

Ang **Katipunan**

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The Long-Term Political Prisoners

How Close to the Firing Squad?

By CARLA MARIANO

Jose Ma. Sison, in a letter from prison several months ago, issued a pointed warning as to the fate of Philippine political prisoners. The Marcos regime, he suggested, may soon adopt a new technique for terrorizing the population into obedience - "judicial or non-judicial execution." He noted that suddenly the Philippine government was rushing to conclusion the subversion cases against him—cases which have dragged on for over six years. Could this be the first step toward legalized execution of dissenters?

If Marcos were to adopt such a program, Sison would certainly be among the first to go. For Sison belongs to a group of political prisoners, the "long-term prisoners," known to have played prominent roles in forging the national democratic movement which aims to free the country altogether from U.S. imperialist domination. Executing them would rid the president and his U.S. backers of some of the nastiest thorns in their sides while raising the stakes for those who choose to resist him.

Marcos has cracked down on just about everybody else in the last eight months so a move against the prisoners would come as no great surprise. Beginning last August, he hit organized labor, the progressive clergy and the media with a vengeance. Union offices were ransacked and sealed off, newsmen and women subjected to military interrogation and labor leaders, church activists and newspaper folk thrown in prison.

Amidst this atmosphere of generalized repression, everyone is a potential target. But the several thousand who languish in Marcos' jails are sitting ducks. Jimmy Carter and his human rights diplomacy are long gone. Ronald Reagan, with his far more tolerant view of dictators, has given Marcos his all-out approval. There is nothing anymore to stop Marcos from using prisoners to teach the population—a bloody lesson about dissent.

JOSE MA. SISON

Before the arrest of Jose Ma. Sison, he was the man most wanted by the Marcos regime. Not only is he a charismatic, quiet-spoken leader, as the international press puts it, but the political consciousness he brought to the resistance movement greatly influenced its actions and direction. The regime insists that he is none other than Amado Guerero, Chairman of the Communist Party of the Philippines and author of the blueprint for Philippine revolution, *Philippine Society and Revolution*.

In *Struggle for National Democracy*, a compilation of essays and speeches published in 1967, Sison presented a thorough analysis of historical events and political and economic movements. A Marxist, he traced the country's crucial problems to continuing colonialism and feudalism. He boldly asserted that Filipinos must destroy the evils of U.S. imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Much to the irritation of the Marcos government, Joema, as he is known to his friends, proved as capable at political organizing as at writing. He led in the establishment of numerous patriotic organizations such as *Kabataang Makabayan* (Nationalist Youth), the Movement for the Advancement of Nationalism, and *Lapiang Manggagawa* (Worker's Party) between 1964 and 1968. This network of organizations launched the surging nationalist movement of the late '60s and early '70s.

On the night of Sison's capture, November 10, 1977, Ferdinand Marcos had his prize catch flown to Malacañang. Joema told Marcos: "If you know history, you

Continued on page 6

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Editorials

Reagan on Central America: Unable to Win, Unwilling to Lose, Must Lose

An extraordinary event was witnessed by us all last April 27. President Reagan addressed a joint session of Congress, televised live nationwide. A presidential appearance before a joint session, outside of the customary State of the Union address, has only happened 12 times in the history of the U.S. What Reagan said was also extraordinary. He gave the most systematic distortion, by far, of the truth about Central America. He also stirringly appealed to the most backward prejudices of the American people.

"El Salvador has continued to strive for an orderly and democratic society . . . [is] making every effort to guarantee democracy, free labor unions, freedom of religion and free press, [but] is under attack by guerillas dedicated to the one philosophy that prevails in Nicaragua, Cuba, and yes, the Soviet Union."

What are we to make of the continuing brutality of the ORDEN and the Salvadoran military, then? Or of the non-prosecution of these criminals, or even those who murdered the American nuns and labor advisors? Are a growing number of people wrong in concluding that the Salvadoran regime is only striving for the orderliness of the cemetery and the democracy of mass murder?

Great progress in human rights, Reagan asserts, is being made by other U.S. allies in the region. "Honduras has made the move from military rule to a democratic government. Guatemala is pledged to the same course." What about the 12,000 non-combatants, mostly Indians, killed in Guatemala last year alone—since Reagan restored U.S. military aid to the religio-fascist Rios-Montt regime.

If George Washington never really told a lie, it was probably more because he did not have Reagan's talent for passing them out. Nicaragua we are told, is the bellicose source of military aggression in the region, threatening Honduras and exporting terrorism to its neighbors. Reagan protested that Managua has "reject-

ed repeated [U.S.] peace efforts . . . has treated us as an enemy." We suppose the Nicaraguans should just turn the other cheek to such U.S. peace efforts as turning Honduras into a military bastion aimed at Nicaragua and a base for Somocistas armed by \$90 million in CIA funds. Nicaragua, we suppose should scream with delight at such peace gestures as U.S. war games on its borders or the threat of a naval blockade.

But more significant than Reagan's outright lies is the main thrust of his speech. What is at stake, he said, is the very security and well being of the American homeland.

"Central America is much closer to the U.S. than many of the world's trouble spots that concern us . . . El Salvador is nearer to Texas than Texas is to Massachusetts. Nicaragua is just as close to Miami, San Antonio, San Diego, and Tucson as these cities are to Washington . . . But nearness on the map does not even begin to tell the strategic importance of Central America bordering as it does on the Caribbean—our lifeline to the outside world. Two-thirds of all our foreign trade and petroleum pass through the Panama Canal and the Caribbean. In a European crisis, at least half of our supplies for NATO would go through these areas by sea."

This has been said before in varied ways by the Kilpatricks, the Enders, the Haigs, and the Shultzes. But this was the first time the President himself elaborated it fully and on such a public platform. He has laid his cards on the table. It is no longer just a need to help a beleaguered ally. At stake are our—America's crucial and strategic interests in Central America—our homeland, our trade, our capacity to police the world. But why did he have to be so explicit about America's real motivation? He no longer has any choice. His speech was somewhat a sign of desperation. Reagan knows that if he raised the flag many people would salute, and a mass pledge of allegiance is what he needs at this moment.

A *New York Times* analyst painted this desperation so vividly: In El Salvador, the U.S. is "unable to win, unwilling to lose." The Salvadoran government is wracked with internal conflicts worsened by political and military defeats. Its army is demoralized, fragmented, and isolated for its crimes. It has been reduced, by guerilla pressure to a "nine-five army with weekends off." Meanwhile, the FMLN-FDR has steadily advanced the revolutionary war to the strategic stalemate.

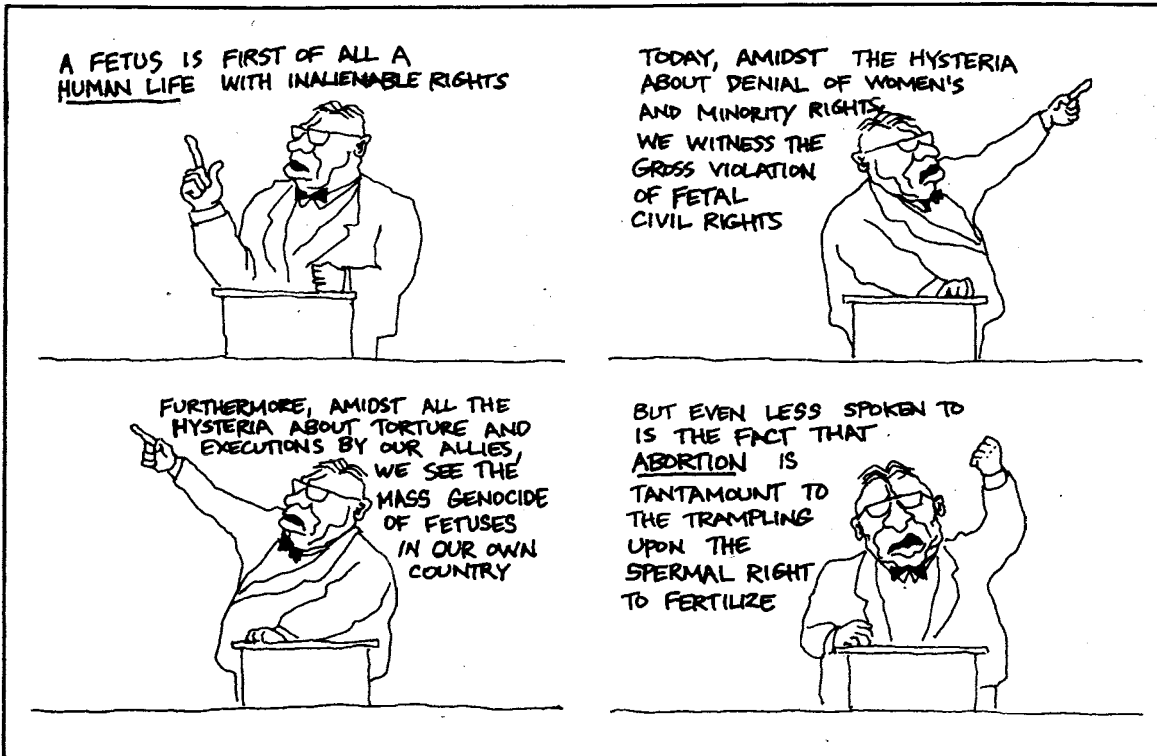
Reagan therefore, wants the U.S. to run the war more directly, and to have a free hand in destabilizing Nicaragua in order to qualitatively reduce the revolutionary tide in Central America. However, his hands are tied. The Vietnam syndrome is stubborn enough that there is still no sufficient popular support for direct U.S. intervention. Reagan is even having a hard time getting all the aid he would like for El Salvador.

This increasingly discomfiting political situation has prompted the President's speech. It was a calculated effort to regain initiative. The speech itself was a sophisticated appeal to great-nation chauvinism, a skillful attempt to rally a popular consensus around his aggressive policy. Of course, it was also a move to isolate the opponents of his policy as the unpatriotic defeatists who should be blamed if the U.S. "loses" Central America.

The movement against U.S. intervention must recognize Reagan's speech as marking a very critical juncture, as an escalation of the threat of war. Reagan has laid his cards on the table and we cannot pretend that his flag-waving has no appeal to millions of Americans. To rely on the Democratic opposition's "we-are-picking-a-sure-loser" objections to Reagan's policy would lead the movement to a deadend. The popular prejudices that Reagan has appealed to must be challenged head-on.

It is time to boldly assert that American interests are not the only interests in the world. As Nicaraguan ambassador to the Organization of American States said, "Our country has vital interests too and we will protect them." Other peoples have their interest of liberating themselves from this country's military powers, and it is time that the American people stood with them.

Only such a bold assertion—raised through teach-ins, massive protest demonstrations and actions that must dwarf the anti-intervention movement's previous efforts—can the struggle of the Salvadoran people and the victory of Nicaraguan revolution be effectively defended. As imperialism unleashes its dogs of war and intervention, we must echo with one voice the Sandinista cry "No Pasaran"—They shall not pass. The vital interest of the people of Central America for liberation, the only valid and just interest in this conflict, is at stake. □



Letters

Tell My Uncle, Please

My uncle is a large stockholder in the Castle-Cooke (Dole) Corp. He will not listen to me when I tell him the truth about how he "earns" his profits. Please have your friends write to him.

Bill Cody/Cherry Valley, CA

Okay, but if he is a large stockholder, will it do any good?—Ed.

ANG KATIPUNAN

A socialist periodical for the Filipino community

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Litter from Manila



By INIDORO DELIHENCIA

Gov. Bong Bong

President Marcos has sworn in 25-year-old Vice Gov. Ferdinand "Bong Bong" Marcos, Jr. as governor of Ilocos Norte. Bong Bong achieved a historic feat when he won the vice-governorship without any opposition. As vice governor he was responsible for upgrading the provincial slaughterhouses (for animals, that is) and the holding of province-wide basketball tournaments. His educational background prepared him for these accomplishments. Bong Bong went to Oxford University in London and also to Wharton School of Finance in Pennsylvania. For Filipinos, it is prestigious enough that he went to these schools abroad. I know a governor in the South who swept a pre-martial law election just because his campaign said he was educated in New York; even though it later turned out he just went to the Ace Driving Institute in the Bronx. Bong Bong pledges to continue the present govern-

mental and development policies of his entire family and to make Ilocos Norte the best province in the world. He replaces his aunt Mrs. Elizabeth Rocka who resigned as governor for health reasons. There is no truth to the vicious rumor that Mrs. Rocka became insane after she was gypped of several hundred million dollars in Australia. She is not, I repeat, she is not walking aimlessly in Malacañang Palace singing arias to herself as the rumor claims.

