relations with the new Aquino government. In addition, the presence of Marcos would provide a constant reminder to the masses in both countries that dictators can be dislodged, a lesson that Singapore's Lee Kwan Yew and Indonesia's Suharto would rather not dwell on.

Despite the fact that, like the U.S., it used to own the Philippines, Spain also turned Marcos down. Spanish Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez has been engaged in a delicate attempt to shift his Socialist government to the right, most recently by success-

fully pushing for a "yes" vote in a referendum on whether Spain should stay in NATO. Under the circumstances, Gonzalez was not inclined to provoke the militant Spanish left by giving sanctuary to a deposed fascist.

When Spain, which had reportedly been Marcos' first choice, issued its definitive rejection March 17, speculation turned to Panama. Three days later, Marcos and company were reportedly packed and on the way to the airport when the deal fell through.

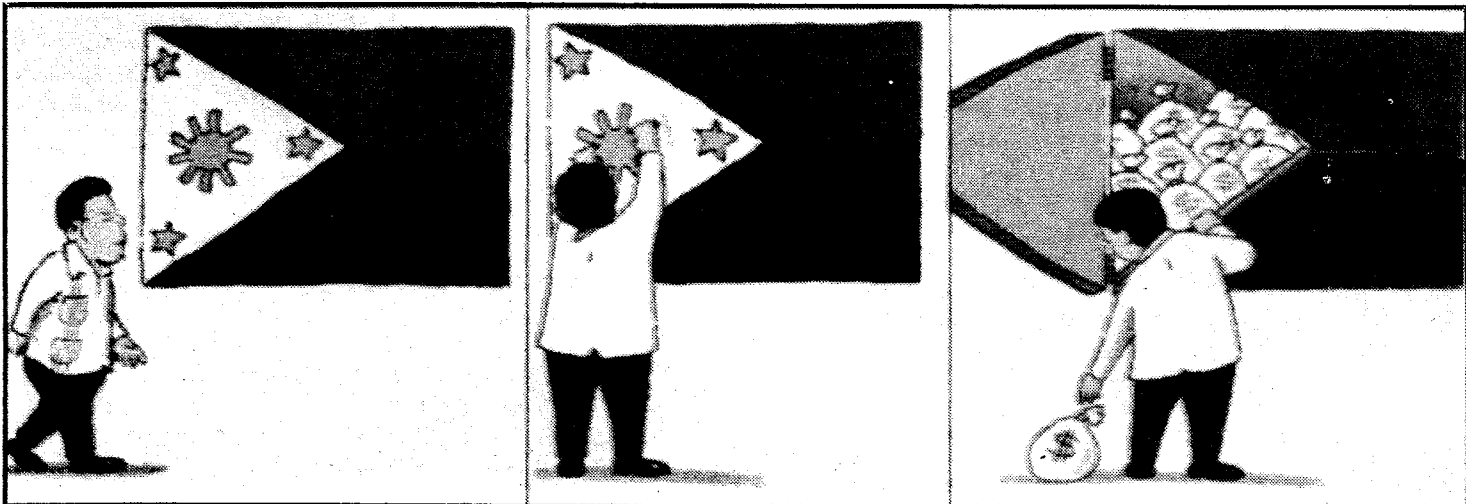
The first problem apparently was a fear on the part of some Panamanian government officials that Marcos' arrival would provoke a controversy much larger than the one which surrounded Panama's acceptance of the Shah of Iran in 1980. The second problem was Marcos' apparent resistance to the \$150,000-a-week rent being asked for the resort island of Contadora, the residence under discussion. And the last straw came when Vice President Salvador Laurel announced that the Philippines would sever diplomatic relations with Panama if it took Marcos in.

GETTING OFF BASE

Still looking for another country, the Marcoses and 20 of their retainers did at least manage to leave the officers' quarters at Hickam Field and move into a rented \$1.5 million beachfront house on Oahu. While the new digs are still not up to Imelda's standards, the chance to set up her own servants in her own kitchen should at least mean that she no longer has to return the food as unfit for human consumption, as she frequently did during the stay at Hickam.

