

Two Blocs Agree; New Party Formed

IS UNITY AROUND THE CORNER?



Diokno



Aquino



Palma

By RENE CRUZ*

Two recent developments signal that the long and winding road to opposition unity has taken another turn, this time, perhaps for the better. Two contending political blocs agreed to form an alliance to field a single presidential candidate in 1987, and the "parliament of the streets" moved to form its own party while announcing intentions to negotiate with all parties of the opposition for a unified electoral front against Philippine president Ferdinand Marcos.

Marcos, 67, laughed off the widely publicized opposition attempts at unity but then quickly admonished his infighting *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* followers to stop bickering and close ranks. (See story on page 3.)

He continued to deny that there will be a sudden or "snap" presidential election as early as 1986 when local elections will take place. But opposition groups of all stripes are not taking any chances.

The bitterly divided National Alliance Council (NAC) and the Convenors Group (CG) announced April 18, after a closed-door meeting, that they agreed to field a pair of candidates for president and vice-president in the election set for 1987.

Corazon Aquino, wife of slain opposition

leader Benigno Aquino and a leading figure in the CG, and Batasan member Cecilia Muñoz Palma of the NAC said in a statement that their blocs would "enter into an alliance of their political forces."

The two prominent women were selected to represent their groups in exploratory talks which led to the April 18 announcement. The terms of the alliance and the method of choosing the actual candidates will be formalized in succeeding meetings, they said.

Mrs. Aquino and *Mambabatas Pambansa* Palma said their respective groups approved their proposal ("subject to refinements") that the opposition slate be selected from a "tight field of five." These would come from the largest political parties and groups in the NAC, which includes parties led by the United Nationalist Democratic Opposition (UNIDO) and the CG, which is composed of parties as well as militant mass organizations.

BITTER FEUD

NAC evolved from the National Unification Conference (NUC) called by UNIDO to rally conventional parties and conservative opposition groups after a feud erupted with the Convenors.

The Convenors Group emerged in November 1984 as an attempt to unify the opposition on a set of common principles

aimed at defeating Marcos. The CG also formulated a "fast track" system that would quickly choose a single opposition presidential candidate from a field of 11 should Marcos' health force him from office before 1987.

Mrs. Aquino, "grand old man" Lorenzo Tañada, 86, and Jaime Ongpin representing businessmen who have become vocal opponents of Marcos initiated the CG. Among the CG mainstays are ex-Senator Jose Diokno, PDP (Philippine Democratic Party)-Laban Party leaders Aquilino Pimentel and Ramon Mitra, Agapito "Butz" Aquino, and ex-Senator Jovito Salonga. It is also the home of the cause-oriented groups who tend to despise the "self-oriented" politicians, observed Rodney Tasker of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*.

The CG's "unity platform," aside from calling for thorough-going democratization, also called for the removal of the U.S. military bases, freedom for all political prisoners and the legalization of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

UNIDO president Salvador Laurel and Liberal Party leader Eva Kalaw were among the 11 potential candidates chosen but the two refused to join the agreement. Laurel disagreed with the CG's stand against the presence of Clark Airbase and Subic Naval Base, preferring a "referendum"

Continued on page 6

IN THIS ISSUE:

Chances for Aid Cut Slim page 3
'Crying Lady': Soldier Shot Ninoy page 5
Behind the Ethiopian Famine page 16

ANG KATIPUNAN
P.O. Box 2759
Oakland, CA 94602

First Class Mail
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 9684
San Francisco, CA

FIRST CLASS

Reagan Contra Loss: FIGHT IS NOT YET OVER

In the first major foreign policy defeat of his second term, President Ronald Reagan failed to bully, cajole, and charm the U.S. Congress into approving his request for \$14 million in aid to the Nicaraguan terrorist "contras." He deserved this stinging defeat.

Reagan issued hellfire and brimstone, invoked the Pope, dusted off favorite '50s McCarthyite homilies, and fought to the very end because at stake was not simply \$14 million to the contras. A vote for his request, in effect, would have given him the carte blanche he wanted to overthrow the sovereign state of Nicaragua.

But many lawmakers said they refused to give him another "Gulf of Tonkin resolution," the measure that gave President Lyndon Johnson the mandate to defeat the Vietnamese liberation movement by any means necessary.

Reagan's defeat was a victory for the Nicaraguan government who opened its door to any U.S. Congressmen who wished to come and see for themselves the damage the White House has inflicted on the people of the small country and on peace in Central America.

It was also a victory for the unceasing efforts made by American peace and solidarity advocates who lobbied, marched, cried out to anyone in the media who were willing to listen, and wrote letters against the great injustice being done to the Nicaraguan people's young effort at self-determination.

But needless to say, the fight is far from over. Reagan, without taking a breath, renewed his attacks on Nicaragua and has even opened a drive to discredit and isolate those in Congress who "represent the interests of communists" and who would deliver this country to "political defeat."

As seen from his refusal to back off from his scandalous Bitburg proposition that to reconcile with the German people he must reconcile with defeated Nazism, Reagan can be stubborn and downright authori-

tarian. This comes as no surprise.

He has hinted at a "family of measures" against Nicaragua including possible economic sanctions, \$28 million for the contras, severance of diplomatic ties and yes, direct military intervention.

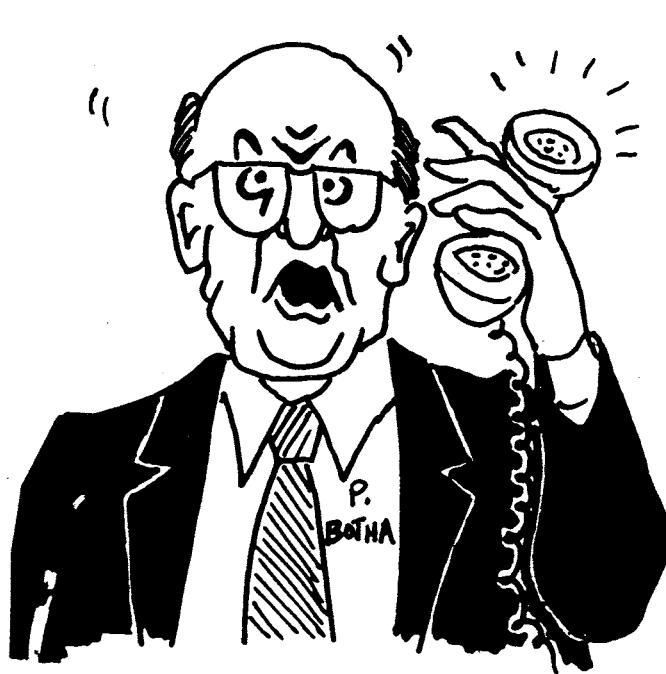
The danger is, despite their opposition, most Congressmen accept Reagan's premise that Nicaragua is a "repugnant threat to U.S. security" and they differ only with his means for stopping the threat. Instead of challenging White House demagoguery, most Democrats are themselves afraid of being fingered as "the ones responsible for losing Nicaragua."

Progressives in this country should therefore, not bring down their guard. The Nicaraguan people are counting on them as part of their international flank in defeating contra terrorism, illiteracy, poverty, remnant Somocismo and imperialist intervention.

April's victory should spur heightened peace and solidarity efforts so that in the next perilous months, the echoes of the cry "No Pasaran" will penetrate even the difficult corridors of the U.S. Congress. □



'I just called to say... FREE NELSON MANDELA!'



Ang Katipunan

Published monthly by the Union of Democratic Filipinos

Editor: Rene Cruz

Philippines: Christine Araneta, Nancy Rocamora, Nene Ojeda

Filipino Community: Emil De Guzman, Vicky Perez, Vince Reyes

U.S./International: Wicks Geaga, Eddie Escultura

Art and Production: Emil De Guzman, Wicks Geaga, Nene Ojeda, Vince Reyes

CORRECTION: Our last issue was mislabeled "March 1985." It was our April 1985 issue. Sorry for any inconvenience.

Letters

Symptoms

I believe more or less, the Marcos administration will fall soon if the opposition parties will be united in selecting their own candidate in the presidential election in 1987. There was a rumor that the president may die at any time. This should not happen to him and I pray to God to give him more life so he can remember the sufferings he has caused the Filipino people especially when he proclaimed martial

law, curtailed freedoms and caused many innocent persons to be killed, arrested, tortured and imprisoned.

Recently, President Marcos dismissed Arturo Tolentino, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and on the following day, Blas Ople, Minister of Labor and his former speech writer resigned. These are symptoms of the decline of the Marcos regime. If the opposition will learn a lesson and become united in this coming presidential election of 1987, it may be the end for his 20 years in power.

Manny Salvo
Los Angeles, CA

Not Alone

I got hold of the March 1985 issue of *Ang Katipunan* recently. Thank you (Vicky Perez) for that feature on my family's efforts to have me and June released. Articles like yours help a lot in making me and my family confirm the fact that we are not alone. June is recuperating from an attack of broncho-pneumonia. Summer's here and the temperature inside Camp Crame Stockade is a lot hotter than outside. Hence the baby's illness. However, a doctor, an ex-detainee herself, has come and

examined June and with the right medicine, I am sure she will soon be all right. More power to you and *Ang Katipunan*. My mother got back the other day and I showed her your article. She's quite glad that your telephone talk blossomed into that write-up.

Judy Taguiwalo
Political Detainee
Camp Crame Stockade,
Philippines

anyway. As for me, I stand by that old favorite, "How much is that doggie in the window? Aw! Aw!"

TRANSITIONS: Arturo Tanco, Jr., Agriculture Minister for 13 years died of cancer at age 51 last April. It was a sad occasion. Under his able management, the Philippines became a rice exporter and solved the rice crisis—in Indonesia. He has gone to that great granary in the sky which was (and Mrs. Marcos will agree with me on this) the real source of "miracle rice." Don't listen to opposition claims that it was called that because "if you can find it, it's a miracle." It's an attempt to dishonor Tanco.

As for fired Foreign Minister Arturo Tolentino, he has gone to that great doghouse in the backyard. He deserved to become a former for biting the hand that fed him, especially at a time when the hand was connected to an arm connected to an intravenous device. In this connection, would-be ex-Minister of Labor Blas Ople is in the twilight zone where his near future is about to make a past out of his present. More blasphemy from Blas about the President's health and there'll be another vacant shelf in the Cabinet. Speaking of health, I heard that Cabinet and KBL bigwigs have been told by Malacañang to be careful about theirs. I asked one of them to confirm this report. He said, "Yes, the solicitor-general has determined that talking about, eh, health may be dangerous to your health." Apparently, it could lead to a severe case of Tolentinosis (a kicking pain in the butt area) or Opleheimer's syndrome (a psychotic fear of your resignation being accepted). As a result, all top officials are now taking daily rigorous exercises that stop the foot from entering the mouth.

My poor idol Danding Cojuangco is getting so much bad press, it's unfair. He's being called a crony capitalist, polymonopolist, an octopus and all that. He deserves a fair hearing. I caught up with him at breakfast. "Want

some bacon, Doroy? Hey Santos! Buy out King Sue Ham and Bacon will you?"

I started solemnly. "Danding, the press is saying you've got your hands on everything and now you're even trying to edge out your pal Bobby Benedicto in sugar. You're being accused of greed, manipulation, *ad infinitum*."

"Enough is enough!" he cried. "Greed, okay. Manipulation, I can live with. But *ad infinitum* I cannot accept. I simply have not yet done that much harm to anyone." He sounded really hurt and a tear glistened but was held back.

"Doroy, people don't understand. Business is not my livelihood. It's a sport, a hobby that gives me inner calm. Some people like physical things to be at peace with themselves—like soccer, polo, running. This is my mountain climbing. I test myself against deceiving options, sudden splits and treacherous mergers, grasping unpredictable averages to conquer the most forbidding promontory of controlling stocks."

"So," I said, "You took over the coconut industry..."

"Ah huh... Because it is there."

I really understood this remarkable soul for the very first time. To console him, I surrendered my controlling interests in a tourist resort. "Thanks, Doroy. What else are they saying about me and what else do you own?" he lit up at last. I'm glad to have been of cheer to my lonesome hero. More about this misunderstood figure in future columns.

Relations between President Marcos and the Church hit a new low and the Church is completely to blame. Turns out that one ordinary day, the President became really sick and called for Cardinal Sin who told him not to worry because he predicts President Marcos will die on a national holiday. When the curious President asked him for the date, Sin said, "When you die, then it will be a national holiday." I say we import some lions right now and demand some respect from this Church. □

Litter from Manila

BLAME THAT TUNE



By INIDORO DELIHENCIA

So what if the *Christian Science Monitor* makes fun of the First Lady because she has taken to singing "Ghostbusters" in public events? As Deputy Minister of Human Settlements Jolly Benitez explained, she is so simple yet so profound. Mrs. Marcos likes the lyrics' political message especially when it says something like "If there's trouble in your neighborhood, who ya gonna call?" It's about public service. In fact, I can suggest to her a few more simple songs that have deep and useful political meaning.

Take "Material Girl" by Madonna: "Only boys that save their pennies make my rainy days." This could be useful in deciding Central Bank appointments, public works contracts, or any appointments for that matter Mrs. Marcos can tell the President to confront public doubt head-on by singing like Lionel Richie, "Hello, is it me you're looking for?" at the Aquino murder trial. For Gen. Ver, there's the Pointer Sisters' "Jump!" I'm sure she has informed the President of the profound lesson in public administration in "Every move you make, every step you take, I'll be watching you" by The Police. Aquino's mistake was not listening to "Fly me to the moon..." and flying to Manila International Airport instead. He always struck me as shallow

April rolled in with the First Resident of Malacañang appearing in top form during an exclusive interview with Phil Bronstein of the *San Francisco Examiner*. Although thinner and drawn, after months of absence due to bouts of asthma that "virtually asphyxiated" him, Marcos as adeptly working crowds, rebuffing U.S. congressmen, ribbing Cabinet officials, planning for the 1986 local elections, and of course, declaring his intentions to run again for the presidency in 1987.

By most accounts, he conveyed the confidence of one who is very much in charge and unscathed by political troubles or economic worries. If the future were not subject to the limits of his health, Marcos appeared as though he could rule forever.

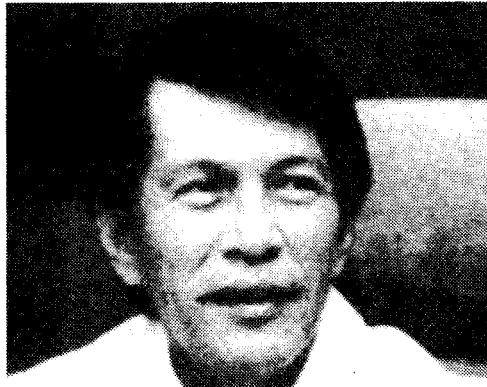
But he is actually presiding over a faction-plagued house of cards as internecine disputes continue to wrack his ruling *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* party. Party factions still consider the president as the rallying point, but all are now looking to a post-Marcos era with secret agendas in mind. Informants say a "re-alignment of forces in the KBL was prompted by intense power struggles" and "the regional and provincial leaders of the KBL have been forced to choose their affiliations."

THREE BLOCS

There are reportedly three blocs in the KBL. The first is based in the Visayas and wants ultimate decision over the presidential slot but with Marcos still in the background cracking the whip. The second, reportedly based in Luzon, wants to dominate the KBL in "a scenario with Marcos completely out of the picture." The third bloc, defined as "the logical refuge point for independent KBL members," wants a completely "new approach" with former senator Jose Roy and "maverick" Arturo Tolentino at the helm.

The upheavals in the house of KBL was prompted by loyalty checks and provincial and municipal reorganization drives in preparation for the 1986 local elections which will install 75 governors, 60 city mayors and 1,540 municipal mayors in six-year posts. The jockeying for berths has resulted in a purge in Antique where Gov. Enrique Zaldívar was ousted by the KBL provincial chapter for "open defiance of party instructions." The expulsion was announced by assemblyman Arturo Pacificador.

Fire in the House of FM Blazes On



Enrile: Next on the firing line?

Laguna governor Felicisimo San Luis also got axed as provincial KBL chair while in Nueva Ecija, the KBL machinery was reportedly split in half after a group called "the Marcos Loyalists" criticized the incumbent Governor Joson.

Top cabinet officials, leaving nothing to chance, are making trips to the provinces to guarantee their candidacies. Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile reportedly warned Cagayan KBL stalwarts: "You are either with me or against the KBL."

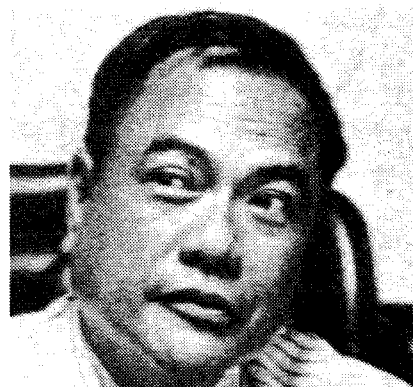
Dissension does not only swirl around the 1986 local elections but the 1987 presidential election as well. While Marcos denies there is any rebellion in the KBL, insiders say that for as long as Marcos does not officially declare Imelda his successor, the reins of power in the party will remain in his hands. If Mrs. Marcos runs, they say, the KBL will split down the middle. Many fear she will be sure loser.

SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST

Marcos has urged party leaders and rank-and-file to "kiss and make up" and rally behind the troubled regime. Unfortunately, that no longer appeals to KBLers who perceive the next local elections as "a survival of the fittest game," not a contest between them and the opposition.

Marcos has also brushed off the idea that his cabinet is ready to mutiny—"I am confident in my entire cabinet in the battle for survival." But signs show the cabinet is far from united.

The "shut up and put up" threats he issued over the past months to cabinet



Ople: Opened his mouth again.

members, have not silenced wayward officials. Labor Minister Blas Ople, twice chastised by the president for uttering embarrassing remarks about Malacañang opened his mouth again.