I dropped in on Imee Marcos and Tommy Manotoc after she delivered a baby boy. I asked her whether the baby would be named after her father, Ferdinand. "Are you kidding?" she replied. "My son will have his own identity. I don't want him to have it easy just because he's the President's grandson." The boy will be christened Fernando instead. I asked to see the baby but Tommy demurred because "the kid is napping." What will they do now? "First we will have dinner in Makati and then we will disappear for two weeks in a secluded spot in the Sierra Madre escorted by a crack army commando team," Imee said. "Yes, and the President himself arranged everything," Tommy beamed. Now, there's a happy couple. I wish him a long life.

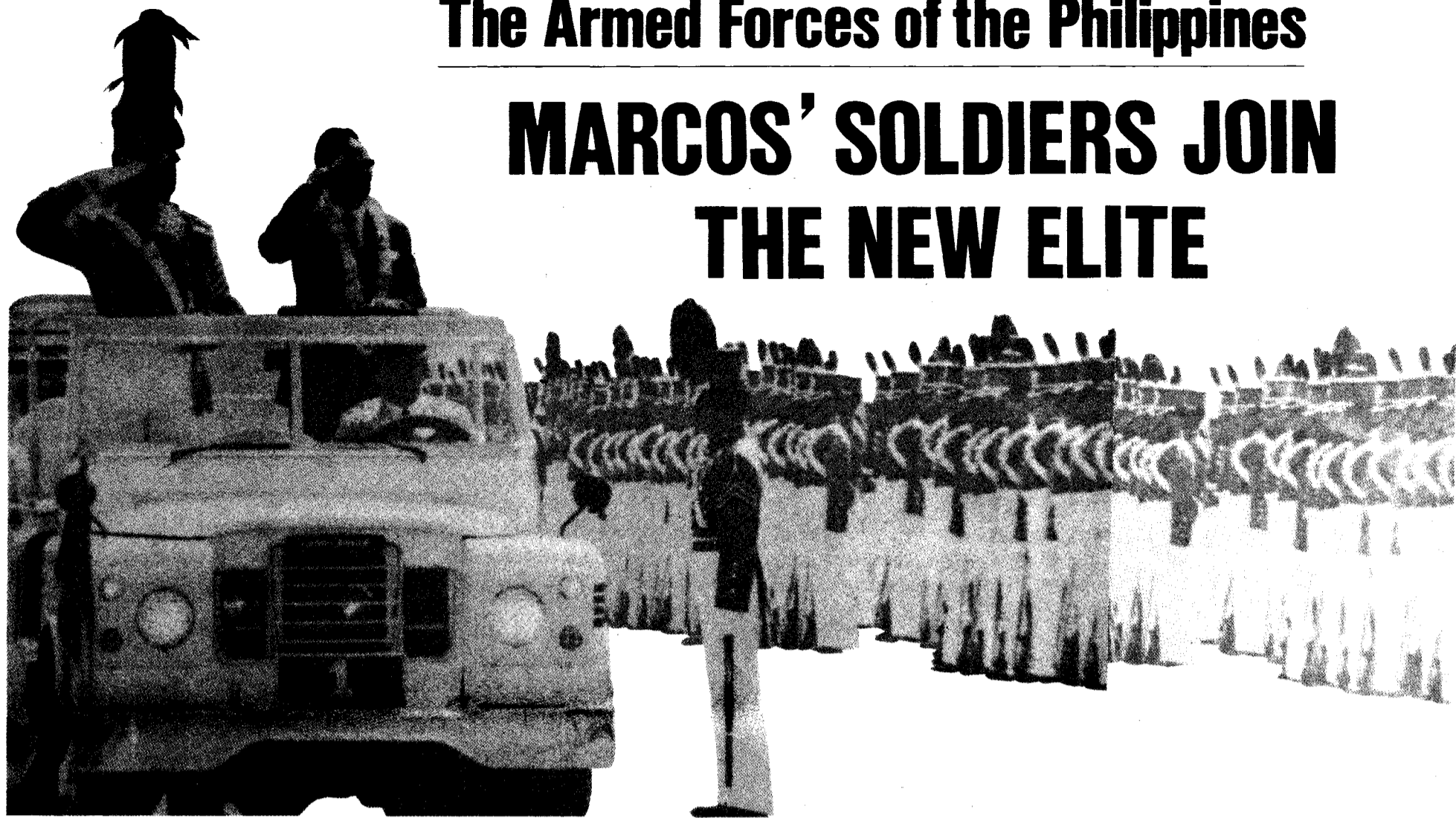
Our consuls to the U.S. are unsung heroes. They are doing everything so that the antis cannot fool the

Filipino community there about the situation here. They have to go to funerals, baptisms, swearing-ins (U.S. Filipinos love to organize) to maintain good relations. A consul I know wrote to tell me of the things he has to do for the Republic:

"You think I have it cushy? Far from it. I might get a heart attack from all the *lechon* and *leche flan* I have to eat at the endless parties. I may also become an alcoholic from the fine wines, Chivas Regal, Johnny Walker Black, at the equally endless cocktails. Maybe I will get tendonitis from pinning all those medals of appreciation or from swearing in newly-elected leaders who hold their sumptuous banquets only at the newest fancy hotels in town. They're the same people by the way—I swore in one guy 10 times in one year. Yes, he is an official of all 10 groups. I also don't know what disease I might catch from kissing beauty contestants. I caught the flu from Mrs. Filipino Community of Stockton once and colds from Bb. Pilipinas International of Indian River. And oh, my godchildren from a hundred baptisms. Good thing they don't come around at Christmas like back home. *Biro mo*, how much that would have cost me *in dollars*. Doroy, this is a thankless job. The only consolation is I am appreciated here. Like the standing ovation I got after a speech congratulating the Pangasinan Association for its contribution to humanity and world peace." The President should really consider the U.S. as a hardship post for our diplomats.

The Armed Forces of the Philippines

MARCOS' SOLDIERS JOIN THE NEW ELITE



'Given its new size and role, the Philippine military has become a new source of enrichment, privilege, prestige, and comfort for its officialdom.'

By NANCY ROCAMORA and NENE OJEDA

When the AFP moves into an area, regard for the military often falls off quickly . . ." notes the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, adding "military men wield near-absolute power in some outlying areas—their troops swaggering and pushing their way about."

Indeed, the officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines are today's hotshots—and not just in the countryside. Officers, active and retired, are to be found heading up government agencies or dot the various layers of the new bureaucracy, transforming the commands of President Ferdinand E. Marcos into government policy and executing his wishes. Some fill key slots in the foreign service, and not a few are chairing private corporations.

Not too long ago, senators, congressmen, presidential go-fers, and various networks of petty politicians did the lording over. Private armies provided the muscle for their swagger, and every so often blood would be shed to resolve conflicting interests.

Ferdinand Marcos takes great pride in having eliminated the private armies. He tactfully refrains, of course, from mentioning that he has eliminated the freewheeling politicians as well, especially those who were his political rivals. The President replaced them with a highly centralized political bureaucracy answerable only to him. As for the muscle? He reshaped and reshuffled the AFP, turning it into his own private army. Its top officers—in 11 short years—have become part of the country's new elite.

And what an impressive private army it has become. The Philippine military has expanded in size dramatically. Nearly tripling in the 10 years following the declaration of martial law, the AFP grew from 58,000 in 1972 to 146,000 in 1982. An additional 90,000 are in the army reserve. Correspondingly, the officer corps more than tripled, going from 8,000 in 1972 to 27,000 in 1982. The 33 generals of 1972 have grown to 92 today.

To support this vastly enlarged institution, Marcos' military budget swelled from \$82 million in 1972 to a staggering \$1 billion and more in 1980. The regime's apologists point out that the Philippines spends a lower percentage of its gross national product on the military than any other ASEAN nation. But they conveniently ignore the fact that this island nation receives \$100 million in U.S. military aid yearly in exchange for U.S. use of the Philippine bases (a sum that Marcos hopes to quadruple during the current bases talks), aside from millions more in arms credit and various other forms of aid.

Given its new size and role the Philippine military has become a new source of enrichment, privilege, prestige and comfort for its officialdom. Three pay increases insure that the salaries of officers

are now greater than those of civilians in parallel management positions.

The militarization of the Philippines has meant a dramatic increase in civilian responsibility and prestige for men in uniform. Generals, colonels and lower-ranking officers populate the country's ministries, often wielding decisive power. Second only to First Lady Imelda Marcos in the Ministry of Human Settlements is a certain Brig. Gen. Rene Cruz (no relation to this paper's editor).

The recently deceased Gen. Carmelo Z. Barbero served as Deputy Minister of Defense. Other generals head the National Housing Authority, the Rural Electrification Administration and the Laguna Lake Development Authority. Meanwhile both active and retired generals have found a new career in the diplomatic corps. Today generals serve as ambassadors to the People's Republic of China, Indonesia, Thailand, Burma, South Korea, and Israel.

Power and presidential favors lead to numerous business opportunities as well. Officers in the field use their near-limitless authority to acquire valuable logging and timber concessions. The devastating practice of strategic hamletting has proven particularly profitable. As peasants are driven from their lands, officers take over both land and crops.

According to one source, Marcos has created 22 economic enterprises for veterans' organizations. One of these, PHILVEDEC (Philippine Veterans Development Company), controls the lucrative and controversial Kawasaki Sintering Plant in Mindanao along with farming, fishing and banking. One general heads the Bataan Shipyards, another Luzon Stevedoring. A retired air force general serves as Vice President of Philippine Air Lines.

Finally there are less conventional sources of enrichment available. From the soldiers in the field who demand cash at roadblocks to the top generals, the new elite uses its power to extort additional wealth. Former Chief of Staff of the AFP Romeo Espino simply took over 15 companies belonging to the Fernando Jacinto family during the early years of martial law. Fidel Agcaoili, a political prisoner, once reported that some torturers also simply took over their victims' business properties.

Certain commands are known to be particularly juicy. SOWESCOM, covering much of Mindanao is highly sought after because the supposedly illegal barter trade with Sabah offers ample opportunities for kickbacks and independent business ventures. The many multinational-owned plantations in the area give hefty sidelines since all are eager to pay for security.

Military officials now hog the political leverage that once belonged to local politicians. Today it is the regional commanders who dispense patronage under a new *compadre* system. Anyone who wants a government job, protection from cattle rustlers, access to public lands, etc., must stay on the right side of the commander. This means anything from providing him with

gifts and inviting him to fiesta celebrations to naming him godfather of one's child.

Having placed such a powerful institution in control of his country, how does the individual (and civilian) Ferdinand Marcos stay on top?

To begin with, though Marcos may be a civilian in theory, he is very much a military man—a Supreme Commander in *Barong Tagalog*. He and his public relations personnel go all out to make the point. The dubious exploits of Captain Marcos during World War II have been turned into national legend.

But Marcos has other ways of maintaining control. For a starter, he turned the once puny and ceremonial Presidential Guards into the largest and most disciplined military unit assigned to the Metro-Manila area, specifically to the Malacañang Palace. The now 10,000-strong Presidential security unit is under the personal command of Gen. Fabian Ver, new Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces and for many years, Marcos' personal bodyguard.

Ver's placement in the topmost military position emphasizes yet another of Marcos' techniques for maintaining his position: centralizing military power under a few highly trusted figures.

Two men, in particular, monopolize military authority. AFP chief Ver, simultaneously chief presidential guard, is also the nation's foremost intelligence officer as head of the National Intelligence and Security Agency. Immediately under Ver, in both the military hierarchy and in political importance, is Vice-Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos, who is also Chief of Staff of the Philippine Constabulary and head of the Integrated National Police.