So far, playing host to Ferdinand Marcos has been an expensive undertaking: \$200,000 to transport him, 88 others and a planeload of luggage to Hawaii; \$150,000 in security costs; \$89,000 for the upkeep of the party at Hickam, and the famous \$12,000 PX bill run up during a 12-hour stopover in Guam.

But there have been political bills to pay as well. For both the Reagan administration and Marcos himself, the main motive behind the continuing search for a new resting place is not cost control, but damage control. □ HC



Next Step . . .

Continued from front page

number of hard-won seats. A conventional political party, UNIDO was hoping to expand its power base and eagerly taking in refugees from Marcos' *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* (New Society Party) who wished to change their political spots.

'MANTLE OF LEGALESE'

Others believed in calling a spade a spade—and in working as quickly and efficiently as possible toward creating a new constitution under which to govern. As presidential spokesman Rene Saguisag put it, "The best legal minds in the government are for going revolutionary."

No one put that position more strongly than *Business Day*, the national organ of the country's business community. "Any attempt to deodorize the dark connotations of a revolutionary government by acquiescence to the provisions of the present constitution," insisted a March 6 editorial, "would be a rejection of the people's reason for manning the barricades which was the removal of a dictatorship which drew its sustenance from the mantle of legalese with which its own 1973 Constitution and Parliament draped it." (See guest editorial, page 2.)

The process may in fact take less than a full year. Aquino has promised to appoint a committee of 30 to 50 to draft a new constitution. Whether portions of the 1973 constitution—or the 1935 constitution on which that was based—is to be included or not is still under debate. The committee is to be in place within a month and the drafting process is to take no more than three months. A plebiscite is scheduled for November to ratify the new document.

Local and national elections may happen any time after that. They may, in fact, occur well before the May 1987 local elections scheduled under the Marcos regime.

STORM OF PROTEST

Manila-based Marcos supporters were quick to cry foul. Former labor minister Blas Ople, now busily trying to reorganize the KBL, branded the move "an undisguised conspiracy to install a one-man rule." Marcos himself, speaking from Ha-

waii, called it "a plain and simple dictatorship."

Ople and Marcos, of course, should know about such things. Ople proceeded to warn of convening a rump parliament April 14. But more worrisome was Marcos' remaining following in the countryside.

Perhaps the greatest challenge to the new government, in fact, is the effort to move the democratization process outside Manila and into the provinces. Given the system by which many towns, cities and whole provinces languish under the control of KBL warlords, many with private armies and all with the sole power to dispense jobs and government favors, the countryside threatens to remain a patchwork of feudal strongholds with the president's new policies unimplemented.

The Aquino government has thus moved quickly to deal with the question. Local government Minister Aquilino Pimentel announced March 1 that terms of all local officials were to expire in two days and, at Aquino's direction, began appointing their successors.

This raised a storm of protest from mayors and governors, some of whom refused to budge (see related story, page 3). It took the intercession of the Pampanga Civil-Military Relations Office to persuade Vice Governor Cicero Punsalan to step aside in favor of Governor-designate Bren Guiao. Cebu City's appointed Mayor John Osmeña was forced to file a countersuit against the KBL mayor who moved through the judiciary to have him ousted.

Elsewhere, KBL mayors and governors barricaded themselves inside their offices and, in some places, continued to hold office even though successors had already been appointed.

Other Marcos loyalists such as Gov. Ali Dimaporo of Lanao del Sur, who admits to receiving telephoned instructions from his chief-in-exile, pledged to support the Aquino government—as long as it did not proclaim itself revolutionary. "I will not turn over the governorship. The people elected me," he told Agence France Presse reporters as he held forth in the provincial capital surrounded by troops wearing heavy arms and knowing smiles.

UNABLE TO DELIVER

The level of opposition has left Pimentel extremely exposed. Some observers suspect that his life may actually be in danger.

Once again Laurel is not particularly

happy. He made promises of local posts to many of his supporters in the election and is finding them impossible to deliver. Pimentel has awarded many of the positions to members of his own party, PDP-LABAN. A cadre organization whose supporters must go through a series of seminars before achieving membership, PDP-Laban espouses moderately social democratic and nationalist views. To Laurel's great annoyance, the small party is broadening its base via the appointments.