"I am part of the strategic reserve of the KBL," Ople told reporter Bronstein on April 26. "In the event the president decides he should call on a younger generation to carry the standards of our party in 1987, I should be in that strategic pool."

Defense Minister Enrile, who has also angered the president for "overstating the extent of the insurgency problem," hardly behaves like a sitting duck on the firing line. Enrile, while laughing off suggestions that his neck is next in the noose, said he plans to run for the presidency if the president or the first lady declines the party nomination.

But Enrile should not be so smug. The acquittal and reinstatement of Gen. Fabian Ver, currently undergoing trial for complicity in the Aquino assassination, "is close to a fact," said a Manila lawyer. Marcos has reportedly finished a decree creating a Ministry of Interior position which shall have custody of state secrets, operational control of police and military forces. The post of course will be filled by Ver. Ramos will be named Chief of Staff, a largely ceremonial title, and Enrile will be named Minister of the Exterior, a useless position focusing on defense against external attacks.

FEUDING CRONIES

Anticipating Ver's acquittal and reinstatement, Philippine Military Academy cadets



Cojuangco: sweet tooth.

and alumni staged a protest of sorts during the graduation rites addressed by Marcos last March. During a "Reform Week" activity, graduates and alumni denounced what they called "high level corruption and favoritism, rendering the merit system inutile."

Divisions among political minions have been aggravated by squabbles between the president's economic partners. The country's commodities titans, Roberto Benedicto and Eduardo Cojuangco, the richest and best of Marcos' friends, decided to turn on each other in a bid for control over the lucrative sugar industry.

"You've got the two elephants fighting," said one sugar miller, "and everybody is caught in between." At issue is chairmanship of a newly constituted Philippine Sugar Commission board. Benedicto, who lorded over the agency and the industry for years, has been accused of corruption and mismanagement at a time when sugar exports are in a slump, causing multi-million dollar losses to sugar planters.

Marcos intervened by cajoling the cronies to a huddle in Malacañang. Cojuangco decided to withdraw his bid for PHILSU-COM's chairmanship but only after exacting certain concessions. Effectively, Cojuangco will have four planters on the commission; Benedicto, two; the three remaining slots will go to government officials, while Benedicto, or a lackey, will maintain chairmanship. Has the arrangement satisfied Cojuangco's sweet tooth? Hardly. According to one planter: "The fight has just begun." □

Aid Cut: Chances Slim

By JON MELEGRITO

The climate is such that I don't think you can get any support for a cut-off," lamented Rep. Tony Hall (D-OH) April 23 to a delegation of U.S.-based oppositionists who came to ask him what he could do to stop aid to the Marcos government. "But I'm not going to rule out anything."

FLASH: Rep. Tony Hall (D-OH) has decided to work on an amendment that would condition U.S. assistance to Marcos in 1987 on the release of prisoners who have not been charged, were arrested or to be arrested on

chairman Stephen Solarz to the Reagan administration's proposal to give Marcos \$100 million in military aid and a total aid package pursuant to the military bases agreement of \$195 million for fiscal year 1986.

SOMETHING TO CUT

Solarz' amendment would keep overall aid at the same level as last year, \$180 million. It would reduce Reagan's \$100 million military aid request to \$25 million

presidential orders. The amendment would defer aid if Congress finds no progress on this matter or if it finds assistance contributes to the violation of internationally recognized human rights in the Philippines.

and shift \$60 million of the request to "economic support funds" as a symbol of criticism of Marcos.

U.S.-based Filipino oppositionists, however, are not satisfied with the Solarz amendment saying that shifting \$60 million from military aid to economic support is shifting money to the same pocket. Some even say Reagan may have purposely increased his total request by \$15 million "so that the liberals may have something to cut and ease their conscience."

Despite Solarz' tame proposal, he was

attacked by Rep. Jerold B. H. Solomon, a ranking Republican in his subcommittee, who took up the cudgels for the White House. "I don't think this committee should ever be withdrawing military aid to any nation that is providing defense for this nation," Solomon said indignantly.

Apparently, the Republicans are going to challenge Solarz with an amendment of their own from the House floor. Without giving any details, Solomon's legislative aide said the amendment will "juggle the numbers such that the administration will aid the Philippines adequately." The aide said the administration should not be hampered from "providing for what it wants to do in the Philippines."

Capitol Hill liberals appear to have fallen for the notion expressed by Senate foreign relations committee chairman Richard Lugar that Reagan officials "have been reasonably adept at encouraging reasonable reforms" in the Philippines. Many also agree with Republican Lugar "of the need to keep obligations in order to accomplish our political and security objectives."

SENATE COMMITTEE APPROVES

Meanwhile, in the Republican-controlled Senate, the foreign relations committee approved the full Reagan package also last March. The full Senate is not expected to debate the measure much. The only challenge may come from Sen. John Kerry (D-MA).

Kerry, who has been to the Philippines, sought an amendment cutting military aid from the proposed \$100 million to \$40 million with Marcos getting the amount only if the White House certifies that he has made progress on human rights and other issues. This was rejected eight to

nine purely along party lines. Oppositionists are hoping that Kerry will challenge the approved measure in the full Senate.

Odette Taverna, director of the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network's Congress Task Force, reported that he was "not closed to the idea" of reintroducing his defeated amendment in the full Senate. Taverna was part of a group that met with Kerry mid-April.

If the House approves Solarz' \$25 million proposal, a Conference Committee will try to reconcile it with the \$100 million military aid figure in the package approved by the Senate committee. With figures that are so far apart some kind of compromise is usually reached. Last year's compromise figure was \$40 million, which did not make Marcos cry.

Despite the unfavorable balance of forces for any aid cut-off, U.S.-based oppositionists sought "openings" by meeting, as a delegation, with Hall. Later, some members of the delegation met with Kerry. Both efforts were to encourage the lawmakers to put up a fight from their respective floors.

The delegation to Hall's office included Heherson Alvarez, president of the Ninoy Aquino Movement; Boni Gillego, director of the Philippine Affairs Bureau of the Movement for a Free Philippines; Taverna of the CAMD/PSN's Congress Task Force; Charito Planas, Bill Christensen and Walden Bello of the Philippine Human Rights Lobby.

Some of these groups are planning, separately or jointly, telegram campaigns, local delegations to members of congress and "community educationals" to explain what "is really going on in the U.S. government" on the issue of aid to Marcos. □

'Political Change is RX for Health Crisis'

By VICKY PEREZ

Health care workers can no longer afford to ignore the appalling health situation of Filipinos for which the government is largely to blame, according to Dr. Mita Pardo de Tavera, an internationally recognized human rights advocate. Pardo de Tavera is on a two-month tour of the U.S. and Canada to seek support for a grassroots health care movement in the Philippines.

Speaking to an audience of 60 people in San Francisco April 11, Dr. Pardo de Tavera rattled off distressing figures. According to government agencies and consumer protection groups, 85% of all pregnant Filipino women are anemic, 70% of school-age children are malnourished, 75 to 85% of school children suffer from intestinal parasitisms, and the leading causes of death are preventable diseases such as pneumonia, tuberculosis, gastroenteritis and malnutrition-related ailments.

"Health is political," she said, "and this is most evident when one examines government priorities."

The doctor said that more than half the national budget allotment for health has been slashed since Marcos came to power. Foremost in the government's mind, she said, is the pursuit of regional prestige by developing novelty high-tech medical centers when curable, preventable diseases rank highest as the common causes of death. She also deplored the hurried work being done on a much needed general hospital just so it



Dr. Mita Pardo de Tavera

would be completed in time for Mrs. Marcos' birthday. Dr. Pardo de Tavera also said that little attention has been given to upgrading conditions that could improve health care.

"The poor can't get medical attention because the roads are so bad. Inadequate irrigation systems in the fields account for the highest number of schistosomiasis [incurable liver parasites] cases in the western Pacific." Sixty-two percent of the population use unsafe drinking water and only 5% have adequate public sewage systems," she said. The most aggravating condition of all is that 70% of Filipinos live below the poverty line.

As chair of an organization of health workers dedicated to social justice, Dr. Pardo de Tavera also has campaigned for the rights of political prisoners, and strongly criticized "salvaging" and the use of torture.

She said that the political situation has deteriorated to such an extent that violence related to salvaging, counter-insurgency, and social crimes such as mugging and robbery now rank third among the most common causes of death in the country.

Dr. Pardo de Tavera said that a government that will genuinely address the needs of the majority of Filipinos is the long-term solution to the health crisis. "It will have to be a coalition government where all sectors are represented," she stated. "Who can know the interests of the farmers but the farmers themselves?"

In the Philippines, Dr. Pardo de Tavera is an advocate of "Community-Based Health Care Programs" and is well known for her efforts in organizing health care that is accessible and supported by grassroots constituents.

Dr. Pardo de Tavera chairs *Alay-Kapwa Kilusang Pangkalusugan* (AKAP) and sits on the International Medical Rights Group with Nobel Peace Prize winners Bishop Desmond Tutu and Mother Teresa. She is also a member of the national council of the Nationalist Alliance for Justice, Freedom and Democracy.

Her tour is sponsored by the Alliance for Philippine Concerns and the Philippine Health and Medical Campaign. In May, her tour will take her to Atlanta, Raleigh-Durham, Miami, Washington, New York, Philadelphia and Boston among other cities. □

Buod ng mga Balita

ZOBEL GOES SOUTHEAST ASIAN

With capital flight reaching a staggering \$5.2 billion in a decade, one often wonders where the money of Manila's rich goes upon reaching foreign shores. Because many of the wealthy have holdings in the Philippines and need to circumvent the regulations of the Securities and Exchange Commission, investments in the U.S. (much of which is concentrated in the Silicon-Peninsula Valley, the San Francisco-Bay Area, and Antelope Valley) for example, remain a tight secret.

But one capitalist makes no bones about amassing assets abroad while many of the wealthy are surreptitiously feathering their nests in foreign climes in anticipation of a post-Marcos era. He is Enrique Zobel, chief executive officer of Ayala International.

Ayala Corporation, the oldest Philippine trading house (est. 1834), embraces leading enterprises in property, insurance, trading, food, processing, semi-conductors, specialty textiles, and telecommunications. Zobel's recent acquisitions include the Bank of the Philippine Islands, Southeast Asia's largest private financial institution historically owned by the Archdiocese of Manila.

Ayala International's holdings in the U.S. now include the posh Campton Place in San Francisco, condominium projects in San Jose, a 400-hectare property development in Hercules in the East Bay, a 70% interest in Houston's Behring International, a huge freight forwarding company and, and in the works is the acquisition of the Mayflower Hotel in Los Angeles.

The globe-trotting Zobel claims Ayala International "can do anything. . . don't look now but I am going to overtake every damn company in the Philippines."

At a time when even cronies are going under or going abroad and most every business is complaining of the difficulty of staying afloat in a sinking economy, Zobel's forecast sounds rather optimistic, even boastful. He can afford to be.

After selling out a major share in the San Miguel Corporation to the Cojuangco-Marcos interests and retiring from his Bank of the Philippine Islands post, Zobel turned his back on the Ayala empire at home, in favor of expanding it abroad.

The Philippine government is having a tough time haggling for more foreign loans and courting new investments, but Ayala International has managed to cut the following multi-million dollar deals:

- equity with the Dai-Ichi Kangyo bank (assets of \$129 billion);
- 50-50 partnership with Merrill-Lynch and Co. in a venture called Merrill-Lynch-Ayala International, South East Asia;
- equity in the Sultan of Brunei's Brunei Island Development Bank;
- 29% of the Liberian registered flagship Ayala International, co-owned by Arab interests;

- 30% of the Universal Life and General Insurance Co. of Malaysia;

- numerous real estate development projects in Malaysia.

In total, Ayala International runs 17 companies from headquarters in Singapore, Manila and Hong Kong.

Zobel denies that his foray into Southeast Asia was prompted by political and economic troubles in the Philippines, but the business community is well aware of his disagreements with the regime's economic policies.

"In 15 years, the country that ranked first in Southeast Asia, now ranks last. The country that had the best ingredients for success is now a model of failure. We are sinking into a sad footnote in the books of the IMF," Zobel said.

The family empire which has historically managed to remain impervious to Philippine upheavals appears to be surviving yet another crisis with nary a bloodied nose, and with hefty year-end profits to boot. □

WESTINGHOUSE ADMITS NUKE PLANT BRIBE

A Westinghouse official admitted in a recent *Batasan Pambansa* press conference that the firm paid a substantial commission to a yet unnamed Filipino businessman for facilitating the deal between the Philippine government and the corporation.

Monroe Walcher, a project director of Westinghouse, builder of the Philippine Nuclear Power Plant, maintained that the commission was legal and within U.S. laws. He added that the U.S. State Department and the Securities and Exchange Commission "found no evidence" in their three-year probe of the allegations of illegal payoffs.

Westinghouse won the contract with a bid of \$500 million for two plants, although the cost of the Bataan plant has since ballooned to \$2.2 billion. Marcos golfing partner Herminio Disini, contractor of the plant's construction, is rumored to have received \$35 million in the deal.

The \$2 billion "Monster of Morong" may yet become the Philippines' costliest monument. Although set to start up last January, the Philippine Nuclear Power Plant remains only 98% completed, still has no license to operate, and its supply of uranium is in jeopardy. Worse, its neighbors and most likely victims in case of nuclear accidents, the residents of Morong, Bataan, were unable to voice their concerns when the referendum set April 13 was cancelled because of the wordings of certain questions.

The license is being withheld by the Philippine Atomic Energy Commission of the National Science and Technology Authority, a government agency. The plant's owner, the Ministry of Energy's National Energy Corporation, has already called on President Marcos and his cabinet to aid in a quicker release of the

permit. But PAEC's Commissioner, Manuel Eugenio, is standing his ground, saying that his agency is concerned about the plant's safety. The Marcos-appointed Eugenio added that he has the president's "specific instructions not to allow myself to be used by anyone, not even the government." PAEC maintains that the plant's defects, cited by the International Atomic Energy Agency, have not been corrected. Marcos ordered the PAEC to conduct public hearings starting May 7 before it decides on licensing.

Once the license is granted, NPC officials intend to generate the 620 megawatt plant by July. But with the country's foreign exchange being closely guarded, the NPC is finding it hard to purchase \$5 million worth of uranium pellets. Only one supplier agreed to the NPC's request for full financing payable over five years following a three year grace period, at financing rates pegged at London interbank-offered rates. But at double the prevailing cost of \$16 per pound, the NPC rejected the offer. The first batch of 121 nuclear fuel assemblies, costing \$65 million, are already in place and would run the plant continuously for three years. Delivery of pellets normally takes 15 to 18 months after an order is placed.

As the controversy over the plant's licensing continues, daily interest charges on the government's foreign borrowings for the project run \$355,000. Energy Minister Geronimo Velasco once said that this amount is about the cost of one 800 megawatt geothermal facility, one natural resource the country has plenty of. □

IMELDA, GHOSTBUSTER

Mrs. Imelda Marcos really thinks she knows how to appeal to her little people's senses. A new song, one with a serious message according to her aides, has been added to the First Lady's repertoire. Mrs. Marcos nowadays belts: "Something strange is happening in your neighborhood. Who ya gonna call? Ghostbusters!"

Jolly Benitez, her deputy minister of human settlements explained that at a time when society's values are breaking down, "new ideas, new concepts" are necessary to "weld society together." He adds, "It is then we need to call in the Ghostbusters."

Mrs. Marcos' ghostbuster vision, however, is becoming a nightmare for some. For despite her constant denials, many believe she will be running in the race to replace her husband. President Marcos also regularly denies Imelda's political ambitions. But as her ministry continues to gobble up other smaller ministries and agencies, the fear of usurpation gnaws.

Even partymates in the *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* are wary and have been trying to convince the president of the folly of her ambition. One even offered himself to Mrs. Marcos as a more likely winner and assured her and her family protection after the Marcoses leave Malacañang.

Mrs. Marcos remains undaunted and goes on singing her new favorite. As for trusted aide Benitez, his admiration for the First Lady is legend. "You see, she [Imelda] is so simple yet so profound," said Benitez. □

'Crying Lady':

Soldier Shot Aquino

A Filipino woman, in the first eye-witness account of Benigno Aquino's assassination, said in a sworn statement she saw a soldier shoot the opposition leader on an airplane staircase, her lawyers said April 26.

"I saw Mr. Aquino with soldiers in front and at the back of him at the stairway," said Rebecca Quijano, 32.

"Then I saw a gun pointed at the back of the head of Mr. Aquino and at the same time I heard gunfire," said Quijano, a passenger on the jet that brought Aquino home August 21, 1983.

"A soldier in khaki immediately behind Sen. Aquino was the one who shot him," she said. Quijano, dubbed as "the Crying Lady" had previously avoided a year-long inquiry into the assassination, saying she feared for her life and went into hiding until her arrest by the National Bureau of Investigation last December.

Despite the commotion caused by two recanting prosecution witnesses compounded by an April 19 deadline to produce missing witnesses, prosecutors in the Aquino-Galman murder trial rallied with new testimony rebuffing the military version of the double murder at the Manila International Airport.

Twenty-six military men, led by Armed Forces Chief of Staff Fabian Ver, and a lone civilian, are charged with the deaths of former senator Benigno Aquino and his purported assassin Rolando Galman. The April 17 appearance of MIA manager Luis Tabuena before the Sandiganbayan backed the prosecutor's contention of a military conspiracy. Tabuena testified that President Marcos ordered the military to take control of airport security some six weeks before Aquino's fateful return from exile.

Marcos, in a handwritten note produced by the prosecutors, informed Tabuena that "I have ordered [Transport] Minister [Jose] Dans to have AVSECOM [Aviation Security Command] take over." The note was purportedly a reply to Tabuena's



Rebecca Quijano

request to have troops retrained following a near-shootout with plainclothes agents patrolling the airport.

Tabuena's account backed the contention that AVSECOM head, Brig. Gen. Luther Custodio and 21 co-accused subordinates, were "in complete control" of airport security at the time of Aquino's return.