The loyalty of these two generals is beyond question. Ver, a mere captain when Marcos took office, skipped over the heads of many qualified officers to become chief of the Presidential Security Guard. Not only does he owe his career to the President, rumor claims he is a half-brother. The disproportionate appointment of Ilocanos to the top ranks is yet another tool that Marcos uses to maintain the loyalty of the AFP. Ramos, like Ver, is a province-mate. He is also a cousin of the President.

The only other figure wielding any equivalent power over the military is civilian Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile, although he is rumored to be unpopular within the ranks. He too, is Ilocano.

Marcos manipulates as well, certain tendencies toward disunity. He carefully pits graduates of the Philippine Military Academy against officers schooled in the Reserve Officers Training Corps and vice-versa, making sure that no faction becomes strong enough to pose a challenge to the Presidency. The regionalistic grudges between the favored (and loyal) Ilocanos and everyone else are also used to this effect. Interservice rivalries continue to smoulder among the men, erupting from time to time in brawls and shootouts.

But just in case any group of officers should get

Continued on page 4

Buod ng mga Balita

'REBEL PRIEST' CHALLENGES MILITARY TO DIALOGUE

In a letter dated March 15, 1983, Fr. Conrado Balweg challenged Marcos' military to a dialogue on the pages of the local newspaper, *Gold Ore*.

The priest turned NPA guerilla has been long-sought by the Marcos government. He was responding to repeated invitations by the Ilocos Regional Commander of the PC-Integrated National Police, Brig. Gen. Victorino Azada, to come down from the mountains for a dialogue instead of engaging in "useless bloody confrontations." Both Azada's report and Balweg's letter were printed by the *Gold Ore*, a weekly newspaper circulated in the Mountain Provinces and the Ilocos.

In an earlier response to Azada, Balweg issued a challenge which more or less told the general "come and get me." Pro-Marcos newsmen attempted to use last March's more measured challenge as proof that the priest was vacillating and on the verge of giving in. In this light, Azada claimed that Balweg is sick due to a military encounter and badly in need of medical attention.

But Balweg's letter was anything but conciliatory. He criticized continuing military abuses of ordinary farmers in the Cordilleras. He denounced every effort of Azada to discredit the revolutionary movement by resorting to the time-worn trick of labelling anything in opposition to the present system as "gutless."

The Marcos regime has accused Balweg of having abandoned his calling and abandoned God by joining the New People's Army. Balweg explains that he decided to join the NPA after only every peaceful means of fighting for the rights of the poor and the oppressed people in Abra had failed. In his letter, he says, "I assure you, that in the NPA, the issue is not whether one believes in God. The moral imperative of our times is to be true Filipinos fighting for national independence and democracy."

The Marcos government has set a ₱200,000 price on Balweg's head. □

VER MOVES TO BEEF UP MILITARY

With the national democratic revolution moving into the "higher substage of the strategic defensive" (see *AK, Vol. IX, No. 3*), the Marcos regime is racing to develop its military capacities. Its goal: to quash the revolution now before it can move into the strategic stalemate.

Much of the regime's activity focuses on developing the country's military capacity. Farsighted members of the President's party, the *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* (New Society

Movement) last month presented a bill to the Interim *Batasang Pambansa* (National Assembly) proposing the development of naval and air force academies.

More immediately, military planners are moving to beef up the 146,000-strong Armed Forces of the Philippines. AFP Chief of Staff Fabian Ver ordered all 40,000 officers and men involved in administrative work out of their chairs and into the field. Their positions, he said, would be filled by civilians.

In line with Ver's order, Rear Adm. Simeon Alejandro announced that the Navy will soon transfer officers and enlisted men to ship duty.

Recent visitors from Tarlac report that all Philippine Constabulary assigned to that province have been pulled out and sent north to combat the New People's Army in Isabela, Abra and the Ilocos. Their places are being filled by Air Force personnel. □ (See related story, page 5.)

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE TARGETS CRONY BAILOUT

The Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry joined Benguet Corporation chairman Jaime Ongpin in criticizing the government takeover of Construction and Development Corporation of the Philippines.

In a position paper submitted to Prime Minister Cesar Virata, the PCCI asserted that the bailout will have grave implications for government-private sector relations. It noted that the amount of long-term funds allocated to CDCP will automatically limit dispersal to other firms. PCCI is also concerned with the unfair advantage CDCP will have in winning government construction contracts.

CDCP is Southeast Asia's largest construction concern, specializing in road construction and civil works. It is headed by Marcos crony Rodolfo Cuenca and has long been known to be on the brink of financial disaster.

True to Marcos' tradition in handling cronies in distress, the controversial bailout was announced by Trade and Industry Minister Roberto Ongpin last February 24. Government financial institutions converted ₱3.9 billion (\$411.1 million) owed by CDCP into equity, raising the latter's capital to ₱5.1 billion and reducing its debt to ₱3 billion. The conversion resulted in a greatly increased government share in the company from 30% to 90%.

The converted amount represents almost one-third of this year's projected government deficit of ₱9.4 billion. The Philippine National Bank now owns 40% of CDCP. This is equivalent to about 60% of the bank's net worth. PCCI argues that this violates a law limiting the bank's investment in any one enterprise to 15% of its net worth.

Two weeks after the bailout plan was announced, PNB President Panfilo Domingo abruptly resigned. While he attributed his resignation to health reasons, observers point out that Domingo was in excellent health just a few weeks before.

Jaime Ongpin, brother of Minister Ongpin, has long been openly critical of the regime's economic policies. But the PCCI traditionally backs any move by Marcos. Its criticism thus strikes observers as additional evidence of rifts within the country's elite. □

PHILIPPINE NEWS JOINS 'SUBVERSIVE' LIST

On March 11, 1983, Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos added to his list of "subversives" 16 U.S.-based Marcos critics including nine staffers of the *Philippine News*. All were accused to have conspired with the editors and staff members of *We Forum* in a plot to overthrow the government through black propaganda and violence.

Charged before the Quezon City fiscal's office with subversion are former senators Raul Manglapus and Benigno Aquino, *Philippine News* editor Alex Esclamado and eight other current and former staffers, and five other alleged officers of the Movement for a Free Philippines, April 6 Liberation Movement, Light-A-Fire Movement, and allied organizations. The names were filed by Brig. Gen. Hamilton Dimaya, judge advocate general of the armed forces.

The *Philippine News* recently printed a series of articles by Bonifacio Gillego contesting the validity of Marcos' war medals. The articles originally appeared in *We Forum* and clearly outraged the President.

Esclamado dismissed the charges as "meaningless and unforceable." He pointed out that, legally, he and his staff are beyond Marcos' jurisdiction.

But Marcos has been moving to place them within his jurisdiction. Both he and his backers have been pushing for ratification of the U.S.-R.P. extradition treaty. Once ratified, it will allow him to pull out records of "documented" enemies and submit them to the U.S. State Department for extradition.

Pending in the House and Senate are amendments to U.S. extradition legislation which will bring U.S. law into line with the U.S.-R.P. treaty. The amendments remove the question of extradition from the judiciary and place the responsibility for determining whether a person to be extradited is being charged for political or criminal reasons in the hands of the U.S. State Department. This, points out the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network, leaves extradition subject to the foreign policy of successive U.S. administrations.

Esclamado and company are only the latest U.S. oppositionists to be charged by Marcos. In early 1981, the regime issued a list including Rene Cruz, editor of this newspaper. □

Marcos' Soldiers...

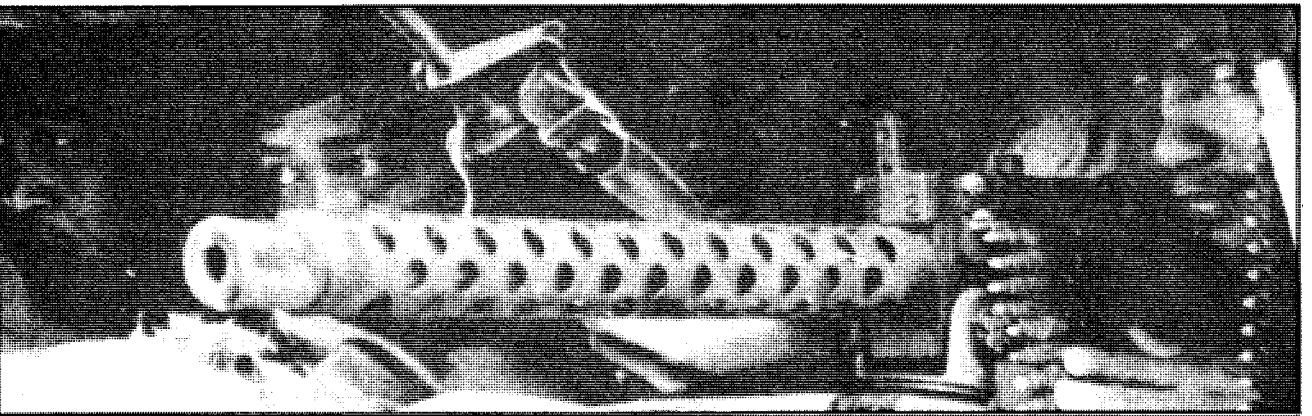
Continued from page 3

dangerous ideas, Marcos' vastly improved intelligence and surveillance network is active not only among the civilian population but within the military as well. "Today's soldier knows he is being watched," remarked an ex-officer now living in the U.S., "and he is extremely cautious."

Despite simmering internal jealousies, the AFP is relatively cohesive as a force in the service of the Republic, and the personification of the Republic in Marcos has, doubtless, enhanced that cohesion. But the underlying ideological glue that holds the AFP together is the notion that the Republic's interest is inseparable from that of the United States, the power that built the Republic in the first place. It was also the power that built and nurtured the AFP, and maintains it financially and technically to this very day. The AFP as an institution is fully aware of just who it is that ultimately butters its bread. Thus, while Marcos exercises more than substantial personal control, his influence may be good only for as long as he remains the U.S.' handpicked surrogate.

"All too often troops in the field act like an occupying army, stealing food and money," reports the *Far Eastern Economic Review*. While denying that his troops consist of a large number of rapists, extortionists, murderers, and drunkards, Ver recently announced that 35,782 "misfits" have been "kicked out" of the various services since 1972. Given its history and orientation, the AFP is, essentially an occupation force in its own country. It has been shaped principally as a force to counteract any threat to the U.S.' and the native oligarchy's allied interests.

It is not for any charitable reason that Washington supplies virtually all of the AFP's arms and equipment, and trains 250 officers in advanced military techniques in the U.S. each year. The Military As-



sistance and Advisory Group (formerly JUSMAG—Joint U.S. Military Advisory Group) monitors the end use of all military assistance. "But," remarks another ex-AFP officer now living in the U.S., "when the level of hostilities between the government and the NPA heightens, this nucleus of advisors is likely to swell into an actual operational command." Thus, the AFP today, while appearing to be independent of its U.S. founders remains true to its mercenary background.

And the AFP did start out as a collection of mercenary bands working for the Americans against their own people during the Philippine-American War that began in 1898. Their task—to track down the *insurrectos*. The most notorious of these bands were the Makabebe Scouts who were instrumental in the capture of Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo, the chief of the revolutionary forces. Eventually known as the Philippine Scouts, these separate mercenary bands were extremely useful to the colonizers because they were familiar with the terrain. The Scouts became an essential part of the U.S. Army in its pacification of the islands.

The Scouts soon numbered 50 battalions, each named according to its regional origins. This enabled the U.S. Army to use already existing regional prejudices to their advantage by sending Ilocano troops to track

Tagalog rebels and Tagalog troops to hunt Moro insurgents.

But pacification of the islands got to be a drawn-out affair. Various localized groups refused to surrender, some holding out through the century's first two decades. Washington saw the need for a native police force to maintain peace and order as American soldiers were not trained in policing a foreign people. Also, there were simply not enough Americans to keep tabs on a restive population. A native police force would also deaden the explosive racial impact of a white occupation army.

Hence, the Insular Police Force was created in 1899, the forerunner of the Philippine Constabulary. Its early members were recruited from the dreaded Guardia Civil of the Spanish colonial government. When needed, the Insular Police frequently doubled as pacification forces.

