



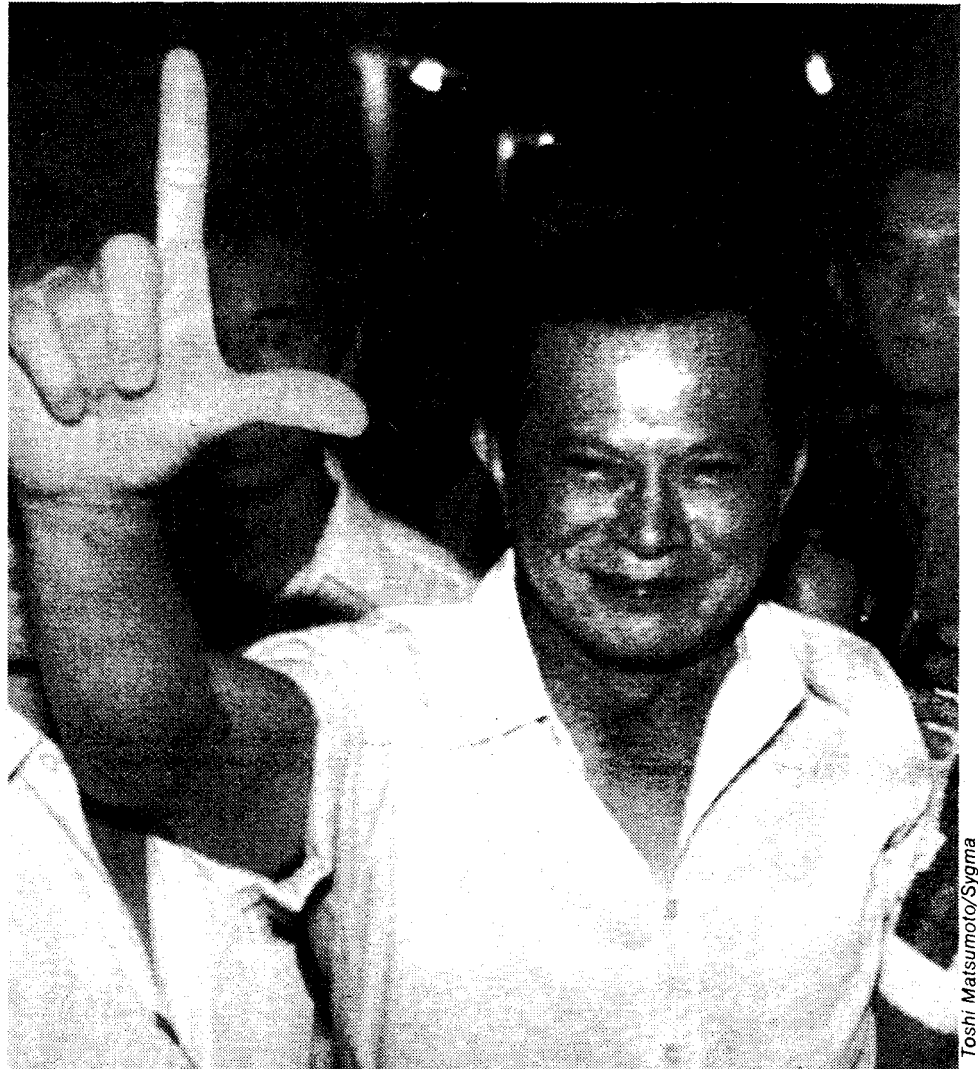
Ang Katipunan

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National Newsmagazine of the
Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP)

'My instructions might have been taken too literally.' — Marcos

MAY 14: A 'LOSER'-TAKE-ALL AFFAIR



Tucci/Gamma-Liaison

Toshi Matsumoto/Sygnia

Ferdinand Marcos: Smug at first, cocky later.

Participationist Doy Laurel: Happy at first, angry later.

By NENE OJEDA

For the first few days after the May 14 elections to the National Assembly, the returns indicated a stronger-than-expected opposition showing. Ironically, no one was happier than President Ferdinand E. Marcos and Ronald Reagan's boys at the U.S. State Department.

A smug Marcos, speaking on international television the night after the elections, appeared unfazed. The jovial president merely remarked that "instructions to our people to allow the opposition to win some seats might have been taken too literally."

Despite the strong call for boycott from a section of the opposition, a large number of the 25 million voters nationwide reportedly trooped to the country's 84,000 polling centers Monday, selecting 183 out of 1,600 candidates to the 200-seat National Assembly.

The U.S. press glowed with praise of "democracy in action." It was "a victory to U.S. diplomacy," insisted the *Wall Street Journal*. "That should please all of us."

By the afternoon of May 15, the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections, an independent election watchdog body of 150,000 volunteers, placed the opposition ahead in 91 of 157 races sampled. This strong opposition lead in the early return tallies of "quick-count" NAMFREL moni-

tors was heady medicine for a group which controls a mere 13 seats in the current assembly. United Nationalist Democratic Organization chief Salvador "Doy" Laurel was ecstatic. "It was just beyond our hopes and wildest imaginations."

"Marcos has won by losing," commented CBS News on May 15. But as the lengthy vote-counting process drew on and the U.S. press turned its attention elsewhere, the tables began to turn. The *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* pulled ahead in the vast majority of the races and massive fraud began to come to light.

The much-praised "exercise in democracy" proved to be the most fraudulent exercise yet in Philippine history.

By May 28, official election results as announced by the Commission on Elections revealed a much smaller opposition win: 110 KBL, 62 opposition and 11 "independents."

Among the independents are members of the KBL who were not chosen for the official slate and decided to run anyway. Marcos still rely on their support however.

Opposition forces insisted that the ruling party's sudden rally was facilitated by vote count manipulation. The Commission on Elections is opening 53 cases of poll fraud—both from the ruling and opposition parties.

GIFTS, PRIZES AND GOVERNMENT FUNDS

Democracy in action, climaxed by a regime victory, turned out to be an ex-

pensive project both in cash and lives. Both ruling and opposition parties reportedly engaged in vote-buying. But, as one candidate complained, "At least before 1972 the cheating was more balanced."

Rallying votes for the ruling party required Marcos and his wife, First Lady Imelda, to meet "in batches" Metro-Manila's 1,700 *barangay* heads. Each was given a brown envelope containing ₱1,000 with warnings of adverse effects for those who refused the offer.

In other KBL pep meetings, *barangay* heads were offered "prizes" of ₱50,000 (\$3,500) for each *barangay* and ₱100,000 for every *barrio* delivering straight KBL votes.

The price of a clean party victory proved steep. A Makati businessman told the *Christian Science Monitor* that Central Bank officials expected the government to spend at least ₱2 billion (\$142 million) on the campaign. Prime Minister Cesar Virata, himself a candidate for a seat in Cavite, when queried by *Business Day* on the government's borrowing of some ₱4.7 million in the last three weeks before the election, replied that it was purely coincidental.