In another testimony, Army Col. Angelo Reyes, military adviser to Prime Minister Cesar Virata, confirmed he had told the latter that Aquino had already left Singapore and was on his way back to Manila. Col. Reyes, however, had difficulty recalling his sources or exactly when he gave Virata the information. Sandiganbayan Justice

Bienvenido Cruz reprimanded Reyes, an intelligence officer who graduated in the top 10 of his military class, for his "surprisingly poor" memory.

Problems have plagued the prosecutors since the trial's start on February 22. Delays due to witnesses, officially listed as missing prompted the Sandiganbayan to set the deadline of April 19 for the prosecutors to produce witnesses. Their non-appearance before the government-appointed graft court will result in the removal of the testimonies they gave to the Agrava fact-finding board from the case records.

Sandiganbayan Sheriff Edgardo A. Urieta denied that the military either detained or harassed witnesses and instead offered what his sources "found out." According to Urieta, many witnesses "considered testifying time-consuming, a drain on their pockets, or simply cumbersome."

One of the five "missing" airport witnesses eventually surfaced. He denied hiding and was in fact waiting for a subpoena to be served. William Layoso, an airport security guard, testified that Aquino was shot by his military escorts on the service stairway.

Recanting key prosecution witnesses sparked new controversies. Witness Roberta Masibay shocked the prosecutors with her plea to change parts of her testimony. Masibay, daughter of Lina Galman, common-law-wife of Galman, was immediately withdrawn as a prosecutors' witness.

She had testified that Lt. Col. Arturo Custodio, a defendant, picked up Galman four days before the Aquino murder and that her mother disappeared after being

"sent for by Gen. Ver" and forced into a car by civilian defendant Herminilo Gosuico.

But Lupino Lazaro, lawyer for the Galman family, charged that "some representatives of the accused" bore gifts in a visit with Masibay just one day prior to her court appearance. Masibay said that she wanted to "tell the truth" but did not specify which part of her testimony she wanted changed.

Rizbonric Sicat, said to be a friend of Galman, likewise informed the Sandiganbayan that what he told the Agrava board were just "rumors and stories." He said he agreed to give his story upon a promise made by an Agrava board counsel to send his children to the U.S. This account was promptly denied by Mario Ongkiko, the counsel involved.

AGRAVA BOARD "TRIED"

The defense also managed to tax the prosecution when it questioned another Agrava board counsel, Atty. Francisco Villa. Villa, one of three deputy counsels under Andres Narvasa, was grilled for almost six hours on how the board reached its findings.

Sandiganbayan Chief Justice Manuel Pamaran repeatedly denied prosecution objections (that questioning was immaterial and must be stopped), relenting only when Villa complained of exhaustion. Villa protested that it was he who was put on trial.

The Agrava board's integrity was further questioned when Dean Antonio Coronel of the defense noted the involvement of American embassy officials in the board hearings. U.S. Embassy 3rd Secretary Gerald Kaplan was allegedly present in the closed-door session conducted with witness Sicat.

Coronel alleged that Ambassador Stephen Bosworth and his wife, along with 16 other American officials previewed the composite tape produced by Jose Mari Gonzales. The tape was later presented to the Sandiganbayan as prosecution evidence. □

'Poverty, Politics, Heat and Smoke'

Friendship Run Stumbles

A crew of California runners and sports writers who went last January to the Third Manila International Marathon came back with more negative views of the Marcos regime than the marathon sponsors would have liked.

"The Marathon was the most visible of races supported by the Marcos regime," wrote Bob Cooper. Cooper chronicled the team's visit in a stinging report titled, "Running Amok in Manila" in the April issue of *City Sports*, a Bay Area magazine. "I'll probably never be welcome there again," he told the *AK*.

"The government picked up most of the bill while the other chief sponsor, Philippine Airlines, is owned by the government," he wrote. "The race director doubles up as Marcos' deputy sports minister, both pre-race dinners were held aboard Philippine Navy ships, and finally all trophies and medals were inscribed, 'Donated by His Excellency, Ferdinand E. Marcos.' You might call it the Marcos International Marathon."

In addition to the U.S. group, there were about 40 to 50 participants from Europe and Canada. The runners were told to go to a myriad of activities including a 5 kilometer pre-Marathon run in Corregidor and a 7 kilometer International Friendship Fun-run in Manila in addition to press conferences, parties and forums, which were not part of the itinerary they had been told. The last minute arrangements irked many of the runners. The Californians felt they were being used. A few of them decided to boycott some of the activities.

POLITICAL CLIMATE

Cooper quickly became attuned to the political climate.

"The litany I would hear all week from resident Americans and Filipinos alike, was that anti-Americanism here was directed against the U.S. government because of its support for Marcos. Yet as individuals, Americans were quite welcome, as I learned on my daily runs along Roxas [Boulevard]."

On a taxi ride back to his hotel, the driver gave Cooper a piece of his mind.

"If we had good leaders, this could be a very progressive country like the United States," the driver said. "But Marcos is not good and Imelda is worse. They know how to eat and we don't, and they want to keep it that way. If Imelda tries to take over, there



Running amok in Manila.

will be a revolution for sure."

Back at the five-star Manila Hotel, Cooper was frisked "as usual," a precaution against a recent rash of bombings that had turned hotels into "fortresses."

PRIZE MONEY POLITICS

A feud started between the marathon coordinator, deputy sports minister Elpideo Dorotheo, and the runners when they were told that the prize money of \$550 would be given to Filipinos only. John Mansoor, the Northern California TAC distance running chairman, complained that the policy sets a very dangerous precedent for international competitions.

Some participants could not understand why the government decided to bar foreigners from winning the measly \$550 when in the past it has spent millions of dollars on events like the World Chess Tournament or the Muhammad Ali fight in Manila.

"Maybe we can award money to foreigners when the economic situation in the Philippines gets better," Dorotheo said, justifying the policy.

An American freelance photographer explained the "politics" behind the prize money rule to Cooper.

"It would have been politically indefensible for the prize money to go to foreigners," said the photographer. To Filipino runners \$550 is a fortune, while to top foreigners it is almost an insult, he added.

"Imelda used to pay big money to bring in famous entertainers and the people said 'we're broke!' You'd have people in the streets if it got out that foreigners profited."

Cooper also found out from his friend that most Philippine runners are "either middle class or subsidized poor, on teams sponsored by the Army, the police or the companies."

The photographer added that runner subsidies are small but sought after.

"Companies don't do much else for their employees here," he said. "An example is a running-shoe plant that was paying its workers two or three dollars a day to turn out 50 pairs of shoes that would sell \$50 a pair in the States. A strike finally shut them down—these people are not stupid."

Dennis Rinde, a California marathon champion finished first. But the prize went to Jimmy de la Torre, a Manila policeman, who finished second. Ledy Semana, a Filipino runner garnered first place in the women's race over Laura Rinde, who succumbed to the heavy smoke from numerous roadside garbage fires along the route.

HEARTS AND SOLES

When the runners packed up to leave the next day, the Rindes were met with a \$60 beverage bill at the Hyatt. They thought that with the exception of alcoholic drinks the tea, coffee and sodas that came with their meals were covered by the per diem agreement. They reluctantly paid. But when Mansoor and another runner were confronted with a \$100 beverage tab, they decided to ignore it.

However, Dorotheo's son-in-law and hotel security men went after them at the airport, demanding payment. The Californians did not budge, saying the deputy sports minister was responsible, and literally ran to the plane before it took off.

"These people are ugly Americans," Dorotheo fumed. Thus ended the race that was billed as "The Friendly Marathon."

Although the government had hoped to garner favorable publicity and support for this international event, Cooper said that the opposition was actually far ahead "in the battle for the Philippine runners' hearts and soles."

A six kilometer run in Benigno Aquino's honor has been held regularly for 19 months since his assassination. "Although the numbers have subsided, turnouts of 1,000 were typical a year ago and the biggest crowd—an estimated 20,000—filled the streets when the fun run coincided with Aquino's birthday on November 27," Cooper wrote. This was followed by the Tarlac to Tarmac Run which swelled to 50,000 runners when it passed through Manila. □

Is Unity Around the Corner?

Continued from front page

on the question instead and Kalaw, known for her anti-left orientation, criticized "fast track" as "undemocratic," "elitist," and "arbitrary."

Laurel and Kalaw proceeded to rally their own camp. Laurel wanted UNIDO to be the main opposition party but others scrambled back to their party affiliations to define more clearly their support bases. Kalaw revved up her faction in the Liberal Party and Pimentel, his PDP-Laban. This led to the call for a National Unification Conference but Laurel still wanted to dominate.

Finally, he had to agree to an equal role for the Liberal Party and PDP-Laban in order to proceed with the formation of a National Alliance Council. (Non-partisan businessman Jose Concepcion reportedly played a "secret role" in patching up the differences.) On March 10, some 700 delegates to the much-awaited NAC meeting decided to postpone choosing its own system for selecting a presidential candidate and held out the possibility of unity talks with senior leaders of the Convenors.

While Laurel's attempts to dominate have been halted, added credibility has been brought to his camp by former Supreme Court Justice Palma, 72 years old and respected for her independent stance on the bench, who was made NAC chairman.

COOPERATIVE MOOD

Meanwhile, Cory Aquino complained she was being "manipulated" by "male chauvinist" leaders of the CG who prevented her from attending the NAC convention, and threatened to quit from the group. CG leaders apparently feared the convention would merely end up as Laurel's "coronation."

The rival groups then quietly appointed Mrs. Aquino and Palma, both of whom renounced any presidential ambitions, to lead the exploratory talks that resulted in the April 18 agreement. Mrs. Aquino said the meeting "will show our fellowmen that we are truly working hard to achieve unity which has eluded us."

Convenors spokesman Emmanuel Soriano said virtually all key NAC and CG members took part excepting the presidential contenders as per earlier agreement. The mood he said, was "positive and cooperative although there are many details we have to iron out." A joint committee was created to do the ironing out and adopt a common platform.

Agreeing to choose a single slate may be easy enough, but agreeing to a common political program is a more daunting task. The Convenors have a very pronounced leaning toward a nationalistic platform while NAC stalwarts have been criticized for being pro-U.S. and having a "collaborationist" tendency.

Furthermore, NAC insiders say that Laurel and Kalaw's interest in coming to terms with the CG is partly to win Cory and Butz Aquino, Pimentel and Mitra away from the "faceless," leftist-backed cause-oriented groups.

But that would be easier said than done.

Convenors stalwarts, not wanting to put their bid for unity all in one basket, have moved to consolidate and revitalize the "parliament of the streets."

NEW PEOPLE'S PARTY

The "parliament of the streets" made a decisive political move when, on March 20, representatives of as many as 500 "cause-oriented" groups nationwide and 16 political leaders met in Manila to form the *Bagong Alyansang Makabayan* (New Nationalist Alliance—BAYAN).

Among the leaders present were Jose Diokno, ex-Senator Ambrosio Padilla, Butz Aquino, Etta Rosales, and Teofisto Guingona. A BAYAN statement said it is concerned more with issues and programs rather than just "personalities and patronage." Its member groups are opposed to the U.S. bases and U.S. "interference in the Philippine economy."

Diokno, head of the alliance, said BAYAN will "unify and consolidate the leadership of popular organizations which are not political parties." He said BAYAN will combine electoral, and non-electoral means like "rallies, marches, general strikes," to topple Marcos. It is a "broader movement" that has as a component, the forma-

Diokno: the two factions 'would continue to meet to agree on a formula that will result in a union of political parties.'

tion of a new political party.

According to Butz Aquino, some 2,000 voting delegates are expected to attend the founding congress of *Ang Partido ng Bayan* (The People's Party) on April 27-28 in Quezon City. A source within the Convenor Group said the party would serve as an umbrella group and will welcome all forces—national democrats, social democrats, and liberal democrats—"as long as they agree to uphold the principles of anti-totalitarianism and anti-imperialism."

CROSSING THE BRIDGE

The People's Party, said Diokno, would participate in the 1986 and 1987 elections. It reportedly has the capacity to field candidates in at least eight regions of the country. On top of its projected table of organization are an executive council and a general assembly each to be headed by a chairperson, 10 vice presidents, five of whom would come from northern and central Luzon, one from Metro-Manila, and one each from southern Luzon, Bicol, Visayas, and Mindanao. Problems are to be resolved by a two-thirds general assembly vote.

Diokno added that the party might put up its own candidates in certain areas and back candidates of other parties with similar views in other areas. He denied that the opposition would be further split by its formation, and said efforts will be made to bridge the two camps (NAC and CG-People's Party).

The two factions he said "would continue to meet to agree on a formula that will result in a union of political parties." Asked if the party might field candidates against NAC candidates, he said: "We don't want to cross that bridge until we get there."

REAGAN WORRY

A unified opposition, observers say, would have a very good chance of unseating Marcos in light of the economic crisis and the after effects of the Aquino murder. If no unity is reached, and two opposition camps run, Marcos' factionalized *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* would have a wide opening. The most likely sources of obstacles to unification, are the conservative pro-U.S. politicians in the NAC who are distrustful of the "cause-oriented" groups.

But if one opposition front emerges during the elections, or if conservatives lose momentum if they split from the front, Marcos would be in trouble, and so would the Reagan plan for a smooth transition to a successor government.

The Reagan administration, in a variation of its El Salvador gambit, is pressing Marcos for a set of "reforms" including professionalizing the military to deal with the growth of the New People's Army, and enticing "Filipinos of moderate political views" to cooperate in "revitalizing democratic institutions."

middle class." It also has substantial clout in the new umbrella group, BAYAN, mainly through its influence among cause-oriented grassroots and workers groups.

NOTHING TO LOSE

The CPP, through its organ, *Ang Bayan*, indicated it will utilize the coming elections to complement the armed struggle. It criticized the "old-style" politicking of NAC leaders but encouraged the CG's political stance expressing as its only regret the fact that militant mass organizations were given only 30% representation in the system of choosing a presidential candidate.

Imprisoned Jose Ma. Sison, reputed founding chairman of the CPP, called for the formation of a left-moderate electoral alliance last January. He was even kind to the NUC, saying both it and the CG were "serious attempts to unite the opposition." In a recent interview with *Philippine News and Features* however, he criticized "one or two" opposition leaders for engaging in an anti-communist witchhunt, and appearing "too eager to please the U.S. government."

He scored the same leaders for being "so obsessed about inheriting the autocratic powers" of Marcos that they have become negligent in exposing the attempts to whitewash the Aquino murder, rebuild Marcos' image, get the country deeper into debt, and escalate militarization and repression.

The left, Sison stated, has nothing to lose by entering the electoral arena. "These elections can aggravate rather than solve serious contradictions among reactionaries and can also result in the ascendance of progressives in many areas where the people's organizations are strong." They cannot dismantle the CPP and its organized base, he said.

TOO EARLY TO TELL

"If again the KBL wins through fraud and terrorism, the revolution will grow even faster. If the legal opposition wins despite the odds, it will have to adopt fundamental policy changes if it is to come to terms with the revolutionary organizations," Sison concluded.

Conservative oppositionists are bound to ask the left to lay down its arms as a condition for joint work. But others, like Butz Aquino, consider that demand "foolish." In a private meeting in the U.S. last winter, Aquino said the left should not be expected to abandon armed struggle and be wiped out. He said later in a public statement lambasted by the Hearst *San Francisco Examiner*, "The people should prepare for armed self-defense" in the face of a well-armed dictator.

All in all, it is still too early to tell whether the long and tortuous road to a common front against Marcos has shortened and straightened out. But the recent steps taken by the key opposition groupings appear more sure-footed than earlier efforts that have faltered. What happens in the next few months will tell whether Marcos can keep fiddling away the threat from the opposition while his own house burns. □

(*Nancy F. Rocamora, the regular writer on this beat, is recuperating from illness.)

LABOR DETAINEES NEED ASSISTANCE

The Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network is appealing to AK readers to assist in raising bail for labor detainees at Camp Crame. The total amount to be posted in order for them to be released is ₱64,400 or \$5,000. Any assistance you can offer should be sent to PSN, P. O. Box 31794, Oakland, CA 94602. Checks should be made out to Philippine Solidarity Network; indicate "Bail Fund" at the bottom right of your check.

We, the undersigned political detainees, would like to solicit your assistance so that we may be able to post the bail bond of ₱64,000 decided by the Quezon City and Pasig courts to be our passport to temporary liberty.

For close to three years now, we have been detained in the PC Stockade in Camp Crame. We were among the more than 40 trade unionists arrested during the military crackdown on labor in August-September 1982. All our companions are now out, except the four of us. Our release has long been recommended by no less than Labor Minister Ople himself. And yet, when finally we have come close enough to the end of our long wait, we are being told that we still have to pay our way out.

Under the circumstances, bail is the nearest we could get to a successful try. However, by ourselves, there is simply no way we could raise the stipulated cash bond. We were mere workers at the time of our arrest and what little we got has been completely wiped out in the course of our detention.

Right now, money appears to be the only thing standing between us and our freedom. To produce it we must, and soon enough. Either this or another month, another year, perhaps longer, in this hellhole. We are counting on you to help us out.

Thank you and best wishes!

Milleth Soriano Jose Britanico Simplicio Anino Lauro Pabit

1985

☆ **Marcos Gets Overthrown!**
☆ **Parliament of the Streets Takes Power!**

Well... we can't predict the future but can give you no-nonsense reporting, interesting features and penetrating analyses.

AK provides a progressive reading of the political barometer for

- ★ Philippine politics
- ★ The U.S. Filipino community
- ★ Worldwide events

Start the new year by subscribing to the AK!

You might miss some important headlines if you don't!

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE (____) _____

() \$10/individual

() \$12/Canada

() \$15/foreign and institutions

() Contribution

\$ _____

Send checks to: **ANG KATIPUNAN** / P.O. Box 2759 / Oakland, CA 94602

From various points just north of Zamboanga City in the southern island of Mindanao, news reporters and correspondents trekked for as long as four hours through coconut plantations, forests and rivers to a most unusual press conference.