The policy of Benevolent Assimilation called for gradually transferring many of the outward trappings of colonial rule to Filipinos. Yet distrust of the colonial subjects was evident. Key political control remained in Washington. And, though the police force, and later half of the army would be native recruits, Americans remained as their officers. Filipino soldiers were allowed to rise to the rank of lieutenant—exactly one per island

Continued on page 9

New Arrests As Crackdown Continues

Marcos' repressive machinery grinds on. Its latest victims include more members of the progressive clergy, media and opposition politicians.

Most prominent of those recently hit, Mayor Aquilino Pimentel of Cagayan de Oro City, was arrested April 17. Pimentel is a founding leader of the Pilipino Democratic Party, a group composed of opposition politicians, consumer rights leaders, rural health care workers and other social rights groups.

On the basis of comments by an alleged New People Army member in military custody, he faces charges of rebellion or "actively supporting the rebellious activities of the NPA." The Cagayan de Oro mayor was named as co-accused in a case filed against Cebu politician Ribomapil Holganza and five others.

This is not the first time Marcos has attacked Pimentel. Two years ago, he was unexpectedly removed from office. Active demonstrations by his constituents forced his reinstatement.

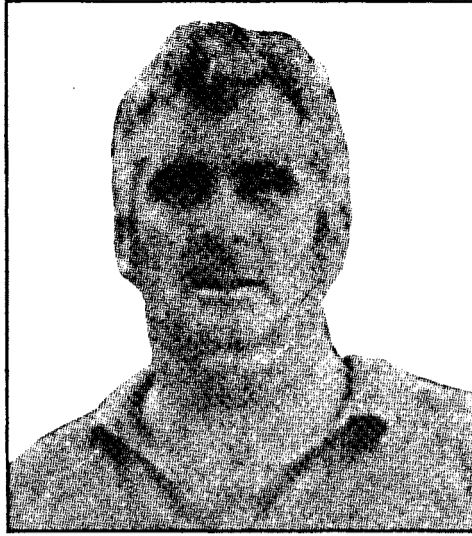
NEWSMAN, STUDENTS HIT

Meanwhile, *Bulletin Today* Senior Editor Antonio Nieva was arrested April 4. Observers in Manila expect him to be charged with conspiring to overthrow the Marcos government.

Nieva, President of the Employees Union of the Major Philippine Daily Newspapers, has been linked to the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (May 1st Movement). The KMU, whose leader Felixberto Olalia was arrested August 13, is tagged as a communist front by the Philippine military. Nieva has



Aquilino Pimentel



Brian Gore

NEWS FLASH

Journalist Antonio Nieva was placed under house arrest April 30 by presidential order after 18 days of military detention.

been denied bail. His colleagues demonstrated April 19 to demand his release.

Other sectors of the opposition have also been hit. Seven students were reported arrested and several others wounded when police broke up a peaceful demonstration consisting mostly of Igorots early last March. The protest denounced the government's exploitation of the Grand Cañao. The Tourism Ministry had used this tradi-

tional Igorot feast of celebration to draw in tourists and foreign exchange.

MORE ATTACKS ON RELIGIOUS SECTOR

The church sector remains one of the most consistent targets of the on-going crackdown.

A raid on the Ecumenical Center for Divinity in Davao City on March 24 led to the arrest of two visiting German nationals, Volker Martin Schmidt and Dorothea Brankaer, both from the Third World Forum. Also detained were lay workers Anmay Moralbos, Jethro Dionisio and Gilda Narcisco. Brankaer was released four days later.

Karl Gaspar, former Executive Secretary of the Mindanao-Sulu Pastoral Committee,

was arrested two days following the raid although he did not surface until April 9. Military officials refused to reveal his whereabouts, since documents reportedly seized along with firearms from Gaspar's office linked him to several other people still being sought. Gaspar is now detained in Camp Crame, Metro Manila.

SIN TRIES TO BALANCE CLASS INTERESTS

The regime earlier arrested Rev. Brian Gore, an Australian priest and subjected him to deportation proceedings. Gore, for 13 years a parish priest of Kabankalan, Negros Occidental, is charged with inciting rebellion and illegal possession of firearms. A murder charge, claiming Gore masterminded the execution of Kabankalan Mayor Pablo Sola in 1982, was later added.

The regime recently displayed clemency by suspending the deportation hearings, but Gore's co-accused, Filipino priest Vicente Dangan, remains charged.

The regime's crackdown on the church includes using turncoat priest Eduardo Kangleon to rebait the progressive wing of the clergy. This has exposed class differences within the institution.

Jaime Cardinal Sin, the Philippines' highest prelate, remains engaged in a delicate and often ludicrous balancing act. While demanding the release of priests and nuns under detention, he insists upon a stance of "critical collaboration." He recently offered Marcos a plan to set up a broad-based advisory council for national unity. □

Demonstrators Demand Bases Out



Demonstrators burn Uncle Sam effigy; coalition calls for ouster of U.S. ambassador.

With negotiations over the U.S. bases in the Philippine drawing near, a series of demonstrations last month signified widespread and growing opposition.

The demonstrations, which took place in front of the U.S. Embassy were led by a broad coalition of opposition parties—clergy, students and labor leaders. Prominent in the protests were former senators Lorenzo Tañada of the merged LABAN and Filipino Democratic parties and Jose Diokno, of the Movement for Philippine Sovereignty and Democracy.

At the first demonstration, an estimated 300 people signed a petition to expel U.S. Ambassador Michael Armacost and Political Counselor Herbert Malin for interfering in Philippine affairs by "defending the presence of American bases in the Philippines." Armacost has noted that the presence of Subic Naval Base, home of the U.S. 7th Fleet, and Clark Air Base, headquarters of the 13th Air Force, diminishes the likelihood of war and warned that dismantling them would change the "strategic equation" of power in Asia, the West Pacific and the Indian Ocean.

The key issue during the negotiations will not be whether the bases remain. That was decided upon long before Ferdinand Marcos journeyed to the U.S. last September to meet with U.S. President Reagan.

The key issue remains how much the Philippines will receive in exchange for their presence. The current agreement calls for \$500 million in U.S. military aid

over a five-year period ending in 1984. Marcos hopes to quadruple the figure. In light of the Reagan administration's support for the regime, observers suspect he will get close to his asking price of \$2 billion.

Meanwhile signs of open U.S. military support to the repressive regime are everywhere. Units of the U.S. and Philippine air force, navy, marine corps, and constabulary last month launched a mock war entitled "Balikatan Tangent Flash '83" involving more than 14,000 men.

The current war games, the largest such exercise in years, is planned to last 20 days.

U.S. participants include a flotilla of 15 warships from the U.S. Navy led by the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Coral Sea and several squadrons of jet fighter-bombers from the U.S. 7th Fleet and the 13th Air Force Base at Clark.

Armacost insists that the bases serve U.S. interests by protecting the sea lanes to the Middle East. But the participation of Clark- and Subic-based units in the war games emphasizes their growing role in assisting Marcos' mounting counterinsurgency drive.

To underscore U.S. involvement in Philippine counterinsurgency, the U.S. government last April 20, turned over five new trainer aircraft to Maj. Gen. Vicente Piccio, Chief of Staff of the Philippine Air Force. The Marcos regime recently announced a drive to build up its air force as part of the effort to combat insurgency. □

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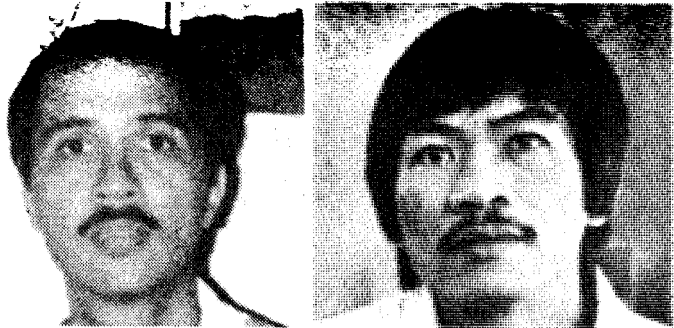
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Sixto Carlos

Satur Ocampo

'Execution at the regime's hands might not strike the long-term detainees as a particularly remote possibility. For some, death has been only a few steps away.'

Political Prisoners . . .

Continued from page 1

know why we are bound to win and why you are bound to lose."

BERNABE BUSCAYNO

Bernabe Buscayno was another of the most hunted men in Philippine history before he was seized on August 26, 1976. Buscayno was a farmer in Central Luzon who came to recognize his own oppression. He was determined to take up arms to fight for a better society. On that day, the legend of Commander Dante was born. Dante's outstanding leadership during the formative years of the New People's Army was due not only to his capacity to lead an ambush or plot a raid, but to his perspective on military work. Dante focused on organizing the peasants politically around the national democratic program. In doing so, he helped to forge the program of the NPA which stresses land reform, agricultural assistance and dispensing medical treatment in addition to outright military activity.

"I guess that just about eliminates the NPA," Marcos smirked on the day after his troops captured the legendary figure. That was seven years ago. But the program Dante helped to develop obviously worked. Two months ago, Marcos sent 7,000 troops to one small part of Mindanao to combat the NPA.

VICTOR CORPUS

Yet another object of the regime's wrath and the admiration of the resistance movement is prisoner Victor Corpus. On December 29, 1970, Corpus, a cadet at the Philippine Military Academy, led a successful raid on the PMA's armory and defected to the NPA. Corpus' rigorous military training proved extremely useful to the young NPA. He quickly became its training officer.

Corpus' defection outraged the Marcos regime and he quickly became one of the most hated of revolutionary leaders. When they finally netted him on January 30, 1976, Marcos' agents spared nothing in their efforts to wring a statement of capitulation from him. Corpus stood firm and, after being severely tortured, was punished by years in solitary confinement.

SATURNINO OCAMPO

Prior to the declaration of martial law, Saturnino Ocampo, or Satur, was a leading journalist and the Assistant Business Editor of the *Manila Times*, a leading national daily. When Marcos closed down the media and began arresting journalists, Satur was forced to go underground.

But Satur was precisely the journalist Marcos most wanted. As president of the Business Economic Reporters Association of the Philippines from 1970 to 1972 and Vice-President of the National Press Club from 1971 to 1972, he was very influential among his colleagues. The regime felt threatened by the combination of his prominence and his adoption of the national democratic perspective.

In spite of his arrest on January 14, 1976, Satur continues to criticize the Marcos regime and to play a leading role among political prisoners.

SIXTO CARLOS, JR.

Sixto Carlos was drawn into protest actions in the early seventies to expose the neocolonial status of the country and the intensifying fascist schemes of the government. In 1971, he became National Chairman of the *Samahan ng Demokratikong Kabataan* (Movement of Democratic Youth), a youth organization which organized many mass actions "against foreign domination in the Philippines and the increasing militarization of (our) society."

When the writ of *habeas corpus* was suspended in August of 1972, Sixto was one of the first 60 placed on the government's wanted list. By the time of his arrest on April 23, 1978, he had become a leader of the National Democratic Front.

Execution at the regime's hands might not strike the long-term detainees as a particularly remote possibility. For some, death has only been a few steps away.

Torture is common within Marcos' prisons. The prominent revolutionaries have suffered brutally. Techniques range from the standard water cure (water

poured into the nostrils through a towel while the mouth is held shut) to fist blows, the "Meralco treatment," or electric shock to the genitals and other parts of the body, burning of the sexual organs with lighted cigarettes, being forced to sit on blocks of ice to simply being chained to a cot in a small, suffocating room day and night. Among the indignities Joema suffered was being manacled to his cot for eighteen months in a small windowless cell.

Since their arrest, Joema and Dante have been kept in solitary confinement in small stifling cells in two different military stockades. The cells do not allow fresh air or views of the outside. They do absorb a tremendous amount of heat, dust and gas fumes. Due to severe torture and prolonged detention, Corpus is reported to have suffered some psychological disorientation.

For the first nine months of Satur's arrest, he was kept in isolation. His wife, four children, relatives and friends, not knowing where he was, presumed he had been killed by his captors. Not content with keeping him without food for some time, his sadistic military captors made him eat human excreta.

Most severely tortured of all was Sixto Carlos. He too was missing and presumed dead for the first four months of his confinement. Aside from running the usual gamut of tortures, Sixto reports that one of the most painful things he experienced was the continuous pounding of his testicles with quick sharp blows from a small hammer.