Mel Mathay, Metro-Manila vice-governor and close friend of the First Lady, still has to account for the ₱40 million withdrawn from the Metro-Manila Commission account one week before the KBL's election slate-launching last March.

Jose B. Fernandez, newly-appointed Central Bank head, alarmed at the govern-

ment's capacity to drain itself of funds, reportedly handed the President a letter of resignation. His gesture of dismay was apparently disregarded.

Loyalty was also exacted from those in government employ. A Central Bank internal memo instructed employees to attend the KBL slate launching March 27 for which they were to be given ₱30 (\$2.10) and a

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A Tale of Two Elections

Two sham elections took place this month for a single purpose: to bolster President Ronald Reagan's bid for continued U.S. assistance to two teetering repressive regimes.

In the Philippines, the choice was between legitimizing the dictatorship of Ferdinand Marcos by voting for his candidates to the rubberstamp National Assembly or legitimizing the dictatorship by voting for oppositionists who could not tame their uncontrollable fetish for elections of any sort.

In El Salvador, the choice was between Napoleon Duarte, a pro-U.S. hatchetman in reformist's clothing and Roberto D'Aubuisson, a fascist leader who barely disguises his death squad connections. Actually, the choice was between legitimizing the Salvadoran regime or losing one's job or life as Salvadorans are required to show stamped proof of their participation on their identification documents.

There was an active boycott of these sham elections in both countries. In the Philippines, not voting can land one in jail for six months, but 40% of the electorate refused to vote; this despite the regime's endless

harangues for participation and the participating oppositionists' active efforts to channel the people's anti-Marcos sentiments to their own misguided ends.

In El Salvador where naked state violence inhibits open campaigns of civil disobedience, the boycott took place in the one-third of the country now under the control of FMLN-FDR liberation forces—areas where real democracy exists, though hounded by U.S.-supplied aerial bombs.

The elections were never intended by the foreign hand that orchestrated them as real solutions to the profound problems of repression, hunger, and injustice gripping the Filipinos and the Salvadorans. In El Salvador, the real immediate solution is a politically negotiated peace—a solution offered by the revolutionary forces but shunned by a Reagan White House intent on

keeping the pro-U.S. oligarchy in power. In the Philippines, the removal of Marcos and his minions and the institution of real democratic processes—including genuine elections—is anathema to a U.S. bent on preserving its military and economic interests.

Reagan would rather mock the democratic aspirations of supposedly sovereign peoples with "democratic" extravaganzas that put B-grade movie fantasies to shame. The greater shame is that U.S. Democrats are often only too willing to accept such thin excuses for continued U.S. aid for fear of being accused as the party responsible for "losing" El Salvador or the Philippines. Reagan can therefore be expected to continue spinning such tall tales as "democratic elections" as excuses for U.S. sponsorship, and even intervention on behalf of the world's most unpopular villains.

ANG KATIPUNAN

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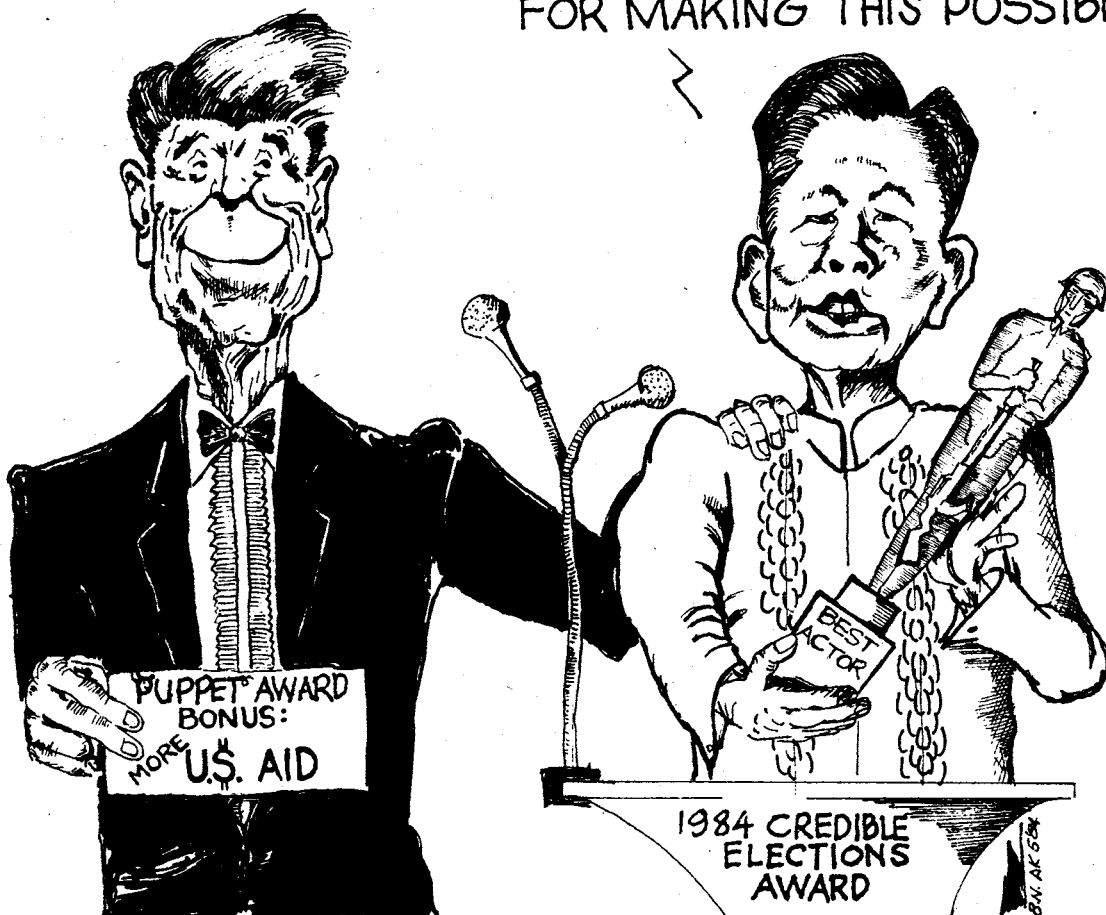
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... AND, I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO THANK... THE UNIDO FOR MAKING THIS POSSIBLE



Letters

I picked up your latest issue at the march here in L.A. against the Simpson/Mazzoli legislation on May 19th, where Jesse Jackson spoke before a crowd of some five thousand. I enjoyed your excellent interview with Ben Cabrera, illustrated with his remarkable prints and paintings. The article ended with a call to send in written or artistic materials, so please find enclosed something small in the way of a contribution to your very fine efforts. These poems enclosed should speak for themselves; in addition, I can describe myself briefly. My name is Sesshu Foster, I was born in Santa Barbara in 1957. Japanese-Americans of older generations call us *happa*: half-breeds. I wish there was a paper as good as yours in the Japanese-American community I could also contribute toward. Thank you.

Sesshu Foster
Los Angeles, CA

(Sesshu Foster's poems will be featured in the coming issues of AK—Ed.)