The head table was rough-hewn and all 11 panel members concealed their faces with native shawls and dark glasses. Outside the plastic-draped hut, some 70 armed guerrillas stood guard. At a time when high level U.S. policymakers and the Philippine government are in heavy debate on just how great is the threat of insurgency, the rebels tried to set the record straight for a select group of Manila-based journalists.

Facing both local and foreign media April 9 were seven council members of the National Democratic Front—Mindanao and four delegates of the Communist Party of the Philippines and its military arm, the New People's Army.

Council chairman, Lucas Fernandez, began with a prediction that in Mindanao, "the movement could achieve victory in just a few more years." Fernandez said that half the NPA's 20,000 guerrilla fighters armed with high-powered rifles are in the island. (The NPA, he said, is in 59 of the country's 73 provinces, and influences some 2,700 villages and 200 towns and cities.)

Fernandez further vowed that government troops in Mindanao will be engaged in more attacks, political actions in the cities will escalate, and that "strategic stalemate" with Armed Forces of the Philippines nationwide can be reached in three to five years.

HOTTEST SPOT

The NDF-Mindanao Council's claims cannot be dismissed. Mindanao was the country's hottest spot of guerrilla activity in the last year. Government reports admit that engagements with the NPA in the island's eastern half—from Cagayan de Oro City in the north to Davao City in the south—left 503 military officers and policemen dead.

The rate of incidents in the area rose from 478 in 1983 to 876 in 1984. U.S. Assistant Defense Secretary Richard Armitage, following a visit to the Philippines early this year, told a Congressional committee that guerrilla-initiated attacks account for 75% of the encounters, a rise of 60% from 1983.

Though smaller than the NPA's estimate, his estimate of NPA strength is the highest yet estimated by an American official: 15,000 guerrillas and influence in one-third of Philippine villages.

Battle-weary troops in Mindanao have been replaced with fresh battalions, two of which are deployed in Davao City alone. Davao City has become the revolutionary



Guerilla Jobs Keep Government Spinning

movement's "testing ground" for urban warfare.

Despite the government's discounting of NPA strength, troops were nevertheless placed on red alert nationwide as the 16th anniversary of the NPA's founding on March 26 neared. Acting Chief of Staff Fidel Ramos ordered maximum security for military installations, town and municipal halls and other vital targets like powerplants and jails.

BIRTHDAY SONG

The anniversary was openly celebrated in a march to the U.S. Embassy in Manila. Priests led marchers in a rousing "Happy Birthday NPA" song.

A fitting birthday gift came in the form of a weapons haul "enough to arm more than one full battalion of the NPA." A March 25 raid cleared the Visayan Maritime Academy in Negros of 429 Garand rifles, 10 carbines, nine Thompson submachine guns, three grease guns and one 22-calibre rifle as well as rounds of ammunition.

The school for seamen, owned by Marcos friend Roberto Benedicto, was in total darkness because of power failure. The 20 raiders overwhelmed the lone guard and five other school employees. The cache was transported in trucks the rebels had brought along. At the end of the 30-

minute operation, the school employees were asked to sing the patriotic "Ang Bayan Ko" by the departing NPAs.

Smaller "agaw-arms" operations against government troops are the most often used source of arms. In Sadanga, Bontoc, Catholic-priest-turned-NPA leader Conrado Balweg led some 300 guerrillas in holding the town hall for nine hours on March 25.

The local military and police force fled, leaving the NPAs arms and ammunition. The town was some 150 kilometers from Baguio City where President Marcos was telling Philippine Military Academy graduates that the NPA will be crushed.

In many instances like the March 10 NPA attack of the Lauaan, Eastern Samar town hall, guerrillas overpower police and civilian militia, who are prevented from calling for reinforcement because the NPA had earlier confiscated their radio equipment.

NUMBERS GAME

Unscheduled military field outings are not any safer. Two ranking military officers as well as three soldiers were killed when NPA fighters fired on an army convoy as it passed an isolated stretch of Tungao Road in Cagayan de Oro.

Even Metro Manila, the seat of government, is no longer an exception in the

NPA's arena of armed struggle. Manila Police Chief Narcisco Cabrera ordered his troops to "neutralize" the NPA threat in the city early April. Some eight suspected underground houses in the districts of Sampaloc, Tondo, Sta. Ana and Pandacan are now being closely watched "round-the-clock." Cabrera believes a "sizeable" number of firearms—M-16s, handguns and explosives—are stored in those houses.

The growth in the NPA's offensive capacities, however, remains a numbers game with government officials and the U.S. administration. In military communications as well as articles in government-controlled papers, reports of guerrilla activity vary only in site, arms haul, and number of casualties.

Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile lowered Armitage's and the military intelligence's 10-11,000 count to his own 8-9,000. Both Enrile and Ramos, moreover, maintain that the situation is under control, discounting Armitage's "worst case scenario" of the NPA gaining control of the Philippines "by the end of the decade."

Still, Ramos worries that the armed struggle is just the "tip of the iceberg." That part that "sinks ships" according to Ramos, "is a much bigger organization" that conducts "activities difficult to counter." □

Regime Tries to Hit Back Big

The lessons of Project Katatagan, launched two years ago in Northern Luzon, will now be used to quash armed resistance in the rest of the Philippines. Acting Armed Forces Chief-of-Staff Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos, in a mid-April military convention, ordered all commanders of the country's 13 regions to "concentrate on the campaign against insurgency." Ramos attributed the increase in NPA/government clashes to the army's active "seeking out of bases, hideouts, and headquarters of the Communist Party of the Philippines-NPA."

Regions 11 (the Davao provinces) and 10 (Misamis Oriental and Occidental, the Surigao and Agusan provinces, Negros Island, and Northern and Eastern Samar) have been targeted as critical areas where additional troops, logistical support and helicopter gunships will be sent. Two fresh battalions were recently deployed to Davao City, purported to be the testing ground for the NPA's urban strategy.

An extra battalion was likewise deployed to the country's sugarbowl, Negros, to "forestall possible rapid deterioration of peace and order with the start of

layoffs." An additional 100,000 sugarworkers are expected to be out of work for the rest of the year due to the slack in sugar milling. Some 150,000 *sacadas* are already out of work since the start of the shortest milling season following WWII.

Military intelligence also noted the establishment of a CPP regional leadership in the province and believe the economic dislocation will provide fertile ground for rebel recruitment. Checkpoints have already been set up with the military on red alert as sugarcane fields burnings and theft of cargo trucks increased. Troops have also been scouring the Negros countryside in efforts to recover over 400 high powered weapons seized in a raid of a school armory late March. Military officers say that "nobody can go around with that cargo and not be noticed." Sixteen sugarworkers suspected of arson have been arrested and detained.

Meanwhile, civilian casualties of the government counterinsurgency program have risen. Hundreds of mountain villagers in Luna, Kalinga-Apayao have fled their homes, taking refuge in the forests after three military planes dropped bombs near their homes. The air strike was apparently aimed at the NPA, said to be actively

operating in the area, and 13 villagers were arrested on suspicion of sympathizing with the rebels. Villagers have also been prevented from buying foodstuff in bulk as was their practice, because the military believes the items are given to the NPA.

The clergy is likewise not immune to military efforts to stem dissidence. Fr. Tullio Fabali, an Italian parish priest in Tulunan, Cotabato, was shot and killed by members of the paramilitary Civilian Home Defence Forces. Another, Fr. Teodoro Remigio, was taken into custody of Piddig, Ilocos Norte on preventive detention action orders. Remigio, who openly criticized government policies on peace and order, political and social programs, was pinpointed by government informants as an active NPA supporter. The priest is also reportedly a friend and former classmate of rebel priest Conrado Balweg.

In Mindanao and Sulu, civic action programs have been launched to check the rise of insurgency: The program is part of the \$55 million released to improve government services in rural areas where the NPA is strongest.

Troop morale has also been a concern of the government. Ramos has ordered improvements in housing facilities and medical services as well as created an investigative committee to check on military abuses. Paramilitary troops are also slated for further training to curb corruption. CHDFs who leave the service have been notorious for lost guns that often find their way to the NPA. Ramos, in a more personal effort to boost his soldiers' morale, parachuted during a field practice, carrying with him a crate of San Miguel beer. □

Crisanto Evangelista

Hero of the Philippine Working Class



Crisanto Evangelista

By CHRISTINE ARANETA

One day in May, 1983 a stooped figure shuffled past an activist selling *Ang Katipunan* in front of St. Patrick's Church in San Francisco. "Aha, *Katipunan*," he said, eyes widening. "Do you know Crisanto Evangelista?" The activist replied that she knew who he was.

The elderly American then launched into a long discourse about the Philippine labor movement and, between memory lapses, spoke of meeting Evangelista in Hong Kong, Manila, Canton, on this or that date.

"Crisanto, yes, he was arrested and killed, right? Quite a fellow he was," his voice trailed as he shuffled to leave. "Quite a bright fellow... a remarkable man."

Crisanto Evangelista was indeed a remarkable man. He laid the cornerstone for a revolutionary movement whose inheritors are now the source of much fear in Malacañang and the U.S. White House. Crisanto Evangelista was the founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines.

Evangelista was born on November 1, 1888 in Malhacan, Meycauyan, Bulacan to a peasant family. His early childhood was framed by two major political events: the triumphant revolution against Spain and the Filipino-American War. He came of age when the country was gripped by anti-colonial ferment.

Evangelista completed an elementary education and was well on his way to finishing high school when his father's death compelled him to abruptly end his formal schooling. Although he had to assume the role of breadwinner, Evangelista had an abiding interest in learning. He found employment in the printing industry and gradually rose in position from proofreader to linotypist.

The printing industry, with a rapidly growing workforce under the stewardship of Hermenegildo Cruz' *Union de Litografos y Impresores de Filipinas*, was the best school for radicalization. It wasn't long before Evangelista became a radical labor leader.

"Radical" by that time was taking on a meaning different from the anti-colonial and anti-foreign convictions of the earlier generation of *Katipuneros* and enlightened ilustrados. "Radical" meant the influence of a new spectre that was haunting the ruling classes of Europe.

Europe-based Filipinos, banished for sedition by Spain, had come home. Some were anything but chastened by exile and came back with even more subversive ideas. Their sojourn coincided with the export of larger amounts of foreign capital to Philippine shores. And with the expansion of commerce and industry, came the growth of a larger, more concentrated, and more restive working class.

Don Isabelo de los Reyes, who was a political prisoner in Spain's Montejuich Castle, was one such exile. He brought back the collected works of Marx (*Vida y Obra de Carlos Marx*), Engels, Proudhon, Bakunin, and the Italian anarchist Malatesta—books later translated into Tagalog and disseminated by Cruz and Arturo Soriano.

On May 1st, 1903, the first worker-led anti-imperialist rally, under the auspices of the *Union Obrera Democratica de Filipinas*, took place in front of Malacañang. The UODF, founded by de los Reyes, was the first labor federation. Over 100,000 workers clamored for national independence and an end to U.S. imperialist rule. The American colonial administration later responded with arrests and raids.

In 1906, printers formerly affiliated with the weakened UODF formed the *Union Impresores de Filipinas* with Hermenegildo Cruz as president. A militant 18-year-old Evangelista was elected general secretary. The union adopted an explicitly left charter and slogans such as "Workers' Liberation can only be Won by Workers Themselves," "Labor is Honour," "Capital

is the Product of Cheated Labor," and "Workers Have Nothing to Lose but their Chains."

Evangelista plunged headlong into union organizing, and gave special attention to forging a national federation of labor. In 1913, the *Congreso Obrero de Filipinas* (COF) was formed with over 36 participating unions. Evangelista represented the workers cooperative in the Bureau of Printing.

From 1906 to 1918, he earned his mark as a respected labor leader and an eloquent writer. He contributed many articles, poems and essays to the local press and earned the grudging respect of the top colonial officials of the time, including Manuel Luis Quezon.

As a result of his rising prestige, Evangelista became the labor sector's representative to the 1919 Philippine Independence Mission to the United States. The mission, composed of Philippine statesmen and prominent citizens, was charged with the task of lobbying for Philippine independence among American groups and members of Congress.

Evangelista became quickly disgusted with his colleagues who treated the mission as a junket. He broke away from the wining and dining, and made full use of the opportunity to elaborate on the cause of Philippine independence and learn from his counterparts in the American labor movement. Evangelista visited work sites and met with trade union leaders such as Samuel Gompers, William Green and others. As a result, several unions sent resolutions to Congress in support of Philippine independence.

Evangelista learned more about the international working class, Marxism, and the recently triumphant October revolution of 1917 in Russia. Bringing back pamphlets on organizing strategies and other strike tactics, he became a full-time organizer and was subsidized with a modest stipend from the *Union de Chineleros*.

Facing dire straits, and with a family of 12 to support, Evangelista later accepted a job with the *Manila Bulletin* and *La Vanguardia*, staunchly refusing a lucrative post as director of the Bureau of Printing that Quezon offered.

The early twenties marked a restive period in the Philippine countryside. The *Colorum* revolts broke out in different parts of the country in 1923 to 1924. On the labor front, contradictions within the COF ripened with Evangelista and Francisco Varona challenging Hermenegildo Cruz' reformist views and cooperative stance toward the colonial government.

It was also during this time that active labor and peasant organizing throughout Asia and especially in China, where a revolutionary situation existed, led to regional collaboration.

Harrison George (pseudonym for American communist James Allen) invited Evangelista to the Pacific Transport Workers Union conference in Canton, China under the auspices of the Pan Pacific Trade Union Secretariat (PPTUS). The PPTUS at the time served as the Far Eastern Bureau of the Communist International (Comintern).

Allen met with Evangelista and other labor leaders such as Jose Hilario, Domingo Ponce, Eugenio Enorme, Jose Salazar, representatives of the marine and transport workers unions, and submitted their names for membership in the Profintern or the Red International of Labor Unions. In China they met Tan Malaka, an Indonesian representative of the Comintern for Southeast Asia. Malaka would play an important role during the formative stages of the Philippine communist movement.

The delegates returned greatly rewarded by their experience. The Philippine labor movement was now officially affiliated with the left wing of the international workers movement. Fraternal relations were set up between Philippine and Chinese workers and plans were in the offing to send more Filipino workers abroad for educational purposes.

Evangelista broke from the ruling class Nacionalista Party and together with labor leaders like Antonio de Ora and Juan Feleo, founded the *Lapiang Manggagawa* (Workers Party). As LM general-secretary, he led extensive propaganda and organizing campaigns.

Shortly after, another American communist, Earl Browder, visited the Philippines as first secretary of PPTUS. In 1928, Evangelista, Cirilo Bognot and Jacinto Manahan were invited to attend a Profintern conference in China. During this visit, Evangelista met Chou En Lai. Soon he was off to the world's first socialist country, the Soviet Union. While there,

Evangelista witnessed the Soviet people's efforts to build a society not ruled by capitalists. Bognot stayed on after the conference to study dialectical and historical materialism and political economy at Leningrad and had a chance to meet with Josef Stalin.

But in their absence, a coup was staged within the COF by a faction disturbed by Evangelista's socialist inclinations.

The coup in the COF represented a major split in the labor movement. A conservative faction gained ascendancy in COF through corrupt means, and government assistance and cooptation. Evangelista, who was up to then a unifying force in the labor movement and a progressive figure in national politics, came under heavy attack as a subversive.

Undaunted, Evangelista formed *Katipunan ng mga Anakpawis sa Pilipinas* (KAP) with 22 unions. The new labor federation's leadership was composed of socialists like Feleo, Cirilo Bognot, Patricio Dionisio, C. H. Hsu, Arturo Soriano, and Augusto David. Its congress passed resolutions demanding national independence from the U.S. and the implementation of homestead laws. KAP advocated continued affiliation with the PPTUS, fraternity with the Profintern, opposition to U.S. plans to curtail Filipino immigration, and opposition to landlord terror. It also denounced imperialist intervention in India and Africa.

KAP initiated mass organizations to reach broader sections of the population, notably the Worker's Youth League and the Philippine Anti-Imperialist League. A major peasant organization, *Kalipunan ng Pambansang Mga Magbubukid ng Pilipinas* (KPMP), joined the KAP.

With the onset of the Great Depression, greater restiveness brewed in the semi-colonies. KAP's leadership decided to form a new political party to lead workers in political and economic struggles. The new party was formed on August 26, 1930, the date the revolution against Spain began in 1896. It was publicly launched on November 7, 1930 in honor of the Russian October Revolution. Some 5,000 people attended the Party's launching at Plaza Moriones, in the heart of the workers district of Tondo. Thus was born the *Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas* (PKP).

The Communist Party immediately came under attack and was virulently assailed by Quezon as taking advantage of the national crisis. Evangelista issued an eloquent rebuttal.

"If you [Quezon] continue with your reactionary reasoning and demagoguery, you have no one but yourself to blame for fomenting social change. The fault does not lie with us, those whom you call the ignorant masses, whom you claim are being courted by agitators. Let us be reminded that we live in the 20th century. We can't go back to the Middle Ages. We can't excuse the revival of the Inquisition, we can't force the peasants to return to the life of feudal serfdom, we can't force workers to live life as robots or animals."