Sixto was also subjected to a primitive version of the medieval rack during interrogation. He was placed in a hanging position, his bound hands pulled by a hook and pulley while his feet remained attached to the edge of an iron sheet. His capture and confinement aggravated a preexisting rheumatic heart condition. This provided his captors with an additional technique—denying him his medicine. "What further need have you for medicine—we are going to kill you anyway," they gloated.

Torture and confinement have not dampened the spirits of these revolutionary leaders. Even in prison, they and their fellow prisoners continue to struggle for their rights under the conditions available to them. They are strengthened by the continuing growth of the national democratic movement and greatly aided by friends and relatives—sometimes at great risk to themselves.

Joema, though in solitary confinement, has smuggled out inspiring messages in letters and poems. Those imprisoned along with others helped organize hunger strikes which forced the release of certain prisoners. They demanded and received visiting rights, the right to read newspapers, to have clean sheets and won higher food allowances.

Groups both nationally and internationally now provide tremendous support to the political prisoners, publicizing their demands and aiding their families. Documented studies on political prisoners have been published nationally by the Association of Major Religious Superiors through its Task Force Detainees and internationally by Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists.

In 1978, relatives and friends of political prisoners formed the *Kapisanan ng Pagpapalaya at Amnistiya ng mga Detenido sa Pilipinas* (KAPATID, Association for the Release and Amnesty of Philippine Detainees). This organization responds to the needs of the families and relatives as well as those of the detainees.

An ad hoc committee was created locally to take charge of forming the Free Jose Ma. Sison Committee in July of 1980. Its goal is Joema's transfer and eventual release through legal campaigns and petitions. This endeavor, according to the group, could provide an opportunity to set legal, moral and political precedents for other political prisoners all over the country.

The plight of Philippine political prisoners was one of the first issues popularized by the Anti-Martial Law Coalition, later the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship and the Philippine Solidarity Network, in the U.S. Broad groups from Hong Kong, Australia, Europe and Canada have taken up the struggle for political prisoners. In Japan, the Concerned Groups for Human Rights in the Philippines was formed in September 1979 to take up the prisoners' issue.

The continued presence of unconvicted political prisoners throughout the country's jails has already proven an embarrassment. Not far into the martial law years, Marcos admitted that 70,000 political prisoners had passed through his jails. The TFD reported over 1,500 prisoners in jails throughout the country at the beginning of 1982. Over the next six months, close to 500 more were arrested—and these are only those reported.

"There will be no more political detainees," military officials were overheard muttering as early as 1975 in response to some of the more embarrassing exposes. With that was born the ominous practice of "salvaging"—military slang for simply disposing of prisoners after torture and interrogation.

Legalized execution might provide another chilling solution to the problem. Marcos certainly would not be the first to adopt it. Only recently Guatemala's Rios-Montt executed a number of convicted prisoners on the eve of Pope John Paul's arrival in his country. It was a brutal attempt to terrorize the opposition into silence.

For some of the long-term prisoners, the mechanism for eliminating them quickly—and legally—is already in place. In November of 1977, a military tribunal found Dante, Corpus and former Senator Benigno Aquino guilty of rebellion and arms smuggling in the Karagatan-Andrea Case. The three were sentenced to death by musketry. It was only widespread protest—both domestically and internationally—that forced Marcos to reopen the case. But the death sentence was never formally revoked and continues to hang over their heads.

Given the value of Dante, Corpus and the others to the revolutionary movement, Marcos is highly unlikely to release them. If he can find a way to eliminate them, he will. They thus remain in the lion's den, vulnerable to Marcos' continuing efforts to terrorize his opposition. Only intense local and international pressure will preserve their lives. □

AK thanks the national staff of CAMD/PSN for materials and assistance in producing this article.

CAMD/PSN Political Prisoners Campaign

At its ninth conference last March, the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network reaffirmed its longstanding commitment to fight for the release of Philippine political prisoners. It will continue to implement its Project on Political Prisoners and will expand this work in response to the arbitrary arrests that are expected to intensify.

In the last year, the Free Satur Ocampo campaign, undertaken by the Toronto chapter, has generated broad support not only within the Canadian Filipino community, but among sympathetic church human rights agencies and even pro-human rights officials in the Canadian parliament. In recognition of the increasing demand for international pressure on the plight of long-term detainees, the CAMD/PSN in Canada will launch the Free Satur Ocampo Campaign nationwide in June.

In the U.S., CAMD/PSN plans to expand this project, with chapters re-launching their political prisoners adoption groups. In the past, adoption groups were instrumental in leading pressure campaigns such as letter-writing to Congress people and even directly to government officials in the Philippines seeking the release of political detainees. They also assisted in meeting the immediate needs of political

prisoners and their families. Adoption groups will focus on long-term detainees such as Jose Ma. Sison and Sixto Carlos, Jr. Plans to adopt other political prisoners are under way.

The CAMD/PSN will also work to increase the size of the Urgent Action Appeal network nationally and on the local chapter level. This is a network of individuals, human rights agencies and organizations mobilized to respond to urgent cases such as missing oppositionists in the Philippines whom the military refuses to surface for access to their lawyers or families. With the crackdown that started in April 1982 and reached new heights during Marcos' U.S. state visit, this network has been instrumental in mounting immediate pressure campaigns.

If you wish to participate in the CAMD/PSN Project on Political Prisoners, write to the CAMD/PSN National Office:

In the U.S.:
CAMD/PSN
National Office
P.O. Box 173
Oakland, CA 94668

in Canada:
CAMD/PSN Toronto
P.O. Box 5505,
Station A
Toronto, Ontario
M5W 1N7

or contact your local CAMD/PSN chapter. □

A Story of Asparagus and Immigration

'Augusto and other undocumented workers like him are the backbone of California's vegetable industry.'

By VENNY VILLAPANDO

"On my first day cutting asparagus, my body ached all over. I found it very painful just to urinate," the slightly-built 39-year-old Filipino asparagus cutter said with a wry smile. But physical pain is not the only stress he has to endure.

Augusto (not his real name) is also an undocumented alien or "illegal," a term immigration authorities prefer. A part-time carpenter, plumber and handyman, he is also among the current crop of asparagus workers in California's Delta Region. A multitude of Augustos, mostly from across the Mexican border and an unknown number from 10,000 miles across the Pacific, supply this country's agribusiness industry with dirt-cheap labor that is also deprived of political and economic rights and benefits.

Arriving here in the summer of 1981, Augusto's first stint with asparagus cutting started during the 1982 season at MacDonald Island where he still works. Pockets of Mexican and Filipino communities surround asparagus camps in Isleton, Walnut Grove near Sacramento and as far as Stockton.

While migrant workers represent the bulk of California's agri-business labor force, Americans, mostly of Italian descent, operate large acreage asparagus farms whose harvests are channelled to supermarket chains across the country. Compared to tremendous profits raked in by the largely white growers, minority workers bring home anywhere from \$1,200 to \$2,000 depending on the length of the cutting season, which could be anywhere from one and a half months to three months.

Asparagus farms stretch anywhere from 30 to 50 acres of land. "On my first day, I could not believe it," recounted Augusto.

"The farm is so huge my eyes could not see the end of the farm. In one day, we could fill more than a truckload. The more asparagus you cut, the more the boss earns. It's good money but of course, it's seasonal work. For the boss, operating this business is really big money."

Rain or shine, they cut asparagus. Workers don several layers of clothing to protect their bodies from heat and cold. Unlike other vegetables where picking has been highly mechanized (like tomatoes and sugar beets), machines have not replaced the delicate technique for cutting asparagus. Using three-inch long knives, workers stoop all day long in their work.

"After a day's work, you can hardly straighten up your body because it involves bending most of the time," Augusto explained.

"Food is not free. There is a cook that prepares the meals—he is paid by the American, the big boss. For breakfast, you pay \$3, lunch \$3.50-\$4 and dinner, of course, is more. You don't pay for accommodations—that's free."

Augusto and other undocumented workers like him are the backbone of California's vegetable industry. A stream of Mexicans trek daily across the southern border in life-threatening situations. Augusto himself slipped into the country from the Canadian border up north. While he crouched for several hours in the trunk, relatives drove him to Seattle from where he made his way to the Bay Area.

"I was afraid I'd get caught because my body was trembling so hard that they would notice the trunk," recalled Augusto, who hails from Baguio City, where he sends money to his wife and three kids.

In addition to the grueling work schedule which begins at three or four in the morning, he has to cope with an undiminished fear of getting caught and eventually being deported.

"It is work that many undocumented



Asparagus, a commercially popular vegetable item, brings enormous profits for growers.

Emil De Guzman

people take, especially those from the [Mexican] border. But there are a lot of Filipinos too. In this field alone I can tell you a dozen who are 'TNT' (*tago nang tago* or one who always hides). But not all Pinoys at MacDonald are illegal. I know a lawyer and an engineer who can't find any other work who are here."

Immigration agents, he said, use helicopters that hover above the fields. "If you run, they will go after you. There was a Mexican in our crew who ran. As the helicopter landed, he jumped into the river. Later, they found his body floating. . . . it was sad and scary."

Augusto explained that there are actually more Mexicans than Filipinos who get caught "because it is easier to deport Mexicans—they will just send them across the border."

But Filipinos cost more to deport because they have to be flown far away. Sometimes, during raids, they will line up workers and agents will go straight to Mexicans but not Filipinos.

"Only if someone squeals, they will arrest a Filipino. At one time, the INS raided our camp and went straight to the room of a Filipino TNT. They knew exactly who to arrest because somebody squealed," added Augusto.

Disenfranchised workers have historically been the source of steady cheap labor for growers representing California's agribusiness industry.

When Filipino pioneers first immigrated to the U.S. in the early 1900s, an astonishingly huge number found themselves employed as agricultural workers engaged in the planting and harvesting of vegetables such as lettuce, sugar beets, asparagus, and tomatoes.

In the growing of asparagus, for example, out of 7,000 workers employed in California's Delta Region, the 1930 Census revealed 5,000 to 6,000 were Filipinos. In other words, they represented over 80% of the total number of workers in the region's 360 asparagus camps.

"The agile, medium and low-built Filipino could move faster than the clumsy, stocky-built Mexican, the lanky Hindu, or the indolent Negro," quoted a local newspaper in describing Filipino asparagus workers.

What the newspaper left out is the fact that Filipinos were shunned from employ-

ment in the cities due to existing racial attitudes prevalent against Asians in general.

For a while the California Chamber of Commerce attempted to exclude them even as agricultural laborers. But according to historical accounts, "groups of employers in the San Joaquin Valley, the Salinas Valley, the Imperial Valley, and the Santa Clara Valley [were] by no means sure that they [could] dispense with the timely aid which Filipino immigration [had] brought them after the doors were closed upon Oriental immigration, and indeed, wonder[ed] what would become of them, in competition with other food industries, if they were deprived of their Filipino workers."

Along with other migrant workers from Japan, China, Mexico, Turkey, and Korea, Filipinos received from 90¢ to \$1.40 per 100 pounds; for washing asparagus, they received 16¢ per 100 pounds.

Today, while the industry has undergone vast changes as a result of heavy mechanization, growers still rely on the same disenfranchised labor force—undocumented Mexicans, Filipinos and hundreds of desperate job-seekers trapped by the economic crunch. As a seasonal crop, asparagus yields more profits than others. These are magnified by the hiring of low-paid workers who can be brought in and out of regular employment.

The U.S. government is the growers' biggest backer, by pushing for immigration laws conducive to providing the industry with a continuous stream of short-term workers, deprived of benefits such as social security, unemployment and MediCal. Such is the intent of the notorious Simpson-Mazzoli Bill, an "immigration reform" bill which, in its second time around, recently passed the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Intent on pushing the bill without any hitch this time, legislators hope to legalize a new *bracero* or contract labor program, that will provide a steady stream of low-paid, benefit-less and transitory migrant labor ideal for growers' needs.

Will Augusto continue his back-breaking work in asparagus camps?

"It's a matter of getting your body adjusted to the job. The hardest is the first week and after that, it's manageable. Yes, I will continue as long as I can because the money is good. If I get caught . . . sorry *na lang!*" □



Filipino farmworkers in the 1930s represented over 80% of California's asparagus workers.