Particularly embarrassing are situations where Laurel has simply named his own officials. In Makati, he swore in vice mayor Johnny Wilson to succeed the late mayor Nemesio Yabut although Pimentel appointed Jejomar Binay. He was thoroughly galled when Pimentel named Osmeña to the Cebu mayorship, having promised the position to Minnie Osmeña-Stuart as part of a campaign deal.

UNIDO secretary-general Rene Espina told the press, "The Unido party is distancing itself from the Aquino government for committing political slaughter of local officials." The situation on the local government front tops the fact that Laurel's followers received relatively few cabinet positions. "They promised us a 40-60 split," one Laurel aide grumbled to the *Christian Science Monitor*. "We're getting the short end of the bargain."

At least one Unido official commented pointedly that an alliance between Unido and KBL members of the now-dissolved Batasan would make for a powerful opposition. The vice president is known to have threatened at least once to pull out of the cabinet.

MAINTAINING THE MOMENTUM

Once again some fairly astute political thinking has allowed Aquino to proceed with her own policies in spite of genuine divisions within her own government. Laurel, whose opportunism Aquino never trusted, has been neutralized at least for now. Relatively few of his followers serve on the cabinet and where he does hold a portfolio, a reliable Aquino follower acts as his deputy. For example, Leticia Ramos-Shahani, a career diplomat and early Aquino supporter flanks as deputy in the Foreign Ministry. If the vice president should wish to quit, he really has no place to go with the Batasan disbanded and his lack of grassroots popularity.

Meanwhile, Aquino has worked hard to

maintain the popular support which from the start belonged to her—not to Laurel or to latecomers Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos. Support for a revolutionary government from both the business community and a key wing of the church known as the "Jesuit mafia" are thus critical.

Undeclared chief of the Jesuit crowd is Joaquin Bernas, simultaneously president of Ateneo University and editor of the newspaper *Veritas*. In a recent opinion piece, Bernas wrote, "It is not President Aquino who is dislodging the Batasan members; the people did that when they declared Cory Aquino President in defiance of the Batasan's proclamation. Thus should President Aquino now decide to maintain the present membership of the Batasan, she would make a mockery of the heroic stand of the Filipino people during the February election."

Thus key blocs of the church and business community remained solidly behind the president. At the same time, at least one major Manila demonstration by the *Lakas ng Sambayanan* (People's Power) movement shows that the momentum of the campaign has not been lost and her mass base remains intact.

SUPPORT FROM ENRILE/RAMOS WING?

Maintaining that momentum and base will be crucial in the months ahead for the process of returning to a constitutional government will not be a simple one. Opposition to the Aquino plan remains among some of her supporters. Even Pimentel is somewhat skeptical. It will require the utmost flexibility and the broadest unity to enforce the democratization process.

For now, the other key faction within the cabinet—the Enrile/Ramos wing—remains quiet on the question of the revolutionary government and appear to support it. Ramos has been known to say that the military should stay out of politics. Whether he does or not remains to be seen.

Their support for now, however, is crucial. The military has already had to "persuade" at least one Marcos hold-out to abandon his post in compliance with the new government's request. The likes of Ali Dimaporo and other entrenched warlords may well require a larger show of strength to convince them to abandon their fiefdoms and become just another couple of faces in the crowd. □

Seeking Dialogue and Political Solution

By EDDIE ESCULTURA

When President Napoleon Duarte met with the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front-Democratic Revolutionary Front at La Palma on October 15, 1984, a new phase in the Salvadoran revolution was signalled. The military balance of forces between the army and the FMLN-FDR had dramatically shifted, indicating that a political solution was not only feasible but compelling if the bloodshed were to end in that blighted land.

While Duarte's army controlled all of El Salvador in January 1981, two contending centers of power emerged by 1984, with the revolutionary army becoming a fundamental reality in the country. By early 1984 the FMLN-FDR gained full control of large areas of Salvadoran territory and was in active contention in most of the provinces. FMLN units now operate in all areas of the country, including the urban centers and San Salvador, the nation's capital. The FMLN has standing operational units in 12 of the country's 14 provinces.