Litter from Manila



The Polls: An Enriching Experience

By INIDORO DELIHENCIA

The May 14 elections should silence the government's detractors for good. Who says democracy is dead in the Philippines? The elections were such a beautiful experience, only 400 people killed. More people die in traffic accidents in a month. To be philosophical about it, those unfortunate 400 could have been driving instead of voting but the fact that they were voting instead of driving was pure coincidence.

Only 23.6 million were eligible voters but 29.4 million registered to vote. We should be elated, not disgusted, by this enthusiasm. I met a number of people working for the KBL who were responsible for such an overpowering turnout and believe me, they came from all walks of life and professions. One avid voter was either a pilot or from Capiz ("I love to fly"). One tough-looking volunteer must have been a plastic surgeon ("I rearrange faces for

the KBL"). Still others came from the oldest profession, the military. All agreed that the process of democratization instituted by the President was an "enriching experience."

True, the opposition complained of KBL candidates handing out fat envelopes in rallies, but all that was merely part of the President's promise of economic redistribution. Critics charge that the government borrowed ₱4.7 billion three weeks prior to the elections. But you can spend more than that repairing a nuclear submarine. To be philosophical about it, the fact that we don't have a nuclear submarine was purely coincidental.

The only low point of the elections was when UNIDO ran Aurora Pijuan-Manotoc knowing that Tommy Manotoc's new wife, Imee Marcos-Manotoc was also a candidate. The ensuing Mrs. Manotoc vs. Mrs. Manotoc situation must have been terrible and confusing for Mr. Manotoc and his wife Mrs. Manotoc. UNIDO should have respected the difference between love affairs and public affairs. The first revolves around the altar while the second has to do with the National Assembly and therefore even brings up intriguing questions about the separation of church and state.

The Agrava commission again started up the side-show that has cast aspersions on the integrity of the President and the military. Spectators unfairly booed the testimony of Aquino's four military escorts when each of them said they weren't looking when an assassin sneaked up to shoot the senator. Sgt. Claro Lat, Sgt. Rogelio Moreno, Const. Mario Lazaga, and Sgt. Arnulfo de Mesa must be given a fair hearing.

Here is their explanation: On the stairway, when Sgt.

Lat learned that Aquino came from the U.S. he asked him for chocolate bars—a customary airport greeting for returning Balikbayans. When Aquino was handing him two Cadburys, Sgt. Moreno butted in saying "Ako na, ako na" ("I'll do it, I'll do it"). This irritated Lat who gave the candy to Const. Lazaga instead. Incensed, Moreno grabbed Lazaga by the collar and the latter, handing over the chocolates shouted, "Heto na, heto na" ("Here it is, here it is").

Angered by Moreno's greed, Sgt. de Mesa turned to Lat telling him "Pusila, pusila" ("Shoot him, shoot him" in Visayan). While they were arguing, somebody they didn't see sneaked behind Ninoy, presumably the communist infiltrator Galman, and fired. All four escorts scampered to safety in the line of duty. Their voices were captured on tape by several newsmen, I don't know why people don't give them the benefit of the doubt.

Air Force Sgt. de Mesa, by the way, was ordered confined to quarters after the Aquino affair. As a result, he was promoted to second lieutenant probably for exemplary courtesy to the public and good behavior.

Foreign magazines are still publishing pictures of the ₱18 million four-storey high stone bust of President Marcos, calling it Mt. Cash No More. These racist foreign media always misread the intentions of our government. That hillside bust was not meant to satisfy President Marcos' vanity but was commissioned by the Minister of Tourism in the spirit of the president's boundless dedication to public service. There was a search for the best sculptors who could give the bust such a look of presidential authority so that even if President Marcos dies, he can go on for many years governing even better than when he was alive. Shortsightedness is one thing you cannot accuse our officials of. □

House Kills Military Aid Cut

By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

A recent attempt to cut off all 1985 military aid to Ferdinand Marcos was killed on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives May 9. In spite of the defeat, however, Washington observers noted that the 149 votes for the amendment proposed by Rep. Tony Hall (D-Ohio) indicated a significant increase in anti-Marcos sentiment within the lower house.

A February 29 decision by the House Foreign Affairs Committee had transferred \$60 million in foreign military sales credits for the Philippines to economic aid. This left only \$25 million in military aid for fiscal year 1985, the target of Hall's amendment.

The total package of \$180 million represents the first installment in the \$900 million to be paid over a five-year period in exchange for U.S. use of its bases on Philippine soil. The amount was originally broken into \$85 million in military and \$95 million in economic aid.

LONG-TERM INTERESTS

"The Philippines is hovering on the brink of bankruptcy," noted Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia-Pacific Affairs of the HFAC. "What the country needs first is economic aid so it can deal with the severe problems facing the masses of people." Solarz was chief engineer of the \$60-million transfer.

The move, later approved by the entire House, was meant to serve as a message to Marcos of U.S. congressional concern about the human rights situation in the Philippines. Critics, however, noted that



it was a mild message at best, and amounted essentially to taking money out of one pocket and putting it into the other.

The Senate followed the House action with its own more moderate message, voting to transfer only \$30 million from military to economic aid.

Hall proposed his amendment as the entire House was voting on the Foreign Aid Bill, hoping to cut out the remaining \$25 million in grant military assistance altogether. This, he noted, could easily be restored in one of the later years of the bases agreement depending on an improvement in the human rights situation.

Pointing to the continued reports of torture, kidnappings and murder by the Philippine military, he insisted, "Long-term Philippine-American relations in the post-Marcos era are being sacrificed now

in the interest of maintaining short-term access to the bases."

SOLARZ: KEEP TIES WITH MILITARY

"My colleagues should be aware that [the remaining \$155 million in aid] would be \$55 million more overall than the \$100 million provided in fiscal year 1984," Hall added.

The Hall amendment was supported on the floor by Bob Edgar (D-PA) and Barbara Boxer (D-CA). Among its most energetic opponents was Solarz, who claimed that the move would be interpreted by the Philippine government as a violation of the bases agreement.

Most emphatically, Solarz referred to Marcos' precarious health and the possibility of a sudden change in the Philippine government. At that point, he stressed, "the Philippine military may have a critical role to play."

"There is an argument to be made," said the New York congressman, "for our maintaining at least a minimal continuing aid relationship with them so that we can have a constructive influence should there be a transition in the Philippines."

Much hinged on the May 14 elections, Solarz added. "If these elections are genuinely free and fair, there is no need for this amendment. . . If they are not, we will have another opportunity to reduce the level of aid when the appropriations bill comes to the floor."

HFAC REFUSES TO BE USED

Washington observers find it still too early to size up the impact of the elections on Congress. Prior to May 14, however, the mood was generally skeptical.

As leaders of the upper and lower

houses, George Bush and Thomas "Tip" O'Neill were invited to the Philippines to act as election observers. Bush sent out a letter to members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee urging them to attend—an invitation which was politely refused, reportedly because of conflicting congressional schedules. The real story, according to one insider, was that Committee members "did not want to be used to legitimize the elections."