By VICKY PEREZ

Carlos entered kindergarten with the exuberance of any new student. He came from Mexico. By the time he was 9, he frequently skipped school as he hated it. It was not that Carlos did not want to learn what was being taught, subjects and skills he previously valued. It was just that he could not read the English books, and understand or be understood by his teachers. They stopped wanting to teach him, and he stopped wanting to be taught. Carlos was one of three million children eligible for bilingual education but the program was not being instituted in his school. At age 15, he dropped out of school.

For the past nine years, bilingual educators have fought an uphill battle with conservatives to make education accessible to English-limited children by developing bilingual education.

Today, conservatives are banding together to eliminate bilingual education because, as former Senator S.I. Hayakawa claims, the programs have "inhibited their command of English and retarded their full citizenship." Bilingual advocates charge that the conservatives speak with a forked tongue.

With full support of the Reagan administration, conservatives have launched a flurry of legislative assaults on bilingual education:

- Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 72 introduced in the Senate this year will enforce English as the official national language in the Constitution. If adopted by two-thirds of the states, SJR 72 would set the basis for prohibiting bilingual education, bilingual voting materials and other similar forms of assistance to immigrants. Already, a resolution, SJR 7, to support SJR 72 has been introduced in California State legislation.

- The Bilingual Education Improvement Act S2412, to be re-introduced in the U.S. Senate this year, will remove the 1978 federal guidelines for bilingual education. The bill, if passed, will leave guidelines on bilingual education up to the discretion of the schools, and allow them to still be eligible for funding.

- In 1981, California passed new legislation adding higher requirements for Language Development Specialists, or bilingual educators.

- In what is considered a precedent-setting decision, voters in Dade County (Miami), Florida prohibited the spending of county funds "for the purpose of utilizing any language other than English, or promoting any culture other than that of the United States." The Latin immigrant community constitutes 41% of the Dade County population.

Bilingual education came in the wake of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited discrimination on the basis of "race, color or national origin."

The decision to enforce bilingual education as a right of immigrants was made in the 1974 case of *Lau vs. Nichols*. The landmark case involved Chinese-speaking students in San Francisco who were denied access to the educational system, or fell two to three levels behind their English-speaking counterparts because of language barriers. By 1978, Congress developed guidelines, specifying a transitional model for bilingual programs. Bilingual education's intent is to transition non-English speaking children into the English language to facilitate their educational and social development. Implemented during the child's first three to four years of schooling, the program calls for the use of the child's mother tongue as the medium of instruction along with several hours of English a day.

An estimated 3.6 million children are limited in English proficiency in the U.S. and are technically eligible for bilingual education programs. In 1980, only 300,000 to 400,000 of these students were enrolled in the programs.

"Without these programs," states Cathi Tactaquin of the Bay Area Committee Against the Simpson-Mazzoli Bill (BACASM), "business can go about unhampered by federal policies and discriminate on the basis of language."

Tactaquin added that most English-li-

Bilingual Education: Next on the Chopping Block



If bilingual education is scrapped, Mexican, Chinese, Filipino, and Southeast Asian immigrant children will be effectively denied access to education.

imited immigrants generally remain unaware of their rights. "Without bilingual programs to help them gain a foothold in society, they become even more vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination."

Businesses enforcing oral examinations as criteria for promotions have kept many well qualified immigrants and U.S.-born minorities from better positions because of accents and grammar.

Educationally, only a minority of the population achieves the requirements for the better paying jobs. Only 30-40% of the Mexican-American community finishes high school and less than 7% ever completes college.

Among the Mexican-Americans, the largest immigrant community in the U.S., the average annual family income is \$12,600 while the national average is \$17,600. More than half of the Mexican-Americans above the poverty line are found working in agriculture, manufacturing or service industries. Only 8% hold professional or technical positions.

Racial discrimination is the biggest factor that contributes to these conditions. Language difficulties aggravate the segregation of most non-white immigrants. But conservatives have blamed bilingual programs for the low educational and economic attainment among non-English speaking minorities.

Hayakawa explains, "I personally believe the ESL [English as a Second Language] and immersion techniques allow non-English speaking students to . . . join the mainstream of society more quickly than through transitional bilingual education. Hayakawa heads up "US English," a group lobbying for the national language amendment to the Constitution. It is backed by rightwing and business interests. The group's Gerda Bikalas says English should be the national language because it is "the best language in the country and in the world."

Cora Samonte, a bilingual educator with the Los Angeles Unified School District, strongly disagrees: "Forcing students into English-intensive programs does not make them learn quicker; it only forces these students out of the schools, back into the poor neighborhoods . . . or else they are put in classes for the mentally retarded and treated as such."

Studies have confirmed Samonte's observations. Students receiving formal bilingual education not only had higher school attendance relative to the student

population, but also scored higher in IQ and achievement measures.

Without bilingual education programs, minority families will have to shoulder the entire responsibility of educating themselves and guiding their children through alien school environments.

But the programs were never popular with "mainstream Americans." Even with Congressional policies enforcing bilingual education, the public educational system resisted the directive. The president of the American Federation of Teachers, Albert Shanker, called the policies an "unmitigated disaster." American teachers in New York attacked bilingual education as a "fraud."

Without federal pressures, districts did not want to spend for bilingual education, or be pressured to provide special education arrangements for immigrant children. The schools preferred to receive federal funds for bilingual education, but wanted to "teach" English-limited students in regular classrooms, with only a few hours of English instruction added.

Even with Congressional directives, less than 15% of the children eligible for bilingual education actually had access to it. The rest were forced into ESL and immersion programs.

The rightwing assault on bilingual education comes in the midst of Ronald Reagan's campaign to unite the nation around an economically and militarily "stronger America." To lift business and industry out of its doldrums, Reagan is pursuing a systematic assault on the social wage, i.e., the wages and benefits that contribute to one's standard of living. Also, funds commandeered through cuts in education, health and welfare are being directly funnelled to the most expensive military program in history.

The ideological impact of the assault on bilingualism cannot be underestimated. The hysteria over the proliferation of "alien languages" corresponds with the convenient use of immigrants as scapegoats for America's economic ills.

In California, for example, state officials last year investigated voters who used bilingual ballots (Chinese and Spanish) to see if any were undocumented aliens. This came at a time when the Immigration and Naturalization Service was rounding up foreign-looking workers nationwide, workers who are "taking jobs away from Americans."

Reflective of the intensifying phobia about aliens, the most repressive and far-reaching immigration "reform" bill—

Simpson-Mazzoli—is gaining momentum in Congress. Demographic researchers predict that 10 to 20 years from now, individuals with Spanish backgrounds will be the majority population of several states. Political leaders are anxious as to how to stem this tide, and insure that the brown multitude are restricted to their "proper place" in society.

The calls for eliminating bilingual education, while reinforcing the segregation of immigrant minorities into the lower rung of the labor force, also feed the national chauvinism of English-speaking Americans (especially whites) who support such stratification.

The vehemence with which conservatives attack bilingual education alongside affirmative action, desegregation and abortion rights, also indicates that they are using the issue in their campaign to forge a "new national consensus" based on patriotism, religious fundamentalism and white racial supremacy. Conservative columnist James Kilpatrick argues that bilingual programs "invite schism and dissension."

Hayakawa goes as far as to say that the programs prepare the grounds for officially and permanently bilingual states, in which case, "separatist movements a la Quebec will be the final stop."

All this is *deja vu*. Bilingual education is not a new concept, and historically, it always prospered or faded according to shifts in the political climate.

In the mid-1800s, public schools began to offer instruction in German, French, Spanish and English to draw immigrants from parochial schools. The Spanish-speaking population of the southwestern states supported these programs actively. After WWI, few of these programs remained intact. The government advocated a national identity based on "democracy and free enterprise" which it felt required the foundation of a common language.

According to Charles Foster, a senior specialist in the U.S. Education Department's Office of Bilingual Education, "the melting pot concept and monolingualism became the certification of assimilation." Bilingualism was viewed as a burden, even a threat to society. The attacks on it also coincided with the national hysteria against immigrants as "foreign agents of godless communism."

This is the atmosphere conservatives are attempting to revive today. Their efforts to frustrate the immigrant minorities' ability to gain equal access to jobs and opportunities coincide with their call for the reassertion of U.S. world supremacy. □

Marcos' Soldiers...

Continued from page 4

group. Proving their loyalty, a batch of Philippine Scouts even fought alongside U.S. troops in the inter-imperialist First World War in Europe.

Counterinsurgency activities continued almost non-stop throughout the American period as pocket resistance erupted continually. Some movements demanded land for tenant farmers like the Colorum rebellions of the 1920s. Others, like the Sakdalistas, called for Philippine independence. The Insular Police, which became the Philippine Constabulary in the 1930s figured heavily in the smashing of these and other, smaller resistance movements.

As the U.S. intended to stay for good, the continuity of its internal security force had to be assured. The Officers' Training School, begun in 1905 as a three-month training school for American soldiers, gradually grew into a regular four-year military college by 1935 and began to take in Filipino recruits. This became the Philippine Military Academy, literally modelled after the U.S. academy at West Point.

With the promise of independence and the establishment of a Commonwealth in 1935, the U.S. began setting up a regular Philippine armed forces—in its own image. Gen. Douglas MacArthur resigned from his post as U.S. Army Chief of Staff to become Field Marshal of the Philippines, a title created just for him. MacArthur's plans called for an \$800 million program for an 80,000-strong Philippine Army with air and naval support, a force theoretically capable of fending off an invading army of equal size for over three years. In 1941 this defense plan would fail miserably before the invading Japanese imperial army.

After Pearl Harbor, the Philippine Armed Forces were placed under the command of the United States Armed Forces of the Far East. The PC, although officially under USAFFE command, was quickly subsumed by the new Japanese-installed puppet government. Throughout the occupation, USAFFE remnants adopted a lie-low policy.

Much of the actual defense of the Philippines was taken up by patriotic guerilla forces, the largest of which was the *Hukbong Bayan Laban sa Hapon* (Hukbalahap or Huks), the guerilla army led by the *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas*. The Huks' success and popularity lay not only in its military capacity against the Japanese invaders, but also on the radical measures it implemented against landlordism in the rice-producing areas of Central Luzon. The communists' well-known pre-war demand for independence from the U.S. also boosted its popularity in many places in Luzon.

The Huks, however, were viciously hunted down not only by the Japanese forces but also by some of the USAFFE guerillas. Alliances between USAFFE troops and Japanese soldiers against the Huks were not uncommon. The governor of Nueva Ecija even resorted to issuing PC uniforms to both Japanese soldiers and USAFFE troops and sending them out to track down Huks. One such incident reportedly left 200 Huks dead.

Despite such incidents, the Huks numbered up to 400,000 armed men and supporters by war's end, an alarming number compared to the puny 37,000-man Philippine Army. The returning MacArthur, fearful of an outright communist takeover, swiftly demobilized the Army, placed its troops under U.S. Military Police command and launched an anti-dissident campaign against the most effective of the anti-Japanese fighters. The PC, though popularly scorned for its wartime collaboration with the Japanese, was quickly pulled back into service against the Huks.

Philippine independence, granted in 1946, was pre-conditioned on various treaties that bound the country tightly to its former master and insured continued but hidden American control. The



Fabian Ver



Fidel Ramos



Juan Ponce Enrile

U.S. deliberately retained effective control over the military. The Military Assistance Act, signed in 1947, was designed by the U.S. not only to help maintain internal security but also to ensure the Americans had the say in every major policy decision. From the MAA came JUSMAG, the agency responsible for the Philippine counterinsurgency program of the 1950s.

With JUSMAG's advice, the government's anti-dissident campaign was reorganized. The PC was removed from the command of the Department of Interior, placed under the direction of the Department of Defense, and merged with the Armed Forces of the Philippines. Almost two-thirds of the new Republic's armed forces were assigned to counter the Huks and to suppress peasant and Moro unrests. U.S. advisers supervised the organizing of Battalion Company Teams which were 20 times larger than regular army companies, equipped with tanks, and supported by smaller units trained in guerilla warfare.