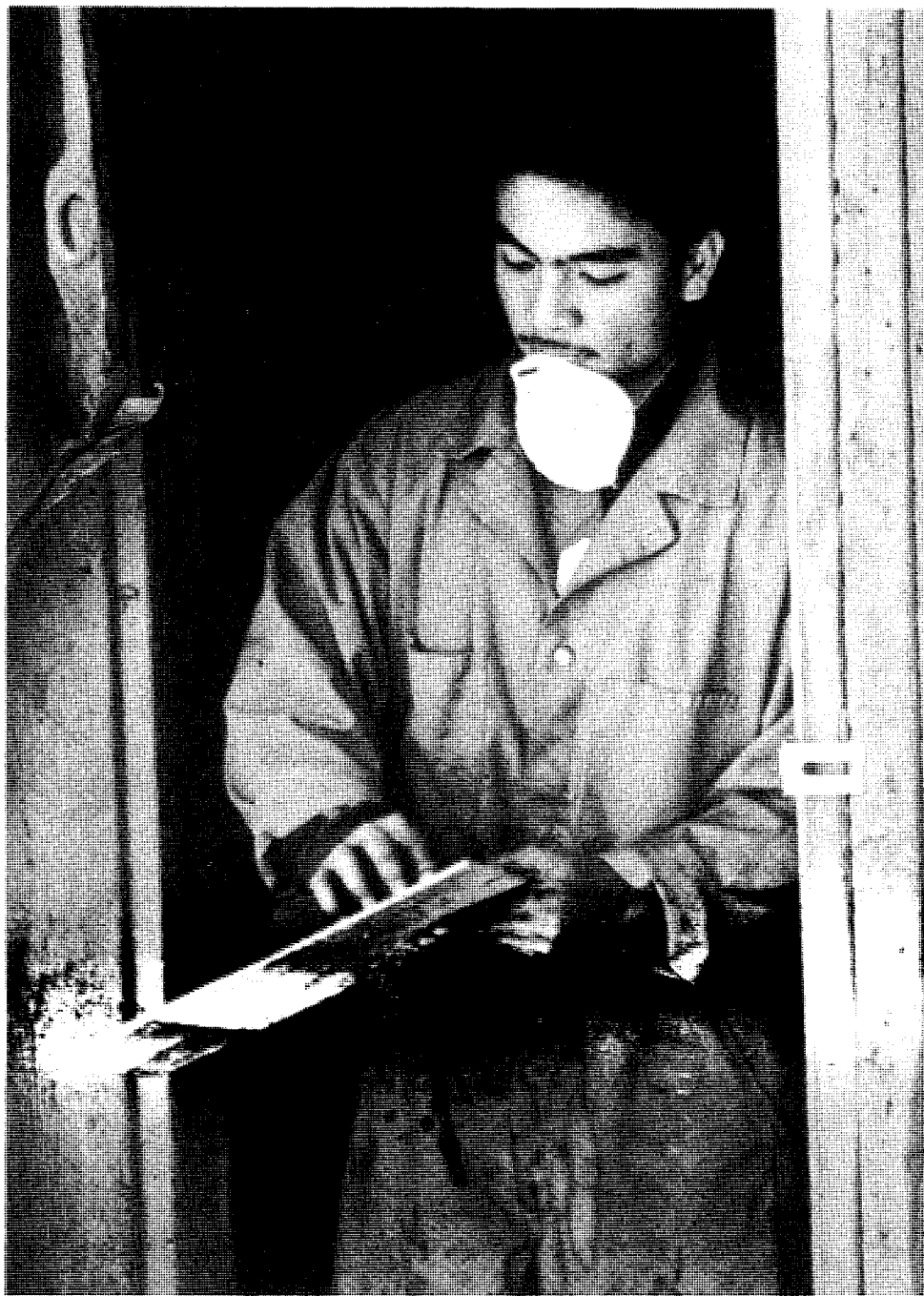
The party rapidly gained national presence and the attention of U.S. authorities. A campaign to quash the party and the workers movement ensued. The party's clandestine second congress in 1937 adopted resolutions that reflected the prevailing climate: unemployment clubs, mutual help organizations, and self-defense clubs were formed.

The year before, colonial authorities raided a KAP convention and arrested 300 workers. It was the biggest "raid" in Philippine history. Evangelista, Jacinto Manahan, Guillermo Capadocia and several other leaders were charged with illegal assembly or sedition. The accused appealed the sentence to the Supreme Court. On July 21, 1932, Evangelista appeared before the High Court and used the opportunity to explain the goals of the Communist Party. The Court upheld the lower court decision and Evangelista and others were imprisoned at the National Penitentiary for five years.

Meanwhile, during the second plenum of the Central committee, an inner party struggle broke out. Jacinto Manahan, mainly associated with the peasant movement, came under suspicion of collaborating with the government. Manahan, in turn, questioned the party's international affiliations and contended that the poor peasants were the revolution's main force. Evangelista's followers stood for maintaining proletarian internationalist links and laying the main stress on organizing the urban proletariat. Manahan was ousted from party leadership and his subsequent employment in the govern-

Continued on next page

Earning a Living



*I am the people—the mob—the crowd—the mass.
Do you know that all the great work of the world is
done through me?
I am the workingman, the inventor, the maker of the
world's food and clothes.*

Carl Sandburg

For over six decades Filipinos have been part of American society's human machinery. Through years of racial discrimination and social injustice, they have survived on the strength of their own labor.

The AK celebrates International Worker's Day by paying tribute to Filipino workers with these pictures showing them as part of the diverse American working class.

Photographs by T. Rocamora

Continued from previous page
ment confirmed suspicions about his intimate links with Quezon.

The party continued working in secret, forming organizations like the League of the Poor. It even formed an alliance with Bishop Gregorio Aglipay of the Philippine Independence Church during a Commonwealth election. The Alliance ticket, however, lost badly.

Nineteen hundred and thirty five marked a new juncture for the international communist movement. Hitler's Germany was threatening to overrun Europe and fascism loomed everywhere. The Comintern, analysing the menacing phenomenon, set forth the tasks of communists worldwide for the period. Comintern general secretary Georgi Dimitrov formulated "The United Front Against Fascism."

Ramon Espiritu, a student in Moscow at the time, came home and disseminated news about the Comintern's decision. A worker's newspaper translated Dimitrov's pamphlet, "Trojan Horse." The PKP adopted the United Front strategy which the American authorities looked upon benignly at the time. The *Partido Frente Popular* was soon launched and succeeded in winning the release of Evangelista on December 31, 1936. Upon his release, Evangelista was affirmed as the general secretary of the Communist Party.

But Evangelista was much weakened physically by his time in prison. American communists offered to host him during his period of infirmity, but the embassy in Manila was no friend of Evangelista. Through

Comintern intercession, he had another chance to visit the homeland of socialism in 1938.

He was warmly welcomed in Russia and spent time recuperating in a hospital in Crimea and meeting with Comintern officials. Upon regaining strength, he returned to the Philippines.

During his absence the party merged with the Socialist Party, headed by Pedro Abad Santos. The merger resulted in a larger peasant membership and the establishment of the United Peasants Center and the National Commission of Peasants.

More sophisticated tactics by the state met every progress made by the party. Anti-communist vigilante groups such as the Soldiers for Peace and the government-sponsored National Commission for Peasants and National Commission for Labor were formed to counter the growing militancy of party-led movements. Slogans such as "Social Justice" and "Quezonian Socialism" were foisted to confuse and sow intrigue in the movement. However, the party's line of united front against fascism continued to have great appeal among the urban middle classes.

As the threat of Japanese militarism became clear, communists in Asia adapted the United Front strategy to the regional situation. At its fourth national congress, the party defined its main task as the defense of the Philippine nation against Japanese imperialism. This meant the subordination of the struggle against U.S. imperialism and its local allies and the forging of a tactical alliance with the local ruling classes against Japan.

On December 7, 1941, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and on December 26, General Douglas MacArthur declared Manila an "Open City." The Communist Party shifted to the countryside and built the *Hukbo ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon* (Hukbalahap). The puppet Quezon government sought exile in the U.S. and the remaining officials capitulated to the Japanese. While Gen. MacArthur chose to direct the USAFFE forces from a safe distance in Australia, the Huks courageously waged armed resistance against Japan.

From his hideout in Bulacan, Evangelista attempted to direct the guerrilla war but was captured on January 25, 1942. Tortured, the physically ailing Evangelista died a captive of the Japanese in Fort Santiago.

The international communist movement lost an outstanding cadre who dedicated his life to the liberation of the Philippines and the realization of socialism in that corner of the globe. In turn, the Filipinos lost a revolutionary patriot, a remarkable man whose sacrifices on behalf of national independence and social justice should place him in the ranks of Andres Bonifacio and Jose Rizal. But the Philippine society that will accord him full recognition as a national hero is yet to be built on the ashes of the one that has tried to keep his image dim in the people's memory. □

Much of the material for this article was taken from a pamphlet in Pilipino entitled: "Crisanto Evangelista: Biography of a Great Leader of the Working Class" published by the "Union de Impresores de Pilipinas (1982) Katipunan" and articles from the National Democratic Front's Liberation.

Thousands Hit War, Injustice

Tens of thousands demanding "Jobs, Peace and Justice" marched April 20 in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Seattle and indicted the Reagan administration's policies in Central America and South Africa.

The event marked a conspicuous advance in the attempts to cohere the diverse and often disparate efforts against Reaganism. Over 100 groups including civil rights organizations, labor unions, anti-intervention networks and churches formed the local coalitions that planned and coordinated the nationwide April 20 demonstrations.

The march to the capitol in Washington, D.C., the focus of the national effort, drew an estimated 26,000 people and climaxed four days of local protest actions. In one act of civil disobedience at the gate of the White House, 265 people were arrested as they condemned Reagan's attempt to get aid for the Nicaraguan contras. The D.C. march and rally featured the Rev. Jesse Jackson who criticized Reagan for "honoring the fascists in Bitburg (referring to the president's upcoming visit to a German cemetery where Nazi SS officers are buried) and embracing the fascists in Johannesburg."

A Filipino contingent joined by activists from New York, Chicago and parts of Ohio included, among others, David Valderrama, vice chairman of the Democratic Party Central Committee of Maryland and anti-apartheid activist. Charito Planas of the Friends of the Filipino People condemned U.S. support to Marcos in a major event during the four-day April actions. Jon Melegrito of the CAMD/PSN spoke at an interfaith service led by Rev. Jackson and Dr. Avery Port, president of the United Church of Christ.



Los Angeles Filipino community contingent.

In San Francisco, as many as 50,000 marchers struck the same themes of opposition to Reaganism, nuclear proliferation, intervention in Nicaragua and El Salvador, apartheid and racism at home. Democratic Congressman Ronald Dellums urged a stop to the "madness of the nuclear arms race," while Berkeley Mayor Gus Newport appealed for divestment from companies doing business with the racist regime in South Africa.

Groups supporting liberation movements in Palestine, Lebanon, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Chile, the Philippines, Ireland, Puerto Rico, South Africa and Namibia circulated with leaflets and petitions as the march led to a rally at the Civic Center.

A Filipino delegation of about 60 marchers featured an anti-Marcos float by the Alliance for Philippine Concerns and a CAMD/PSN children's contingent and frequently drew inspired reaction from the sidewalk spectators. Members of the Church Network on the Philippines, League of Filipino Students, and Philippine Resource Center were in the contingent.

The Los Angeles and Seattle rallies were smaller but just as spirited. Both mobilized an estimated 8,000 demonstrators each.

Although smaller than expected, the Los Angeles action featured prominent participation from the Black community. The speakers included the Rev. James Lawson from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference; Angela Davis, author and anti-racist activist; and Greg Santillan representing *Katipunan ng mga Demokratikong Pilipino* (KDP). A contingent of Filipinos included members and supporters of the New Aquino Movement, Movement for a Free Philippines, CAMD/PSN and KDP.

In Seattle, Bob Santos, housing activist and councilman candidate for the local Rainbow Coalition, told the rally of the ongoing effort to achieve justice in the Domingo and Viernes case against the U.S. and Philippine governments. Unlike the other national protests, the Seattle march was confronted by a tiny group of counter-demonstrators who defended Reagan's militaristic policies. □

Hawaii Civil Rights Hearing Racism in Paradise

By VENNY VILLAPANDO

Contrary to popular belief, racism is alive and well in the multi-ethnic "Island Paradise," according to a battery of speakers who denounced civil rights violations against Native Hawaiians, ethnic minorities and immigrants, and women in a public hearing held by the Hawaii State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights last March 22, 1985.

While the flurry of criticisms focused on the state of Hawaii's record on issues ranging from affirmative action in education and employment, to deprivation of native Hawaiian homestead lands, the majority of speakers said these problems have been worsened by the policies of the Reagan administration.

"The present administration in Washington has emphasized via the news media its lack of interest in enforcing the civil rights laws," said Ira Vanterpool, spokesperson for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. This emphasis, he said, has traveled down to the state level and many areas of local government.

"It is interesting to note that the [U.S.] Supreme Court in its decisions pertinent to civil rights is not making it easier for the average man and woman who have been discriminated against to obtain appropriate redress for wrongdoings," he added. "Citizens who file complaints are seen as troublemakers. We are in for a second helping of Jim Crowism."

Twenty-six representatives of various advocacy groups testified before the annual hearing which is supposed to give recommendations to the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. Jeffrey Wallace, representing the commission's western regional office

cautioned that the findings in Hawaii will be given to Washington "for their information, not approval."

Dr. Helen Nagtalon-Miller, HSAC chairperson stressed the usefulness of the state hearings but admitted feeling that "Reagan will probably be happier if the Commission itself is done away with."

NATIVE HAWAIIAN RIGHTS

"Go to Washington, D.C. and tell them all is not well in Hawaii," cried one native Hawaiian activist. "Indigenous peoples have been denied their rights to resources, religion and culture—no thanks to 'Hassle and Crook' [Castle and Cooke] and A&B [Alexander & Baldwin], 'Almost Broke!'"

Other native Hawaiians focused on the hotly contested land issue during the hearings. Marie Kekahilaulani Olsen, 73, protested the proposed "land swap" between the Hawaiian Homes Commission and the State Department of Transportation. Under the proposed exchange, the Homes Department would get some 13 acres of light industrial land in central Honolulu in exchange for 203 acres at the Hilo, Waimea and Molokai airports.

Olsen charged that these lands were put in trust for the Hawaiian people and it is not up to the state government to dictate their transfer. Recounting the violent clashes over the issue in the past, Olsen said, "We are positive of the trouble that are sure to come to ourselves even to the first and third generations after us."

POOR AFFIRMATIVE ACTION

The State Department of Education received blistering attacks for violating affirmative action in hiring and faulty delivery of bilingual and bicultural education in the public school system.

Lee Tamoria, a lawyer and spokesperson for the Inter-Agency Council for Immigrant Services, charged that the department has

not moved to effectively eliminate discriminatory practices and to have a workforce that "will meaningfully reflect its community population." Tamoria said the department does not give consideration to ethnicity or sex in hiring and as a result minorities and women are still underrepresented in its rolls.

In July, 1983, an HSAC report noted that the department's Affirmative Action Advisory Council had not met to review affirmative action developments in over two years. The report concluded that the department's affirmative action policy has "not achieved meaningful results."

Other testimonies revealed that employment discrimination is not confined to the education department, the third largest employer in the state.

Julianne Puzon who served as director of the Oahu Filipino Community Council task force on equal employment opportunity, said that Filipinos are "most adversely impacted by employment discrimination." Despite "an excellent state affirmative action plan written and adopted in 1980," the state workforce "still reflects a serious ethnic imbalance," Puzon noted. "Filipinos are still the most underrepresented group in civil service today. Only lipservice is paid to this plan, and some of its strongest provisions have been ignored."

In the private sector, especially in the hotel and restaurant industry, many Filipinos are employed at the lowest occupational levels. "I personally know of Filipino men and women who were trained as teachers, pilots and dentists, for example, who are working as housekeepers, dishwashers and utility men—a tragic waste of human potential," she said. Puzon called for "a vigorous enforcement of civil rights and other laws which guarantee equal employment opportunity."

NATIONAL CHAUVINISM

Amy Agbayani, director of "Operation Manong," a student assistance program at the University of Hawaii, showed graphs and statistics pointing to major barriers facing Filipinos in workplaces and education.

Agbayani reported that while Filipinos are the fourth largest ethnic group in Hawaii, comprising 12% of the total population of 956,118, they are the second lowest group in median family annual income with \$15,328—slightly above the Hawaiian and far below the Caucasian, Chinese and Japanese. They have the

lowest median years of schooling (12.1 years) completed among the ethnic groups. Filipinos have the highest proportion of workers holding "low status jobs." Filipinos are the smallest group enrolled at the University of Hawaii Manoa campus, while representing the third largest ethnic group (19%) in Hawaii public schools.

William Hoshijo, attorney and executive director of The Lawyers for the People of Hawaii, presented the case of *Fragante Vs. the City and County of Honolulu* to exemplify the racist and national chauvinist attitudes toward immigrants.

Fragante applied for a clerical job with the city, getting the highest score in the civil service exam among all applicants. But he was not hired because those selected exhibited "superior verbal ability."

In a dramatic twist at the hearing, Fragante himself spoke, asking the HSAC panel whether they understood what he just said. The panel members answered yes. "If you understood me clearly, then that's enough," Fragante said. "To deny me a job because of my accent is wrong."

RACIST INS

Helen Toribio, coordinator of the Coalition to Defend Immigrant Rights, denounced the recent raids staged by the immigration authorities as "blatant civil rights violations."

Using gestapo-like tactics, INS agents forcibly entered homes and workplaces on Maui and the Big Island, demanded personnel files from employers and sought only workers with Tongan or Samoan names, Toribio reported. On Maui alone, INS agents rounded up 60 undocumented workers. None had criminal records and yet all were brought to the Oahu state prison "along with common criminals." She said the "atrocious methods employed by the INS serve to popularize the image of immigrants as criminals."

The INS raids are discriminatory, Toribio said. "In 1984, of the 696 arrested, 20% were Tongans, 15% Western Samoans and 11% Filipinos." Tongans are only one percent of the foreign visitors to Hawaii yet they comprised the majority of undocumented aliens apprehended. Meanwhile, Toribio said, 20% of foreign visitors come from Canada and 13% from Europe, yet the INS rarely apprehends overstaying visitors from these predominantly white countries.

Continued on page 12

Community v. Corporations?

Oakland Schools Mess Gets Messier

By VINCE REYES

Allegations of overblown litigation expenses and suspicious ties to corporate interests that bankroll school board candidates are entangling the Oakland School District, which is already in hot water for its alleged mishandling of the city's bilingual education program.