Only three days before the elections, 12 congressmen issued a letter expressing alarm at increasing incidents of violence and election fraud in the Philippines.

REAGAN: USING ELECTIONS

Signed by Fortney "Pete" Stark, Ted Weiss, Major Owens, Bob Edgar, Don Edwards, Doug Walgren, John Conyers, Jim Bates, James Oberstar, Ronald Delums, George Crockett and Berkeley Bedell—all Democrats—the statement asserted, "It is our view that an election exercise riddled with irregularities does not meet the demand of the Filipino people for the restoration of democracy in the Philippines."

"We do not view the recent reports of violence and fraud as indicators of a meaningful step toward true democratic rule in the Philippines," the congressmen concluded. "In fact, we are concerned that they may be a prelude to large-scale arrests of members of the opposition."

"The Reagan administration will most likely justify its continued strong support for the Marcos government by pointing to the May 14 elections as progress. We ask that others carefully examine those elections and that the U.S. reexamine its policy toward the current government of the Philippines." □

Economy Update

Prices Jump; Financiers Flee

By CARLA MARIANO

As predicted earlier, President Ferdinand Marcos—barely three days after the May 14 elections—started implementing IMF-imposed "economic austerity measures" by raising the tax on oil, thereby pushing gasoline prices up 8.1%.

Government economists rationalized that the increase in gasoline prices will promote conservation and efficient use of fuel. Less gasoline consumption means less oil imports. This, they claimed, would dramatically decrease the value of total Philippine imports since oil is a major import commodity.

Prime Minister Cesar Virata stated that if the decrease in Philippine imports is complemented by an increase in exports, then the country's balance-of-payments position will greatly improve.

This rosy proposition, however, glosses over the hard fact that the gasoline price increase will trigger price increases in virtually all commodities.

HOARDING

Already, the prices of two basic commodities have increased. Rice, a staple food is reportedly being sold in public markets at ₱4.20 to ₱4.60 a kilo, about 21% higher than the government ceiling of ₱3.80 a kilo. Cooking oil prices have nearly doubled to ₱350 per 17-kilo can (kerosene can) from last December's price of ₱200.

But even at these prices, supplies are hard to find. Hoarding, profiteering and price manipulation have increased as a result of speculations that prices will spiral soon after the May 14 polls when the peso



is expected to be devalued once more.

Government officials, worried by these developments, are assuring the public that there are ample supplies of all basic commodities. At the same time, Trade and Industry Minister Roberto V. Ongpin directed Price Stabilization Council agents to be more vigilant in monitoring the supply and prices of commodities to check hoarding, profiteering and price manipulation.

WORKERS UNIMPRESSED

Kilusang Mayo Uno (KMU), a militant labor federation representing 52% of organized workers in the Philippines, has assailed the new oil tax and warned that it may stage strikes to force the government to roll back the gasoline price increases.

A spokesperson of the labor federation said that the president's tax measure is a

further affront on the already impoverished condition of the Filipino workers.

President Marcos last May 1 granted private industrial workers a 9% wage increase, effective immediately, by issuing Wage Order No. 4 which integrates cost of living allowances (COLAs) presently enjoyed by workers under Wage Orders Nos. 1, 2 and 3 into the basic pay. The new gross nominal wage for private industrial workers in Metro-Manila now amounts to approximately ₱46.34. Workers, however, are not impressed.

"This amount is still some 50% short of the daily requirement of ₱75 to ₱90 needed by a reference family of six to meet the cost of subsistence living," remarked Bob Ortaliz, First Vice-chairman of KMU.

The labor movement, Mr. Ortaliz said, cannot concede that the wage order will

offset the runaway prices of commodities that the president's tax measure will trigger. "Besides, the workers still would have to contend with big local and foreign capitalists for the order's implementation." He added that Wage Order No. 4 "was intended to placate a restive labor front and refurbish the government's badly eroded credibility."

KBL SPENDING SPREE

Observers noted that Marcos could not wait longer before instituting the unpopular "austerity measures" because his political party (*Kilusang Bagong Lipunan-KBL*) poured an unprecedented amount of money into the campaign, thereby aggravating the country's economic crisis and necessitating swift governmental action. Much of this money is strongly suspected to have come from government funds.

A senior executive in the main business center of Makati, said Central Bank officials told him that the government used at least ₱2 billion (\$142 million) in government funds for the campaign.

Business Day, a Manila business paper, reported that in the three weeks prior to the May 14 elections, the government borrowed ₱4.7 billion (\$330 million) from the Central Bank. Prime Minister Cesar Virata confirmed the transactions but explained that its timing with the elections was purely coincidental.

Foreign correspondents, however, reported that local officials were busy handing out bags of cement and cash favors to voters, ostensibly for "local economic development." At one Manila KBL rally, reporters saw Marcos officials handing out envelopes containing cash to the audience.

Meanwhile, top executives of a dozen distressed finance companies are quietly leaving the country despite orders issued by the Securities and Exchange Commission banning their departure while the investigation of the irregularities is in progress.

Reportedly, prominent blacklisted officials were able to leave the country through the Manila International Airport. □

Buod ng mga Balita

SAN JUAN MAYOR IN MAULING RAP



Joseph "Erap" Estrada acted out in real life his silver screen "tough guy" image when he allegedly beat up three campaign managers of opposition candidate Neptali Gonzales inside San Juan's police headquarters.

The three complainants filed before the Tanodbayan charges of physical injuries and abuse of authority against San Juan mayor Estrada and his son, Jinggoy.

According to the complaint, the three victims were brought to police headquarters by policemen on suspicion that they have roughed up the mayor's youngest son, Jude.

The three denied the charges, stating that they merely reprimanded Jude for tearing down some posters of Gonzales, an UNIDO bet in the San Juan-Mandaluyong district.

Estrada and son Jinggoy, upon arriving at the police station and without a word, allegedly took turns beating up the three complainants one at a time. The incident was reportedly witnessed by 15 policemen including six of the mayor's bodyguards.

Mayor Estrada denied the allegations saying that he could not have beaten up the three as he was accompanied by six reporters during the incident.

He added that his youngest son will file countercharges of slight physical injuries, oral defamation and life threats against the three.

After the polls, Estrada joined the ranks of politicians who, surprisingly, fulfill their election promises. He vowed that he would resign as mayor if KBL candidate Ronaldo Zamora did not win in the elections. Zamora lost, Estrada resigned. □

CEBU NOW MECCA FOR JAPANESE SEX TOURISTS

In the past month, Japan Air Lines has increased its Japan to Cebu flights from one a week to four. But instead of being a cause for joy, this increased commerce is causing consternation among the residents of this city.