When the Korean War broke out in June 1950, President Quirino eagerly showed his puppetry by offering to send 5,000 Filipino troops. The U.S. took 1,700 but told Quirino to set his own house in order. He was directed to appoint Ramon Magsaysay, the CIA's favorite in Manila, as Defense Secretary. In October, CIA agent Col. Edward Lansdale arrived in Manila to help Magsaysay. Thus, while the 10th BCT was

'With the American-spawned AFP, the U.S. has a loyal, relatively well-trained mercenary institution already in place.'

dutifully fighting for America in Korea, the rest of the Philippine armed forces—bolstered by U.S. aid that rose from \$4 million to \$13.2 million and speeded up delivery of material—was being directed by the CIA in Huk elimination campaigns.

The Magsaysay-Lansdale team called for increased military recruitment except, of course, from the Central Luzon provinces, where the Huks were strongest. It dispatched additional police and intelligence agents to hot areas. Barrios suspected of supporting Huks were strafed by PAF-piloted U.S. planes. The PC too, did its share of terrorism. In some cases, as one PC major put it, "plainly eliminating" civilians.

Lansdale taught Magsaysay other counterinsurgency tactics such as psychological warfare through the airwaves and through rumor-mongering. In response to the Huks' call for land, they set up the Economic Development Corp. This was to relocate families from particularly overpopulated regions to Mindanao. The program, however, relocated only 1,000 families, a good number of which were families of AFP soldiers and officers.

By the late 1950s, Lansdale and his Filipino boys had done their job and the insurgency was broken. With the capture of the PKP Politburo and the remaining leadership's erroneous decision to drop the armed struggle, the Republic was kept safe for the landlords, the corrupt politicians and the U.S. investors. This

successful anti-dissident campaign became a model for Lansdale and other CIA personnel assigned to squelch the expanding Vietnamese insurgency in the 1960s. It also confirmed the AFP's undying mercenary and puppet traditions.

The early 60s represented a lull in Philippine insurgency, giving the counterinsurgency-oriented AFP a breathing spell. In 1964, newly-elected President Marcos gallantly offered his troops for counterinsurgency elsewhere, and 2,000 AFP "volunteers" were sent as a Philippine Civic Action Group to aid the U.S. forces in Vietnam. As the Philcag bled before the superior Vietnamese National Liberation Front guerillas, Uncle Sam of course, paid most of the bill.

But the lull was short-lived. In 1968, a band of 60 revolutionaries bearing a ragged assortment of arms met in Central Luzon to found the New People's Army, the military arm of the newly-reestablished Communist Party of the Philippines. Four years later, the growth of a mass movement that supported the NPA and the resurgence of the Moro movement for self-determination led Marcos to declare martial law—with U.S. blessing. This opened the present chapter in the AFP's less than honorable history.

Today's challenge to the AFP is far greater than it has been in years past. Not only are the adversaries dedicated and popular, but the New People's Army studies the science of revolutionary warfare—a science which brought victory not long ago in Vietnam, Angola, and Nicaragua.

Aware of this, both the U.S. and Marcos are working hard to stabilize, unify and upgrade the Philippine armed forces. But much remains to be done. Ver's Project *Katatagan* (Stabilization) aims to professionalize the forces in the field, at the same time tightening surveillance and control over the rural population. A bill before the *Batasang Pambansa* calls for upgrading the country's navy and air force—two services that are essential for counterinsurgency warfare in an archipelagic country, yet the two least developed of all services.

The U.S. under Reagan continues to stress not only the longstanding (colonial) relationship between the countries, but the strategic value of the Philippines. The State Department no longer makes any bones about the counterinsurgency character of its assistance. In El Salvador, Reagan has had to double-time in directly training the junta's troops in the "proper" political and fighting orientation, even training whole battalions in the U.S. In the Philippines, the U.S. has had a lot of time for this—more than 80 years. With the American-spawned AFP, the U.S. has a loyal, relatively well-trained mercenary institution already in place.

The stability provided by having a forceful commander-in-chief for 19 years has certainly improved the AFP's counterinsurgency capability. For all its internal bickerings it remains relatively unified under a central figure, and ultimately under one single imperialist sponsor.

Still after Marcos, what? After all, Marcos has given the generals and the colonels a taste, in a grander scale, of the rewards of puppetry—something they would want to retain even when Marcos is gone. Of the competing politicians and generals in Marcos' ruling coalition, it is questionable whether any has his remarkable balancing skills and capacity to satisfy the varied interests of differing factions. Many observers predict that only a junta will be able to carry on the job. And of course, it will have to be handpicked by Uncle Sam. □



Project *Katatagan* aims to professionalize the troops; additional plans call for upgrading navy, air force.

(FEER)

Domingo/Viernes Civil Suit

Judge Rules R.P. Has No Immunity

The Philippine government does not enjoy immunity in the civil suit filed by relatives and associates of murdered anti-Marcos activists Gene Viernes and Silme Domingo, a federal judge in Seattle ruled last April 21.

However, U.S. district court Judge Donald Voorhees also ruled that Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos, as well as the Philippine's Consul General in Seattle, Ernesto Querubin have immunity as individuals.

Voorhees delayed ruling on the U.S. government's claim of "absolute immunity for reasons of national security and foreign policy." Meanwhile, he ordered an indefinite stay on the plaintiffs' attempts to discover from the defendants more facts that could bolster their murder conspiracy allegations against high Philippine and U.S. officials.

The rulings came during oral arguments held at the U.S. Federal Court House in Seattle. Representing the defendants were Denise Cafaro of the Department of Justice for the U.S. government, and Peter Truboff of the Washington, D.C. law firm Covington and Burling, and Peter Jennings for the Philippine defendants. Making a surprise appearance was Philippine Solicitor General Estelito Mendoza who flew all the way to observe the proceedings from the defense counsel's table.

Representing the plaintiffs were Michael Withey, Elizabeth Schott, James Douglas and John Caughlin. Also present were the Domingo family and plaintiffs Terri Mast, ILWU Local 37 president; David Della, the local's secretary-treasurer and Rene Cruz, national executive of the Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP). Supporters and members of the Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes (CJDV) filled the large courtroom.

The civil suit, filed last September in Seattle, accuses high Philippine officials of violating Viernes' and Domingo's civil rights by conspiring to murder them. It accuses high U.S. officials of having foreknowledge of the conspiracy and of covering up for the perpetrators. Domingo and Viernes were reform-minded officials of ILWU Local 37 and prominent activists

of the KDP. They were gunned down in June, 1981 and three local hoods have been convicted for the murders.

Also named in the suit are Constantine "Tony" Baruso, the ousted "pro-Marcos" president of Local 37 and a number of suspected Philippine and U.S. intelligence operatives. The suit asks for monetary damages, as well as an injunctive relief that would protect U.S.-based anti-Marcos activists from further harassment.

The judge held that the Philippine government has no immunity because the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act allows suits against foreign governments for causing personal injury or death to persons living in the United States. He invited the defendants to appeal his decision to the ninth circuit court.

Cindy Domingo, national spokesperson

dictators like Marcos whose only ticket to immunity is the fact that they serve U.S. political and economic interests abroad."

Cruz also commented on Solicitor General Mendoza's presence, noting that it signified the Marcos' nervousness about the suit. "Mendoza is a top gun of the Marcos'. He is the regime's grand inquisitor. He is the one responsible for concocting formal charges against political prisoners or for concocting legal alibis for why some of them can be held for years without formal charges," Cruz added.

Consul Querubin was granted consular immunity based on a standard most-favored-nations agreement that frees foreign consular officials from prosecution for serious crimes that may include murder. Ironically, the same agreements do not give consular officials immunity from minor wrongdoings



Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes National Staff: Frank Kiuchi, Cindy Domingo and Kris Melroe. (CJDV Photo)

for the CJDV, said the Committee was "heartened by the ruling because it would enable us to proceed with unravelling the murder conspiracy."

The Marcoses were dropped from the suit because Voorhees held that the U.S. executive branch's suggestion of immunity for foreign heads of states is binding and cannot be challenged by the court.

Plaintiff Cruz of the KDP said that he and the CJDV were dismayed by the ruling as it confirms that the State Department "has a free hand in protecting criminal

such as injuries or deaths resulting from traffic accidents.

Before announcing that he was delaying the decision on the U.S. government's motion for absolute immunity on the basis of national security and foreign policy considerations, Voorhees listened to Attorney William Bender of the Center for Constitutional Rights who argued a friends-of-the-court brief against the U.S. claim. The brief, which warned of the grave implications to civil liberties that the U.S. immunity claim represented, was signed by former

U.S. Attorney General Ramsey Clark; the American Civil Liberties Union, Washington; the National Lawyers Guild; Seattle Catholic Archdiocese; the National Conference of Black Lawyers, Seattle; the Church Council of Greater Seattle and the National American Friends Service Committee.

Voorhees also asked the plaintiffs whether they could really place high U.S. officials in the conspiracy. The plaintiffs responded affirmatively but said that the evidence is in the hands of U.S. government agencies for which they need discovery. Voorhees announced that he will rule on the U.S. claim in two weeks. The plaintiffs speculated that he may drop the U.S. from the suit but may allow the plaintiffs to amend their complaint so that their allegations about the U.S. officials' role in the conspiracy may be "more specific."

Voorhees, however, "stayed all discovery" (attempts by the plaintiffs to get more evidence through depositions), until he makes the ruling on the U.S. claim and until the Ninth Circuit Court decides on the Philippine government's appeal. He said, however, that he will entertain specific appeals by the plaintiff for discovery.

Plaintiff Della expressed apprehension at the ruling. "It places us in a catch-22 situation. For example, we are being asked to make our charges against the U.S. defendants more specific yet, we are being prevented from getting more evidence that can make our charges more specific," he said.

The defense lawyers successfully argued that to allow continued discovery would not be in the public's interest because of the "social cost" that would be incurred by the U.S. government everytime a deposition is made. The CJDV called this argument "appealing but misleading."

In a statement released to the press, the Committee said it "has always thought that the real public interest here is not how much the U.S. government has to spend in plane fares for its lawyers, but whether justice is served in this murder conspiracy." It added that the real social cost that should have been considered is the loss of two lives and the violation of the victims' political rights.

In a minor victory for the plaintiffs, U.S. Attorney for the Western region, Gene Anderson removed his office from the defense panel. The plaintiffs had asked for Anderson's disqualification due to conflict of interest. Anderson was supposed to be investigating Baruso for racketeering and cannot be on the latter's side in the civil suit. Anderson's office has been criticized for dragging its feet on the investigation of Baruso. □

FILM REVIEW

Oro, Plata, Mata

Prizewinner A Long Way from Cannes

By ANNA TESS ARANETA

Oro, Plata, Mata, first prize winning film in the 1983 Manila International Film Festival, came to San Francisco last month. Proudly introduced to local audiences as part of the regime's experimental film project chaired by none other than Imee Marcos, it was introduced as a candidate for the exclusive Cannes Film Festival.

If anything, this prize-winner proved to the audience that Philippine filmmaking still has a long way to go. It left this reviewer longing for scissors to cut its 3-1/2 hours of poorly edited film and groaning, just like everyone else in the theatre, over director Peque Gallaga's decision to O.D. on violence and gore. If Oro, Plata, Mata makes it to Cannes, it will only be because Marcos money bought it in.

In many ways, it was really too bad. For Oro, Plata, Mata reflects a higher level of sophistication than the average "boy-meets-girl" or cowboy film that dominates Philippine film industry. Gallaga

made good use of atmosphere and subtle detail in an effort to produce social commentary.

The target of his, at times, piercing commentary were safe ones for a director working under the Marcos regime—the elite *hacenderos* of the Philippines, now becoming increasingly passé—and the workers and servants under them.

Oro, Plata, Mata provides a piercing view of the dilemmas of several wealthy landlord families fleeing on-coming Japanese during WWII.

The film opens with a scene of a birthday party for Maggie, eldest daughter of one of the families. Overly long scenes of a huge silver-laden banquet table, servants taking care of every need, elegant clothing, created a nauseating sense of decadence.

While everyone's mind is on the possibility of Japanese taking over, later scenes reveal an equal fear and contempt of "the Filipinos"—the workers and peasants who surround this small mestizo clan. "You are all mindless dummies. Where would you be without us?" shrieks Viring, a marvelously portrayed eccentric and gossip. The servants, however, remain passive and loyal to this class, never speaking back or defending their actions.