When Latino and Asian parents sued the district last year for noncompliance with bilingual programs, it shot back with a countersuit which was later dropped. Later, eyebrows were raised by the revelation that the school district had spent over \$800,000 over the last two years on legal advice and various tangles involving employee grievances, arbitrations, unfair labor practice suits, student disciplinary cases, and union disputes. More recently, a grand jury began looking into alleged conflict of interest violations and accusations that Oakland's conservative business community bankrolled school board candidates during the last April 16th election.

MONEY FOR LAWYERS, NOT STUDENTS

The district came under scrutiny when it became known that members of an Oakland law firm that receives the most money from the district's legal coffers was giving financial support to a slate of school board candidates.

The revelation came early April when the school employees' union, in the midst of contract negotiations with the school district, found out that the latter had subcontracted \$500,000 worth of legal work to non-district lawyers over the past two years. The union was pressing the district to handle more of its legal matters in-house to free up more money to settle bargaining issues.

Such high legal expenses cast doubt on the district's argument that student programs such as bilingual education were just too expensive to keep.

ELECTIONEERING LAWYERS?

About \$300,000 of the \$500,000 expenditure, the Oakland School Employees Association reported, went to one law firm—Crosby, Heafy, Roach and May.

Suspicious rose when OSEA president Anne Sprague cited published reports that a political action committee—the Good Government Committee—headed by Crosby law firm senior partner Justin Roach, a Republican, was donating \$40,000 to \$60,000 to the campaigns of Sylvester Hodges, Lloyd Vann, Patricia Monson and Kathleen Crawford.

"It looks bad because its a lot of money to put behind school board candidates," outgoing School Board president Peggy Stinnett told the *Oakland Tribune* before the elections. "I think we do need to see if it presents a conflict of interests. If those candidates get elected what do they then owe to Good Government?"

About five other firms performed services for the legal advisors' office. The next largest amount paid to one law firm, Berkley, Swartz and Rhodes, was \$59,000.

Miles Washington, a member of the Berkley law firm, is the district's lawyer in the bilingual case. As to the firm, it was reported that a \$400,000 grant from the Legal Services Corporation in Washington, D.C. was given to Oakland's Urban Legal Foundation which is headed by Thomas L. Berkley. The grant received attention in the *New York Times* because two congressmen charged that the Legal Services Corporation is now more interested in carrying out the policies of the Reagan administration than aiding the poor.

Local media coverage of the controversy characterized it as a classic power struggle

between Oakland's business establishment and the coalition of unions and community activists over control of the city's schools. It was not the first time Oakland's big business figured in school board politics.

ENTER THE CORPORATIONS

Oakland Schools Superintendent J. David Bowick has often been at odds with school board members over how the district should be run. A year ago, the board gave Bowick's performance a negative evaluation. "Essentially he got a D-minus," said Stinnett. "The only thing he got a good evaluation on is he's dressed well."

Bowick charged that the school's poor performance was due to the board's meddling in the district's affairs.

Sniping between Bowick and some board members prompted a number of Oakland's corporate leaders to step in. In a letter to the board on May 25, 1984, Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation president Cornell Maier charged that the "disruptive and nonproductive struggle" had "virtually brought any progress in our school system to a standstill."

Maier chastised the school board for repeatedly recommending "actions which appear to service some special political or personal purpose" and gave "an unlimited forum and credence to these special interest pleas which have undermined the administration and the progress of the schools." At least one of those "special interest" groups was interpreted to be the parents asking for bilingual education.

Then in June last year, California Schools Superintendent Bill Honig himself wrote the board threatening to "intervene, if necessary, by whatever means the power of my office permits, to ensure that these problems are corrected." Liberal board members interpreted this as intimidation.

This year, to seal the bond between the industrialists and supporters of Bowick, a group of Oakland's largest corporations raised money for the Oakland Good Government Committee, which endorsed the four board candidates who support the superintendent. The committee spent \$8,400 for Vann and Hodges, but Monson and Crawford disclaimed receiving anything from the committee. Monson won her district and both Hodges and Crawford will be in runoffs on May 14. Vann lost to progressive Alfreda Abbot.

The four candidates also had been closely identified with a year-long drive by a private nonprofit group called the Quality Education Project to get parents "more involved" in the schools. The San Francisco-based project is funded by some of the same businesses that fund the Good Government Committee. Its head just happens to be Nancy Honig, the wife of the California School Superintendent.

All four candidates denied they were pawns of business. Business leaders likewise denied they were trying to take over the schools. "We don't feel we have the expertise or the right to run the schools," said Robert B. Sheterly, board director and past chairman of the Oakland-based Clorox Co. which gave \$5,000 to the Good Government Committee.

Critics said the corporate campaign might result in an educational curriculum tailored to the technological needs of business rather than the need for a well-rounded education for students.

GRAND JURY

The Honigs acknowledged that the Quality Education Project evolved from a talk with Bowick about the need to increase parent participation in schools.

Mrs. Honig, whose father worked for Kaiser, denied that corporate leaders are part of the project but acknowledged that Kaiser head Maier supports her husband.

In early April, Maier, Clorox chairman Calvin S. Hatch and Equitec Financial Group Inc. chairman Marsden Cason, co-hosted a fundraiser for the Quality Education Project. Kaiser, Clorox and Equitec are also the main financial backers of the Good Government Committee.

Presently, all eyes are on an Alameda County grand jury looking into allegations of misconduct in the district. Four of the six board members requested the probe.

Darlene Lawson, school board vice-president, a strong supporter of bilingual education and other student programs, charged that certain administrators who personally backed the Good Government candidates illegally campaigned on school time and pressured their employees to do the same. She also questioned why an employee of Nancy Honig's Quality Education Project was brought into the district without board approval. □

By EMIL DE GUZMAN

"If Blue Cross succeeds in its strategy in the next few years," says Mike Eisenscher, coordinator of the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEU) Local 29, "It will be one of the biggest plant closures in Oakland."

Last March, 200 Blue Cross of Northern California workers and their supporters rallied in front of the company's headquarters in Oakland to oppose its plan to terminate jobs and transfer its operations to Southern California. A good majority of 1,800 positions are in jeopardy. Employees are accusing the company of "union busting."

Most of the Blue Cross workers are minority women, with Filipinos comprising 30% and Blacks filling an equal number of job positions. A good portion of the women are single parents and heads of households earning between \$7.00 to \$9.75 an hour. OPEU Local 29 and the Oakland-based Plant Closures Project are leading a "Keep Blue Cross Jobs In Oakland" campaign.

In a similar plant closure, Blue Shield in San Francisco, which at one time had 1,700 jobs, relocated in 1981 leaving only 97 jobs in San Francisco despite a long and bitter strike by OPEIU Local 3. A large percentage of the workforce were also Filipino women. Of those displaced, only 15% found new jobs at the same or higher wages while 30% became unemployed or marginally employed.

RELOCATION JITTERS

The trouble began last year in Oakland when Blue Cross of California (BCC) sold its 21-story corporate headquarters building to Kaiser Foundation Health Plan, Inc.. BCC still occupies most of the building under a lease-back arrangement, but must vacate the property by 1990. The search for a new site by the company's Relocation Task Force produced jitters

Union Busting at Blue Cross



Blue Cross rally

among the employees. According to Eisenscher, company officials at a March 26 meeting with Local 29 promised to keep corporate offices in Oakland, but were non-committal on whether the firm's state-wide operations would remain in the same area. The jobs threatened are in the clerical, claims and data-processing departments—the bulwark of union representation.

The Union argues that Blue Cross has an obligation to its employees and the City of Oakland noting that the city has invested heavily in the company and contributed to its success over the years. Furthermore, the union says a shutdown of Blue Cross will be felt by the entire East Bay economy. Alameda county is second only to Los Angeles county in suffering the highest rate of plant closures in Califor-

nia. From 1980 to 1984, Alameda county lost 16,000 jobs, with Oakland suffering a disproportionate percentage of the losses. Studies cited by the union claim that for every job lost through plant shutdown, three or four other jobs in the community are negatively affected.

EXPANDED OPERATIONS

Blue Cross of Northern California was founded in Oakland in 1936 as a nonprofit institution. It eventually expanded its operations to San Francisco, Sacramento, San Jose, Emeryville and Fresno with an administration employing 2,200 workers.

In 1977, the OPEU succeeded in organizing the employees after a 102-day strike. All Northern California field office workers voted for the union.

In 1982, Blue Cross of Northern California merged with Blue Cross of Southern California to form Blue Cross of California and became the state's largest health insurance provider. The firm also administers Medicare to two million senior citizens.

Southern California has 10 field offices and a larger regional office in Woodland Hills. The combined workforce for both regions total 4,400 workers with all southern offices being non-union shops. OPEU charges that departments in Oakland will be transferred to the Woodland Hills office.

UNION BUSTING SCHEME

Beth Kean, a Blue Cross customer representative who is also vice president

of OPEU Local 29 says that Blue Cross companies have a national "union busting scheme."

"First, smaller companies are merging with larger ones. This happened in California and now all Nevada's business is being done by California. Secondly, companies are moving from urban areas where there is union representation and minority workforces to rural or suburban areas where whites mainly reside and union organizing is unfavorable. Workers there are paid a lower salary because the company depends more on part-timers."

Since the 1982 merger, 200 jobs and five departments have shut down. Eisenscher claims another 98 jobs will be terminated by the end of the year and one more department will be shut down. The company will increase some jobs, but most future jobs will be temporary and there are no plans for expansion.

Local 29 is also demanding that a public official and union representative work with the Relocation Task Force and monitor its plans. In addition, the union has challenged the non-profit corporation's board representation. It says the present board is heavily tilted toward the hospital and medical industry with no consumer representation. It charges that rates and schedules are decided in favor of industry interests, and the subscribers who pay into the \$4 billion-a-year operations have no voice.

CORRESPONDENCE CAMPAIGN

Last month, the Oakland City Council passed a resolution in support of the Blue Cross workers. The Alameda Central Labor Council also asked local unions, especially those whose members are under Blue Cross health coverage, to send letters to the firm asking that it not move out of the Bay Area. Churches, senior citizens organizations, and women's groups have launched a similar correspondence campaign. □

Immigrant Rights Groups Gear Up for Fight



Immigrant and refugee rights advocates at L.A. parley.

Immigrant rights activists from all over the United States converged in Los Angeles to set the stage for the creation of a national network of church, labor, civil libertarian, legal and community groups that would defend the rights of undocumented workers and refugees.

The National Consultation on Immigrant and Refugee rights met April 25 to 27 and was attended by over 150 activists from 24 areas including Texas, Arizona, Washington, D.C., New York, Chicago, Minnesota, New Orleans, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle, and Utah. Representatives from El Salvador, Haiti and Mexico were also present.

Building a national movement to defend undocumented workers and refugees and defeating the Reagan administration's assault on immigrants exemplified by the repeated by-passing of Congress to fund the Immigration and Naturalization Service and its enforcement wing, the Border Patrol, were the conference's main themes.

The parley was sponsored by the Midwest Coalition in Defense of Immigrants, Chicago; Center for Immigrant Rights, New York; Committee for Fair Immigra-

tion Legislation, New York; Bay Area Committee Against Simpson/Mazzoli; National Immigration Project of the National Lawyers Guild, Boston; El Rescate, Los Angeles; and chapters of the American Friends Service Committee Groups; the Haitian Refugee Center from Florida sent representatives. Also in attendance were Filipinos who came as delegates of the Committee to Defend Immigrant Rights in Honolulu, the KDP chapter in Los Angeles and the Bay Area, the ILWU

Paradise

Continued from page 10

"We believe these INS raids do not stem from any genuine concern to put Americans to work but reflect Reagan administration policy to restrict the rights of the undocumented and curtail the entry of non-white immigrants." She said the INS is prematurely carrying out measures that circumvent Congress debate on immigration reform. "Immigration reforms, to be viable, should be able to guarantee the basic constitutional rights of the undocumented as persons living in the United States."

Local 37 in Seattle, and individuals from the Wilmington and L.A. city area.

A panel explained the repressive character of U.S. immigration laws, the detention process and the expulsion of undocumented workers. Panelists stressed that violence against the undocumented, and the militarization of the U.S./Mexico border with the deployment of SWAT-type teams trained in military techniques called Border Patrol Tactical Team (BORTAC). The move is based on the INS view that the entry of immigrants at the border constitutes "invasion" and the border patrol is justified in "defending the nation" from alien hordes.

Panelists included Peter Schey, NCIR; Darlene Kalki and Marla Kamiya of CIR; Maureen O'Sullivan, NLG; Oscar Chacon of Casa El Salvador; Bill Tamayo; BACASM; Joe Treviño, LULAC; Carlos Arango, Midwest Coalition, Chicago; and Rev. Gerar Jean-Juste of Haitian Refugee Center. Rev. Alfonso Roman of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, the main funding sponsor of the event, moderated the plenary sessions.

Asylum and foreign policy workshops targeted the denial of due process to political refugees from Central America and Haiti who are forced to leave their countries because of civil strife and administration efforts to block refugees from obtaining temporary status in the U.S.

Activists were encouraged to support the DeConcini/Moakley Bill (SB 377 and HR 822) which backs refugee rights and the Rodino Bill (HR 23) specific to the rights of Haitian refugees. Both bills currently lack the political momentum necessary for their passage.

"Indirect discrimination plays a big role in job employment here in Hawaii for the Black American, male and female," says the NAACP's Vanterpool.

"Informal word-of-mouth recruitment networks, which rely on present employees for new applicants are used by predominantly white male firms," he said. As a result, Blacks have a tough time getting work in Hawaii, and have to return to the mainland upon completion of college to find work.

Vanterpool noted that of the 160,932 total student enrollment population in the state school system, two percent are Black students. Of the total number of classified personnel employed by the Department of

The sanctuary movement was cited as a powerful expression of the defense of refugees and Mayors Gus Newport and Harold Washington of Berkeley and Chicago were praised for declaring their cities refugee sanctuaries. Prosecuted sanctuary workers, speakers said, are not lawbreakers but individuals who are standing up for the rights of people who face death or imprisonment if returned to their own country.

Participants were also asked to address refugee needs such as health, food, clothing and shelter, and medical and legal aid.

The panel on legislation focused on defeating the Simpson/Mazzoli bill which is pending reintroduction in Congress this year. Panelists also criticized the already introduced Roybal and Lungren bills for their stress on employee sanctions, which they argued will only encourage job discrimination against non-whites.

Resolutions were passed ranging from nationally coordinated lobbying efforts, a National Day of Justice which includes a "Know Your Rights" drive and a task force to monitor INS abuses to a Bill of Rights for undocumented to be presented to the United Nations.

Rev. Tyrone Pitts of the Racial Justice Program of the National Council of Churches said the conference was historic since it represented an important step in the goal of building a "national monument for the rights of immigrants and refugees."

Bill Tamayo of the BACASM said "the many resolutions passed are not merely resolutions of spirit—they can materialize because the groups that will go back to their own areas are responsible, experienced and committed." □

Education's 4,863 workers, only four are Black. Of the total number of certified personnel statewide—teachers, principals, professionals—there are only 43 Blacks out of a total of 9,791.

"When you look at the emphasis placed on (affirmative action) by the Reagan administration, it is fruitless to place blame at the state or local level, for when the stream begins at the mountain top and turns into a river on its way to the sea, it is only reasonable to assume that the particles of misrepresentation, disenfranchisement, prejudice and racism will flow with the tide, especially if it is high tide all the time." □

ILWU CONFAB BACKS R.P. WORKERS

Over 400 worker delegates representing union locals from the west coasts of the United States and Canada, Hawaii and Alaska unanimously approved a resolution supporting Filipino workers organizing against the Marcos government.

The resolution sponsored by Seattle's ILWU Local 37 was passed by the 25th biennial Convention of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union held last April in San Francisco.

"I met young men and women on strike at one factory for 619 days. They were shot at, water cannoned, beaten up by police and goons; yet, they returned to the picket line everyday," spoke Jim Ryder, business agent from the Bay Area ILWU Local 6, in support of the resolution.

He had just returned in time for the convention from a three-week visit to the Philippines where he met with labor leaders of the militant *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (May First Movement). Ryder talked of the jailings and murder of national labor leaders, low pay, and unemployment. "Labor must speak out for the Filipino workers," he said.

The resolution was the second on record. Four years ago at the 23rd biennial convention, Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes, young Local 37 union officials and KDP members, engineered the passage of a similar resolution in support of Filipino workers in spite of strong opposition from pro-Marcos Filipino members in Hawaii. A month later, the two American-born Filipinos were murdered.

This time, a delegate from Hawaii's Local 142, a predominantly Filipino union of 35,000 workers gave full support by speaking on behalf of the 187 delegates for the resolution.

With the resolution, the ILWU vowed to promote greater interest on the Philippines through its newspaper, *The Dispatcher* and other types of educational work.

Other general policy statement resolutions were passed in support of workers in Central America and South Africa. At one point, the convention adjourned

to march in solidarity with University of California Berkeley students demanding the removal of the university's investments in South Africa. The day before, 159 students were arrested in a sit-in protesting South Africa's apartheid system. □

ACTIVIST'S KILLER HAS IT EASY

The killer of Vietnam solidarity activist Professor Edward Cooperman received a trial verdict peace activists call "a license to kill."

Judge Richard Beacom convicted admitted killer Minh Van Lam March 28 of involuntary manslaughter, which will carry a maximum sentence of two to four years in prison.

Professor Cooperman was shot in his office at the California State University campus in Fullerton in September 1984. Cooperman was internationally recognized for his humanitarian work in Vietnam and for his efforts to normalize relations between the United States and Vietnam. He spearheaded several efforts for scientific cooperation between the two countries.

"We're pleased," said Defense Attorney Alan May of the verdict. "The judge at least believes [Lam's] version that the whole thing was an accident."