The reason? Each flight carries hundreds of male Japanese tourists in search of "cheap thrills." Advertisements appearing in Japan describe Cebu as a tropical paradise teeming with attractive and willing mestiza beauties. The increase in flights was also accompanied by the mushrooming of motels and nightspots in the city where women publicly perform heterosexual and lesbian acts.

In the 70's, Manila was the destination of these sex tours. In the early 1980's, there was a dramatic decline in the number of tours because of the furor against them raised by women's and religious organizations both in the Philippines and Japan.

A package tour of four days and three nights, according to a tour operator, costs \$400. The amount which includes airfare, accomodation, transportation and meals is paid to the agency in Japan.

Proponents of banning the sex tours, stated that this

kind of tourism does not provide any benefit to the Philippines at all. They claim, for example, that the amount each tourist spends is less than \$100, only approximately \$15 goes to the girl.

Japanese participants in the sex tours are mostly salesmen who won their trips as prizes for reaching their sales quota. The rest admitted they just wanted "a cheap way of relaxation." □

WHERE IS MANDA ELIZALDE?

Manuel "Manda" Elizalde, who holds a ministerial-level post in the cabinet of Ferdinand Marcos as head of PANAMIN (Presidential Assistant on National Minorities) has disappeared, reportedly along with ₱1.2 billion.

Even as a spokesperson for PANAMIN insisted in a press interview that Elizalde is "abroad on a special mission for the government," rumors surrounding the disappearance became juicier after the discovery that 28 teenage girls from various Mindanao tribes were also missing. All 28 were recruited by the government agency as Elizalde's personal scholars.

At the time of the interview, PANAMIN offices were being closed purportedly for "inventory purposes." Informed sources, however, contended that the offices were being shut down to make way for the destruction or alteration of the records pertaining to the girls.

They recalled the mysterious fire that gutted the old PANAMIN offices also in Makati shortly after a series of articles alleging anomalies at the PANAMIN foundation appeared in the now-defunct *WE-Forum*.

One article in the series claimed that the personal scholars were "being used to entertain" businessmen and politicians in private parties at the Elizalde residence.

So, where is "Manda" Elizalde? *Pahayagang Malaya*, an independent Manila daily, reported that Elizalde had left for Spain with his family soon after the Aquino assassination and brought with him most of his valuables and personal effects.

Another source has called the disappearance "another Dewey Dee Affair." Allegedly, Elizalde fled the country with ₱1.2 billion. The money corresponds to a debt owed by North Davao Mining Company—a copper mining company recently established by Elizalde—from government financial institutions. A foreclosure proceeding against the company has discovered that its total assets are virtually nil.

The financial community in Manila has reacted to the latter report with extreme anxiety. Elizalde's loot, if true, is almost double the ₱700 million in debts the businessman Dewey Dee fled with two years ago. The Dewey Dee affair shook the foundations of the country's financial system. The Elizalde affair may provoke a more destructive tremor.

Still another source predicted that like Dee, Elizalde will surface sooner or later in a far-away country like Canada asking for political asylum. □

CB MONEY WOES OF ANOTHER KIND

After the embarrassment a few months ago of having been caught overstating the country's foreign reserves by some \$500 million, the Philippine Central Bank remains plagued by other money problems. The keeper of the country's coffers, it seems, not only cannot count, it also cannot spell.

The CB-issued 50¢ coin, showing an airborne Philippine monkey-eating eagle, identified the now endangered national bird as *Pithecobhaga jefferyi* instead of *Pithecobhaga jefferyi*. The smaller 10¢ coin contains a smaller error: the tiniest fish in the world which inhabits southern Philippine waters, was noted as *Pandaka pygmaea*, losing the extra "a" in its scientific name, *Pandaka pygmaea*. The Central Bank intends to issue corrected coins this year to "pacify purists" and prevent collectors from hoarding. "But with 34 million [50¢] coins floating, what's the use?" asked an exasperated CB representative.

The Central Bank too, is experiencing an "exchange" problem of another kind. Apparently a rumor sweeping the provinces claims that old ₱1 coins, which are bigger and heavier than the post-1976 issues, are being bought back by the bank for as much as ₱7 each. Con men have convinced unsuspecting farmers to buy old peso coins for as much as ₱4. Many farmers have since shown up in front of Central Bank windows, wanting their coins exchanged at the more favorable bank rate. □

MEDIA CRACKDOWN LOOMS

The love-hate relationship between Ferdinand Marcos and the foreign media has soured anew.

In a statement from the presidential palace April 30, President Marcos lashed at the foreign media, particularly American and British journalists, calling them "tools and lackeys of Communists."

This attack on the foreign media is viewed by many as a retaliatory response to a *Newsweek* magazine article and a five-minute British Broadcasting Corporation report, both dwelling on the growth and successes of the New People's Army.

Marcos assailed the two reports as "ten percent factual and ninety percent Communist propaganda and fantasy."

Barely a week after, on May 5, Marcos launched another scathing attack on the American media, accusing members of the U.S. press of engaging in a systematic and deliberate campaign to destabilize his administration.

This time, the president is responding to a damaging assessment of the current and future state of press freedom in the Philippines. The assessment was reached by an investigating team representing U.S. press and human rights organizations after a ten-day survey of newsreporting under the Marcos government.

The investigating group was sponsored by the Committee to Protect Journalists chaired by Walter Cronkite; the American Newspaper Guild; and the American Committee for Human Rights, whose president, Dr. Jonathan Fine, was member of the team.

The other members were Spencer Reiss, general editor of *Newsweek* magazine; Randolph Ryan, editorial writer of the *Boston Globe*; Brennon Jones, executive editor of Interlink Press Service; and Tamara Jacoby, deputy editor of the Op-Ed page of *The New York Times*.

The team concluded that the future of a free press in the Philippines remains uncertain despite a recent easing of government restraints.

A spokesperson for the group said that the conclusion was based on various observations, the primary one being the "unaltered fact" that the Marcos government "is still an authoritarian regime, and, almost by definition, authoritarian regimes are hostile to press freedom." He also noted that the mechanism for controlling the press during the martial law years still exists.