Two families and two close family friends with their complete entourage of servants, escape the Japanese by retreating to a jungle hideaway. Here the four older women play endless games of *mahjong* and the younger generation discovers sex.

The intricate relationships and surprising swaps rival your average TV soap opera—only the soaps are far less vivid.

It is here that the blood and gore begin with a jolt and persist through the rest of the film. Wounds of the retreating guerillas who stop to rest at the hideaway gush, guts spill. The audience is spared nothing. Perhaps the grossest scene occurs when Hermes, one of the anti-Japanese fighters staying with the household to recuperate becomes a hero by manually splitting open the head of an already injured Japanese intruder.

Any attempt at an honest portrayal of class conflicts begins—and ends—in the jungle. Melchor, foreman at the hacienda and manager of the jungle household, steals a jewel from Viring and is ordered to leave. "I've earned it by all the work I've done to feed you," he shouts. "While you were comfortable, I was working!" "What will you do for food without me?" he asks as he leaves. "Go ahead and eat you

mahjong tiles!" he spits to great applause from the audience.

But Melchor does not join the guerillas. He joins instead a group of bandits and returns after his defection to ransack, mutilate and kill—raping his former mistress along the way. (Perhaps this isn't so different from the cowboy flicks after all.) Melchor's ravages are shown in gory detail.

Thus the director's message about servants and workers turns out to be not all that different from Viring's. They are violent, dangerous, unreliable, just as their decadent masters claim them to be. In the course of the movie, they are the source of more violence than the Japanese.

The director borrows from a number of different sources. The film has been labelled, with some justice, a Filipino "Gone With the Wind." At the same time, the influence of both French satire and *Apocalypse Now* are equally apparent.

While the director effectively uses many aspects of Philippine life—*santos*, *engkantadas*, scenes of beautiful countryside, and folksongs, the film conveys a thoroughly cynical view of life and people. The wealthy may be imprisoned by their social mores, but the peasants and workers are animals.

Oro, Plata, Mata ends just as it began, with an elegant party—only this time the silver and china are filled with Spam and corned beef instead of lechon. Styles in clothing and hairdos have changed, but the style of life has not. Servants still know their places; the wealthy are still on top—hardly a neutral class perspective. □

By WICKS GEAGA

Yasuhiro Nakasone's recent rise to power signals an ominous turn to the right in Japanese politics and an end to the government's official post-WWII program of "peace and democracy."

A long-time advocate of Japanese remilitarization, Nakasone is embarking on an unprecedented arms build-up allegedly to counter the Soviet threat in the region.

Nakasone's declaration, during his U.S. visit early this year, to turn Japan into an "unsinkable aircraft carrier" was a gesture savored by U.S. strategists. For the past several years, the U.S. has been prodding Japan to revive its once-formidable imperial army and to assume its "fair share" in the defense of common imperialist interests.

The U.S. wants to immediately transfer the responsibility of patrolling 1,000 miles of sea lane for oil transport from Japan's coast to the Middle East, and an identical stretch to the U.S. supply base in Guam.

Even more critical is the role slotted for Tokyo in the event of an all-out confrontation with the Soviet Union. In case of such an "emergency," the Pentagon strategy calls for the Japanese forces to contain the entire Soviet Pacific fleet in the Sea of Japan by mining four "choke points" (straits) leading from Vladivostok to the Pacific Ocean. To meet up to these responsibilities, U.S. strategists stress, Japan needs a greatly expanded military.

Heeding Washington's demands, Nakasone has announced plans to upgrade Japan's air force and navy: One of his first acts in office was to increase military expenditures by 6.5% on top of the 7.5% increase by outgoing Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki.

On a regional level, Nakasone began strengthening relations with South Korea, another key U.S. ally in Asia. His recent visit to Seoul concluded a \$4 billion aid agreement with the economically ailing Chun Doo Hwan regime. He also initiated talks on the Pacific Community Plan. Sponsored by militarists within the Japanese business elite, the plan envisions a regional build-up by Japan and South Korea to counter "communist in-roads."

JAPAN'S THATCHER

Dubbed by observers as the Japanese version of Margaret Thatcher, Nakasone's Reagan-like war-rhetoric reveals a style that far outshines his conservative predecessors.

Nakasone comes from the right-wing of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), which has never shared political power with another party since its founding in 1955. As American journalist Richard Halloran notes, the LDP, contrary to its formal title, is "neither liberal nor democratic nor a party, but a conservative authoritarian alliance of *habatsu* (factions)."

The LDP has been the main prop through which the country's industrial-financial giants—the *zaibatsus*—exercise political and ideological control. As the LDP's constitution states, it is "a party which is striving strictly for the elimination of the pro-communist forces."

Nakasone, who served as an officer in the imperial navy, rose through LDP ranks as a resurgent nationalist cum militarist and as a diehard anti-communist advocating the repeal of the post-war constitution's no-war provisions.

In the early 50s when the Japanese were still suffering from the aftermath of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Nakasone promoted the civilian use of nuclear energy. Ten years ago as Defense Agency director, he secretly ordered the Mitsubishi conglomerate and other weapons manufacturers to conduct a feasibility study on the cost of producing a Japanese A-bomb.

RIDE WASN'T EXACTLY FREE

Radical as Nakasone's plans may appear, they represent a growing consensus among Japan's ruling circles. The realization that Japan must assume a "fair share of global responsibilities" is first of all an inevitable outgrowth of its rapidly rising position as a world economic power.

While Japan found it handsomely profitable in the post-WWII period to concentrate on industrial and trade develop-

Nakasone Toes Reagan's Line

U.S. PRODS JAPAN TO RE-ARM



ment while the U.S. provided the military security, this arrangement is proving to be increasingly untenable particularly for the U.S.

Complains one high State Department official: "The U.S. is not willing or able to carry all these burdens alone." And despite its previous reluctance to accede to U.S. pressures, Japan can no longer blind itself to the economic and political interests that inextricably bind the two powers together.

Today, Japan ranks second only to Canada as the main market for U.S. products. The \$22 billion that it imported from the U.S. in 1981 formed 18% of its total imports. More importantly, the most substantial market for Japanese goods is the U.S. which absorbs over 30% of its exports. This vital economic interdependence has led not a few U.S. policymakers to view "the U.S.-Japan relationship as the most important bilateral relationship in the world today, bar none."

However, Japan's large surplus—over \$30 billion for 1981-82—in its bilateral trade with the U.S. has only added weight to the latter's claim that Japan has been taking a "free ride" for too long. The growing cries for protectionism within U.S. business circles constitute a political pressure that Tokyo can no longer ignore.

More, despite its high technology and trade prowess, Japan suffers from a serious handicap. With a serious lack of natural resources, Japan imports 50% of its caloric intake and depends on imports for about 86% of its energy requirements. Its high-powered economy, thus, stands on an Achilles' heel.

The oil crisis of the past decade sharply reminded Japan of its critical dependence on Middle East oil. Japan briefly distanced itself from American Middle East policies after suffering from the Arab oil embargo of 1973. But the strengthened U.S. position in this region has further pushed Tokyo under Washington's political umbrella. The Ohira-Carter joint statement of May 1979 specified, for the first time, the widening of Japan's cooperation as a requirement in the maintenance of stability in "the Middle East and Gulf area."

RIDE WASN'T EXACTLY FREE

Grumble as U.S. officials may at Tokyo's "free ride," the U.S. has derived great political benefits from the arrangement. It

was an arrangement built primarily around the U.S. post-World War II agenda, in the first place.

Although the U.S. effectively disarmed Imperial Japan after the war to prevent it from rising as a serious military rival again, the former made sure that the latter got back on its capitalist feet. Even the slightest possibility of a Japanese revolutionary movement sweeping aside the war-weary ruling class and going the way of Eastern Europe was something the U.S. could not tolerate. Besides, with socialism and revolution looming in Korea, Indochina, Indonesia, and other parts of Southeast Asia, the U.S. needed a capitalist bulwark in the area.

Thus, the U.S. occupation government implemented its Asian version of the Marshall Plan, pumping in billions for the reinvigoration of the war-devastated economy. Simultaneously, it unleashed a "red purge" of tens of thousands of Communists and their sympathizers from factories and newspapers, and banned workers' strikes.

In post-war Japan, the U.S. acquired a valuable forward base so crucial in its execution of the Korean War. With the U.S.-Japan Security Treaty, Japan has been sanctified as a critical staging point for America's adventures, be it in South Korea or Vietnam.

NAKASONE: DEAD SET AND EAGER

The Japanese people's memories of World War II remain a significant obstacle to Nakasone's hawkish policies. The constitution's Article 9 pledges "to forever renounce war" and to "never maintain any war potential." And backing this pledge is a widespread sentiment—estimated to encompass at least a third of the population—against any form of militarism that is reminiscent of WWII.

The Japanese progressive movement is showing signs of regeneration, with peace and anti-militarism as its rallying cry. Just recently, several thousand demonstrators in Sasebo Harbor denounced the arrival of the U.S.S. Enterprise, a carrier equipped with nuclear weapons in violation of Japan's constitutional ban on nuclear arms on Japanese territory.

So far, Nakasone appears determined

to hurdle all obstacles. In mid-January he led the LDP in calling for a new national constitution that would renounce Article 9.

A few days later he persuaded the LDP to begin reviewing Japan's policy of restricting the export of weapons—another barrier to full rearmament. Nakasone has also hinted at breaking a long-established rule that limits military spending to 1% of the gross national product.

PAY DIRT FOR U.S. ARMS MAKERS

Anxiously awaiting the Prime Minister's success is the U.S. armaments industry, a would-be beneficiary of Japanese rearmament. Plans are underway for the co-production of certain weapons by Japan under license to U.S. companies.

Even the already existing low levels of co-production promise substantial returns. For example, the 15-year F-15 fighter plane program between Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Ltd. and McDonnell Douglas Corp. will yield \$2 billion in licensing fees and purchases of U.S. parts and machinery. A further \$950 million is expected from the P-3 antisubmarine planes that Kawasaki Heavy Industries Ltd. is producing with a license from Lockheed Corp.

With recession and protectionism abroad beginning to threaten markets for Japanese exports, key Japanese industries are looking to defense production for more stable and promising profits. Declares Nissan Vice President Nasataka Okuma: "The next area we're looking at for growth is defense and aerospace."

Nakasone's call for more defense spending and his plan to lift the ban on the export of weapons have won wide approval from both the business and military sectors. All of these are eagerly awaiting the opportunity to transform Japan's Self Defense Forces—already ranked 7th largest in the world—into a force comparable to France's or Britain's.

And few doubt Japan's capacity to accomplish this task in a matter of a few years, given its impressive industrial strength. Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, which currently makes tanks, can rapidly increase its production capacity 20 times when shifted into full operation.

Similarly, Japan's shipbuilding industry, reputed to be the world leader, has an annual construction capacity of 10 million tons. By turning only a part of this capacity to the production of war vessels, Japan could quickly become a formidable naval power.

NO TIME FOR NOSTALGIA

While resurgent Japanese militarism brings dark clouds principally to Asia's national liberation movements, even America's closest fascist allies view the trend with mounting apprehension.

"Our peoples are one with the peoples of the ASEAN in expressing legitimate concern and apprehension that Japan may once again employ its military might to dominate the region," said Ferdinand Marcos. The Philippine president is a staunch follower of U.S. foreign policy, however, and this apparent divergence with Washington merely reiterates his preference for American, rather than Japanese subjugation. More, underlying such mild protests by the Southeast Asian regimes is the wish that the U.S. beef up their own military capacities instead of spending everything on Japan.

But the U.S. has clearly made up its mind. Contrary to the fears of its allies, the U.S. demand for Japanese rearmament is not even a calculated risk. America's military strength far outstrips that of any of its imperialist competitors. Even a rearmed Japan would surely not entertain the illusion that it could challenge U.S. nuclear hegemony. At best, a remilitarized Japan would be like West Germany—bristling with arms but reconciled with the fact that it can no longer launch a war against the United States a la World War II.

While the U.S.' Asian surrogates may still be living amidst wartime memories, the U.S. can ill-afford such bouts of nostalgia. At the helm of a shrinking imperialist system and confronted by a steadily expanding socialist camp, America can no longer entertain illusions of its capacity to single-handedly shoulder the defense of the empire. □