The Committee for Justice for Ed Cooperman, however, denounced the decision and criticized Beacom for preordaining a verdict in the second trial after the first resulted in a hung jury. The Committee also criticized prosecuting attorney James Enright for not forcefully arguing a case for second degree murder.

Enright, it said, did not pursue pertinent areas of investigation such as: the mounting threats on Cooperman's life which made an FBI agent suggest to the victim that he get a gun; a bloody footprint at the murder site not matching Lam's or Cooperman's; a vehicle belonging to Lam's uncle that had been linked to the threats against Cooperman; and a confession Lam allegedly made to a jailhouse witness about his extensive backers, including former South Vietnamese Vice President Nguyen Cao Ky.

The Committee believes Lam has links to an organized gang of anti-communists called The Frogmen. The gang of former members of the South Vietnam Navy has been linked to a number of crimes ranging from

ranging from extortion to political murders.

"There can be no real justice," said Committee chair Tony Russo, "unless a full investigation into the links between rightwing terrorism in the Vietnamese community, Cooperman's murder and the murders of other progressive Vietnamese is done."

Following the judge's decision, the victims widow, Klaaske Cooperman, filed a \$12 million civil suit against Lam and unknown accomplices. "Lam isn't really that important—I want to find the ones who ordered him to kill my husband," she said. □

RILES LOSES BID

Oakland city councilman Wilson Riles, Jr., failed to unseat incumbent Lionel Wilson in the mayoral election last April 16. Riles, who led a grassroots campaign pushing for jobs, rent control, housing and bilingual education fought an uphill battle against Oakland's first Black mayor. Riles' shoestring campaign budget was pitted against Wilson's war chest of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Wilson had the generous support of the city's big business sectors.

Wilson, who has been in office for eight years, handily won with 32,396 votes to Riles' 17,578. The Riles camp, however, hardly considered Wilson's victory a mandate, as only one-fourth of the registered voters went to the polls.

"Regardless of what happened tonight, we still have a job to do," said Riles after the election. "I would not have made a different decision even if I had known what was going to happen tonight. The [progressive] movement never moves forward by sitting on its behind."

During the campaign, Riles criticized Wilson's close ties to Oakland's industrialists which he believes have had a conservative influence on the mayor. Riles said his defeat insures that "the downtown corporations will continue to hold sway" over the direction of Oakland.

Riles will continue his political sparring with Wilson as a member of the city council and said that "We have not set the progressive campaign back but we've taken another leap forward. People in this city have to deal with us in the future."

Riles' mayoral attempt was endorsed by several Filipino-American organizations who came together as "Filipinos for Riles." □



Remembering an Activist

By PAULO GUERRERO

It was on a bamboo floor of a dilapidated nipa hut overlooking rainswept rice paddies that I first met Fernan (Rolando Federis), an activist in his early twenties.

Along with his younger sisters, we sat on the floor in a circle as his mother served fried bananas and water.

The joy of having bananas for snacks was something Fernan's sisters had not experienced for quite a long time. All throughout their young lives, except on special occasions, they had to be contented with water for snacks and whatever leftover they had from lunch, which was always rice soaked in soy sauce, with a little bit of dried fish and tomatoes.

It's a strange paradox that things as simple as being treated to fried bananas create a situation of lasting significance among strangers that when the experience is gone, they find themselves friends forever.

This happened to Fernan and me.

As I exchanged jokes with his sisters, Fernan modestly looked into my eyes and asked me questions about my life as a college student. Shocked by my reply that a college degree is important to change Philippine society, he talked about how the Philippine system of education was patterned after the American pedagogy for the purpose of producing a pool of graduates who will think and act like Americans and eventually idealize American political and economic values.

As the rain poured heavily, our conversation shifted to a more solemn note as Fernan began to share his life as an activist. I began to feel ashamed as he told me about his tasks of educating people and soliciting their support for the revolution, despite the constant threat posed by marauding Philippine military police.

Fernan had been through tough times before. As a

student in the early seventies, he was an active participant in mass demonstrations and rallies, having been beaten by truncheon-wielding soldiers more than once. He had lived with factory workers, had gotten used to sleeping late at night and slapping away mosquitoes as he tirelessly explained the need for a union with a nationalist and democratic orientation. He had worked with other activists from Tatalon and he knew what it meant to live in a squatters' area where one had to compete with cockroaches and rodents for space.

Fernan's stories were full of depressing scenarios. He spoke of anger, injustice, greed, separation, hardships, and challenges. And yet there was no trace of surrender in his voice. He also spoke of commitment, serving the people and his willingness to pay the price for what he believed in.

Because of his poor background and love for the people he grew up with, Fernan was well-liked anywhere he went. The people he solicited donations from, described his patience in dealing with those who do not understand the Philippine political situation. His co-workers talked of his readiness to take risks. I remember him as a sensitive person who would talk about his son and how much he missed him.

In the end, Fernan stood tall. He inspired a lot of people, including myself. He was a teacher in his own way. More than this, however, he was a learner. He learned from the masses. And, through his work, he gave back to the masses what he had learned from them.

Fernan's life is the only gauge through which I viewed the fallacy of the accusation that eventually led

Sanggal sa Crame

Makitid ang ating daigdig, anak.
Pinakikitid ng mga pader at alambreng tinik
na nakapaligid sa atin.
Pagtiisan ang biglang kalampag ng bakal na pintong
gumigising sa iyong pagkakahimbing.
Pagtiyagaan ang ilang sandaling ligaya't aliw
dulot ng ating dalaw.

Pero, pakatandaan mo anak.
May maluwang na daigdig sa labas:
gintong palay sa luntiang bukid,
matatayog na puno sa bughaw na bundok,
mababangong orkidyas sa birgeng gubat.

Musmos ka pa, anak.
Maaga kang naisasalang
sa apoy ng pagsubok.
Sunggaban ang pagkakataong ito.
Patigas ang buto't laman.
Patibayin ang tuhod at gulugod.

Ihanda ang sarili, anak,
para sa kinabukasan.

Judy M. Taguiwalo
Political Detainee
Camp Crame Stockade
December 15, 1984

Awit Kay Diwa

Kung ako ay wala na
Napugto ang hininga
Bunso kong maiiwan
Kandiliin sana.

Diligin ng sigasig
Ng tiyaga at pag-asa
Iwihin sa kandungan
Ng pakikibaka.

Mar Guevarra
ama, rebolusyonario
Maynila, 1979

to his death—that he was a subversive and, therefore, he deserved to die.

Fernan was one of those I've known whose concern for social amelioration transcends his own desire for personal convenience and security. He is the symbol of man's innate strength and courage that's available to anyone who wants to work for justice and freedom.

Fernan, a friend, was a man of the people. He had friends in the cities as well as in the countryside. His regular brushes with detention and death made his life more than ordinary. Yet he remained undaunted.

At first, he did not know the final proof of his love. Should he work and take care of his sisters, or should he work for the interests of the bigger community? His choice to leave his family and work for the people was what made a lasting impression on me.

Ten years ago this year, Fernan disappeared on his way to the Bicol region, a victim of military atrocities. His body was never found. According to a friend who was in the same ordeal, he was severely tortured until he died.

The last time I visited his sisters to inform them of the tragedy that befell him, his mother, wiping her tears, said to me in Tagalog, "Don't fail us, don't fail the many people that my son loved so dearly."

If Fernan opened my eyes to what it means to be an activist back in that nipa hut where his sisters almost jumped in excitement at the sight of fried bananas, the many people he left behind have taught me that they are indeed worth dying for.

Paulo Guerrero
Seattle, WA

Eh Ano Sa Iyo (AMERICAN DREAM)

Eh, ano sa iyo kung pinaslang si Aquino
Sa harapan ng mga nagkikindatang kamera
nakamulagat na mata ng mga reporter
sa telebisyon at peryodiko
Eh, ano sa iyo kung ang kumalabit ng gatilyo
ay sundalo ring alipin at bihag ng
sistemang baligho
Eh, ano sa iyo kung sumiklab ang protesta
mula sa Tondo hanggang Makati
mula iskinita hanggang highway
Ah, you don't care, kailangan mapangalagaan
ang iyong American Dream
You have to strive for that Milk and Honey.

Eh, ano sa iyo kung ang dollar sa piso'y
nagiging lobo

Bigas sambutil ay maging singko
Eh, ano sa iyo kung ang agos ng pawis
tinig at hinaing ng mga api
ay sinasalungat ng dura
winawasak ng halakhak ng mga inaamag
na amo at pulitiko.
Ah, you don't care, kailangan mapangalagaan
ang iyong American Dream
You need to strive for that Milk and Honey.

Eh, ano sa iyo kung ang larawan ng bayang
sinilanga'y
Sakmal pa rin ng lumutang kuko
Kamandag ay mabagsik na lumalason

Elektroniko-makinaryang gumigiling ng laman
at humihigop ng dugo
Eh, ano sa iyo kung sa matinding kahirapan
kaapihan at kawalan ng laya
Pakikibaka ay lumagablab mula Aparri hanggang Jolo
Dinudustang kasaysayan, hihimasing walang sintamis
ay gatilyo
Ah, still you don't care
Amagin man ang puwit ng kriminal sa trono
O magdiskurso man ang monumento ng bayaning
hinubog ng dahil lang sa isang punglo.

R. Dacquel
Setyembre 1983

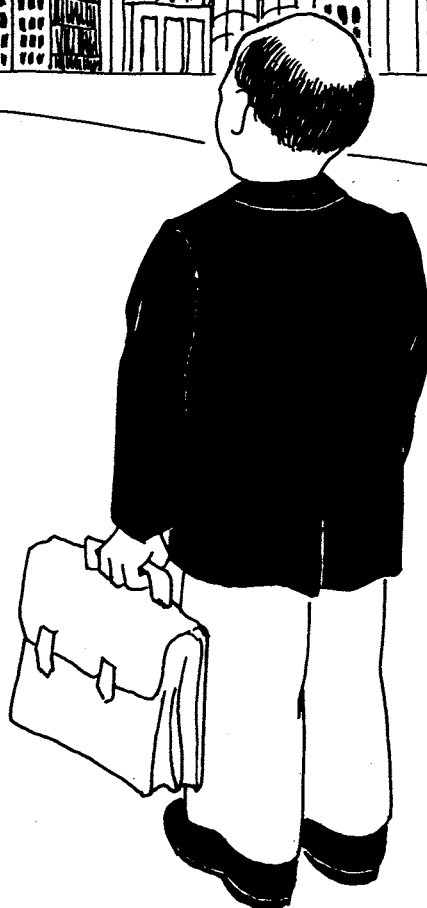
R. Dacquel is a two-time winner in the National Essay Writing Contest 1977, 1979. He "loves to write and experiment in free verse." He works as a technician in Silicon Valley (Sta. Clara), California.



Ang Samo ng Isang Bayani!

1
Isang hapon noong
Ulan ulan,
Magkausap kaming
Dal'wang magkaibigan
2
Kapwa Pilipino,
Ang pinag-usapan
Mga tinitis
Ng kawawang bayan.
3
Di n'yo naitatanong
Kaibigan kung sino?
Isa siyang bayani,
Kilalang totoo.
4
Sa bilanguang siya'y
Tinapo't piniit,
Dahil sa Lumaban
Sa gobyernong ganid.
5
Sa mabuting palad
Siya'y nakalabas,
Anim na taon ding
Tiniis ang hirap.
6
Narito siya
Ngayo't naghahanap
Ng makakatulong
Sa labang masaklap.
7
"Bakit nga ba dito,"
Tanong ng kaibigan,
"Kababayan nati'y
Walang pakiramdam?"
8
"Hindi naman lahat,
Ngunit karamihan
Hindi nadadama
Hinagpis ng bayan.
9
"Hindi nadidinig
Malakas na sigaw,
Daing ng Kawawa,
Poot sa Kalaban!
10
"Di ba nila alam
Sila'y kailangan
Upang magtagumpay
Pagligtas sa bayan?"
11
Dito'y napasin kong
Siya'y di nagagalit,
Kungdi nalulungkot
Naghihinanakit.

12
Parang nalulumbay
na di siya tulungan,
Baya'y umiiyak,
Ngunit lumalaban!
13
Malumanay akong
Tumugon sa Kanya,
Parang nauumid
At nahihiya pa:
14
"Tutoo't mayroon nga
Na di pumapansin
Sa sugat ng bayan
Gaano mang kalalim.
15
"Hindi nila gustong
Sila'y gambalain
Sa ayos ng buhay,
Dami ng pagkain.
16
"Ano sa kanila
Kung mabalitaang
Laganap ang gutom
Sa alilang bayan?
17
"Ano sa kanila
Na ang kalayaan
Ay tinatadyakan
Ng pinunong sukal!
18
Napatindig bigla
Mahal kong kaibigan
"Bayaan na sila
Huag nang pagusapan!



19
Inakbay ko siya't
Marahang sinabi:
"Makinig ka pa rin
At magdili-dili.
20
"Mayroon s'ating dito'y
Nag-aala-alang
Kay liit dao yatang
Magagawa nila.
21
"Sa layo ng bayan,
Kanilang palagay
Kahit anong gawi'y
Walang kabuluhan
22
Pakli ng kaibigan
Tinig mahinahon:
"Maling mali iyan,
Pakinggan mo ngayon.
23
"Hindi mo ba alam
Na hindi maselan
Ang bayan tang aba
Sa pangangailangan?
24
"Pagtulong sa kanya'y
Maipakikita
Sa mga paraang
Hindi lang iisa!
25
"Iba't iba tayo,
Iba't ibang kaya;
Malki, maliit,
Ialay sa kanya!
26
"Ikao'y manggagamot,
Ako'y magkukwento,
Siya'y magtitinda,
O kaya'y basurero.
27
"Kailangan kong lahat!
Ang taghoy ng bayan,
Ibigay ang kaya,
Huag n'yo akong iwan!

28
"Si Rizal sumulat,
Si Andres lumaban
Del Pilar umakda,
Ang iba'y sumigaw!
29
"Kahit sa pangamba
Sa Diyos na mahal
Ay iba iba rin
Ating ina-alay.
30
"Gayon di sa ngayon,
Di ba kaibigan?
Laban sila doon,
Dito, tulong naman.
31
"Ang tulong na ito
Aking uulitin,
Iba't ibang uring
Lingkod at gawain.
32
Ang lahat ng kaya
Ay ibigay natin,
Pagka't natataya
Ang bayang alipin
33
Payapa ang mukha
Ng aking kausap;
Napawi ang galit,
May ngiti pang galak.
34
Nagtakip silim na
Huminto ang ulan:
Nahawi ang ulap
Saming magkaibigan.

ni Conrado Sandiko

Conrado Sandiko is a frequent contributor to "Voices." He works and writes in Washington, D.C.

TO OUR READERS:

Send your essays, satires, poems, short stories, photos of your paintings, sculptures, or woodcuts; photo art; etc. Send also a brief description of yourself as a writer or artist.

- Contributions must be **generally progressive** in content. However, all written materials accepted for publication are edited only for length. **The contributors are responsible for the political opinions expressed in their work.**
- Essays, feature articles, or short stories, should not exceed 2,000 words. All articles must be typed double spaced and received by us within the first week of the month. Only articles with self-addressed stamped envelopes will be sent back if not accepted for publication.
- Photos of art work will be sent back upon request by the contributor.
- For now, **AK** cannot give monetary compensation for published material although we wish to do so in the future. **But your contribution to the enrichment of the Filipino community's cultural experience will itself be a satisfying reward.**

Why the U.S. Farm Crisis?



Auctioneer trying to sell foreclosed farm amidst jeers from local farmers.

By WICKS GEAGA

For the estimated 500,000 farmers who have lost their farms through foreclosure since Reagan took office in 1981, and the 200,000 more on the threshold of bankruptcy, the boom years of the 1970s have suddenly turned into the Great Depression of the '80s.

According to agriculture undersecretary Frank Naylor, about 40,000 farmers are presently being buried by debt loads equal to 70% of their assets. They are not expected to survive the rest of the year. Another 160,000 continue to juggle growing debts ranging anywhere from 40% to 70% of their assets. Unless a miraculous economic upturn occurs, they are expected to stay in operation from two to five years before "they would be completely wiped out."

The problems stalking the American farmer are overwhelming. Depressed crop prices remain dangerously below the levels necessary to cover production costs. High interest rates on farm operating loans raise the costs of production, while simultaneously inflating the farmer's ever-increasing debt. Declining land values restrict his ability to acquire the essential operating loans for the spring crop planting. Meanwhile, the export market has severely contracted.

ROOTS OF CRISIS

The roots of the present bust are invariably traced back to the early 1970s when farm exports experienced a dramatic boom. The Soviet Union became a major importer of U.S. wheat and corn, along with several countries that suffered crop failures. With government prodding, farmers borrowed heavily to expand their acreage and modernize their farm equipment.

By the end of the decade, exports had quadrupled from \$10 billion to \$40 billion and everything seemed to flourish. As farm prices soared to unprecedented levels, so did the value of farmland. Rural bankers and land speculators thrived as farmers mortgaged themselves without restraint. From less than \$50 billion at the start of the '70s, the farm debt skyrocketed to over \$220 billion today.

The farm boom finally abated in 1981, in the wake of the U.S. grain embargo on the Soviet Union and the worldwide recession. The resulting drought in U.S. farm exports triggered a plunge in farm commodity prices. At the same time, land values began to plummet from their inflated summits, after the Reagan administration and the Federal Reserve Board put the clamp on the money supply in the effort to halt inflation.

Saddled with massive debts and unable to acquire operating loans on their deflated land, many farmers

joined unemployment and food stamp lines. Overcome by their plight, some have opted to quit, literally. From 1982 to 1983 suicides among farmers rose by 25%.

MIDDLE, SUPER AND PART-TIME

The crushing farm debt weighs most heavily on the shoulders of 650,000 "middle-level farmers, who gross between \$40,000 to \$50,000 in sales annually and produce about two-thirds of the nation's staple crops. For these predominantly family farms, the interest payments on debts have over the past several years superseded their net farm income.