Filipino journalists, several of whom had been arrested on charges of "subversion," described to the group the

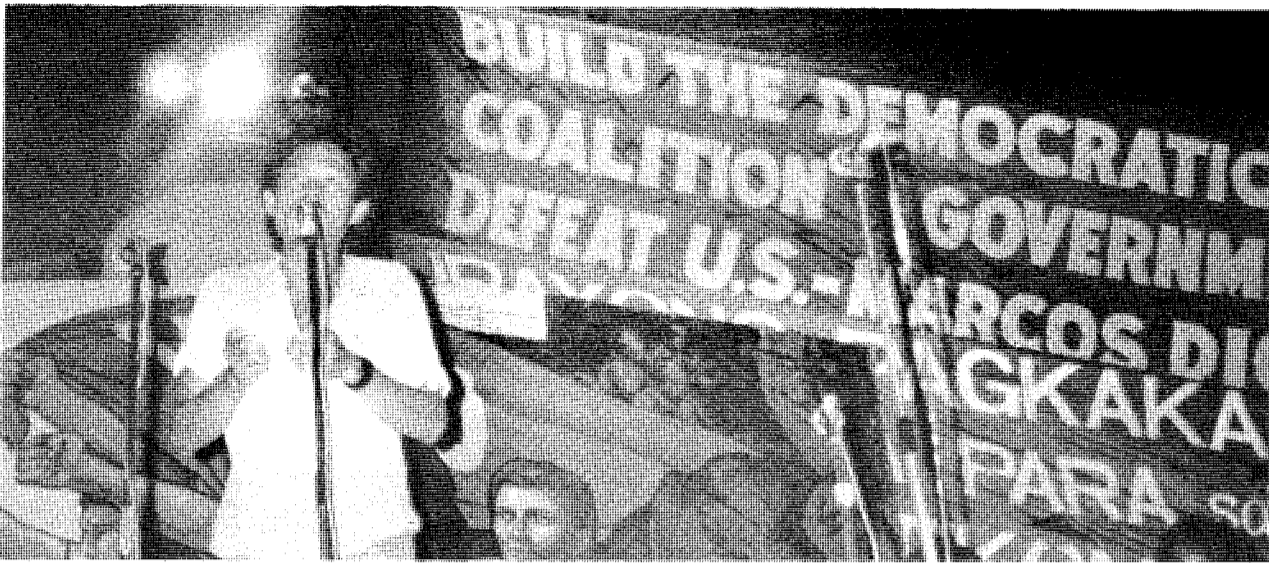


different methods used by the government to "intimidate" news reporters and editors. The methods ranged from threatening telephone calls to libel suits and the "invitation" to appear before a military intelligence review board to explain their stories. The local newsmen also expressed their fears of a massive crackdown by the government soon after the elections.

Before flying back to the U.S., members of the group expressed the same apprehension citing a yet-to-be-issued government report as a danger signal. The report, allegedly produced by the Office of the Ministry of Information, will propose a reinstatement of past restrictions on the press to curb "an increasing trend toward license and abuse among its irresponsible ranks."

Warning of an impending crackdown, a group spokesperson quoted one of the government press assistants as saying, "The Philippines at this time cannot afford the luxury of a free press." □

U.S. Delegate to KMU Convention Says: 'The Strike Fever is On With the Temperature Still Rising'



Amado David speaking before KMU rally.

By CARLA MARIANO

That is the kind of violence and more, Philippine workers are subjected to in their struggle for decent wages and democratic rights," Amado David explained a videotape segment that showed fully-armed and truncheon-wielding military personnel swinging away at defiant workers who have locked arms to prevent police-escorted scabs from entering a struck factory.

Amado David is a union organizer for the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) International, and chairperson of the Task Force on Philippine Labor of the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network.

He recently visited the Philippines—after a 20-year absence—as part of a 32-member international delegation, for a three week in-depth labor exposure sponsored by the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (May First Movement).

While there, he walked the picket lines at two struck companies, the Philippine Electric Co. (Philec) and the Holland Milk Products, Inc.. David also joined the SAKBAYAN—a 52-vehicle caravan that went through various towns in Northern and Southern Luzon to rally the people to boycott the May 14 elections. He also spoke before 70,000 workers in a rally commemorating the fourth year of the KMU.

He is currently preparing for a speaking tour of certain cities on the West Coast and Canada to share his experiences with labor activists and union officials.

STRIKE FEVER

In the last three years, the economic conditions of Filipino workers have rapidly deteriorated as a result of economic mismanagement of the Marcos government alongside the steady erosion of their democratic rights.

Their meager wages have not caught up with the constantly rising cost of living pushed by double-digit inflation and yearly peso devaluations.

Today, the basic wage of a private industrial worker in Metro-Manila is approximately ₱46.72, just half of the ₱90.00 daily subsistence requirement of a family of six. David saw firsthand the concrete impact of this disparity.

"The workers are fuming," he said. "Naturally, they can only seek relief from such an economic low through the only means available to them—the strike. Currently, a strike fever is raging in the country with the temperature still rising. The Filipino worker is fighting mad."

The strike season started October last year when more than 10,000 workers in 18 foreign companies at the Bataan Export Processing Zones launched coordinated strikes, David learned. The Bataan strikes were followed by strikes at the Philippine Long Distance Telephone, Philippine Refining Company, Wyeth-Suaco, La Toñeda, Alfa TRW, and many others.

A March 12 listing of the Ministry of Labor showed that the number of strikes declared since January has reached a total of 44, involving approximately 10,000 workers. The strike count in Metro-Manila alone, as of April 16, is 19 on-going strikes and 20 settled ones.

HELP FROM ABROAD

"Marcos' response to this upsurge of bread-and-butter strikes is heightened repression. Military personnel were sent to picket lines to 'keep the peace'; meaning, to keep the peace for the factory workers," said David, reminding the people gathered around the TV set in his home of the violent scene they had just witnessed on tape.

Two workers of Foamtex Industries in Valenzuela,

Metro-Manila were killed by police bullets April 6. Earlier victims of military violence against strike-bound workers were Antonio Baynosa of Solid Mills, Virgilio Herbon of Metallied Industries and three other unionists of Polyamide Industries.

Workers charged that the viciousness of the military elements is derived from the repressive provisions of Batas Pambansa 130 and 227 which empower the Minister of Labor to stop strikes, issue return-to-work orders, and "seek the assistance" of police and the military to implement the order. The workers have demanded the repeal of both laws.

The labor movement, as a whole, recognizes that the increase in the militancy of their ranks would proportionately be met with increased repression by the Marcos regime.

"This recognition has prompted KMU to form an External Affairs Committee so that unity with various organizations abroad can be established," David explained.

The External Affairs Committee, in a statement released last March, exhorted "all freedom-loving trade unions and labor groups to assist the Filipino workers in opposing trade union repression and harassment in the Philippines."

It also called for "whatever possible assistance" can



Boycott rally at Rizal Park Grandstand

He Was Being Watched

A day before his departure for the Philippines, someone posing as a real estate agent took pictures of his Berkeley house.

Amado David, AFSCME organizer and CAMD/PSN labor task force chief knew right away that U.S. and Philippine intelligence authorities would be watching his visit to the Philippines very closely.

True enough, Filipino agents in Manila never attempted to hide their surveillance activities. David, who is a U.S. citizen, related that while visiting a photojournalist friend in Malate, two agents brandishing M-16 rifles conspicuously parked their car in front of his friend's house.

At the Manila International Airport, as he was checking in his baggage, headed for the U.S., a barong-clad agent took a frontal shot of David with a flashbulb camera from a distance of only two feet.

"These surveillance and harassment tactics were similar to the ones used when Ka. Gene (the late Gene Viernes, KDP activist and dispatcher of ILWU Local 37) went to the Philippines in April of 1981," said David.