DESIRE FOR PEACE

In the political field the FMLN-FDR developed the capacity to organize the urban and rural areas and established in its areas of control embryonic forms of civilian rule. The FMLN-FDR and its supporters are capable of establishing salary levels for the rural workers and having them followed; they pronounce rules and impose taxes on the landowners in large areas; they have the capacity to disrupt the fiscal system of the government by impeding large popular sectors from paying taxes; and they are able to take control of the roads, and regulate or completely paralyze transportation in 70% of the territory and partially in the rest of the country.

Duarte's civil defense and security forces have disappeared in large areas of the territory and the army cannot operate at the level of companies in many areas without running the risk of annihilation. FMLN-FDR power has influence not just in the areas of war but throughout the national territory and commands authority and recognition among the people.

BROAD FRONT

Greater coordination among the five member organizations of the FMLN has become more evident in recent years. This has culminated in the actual process of greater internal consolidation which was formalized last summer. The result has been a more coherent leadership that advances not only the armed struggle but the political struggle as well, especially those aspects that have a bearing on the process of dialogue and negotiations.

At the same time, a broad popular front has been built, under the umbrella of the FMLN-FDR, encompassing a wide spectrum of forces that includes the progressive wing of the Catholic Church and the reformist section of Duarte's army. This has deepened Duarte's political and economic crisis.

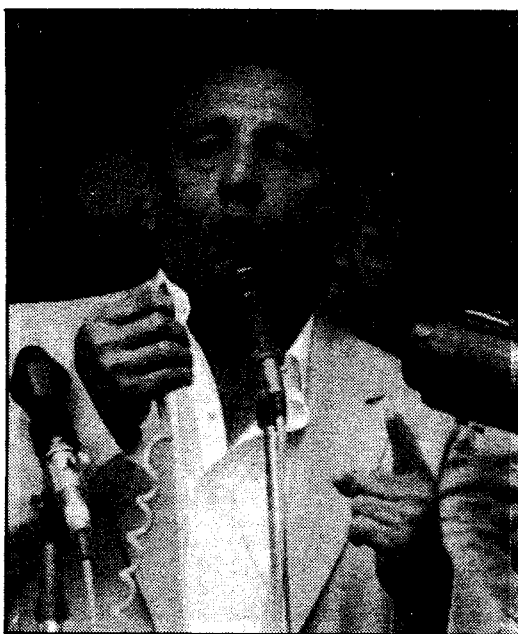
On the diplomatic front, the FMLN-FDR enjoys broad international recognition and its representatives move as invited guests in many international forums. The FMLN's internationalist perspective aided by the FDR leadership's international links and stature has contributed a great deal towards these gains. Dr. Guillermo Ungo, the president of the FDR, is also the vice president of the Socialist International while Dr. Ruben Zamora, a member of the political-diplomatic commission of the FMLN-FDR, was El Salvador's minister of the presidency from 1979 to 1980. This has assured the Salvadoran revolution not only support from the socialist community but also among many social democratic and liberal governments and other political forces.

DIALOGUE WITH DUARTE

It was this internal crisis in El Salvador, combined with international diplomatic pressure which dragged Duarte to the negotiating table in 1984.

This pressure started as early as 1981 when the French-Mexican declaration of August that year raised the need for a "comprehensive political settlement" and established the legitimacy of the FMLN-FDR's participation in "instituting the mechanisms for rapprochement and negotiation required for a political resolution of the crisis." The declaration called for an international commission to ensure that "any intervention in the internal affairs of El Salvador be averted."

This call for non-intervention has persisted, especially at conferences of the non-aligned nations, and was amplified with a similar call by the UN General



Napoleon Duarte



Fernan Cienfuegos (l) and Dr. Guillermo Ungo (r)

Assembly. On March 15, 1984 the Coordinating Bureau of the non-aligned nations denounced U.S. intervention in Central America and raised its "concern at the deterioration of the Salvadoran conflict due to the continuation of foreign intervention in the internal affairs of that country."

It expressed the hope that such intervention would cease and a reasonable political solution would be promoted. It further "reiterated its appeal to all states to adopt a constructive approach and not to give military assistance that might impede the process." This appeal has been welcomed by the FMLN-FDR.