The "superfarms" or monopoly-conglomerates which comprise a mere 1% of the nation's 2.4 million farm units but produce 25% of the total farm output are in no danger of going under. These monopolies reap substantial fruits from tax shelters inaccessible to the middle farmer. Many are mere extensions of financial corporations whose assets reach far beyond the agricultural sector, and are thus relatively immune to the booms and busts of farming.

The remaining 72% of farming units, which produce less than \$40,000 worth of commodities annually, manage to survive only because they are operated by people who derive most of their income from full-time jobs in nearby towns.

EXPORT THE FARMER

The Reagan administration's response to the widespread farm failures and growing demands for prompt government intervention and emergency aid is to virtually ignore them.

Reagan even joked: "I think we should export the farmer and keep the grain." Although immediately dismissed by the White House aides as merely another bit of presidential humor, the remark betrays the administration's attitude toward the crisis.

When Reagan took office in 1981, he vowed to unleash production by applying his "free market" philosophy to agriculture by restraining government aid. Two years later, record overproduction in the farms and resulting price depressions forced the White House to switch to its equally disastrous Payment-in-Kind (PIK) program which paid farmers, in money or crops, not to plant beyond a certain acreage.

At a staggering cost of \$30 billion, PIK merely fattened a few superfarms that, by virtue of their size, were able to cash in on the program's benefits. PIK enabled a handful of smaller farms to barely hang on, while most received payments too small to offset their losses.

Ironically, the administration is now using the dismal

failure of PIK to resurrect its "free market" strategy. Its ultimate goal is to dismantle the whole structure of crop loans, cash subsidies and acreage restrictions that grew out of the Great Depression of the 1930s. The 50-year-old system was set up to protect the average farm from the ravages of economic depression and the threat posed by ever-expanding agricultural monopolies.

FIERCE GLOBAL COMPETITION

Reagan's decision to finally place farm support programs on the chopping block was no doubt based on his effort to reduce the astronomical budget deficit without cutting into his costly military build-up. Up to this point, Reagan's cleaver had aimed mainly at social programs affecting minorities and other low income sectors. Now, programs that benefit the more privileged sectors of the population—such as farm aid, Medicare, revenue sharing and housing development—are taking their turn at the chopping block. The military budget remains a sacred cow.

However, Reagan's plan to eventually eliminate the farm support system is based on more than just budget needs. Given the declining U.S. position in world trade and its new status as a net debtor nation, the administration is also bent on recapturing the foreign agricultural markets it has lost to other exporters in recent years.

There is fierce competition within the global capitalist market system. To carve out larger sections of the agricultural market, the governments of Brazil and Argentina, in particular, have launched low-interest farm loan programs and reduced export tariffs. Their own staggering debt crises have forced them to boost agricultural exports in order to earn badly needed foreign exchange.

Meanwhile, the European Community (EC) spent \$5.4 billion in 1984 on export subsidies to unload its growing agricultural surplus on the world market. (A net grain importer of more than two million tons in 1980, the EC exported 10 million tons more than it imported four years later, and surpassed the U.S. in wheat production.)

Given the climate of intense international competition, the Reagan plan is redefining the bottom line for participation in American agriculture: the ability to compete in the world market with little government assistance. As agriculture secretary John Block said, "This country can no longer afford farm policies that do not allow us to be competitive in the world."

BROAD IMPLICATIONS

Undeterred by the growing protests nationwide, including cross country marches to the Capitol by desperate farmers and their supporters, (the overwhelming majority of whom voted Republican last November), Reagan is plowing ahead with his farm policy. He recently vetoed an emergency farm aid bill passed by Congress.

Should Reagan succeed in abolishing the farm support system, the inevitable result will be the demise of small farmers and the absorption of their farms by the large monopoly combines.

Economists, however, point to a broader impact. Already the farm depression is creating ghost towns throughout rural America by devastating small-town businesses and causing countless rural bank failures. A University of Nebraska study predicts that most sparsely-populated rural communities of 900 or less will disappear by the end of the decade.

A resistance movement among farmers has taken shape and local police and bank officials are worried about growing militance and the increased potential for violence. Progressives like Rev. Jesse Jackson are actively forging alliances with farmers' groups, and farmer participation in broad anti-Reagan protests have become more visible.

However, the influence of right-wing ideology has also been noted in a number of farm communities as despairing farmers become vulnerable to populist anti-Federal doctrines by right-wing survivalists and para-military groups. Such views intertwine standard white supremacist theories with attacks against taxes, the federal banking system, the Trilateral Commission and any government authority above the county sheriff. □

Nations, \$1.5 billion. It is not clear, however, how much share Ethiopia has received from this effort and there is little evidence that it is getting much help from the West beyond those coming from private humanitarian efforts.

In answer to the charges by the U.S. media, Mengistu declared at a press conference in Addis Ababa last November, "There is no comparison between Western aid and that rendered by the socialist countries." In truth, the U.S. refuses to support the Ethiopian government's efforts to alleviate the famine but has instead directed its resources to aid the rebel forces fighting the Derg.

Recently the U.S. announced that it will expand this aid by sending 115,000 tons of food and 86 trucks to the rebel-held territories.

Since last year the U.S. has embarked on a clandestine operation based in Sudan to bring aid across the Ethiopian border to the rebel-held territories. It has also encouraged Ethiopians, especially the Ethiopian Jews in the stricken areas, to cross the border to Sudan where the rebel forces are reportedly recruiting members. The CIA also engaged in a massive airlift operation to bring Ethiopian Jews to Israel and discredit the Ethiopian government. (Ethiopian Jews in Israel—there are 10,000 of them now—recently protested their ill treatment in the hands of the Israelis.)

That Ethiopia is facing great difficulty in overcoming centuries of neglect and colonial exploitation while having to deal with a raging civil war, gives a certain level of effectiveness to U.S. propaganda. Drought and famine have given

Washington a golden opportunity to discredit a government whose main "crime" was that it had the temerity to break away from the domination of Western capital, restructure its society, gear economic priorities toward internal needs, and form alliances with the socialist countries in the process.

However, it is this temerity to fight for its own independent development which will ultimately give Ethiopia the productive and social capacity to overcome the impact of droughts.

In fact, while drought is expected to remain a sad feature of the African landscape, countries that are breaking free from centuries of underdevelopment and colonial plunder—like Ethiopia, Angola and Mozambique—will have the best basis in the long run to weather the impact of nature's worst tempers. □

Ethiopia ...

Continued from page 16

member states to put money on the table, they are not there, including some who are crying loudest now about Ethiopia."

WHERE'S U.S. AID?

Western governments including the U.S. have pledged relief aid to all of Africa: Italy, \$900 million; the U.S. \$800 million; Japan, \$165 million; West Germany, 7,000 tons of wheat; and the United

The Politics of Famine

Behind the Famine in Ethiopia

By EDDIE ESCULTURA

To anti-abortionist Phyllis Schlafly, the sweetheart of the New Right, it is all so simple. Drought only strikes countries that have "gone communist."

Although not as crude as Schlafly in damning the facts to preach the gospel, the U.S. government pretty much is promoting a similar view of the devastating famine that has brought untold suffering to tens of millions of Africans. Washington has focused its drought-related diatribes on the revolutionary government of Ethiopia and its "inhumane and irresponsible" backers in the socialist bloc.

Without a doubt, Ethiopia has suffered a staggering human toll—half a million Ethiopians starved to death last year alone and 2.3 million more face starvation in the subdesertland of Northern Ethiopia, according to an estimate by the Western media.

Humanitarian efforts to bring relief to the stricken areas have been commendable but these efforts are being hampered by a raging civil war in Ethiopia's northern provinces of Eritrea and Tigre (*the subject of a future article—Ed.*) and Washington's attempts to manipulate aid and direct it to the rebel forces fighting the present government.

But the drought has not been as ideologically inclined as the U.S. implies. It has, in fact, gripped the African continent for more than 20 years now, hitting the hardest 18 countries as politically diverse as Ethiopia, Sudan, Niger, Mauritania, Mali, Chad, Bourkina-Faso, and Angola. Thirty million people face starvation in these countries alone while another group of nine countries, though less severely affected, are also reeling from the searing drought.

These countries happen to be at the confluence of two adverse factors—geographical and historical—that have left a vast portion of Africa doomed to the worst impact of natural calamities. A very large strip of subdesertland, just beneath the Sahara, extends from the Western coast to the Horn of Africa and makes a wide arc down to the southwestern coast of the continent. Very low rainfall limits vegetation in these areas.

An even wider strip of African land that overlaps with the subdesertland and generally follows its contours sustains subsistence agriculture as the basis of the economies of the countries along its course. The pattern of subsistence farming and general underdevelopment resulting from feudal relations frozen by colonial subjugation and reorganization have made the continent so vulnerable to the impact of natural disasters such as drought.

COLONIAL LEGACY

While the Western media is understandably reluctant to look at Africa's past to shed light on the present crisis, one cannot dissociate the colonial pillage of Africa's land resources from the ecological imbalance that has magnified the effects of natural calamities. The deforestation of Africa is directly related to the dissipation of water resources that are particularly critical in a region with very low rainfall.

Ethiopia lies in the intersection of these two negative influences. It is one of the largest countries in the continent, with 471,000 square miles and 41 million people. Its central highland, where 85% of the population lives, is a pocket of vegetation (mainly grassland for grazing) and mountainous forests in a country of subdesertland. Despite the stubborn efforts of the present regime, the colonial legacy of subsistence agriculture and underdevelopment still compounds the awesome task of building a new Ethiopia out of the

economic shambles left by the deposed Emperor.

Famine is nothing new in Ethiopia. In fact, the Derg (the governing revolutionary Coordinating Council) came to power in the wake of the worst famine which claimed the lives of half a million Ethiopians from 1973 to 1974, according to the Carnegie Institute for International Peace.

During the 50-year reign of Emperor Haile Selassie, the last ruler of Ethiopia's 1,200-year monarchy, the feudal economy of this vast land was merged with an agricultural export-oriented economy that neglected industrial development.

Although rich in agricultural and pastoral land and mineral resources, Ethiopia suffered the same structural malady endured by her neighbors. Prior to the 1974 revolution, the landlords comprised only 2% of the population but owned 80% of the land. Sixty percent of the land was devoted to coffee which was sold for export to such foreign giants as Nestle Company and General Foods Corporation. More than 90% of the population lived and worked in

it was too little too late. In 1974, a group of young army officers led by Lt. Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam toppled the monarchy and set a new agenda for Ethiopia.

The new leadership stood against colonialism and vowed to set the foundations for socialist development. Acting promptly, the Derg under Mengistu's leadership, embarked on massive agrarian reforms that eliminated the power of the landlords and allocated 90% of the land to the tillers.

The rest of the land was turned into large cooperatives and state-owned farms. Banks, mortgage and insurance companies, and the sugar, textile and oil industries were nationalized. These reforms were capped by a massive literacy campaign that extended into the rural areas.

U.S. DISPLEASURE

The U.S. was not pleased by this turn of events. Relations soured and by 1977 the U.S. broke diplomatic relations with Ethiopia. President Carter signed a \$6.7 billion foreign aid package that year which contained a measure banning all aid to Ethiopia. At the same time the U.S. imposed an arms embargo and supported neighboring Somalia's grab of Ethiopia's eastern region of Ogaden while indirectly aiding other forces hostile to the Derg. Somalia took over 97% of Ogaden.

According to Rev. Charles Elliot, former director of the Christian Aid in Britain, the U.S. and the Common Market "systematically ignored" Ethiopia's needs as they pinned their hopes on the famine and the secessionist movements to topple its prog-

ressive government. The agreement is part of a long-term technical cooperation to alleviate the impact of frequent natural disasters.

The Derg has engaged in a massive resettlement program for those who left the famine zone in Wollo and Tigre provinces where agriculture and livestock raising cannot be restored. Since 1978, 100,000 Ethiopians have been resettled and 500,000 more need to be relocated. The government allocates an enormous amount of resources for homes, necessary services, land plots, seeds and fertilizers in the resettlement zones.

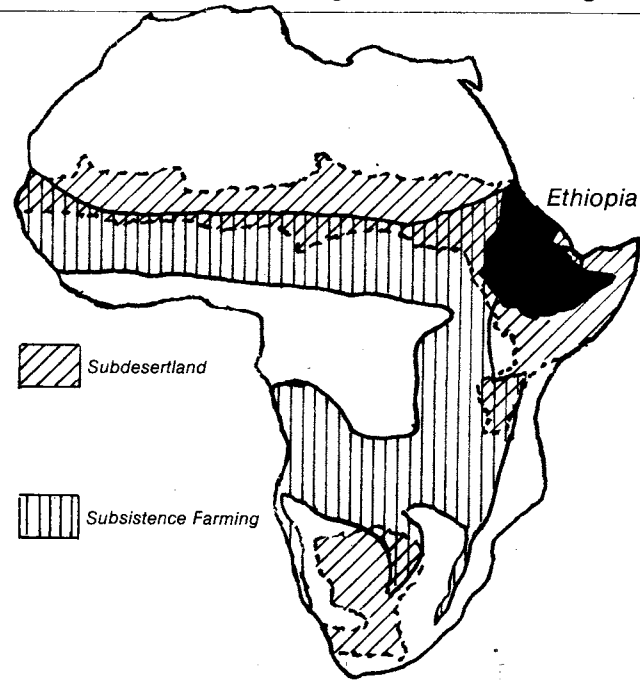
To be sure, the Ethiopian leadership is saddled with inexperience in the face of gargantuan economic tasks. The complications brought by the drought and the civil war in Eritrea and Tigre pose greater demands that require more efficient social and political organization. But on the whole, Ethiopia appears to be making a dent in the task of eliminating its colonial legacy.

It is, however, the path chosen by the Ethiopian government—decolonization and close cooperation with the socialist bloc—that has earned the unfriendly scrutiny of the U.S. ruling institutions, despite the fact that a vast portion of Africa has suffered similarly under the drought.

Washington is still bitter at the "loss of Ethiopia" which, when combined with the "loss of Iran" as an anti-Soviet gendarme and intelligence outpost, constitutes a strategic political and military setback. As in Nicaragua, the U.S. has not given



Relief drugs arrive at Jigjiga camp in Ethiopia.



Ethiopia: colonial legacy of subsistence crops on subdesertland.

the rural areas but their crops served the foreign markets—an arrangement that insured chronic domestic scarcity.

For domestic consumption, the population relied on livestock raising and whatever little food was coaxed from the remaining available lands which were generally the least fertile. Even such lands were subject to heavy taxation by the landlords.

Given its low level of industrial development, Ethiopia had a very small working class and no more than half a million workers were absorbed by such largely foreign-owned industries as oil, tobacco, textile, leather goods, hydroelectric, and transport.

REVOLUTIONARY COUP

Popular discontent brewed, waiting to burst into political upheaval. Selassie, who was restored to the crown in 1941 by the U.S. and Britain five years after he was expelled by the Italian invasion of Ethiopia, was able to buy time with an impressive military apparatus financed and trained by the U.S. Any sign of restiveness was ruthlessly crushed.

But mired in underdevelopment by an economy subordinated to the goals of foreign capital, Selassie's Ethiopia was ultimately headed for disaster. An economic collapse compounded by the severe drought of 1973 caused the worst famine in Ethiopia's history and led to Selassie's downfall.

The Emperor was first compelled by widespread unrest to loosen his grip and offer some political and economic concessions to the workers and peasants. But

up hope that destabilization will bring Ethiopia back in its orbit.

But those hopes were dashed as the Derg expanded its gains. Moreover, the socialist countries responded decisively to Ethiopia's call for assistance. In 1977 the Soviet Union signed a series of agreements for mutual cooperation and promptly extended \$385 million in development aid focusing on infrastructure programs and transportation equipment. (Three-fourths of the aid distributed in Ethiopia are carried by Soviet-supplied vehicles.) Tractor assembly plants, an oil refinery, grain storage and refrigeration facilities have been constructed. At the same time 10,000 hectares of virgin lands have been developed and 60,000 more are expected to come under the plough in the next period. To assist the resettlement of drought victims, the Russian state and mass organizations have sent food, medicines, tents, and radio communications facilities and coordinated the flow of aid from other socialist countries, particularly the German Democratic Republic.

In 1977 Cuba sent a large contingent of medical personnel and 400 Cuban military and technical advisers. Since then they have been joined by 500 Soviet doctors who fanned the towns and remote areas of the country. With help from Cuba, the GDR and other socialist countries, Ethiopia won its war with Somalia in 1978 and regained the Ogaden region.

SINGLING OUT ETHIOPIA

Last September, Ethiopia and the USSR signed another economic agreement which will enable Ethiopia to build farm machinery service centers and model farms,

up hope that destabilization will bring Ethiopia back in its orbit.

Thus, self-righteous official pronouncements combined with a media blitz instantly turned the famine in Ethiopia into fuel for another anti-communist crusade. TV footage of starving multitude and emaciated faces, played hour by hour for days, did touch the hearts of Americans and soon donations came "pouring in."

The U.S. media congratulated themselves for the "humanitarianism" of the American public as they interviewed officials with a distinctly political message to spare, including the Agency for International Development's African relief director Peter McPhearson and former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Robert McCloskey.

Blame was placed on the Ethiopian government for alleged incompetence, militarism, lack of cooperation and callousness towards its own people. Moscow was castigated for alleged neglect, failure to give sufficient aid and for building up the Ethiopian military.

Ironically, it is not clear how much effort has been spent by the U.S. government to aid the Ethiopians. Reagan himself rejected the suggestion by Congressional leaders to send aid to Ethiopia. "Would it be moral," Reagan asked rhetorically, "to increase aid to Ethiopia when the U.S. poor need social programs?" (as if he had not been quashing programs for the U.S. poor in favor of the Pentagon).

At the height of the publicity around the Ethiopian famine one Common Market aid official remarked, "When you ask

Continued on page 15