From the Philippines, Viernes went straight to the ILWU International Convention in Hawaii. To-

gether with Silme Domingo, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 37, he fought and won a bitter struggle for the passage of a resolution calling for the creation of an investigating team to look into the conditions of Filipino workers under the Marcos regime.

On June 1, 1981, Domingo and Viernes were shot in the local union office in Seattle, Washington. Viernes died on the spot while Domingo died a day later. Three members of the "Tulisan" gang were convicted for the murders. Constantine "Tony" Baruso, who has close ties with the Marcos government and to whom ownership of the murder weapon was traced, is yet to be charged by the Seattle prosecutor for the murder.

"All indications point to the Marcos regime as the initiator of the double murders. Private investigations later showed that U.S. and Philippine intelligence thought Gene was carrying \$290,000 to the KMU," David explained.

"Let me tell them right now that I was not carrying any money. Neither Gene nor I nor anyone have that kind of money—although I wish we did because the Philippine labor movement deserves it and needs it badly." □

be extended to the Philippine labor movement. "And they really need this support," said David who is already trying to figure out how his labor task force can help.

'STRUGGLE UNIONISM'
As early as 1983, to protect the workers from the wave of anti-labor and anti-strike legislations and trade union suppression, the KMU formed the National Coalition for the Protection of Workers Rights. It was supported by other militant labor federations and unions, as well as by militant organizations of students, health workers, professionals, church and civil libertarians.

The KMU is the largest nationwide labor federation representing 52% of organized workers. Its phenomenal growth after only four years of existence, according to David, is due to the dedication of its leaders and members to genuine trade unionism.

"The KMU's External Affairs Committee took me under their fold, showed me around—and in the KMU convention, I was inspired by the class struggle unionism of its membership," David related.

"I explained to them, to the best of my ability, the challenge of building ties of solidarity with the U.S. labor movement—you know, how racism and chauvinism often blind American workers. But I also explained that there are stirrings among many rank-and-file workers against U.S. foreign policy, particularly in Central America."

In March this year, the KMU spearheaded the formation of the *Pambansang Koalisyon ng Manggagawa Laban sa Kahirapan* (PKMK—Coalition of Workers Against Poverty) to demand economic measures that will alleviate workers' fast worsening living conditions.

Among their demands were: a minimum wage adjustment of 35% to recover the losses they have incurred from the peso devaluations of June and October of last year, and a shift in government economic support to distressed small and medium industries from ailing firms identified with high government officials.

They are also demanding the setting up of a common fund from the government sector as well as multinationals and big businesses to subsidize displaced workers hit by continuing lay-offs; the restoration of the right to strike; and the release from detention of all workers detained due to strike-related cases.

What distinguishes the KMU from other labor federations is its participation in the Filipino people's struggle for national independence and democracy.

The KMU mobilizes even on non-economic issues such as military harassment and brutality against the student sector, the presence of U.S. military bases in the Philippines, the arrest, torture and murder of nationalist leaders and militant peasants. □

Loser-Take-All

Continued from front page

free T-shirt. Three hundred thousand government employees attended the rally.

More funds for local economic development projects miraculously became available in the last weeks prior to elections. Cement sacks were freely distributed as were canned goods and rice.

INCOME REDISTRIBUTION

Vote buying also boosted incomes for many. Affidavits, slips confirming one's residency and allowing one to vote, were peddled for ₱100 (\$7.10)—several days wages for most semi-skilled laborers. Marcos, in his Labor Day speech, promised long-sought wage increases for government employees as well as extolled the benefits of continued KBL rule.

Votes were sold for up to ₱50 each although COMELEC official Sylvestre Padilla called the price "too high." Padilla added that "₱20 is about average." Prime Minister Virata aptly called the elections "a form of income redistribution."

Popular participation of impossible proportions became one of the hallmarks of this year's democratic exercise. Despite a census count of only 23.6 million eligible voters, 29.4 million people registered to vote.

Figures on voter participation also have to be viewed with some skepticism since NAMFREL claims that 598,000 voters "flew" from one precinct to another in Metro-Manila alone. Two-and-a-half million votes nationwide—about 10% of registrants—were believed to be flying voters.

"Statistical improbabilities" abounded. In some cases, at least 90% of an area's entire population were listed as registered voters.

Intimidation was also used to exact votes. In Capiz, five armed men knocked from door to door, with warnings of grave danger if government candidates did not win. Eviction threatened 23,000 squatters in a Quezon City district in case of KBL defeat.

Election day teetered from the outrageous to the violent. Paul Quinn-Judge, writing for the *Christian Science Monitor*, visited a polling center in the squatters' area adjoining the Civil Aeronautics Authority Field. There local NAMFREL monitors told him of 10 early risers arriving before the 7 a.m. poll opening discovering that their ballots had already been cast. Several hundred voters turned up later in the day,

many polling centers. Davao city experienced a run on alcohol, which also had a surprisingly thorough effect on the ink.

Even then, marking a voter's finger was hardly practised. As one poll watcher remarked, the stuff ruined her nail polish.

NAMFREL chief Jose Concepcion also complained of harassment. Some of his monitors were reportedly made to sign pre-tallied election results. Many quit because of intimidation by barangay chiefs.

Barangay heads, officially barred from polling centers, roamed the premises, ordering voters about, often with pistols bulging from side pockets. A section of Makati—with some 40,000 voters—conducted voting in a barangay captain's compound.

Cases of ballot box snatching was reported in the south: Zamboanga del Norte, Zamboanga del Sur, North Cotabato, South Cotabato, Davao del Norte, Davao del Sur, Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Misamis Oriental, Cagayan de Oro City, and Davao City. Boxes were also stolen in Albay and Camarines Sur.

Most snatchings occurred as the boxes were being transferred from local polling centers to municipal halls. A phalanx of nuns in Vigan escorted ballot boxes to the safety of a provincial treasurer's offices, to the dismay of three jeeploads of thugs—including the town mayor—who were carrying substitute boxes.

PULLING OUT ALL THE STOPS

The government's dominant representation within the agency that regulates the election proceedings facilitated its control over the entire election process. Three of seven COMELEC officials own three of five private presses commissioned to print official ballots. The two remaining presses are owned by close associates of two other COMELEC members. Quinn-Judge was informed by an insider however, that the body would not doctor the results. "Barangay officials will do that," he was told. "The COMELEC will just ratify the results."

Even so the COMELEC delayed ratifying voting results. Two weeks after the elections, only 143 contests have been declared. In Palawan, vote tallies were suspended when government candidate and Cabinet Member Teodoro Peña charged fraud on the part of his opponent, the former senator Ramon Mitra. Mitra was leading by 25,000 votes with 92% of ballots counted. (Peña has conceded

Graite a winner by 5,736 votes over Manotoc even before counting for the district officially ended.

Other municipal officials did not bother with the courtesy of tallying. In Pasay City, officials threw out poll watchers and counted votes "on their own." Ballot boxes in several Mandaluyong precincts were emptied and burnt.

Elsewhere the battle moved beyond the manipulation of the voting process to a virtual state of war. The election death count since campaigning officially began March

'The early opposition lead reflected widespread disgust with Marcos.'