It is against this backdrop that a dialogue took place at La Palma followed by the more substantial meeting at Ayagualo on November 30, 1984. These meetings raised the FMLN-FDR's international standing to an unprecedented height.

ROAD TO PEACE

The dialogue had broad popular support and raised the country's expectations for peace to an unprece-

'As its concrete proposal, the FMLN-FDR called for the formation of a transitional government of broad participation that would include the FMLN and its armed power as well as . . . the present government and its armed forces.'

cedented level. The Mothers of Political Prisoners and Disappeared were there to observe and demand a sincere dialogue between the parties. They chanted, "There can be no peace with persecution" and "Alive they took them, alive we want them," referring to their sons and daughters kidnapped by Duarte's security forces.

The workers also came in great numbers, especially among the members of the *Industrias Metal Mecanicas* who were hopeful that "the dialogue would resolve the problems of the workers" who demanded "peace with salary increases and cessation of repression."

Both meetings were supported by many countries. Mexico provided the plane for the rebel leaders while Spain offered its Embassy's Chancery to house the rebel delegates. Sweden, Switzerland, Costa Rica, and France also helped.

The Ayagualo meeting gave the FMLN-FDR the opportunity to present its assessment of the situation in the country and give concrete proposals towards a negotiated peace. It identified the main causes of war as social injustice, excessive concentration of wealth in the hands of the oligarchy, open violation of human rights by the armed forces of El Salvador and the death

squads and the loss of national sovereignty.

The road to peace was laid out by the FMLN-FDR. It has many phases. Among them: recovery of national sovereignty in order to advance towards a negotiated political solution, cessation of hostility and guaranteed agreements, and institutionalization of democracy.

TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT

As its concrete proposal, the FMLN-FDR called for the formation of a transitional government of broad participation that would include the FMLN and its armed power as well as the component sectors of the present government and its armed forces. This transitional government, the proposal states, would immediately address the problem of the existence of two armies and create the necessary conditions that would allow the Salvadoran people to democratically decide the future of the country through genuinely free elections.

The FMLN-FDR does not require that the present armed forces of Duarte be disbanded nor that the current government resign. Rather, it is asking that these bodies integrate themselves with a process that would bring about a peace treaty. The Duarte government would also make the same requirement of the FMLN-FDR.

In its statement on the meetings, the FMLN-FDR explained that it was conducting a dialogue with Duarte not because it recognizes the legitimacy of his government but because he represents the other belligerent party in the conflict.

For its part the government maintains the demand that the FMLN lay down its arms while it offered amnesty for its members and their participation in the municipal elections of 1985. Under pressure from the U.S. and El Salvador's rightwing, Duarte rejected the FMLN's proposal outright a day after the Ayagualo meeting.

Since the collapse of the La Palma and the Ayagualo meetings, the Duarte regime has pursued a policy of escalating the U.S. war of attrition against the FMLN-FDR. While hoping to deprive the revolutionary forces of its base of support—through intensive aerial bombardments and "scorched earth" military maneuvers resulting in massive rural destruction and the deaths and displacement of thousands—the Duarte regime has only prolonged the suffering of El Salvador's people.

The continuation of the war has not, as Duarte and the U.S. hoped, resulted in the isolation and defeat of the FMLN-FDR. The FMLN's seizure of Duarte's daughter last fall provoked a profound governmental crisis which virtually paralyzed the regime and was resolved only with the release of 26 political prisoners and 96 wounded FMLN combatants, a huge setback for Duarte and the U.S. In addition, the FMLN continues to mount numerous campaigns of economic sabotage and other harassment which cripple the regime. When linked with recent urban unrest, which has seen an unprecedented wave of strikes and protests, the country's crisis is far from resolved.

The FMLN-FDR continues to seek the path of negotiations and dialogue to resolve the country's turmoil. It notes that its initial proposals at La Palma and Ayagualo remain a basis for a continuing dialogue since it accurately reflects the current balance of forces in the country. Domestic and international pressures combined with the failure of U.S. policy to turn the tide of war and defeat the revolutionary army can only lead to the recognition of current realities in El Salvador and the prospects for renewed peace talks in the near future. □