—Butz Aquino



27 totalled 448 as of May 26. At least 109 people were killed on election day alone.

Nine people were killed in Panay when members of two opposing factions engaged in a furious gun battle on a bridge. Intra-party feuding in Olongapo City also resulted in the death of one and the wounding of four others. Targets of other liquidation attacks were town mayors and barangay officials.

The rash in deaths of local officials prompted the government to put some 300,000 troops on alert. Although the New People's Army was blamed for the killings, *Far Eastern Economic Review's* Guy Sacerdoti remarked on the little evidence of their involvement. Though some deaths were clearly part of the NPA's justice policy, most killings, according to him, were not carried out in "typical NPA fashion."

The violence went on past May 14. Post-election fatalities included three demonstrators in a Cebu rally. Violence erupted in this southern city when oppositionists rallied May 20. They were protesting election fraud that cut the opposition party's leads in five of six contested *Batasan* seats. Twenty-seven others including seven policemen were hurt in the riot.

While old-style politicians opted to "play Marcos' game," boycott supporters saw opposition participation in the election as a victory for Marcos. The election itself legitimized Marcos' rule insisted boycott spokesman Sen. Lorenzo Tañada—a position later borne out by CBS observers in their "winning by losing" comment.

But with a highly visible segment of the opposition opting for participation, the boycott movement was unable to keep the majority of the population away from the polls. Instead, the anti-Marcos sentiments

stirred up and expressed by the boycott movement fed into the anti-KBL votes at the polls.

Boycott leader Butz Aquino, in a radio interview, claimed that the early lead of opposition figures in the elections reflected the widespread disgust with Marcos.

Nonetheless, boycott activities were both extremely popular and highly visible throughout the country. Boycott campaigns matched official candidates' rallies. Boycott registration centers were set up during the registration period for the May 14 polls. In Metro-Manila, some 14,000 signed up for boycott in the first weekend of registration. A people's Referendum which was to decide if Marcos should stay in power, became the forum for those who chose to boycott.

Boycott protests and rallies drew thousands. Riot police had to be dispatched to rout 1,000 students as they marched toward Malacañang May 11. Another group of several hundred headed toward the U.S. Embassy that day protesting American intervention in the country's politics. SAK-BAYAN (*Sakay para sa Kalayaan ng Bayan*), a ten-day motor caravan protest brought the boycott message throughout the entire length of Luzon.

As vote counting drew to a close, Marcos' intention to hold on to the reins of government very tightly became apparent. In a signed proclamation released from the presidential office May 24, Marcos called for a special 15-day session of the outgoing *Batasan*. The purpose: to consider adding 18 more presidential appointees to the body.

Marcos' proposal was "in response to the desire of our people for adequate representation." Observers saw this move as a way to reinstate a number of cabinet members who were forced to resign their posts as a result of defeat in the elections and, of course, as a way of ensuring a KBL majority. (Agriculture Minister Arturo Tanco and Justice Minister Ricardo Puno both lost to oppositionists along with National Resources Minister Peña; Solicitor General Estelito Mendoza resigned after an oppositionist won the seat in his province of Pampanga where he serves as governor.) Furor over this move forced the ruler to withdraw it quickly.

However, Marcos informed the new *Batasan* and the public that he intends to retain his decree-making powers which allow him to bypass the lawmaking body. "I consider the decree-making power a legislative tool against terrorism and subversion," he told the press. Opposition winners have said that they plan to give top priority in the new National Assembly to curbing Marcos' powers. Marcos rejected the argument that his power to legislate by decree should end when the newly elected regular National Assembly takes office in July, replacing the "interim" one. "I personally would resist," he said.

So, ask Manila observers, what else is new? □



AK Photo

'The widely supported boycott campaign was hardly publicized internationally.'

only to suffer the same fate.

Confusion reigned in other polling centers. Ballot boxes were seen left open or unlocked. In some places, sample ballots for government candidates were strewn on the floor under polling booths. Faces of the KBL slate, in posters covering schoolroom walls, loomed over voters casting their ballots.

LESS THAN INDELIBLE INK

The use of indelible ink to prevent flying voters came to naught. The "election integrity solution" ordered from Sirchie Fingerprint Laboratories in the U.S. at the suggestion of elections expert William Kimberling came off with soap and water. Bottles of acetone were seen in

defeat and has resigned from his cabinet post.)

Just how prepared local officials were to pull out all the stops was demonstrated in the case of the Makati race. Two oppositionists had already dropped out of the contest fearing the political machine of Makati mayor Nemesio Yabut when ex-beauty queen Aurora "Au Au" Pijuan-Manotoc agreed to take him on.

This provoked an outraged response from Mrs. Marcos. Manotoc is the first wife of Tommy Manotoc, currently married to Imee Marcos in a country where divorce is not recognized.

Yabut declared his candidate Ruperto

In Makati, opposition poll watcher Ernesto Y. Cionelo was found dead May 17. The 24-year-old construction worker, his hands tied behind his back, had been shot between the eyes.

WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

Meanwhile, despite UNIDO-government hype and the legal pressure to participate in the electoral process (failure to vote is punishable by six months in prison), boycott supporters estimated that a full 40% of the electorate stayed away from the polls.

The widely-supported boycott campaign was hardly publicized internationally.

NPA Offensives Stun Government Troops

By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

While activists in Philippine cities and towns marked the May 14 elections with a massive boycott movement, the New People's Army appears to have launched a major offensive in the countryside, much of it aimed at disrupting the dubious electoral exercise.

As of May 15, military sources reported 60 dead and at least 26 wounded beginning on the Saturday before election. The dead included 40 government troops, 12 civilians, and eight NPA fighters. (Military sources however, have been known for inflating rebel losses and deflating government casualties.)

Most dramatic was the confrontation between government and NPA troops in Banawe, Ifugao May 12 which left 17 AFP forces dead. Other encounters in the region over the weekend included one in Davilican, Isabela in which four NPAs were slain and two government soldiers wounded; another in Kiangon, Ifugao on election day itself, which left one PC sergeant wounded; and one in Gattaran, Cagayan in which one NPA died.

Two soldiers were killed and four others wounded in an ambush the day before elections in Sagada, Mountain Province. Their party had been dispatched to an area described as "critical" and was on its way at the time of the encounter.

AMBUSHES

Elsewhere the climate was equally hot. Four clashes in Negros Occidental left six army men and a poll chairman dead. Four soldiers died when their party of seven was ambushed while escorting ballot boxes to poll sites on the morning of election day in Candoni. Other clashes occurred in Cauayan, Bago City and Cadiz City. Ballot boxes were snatched in Escalante and representatives of the National Committee for Free Elections reportedly fled when armed men surrounded the polling places in Sagay.



NPA guerrillas: Election disruptions—part of raising level of warfare.

In Zamboanga del Sur, clashes erupted in Ozamis City and San Miguel. Two members of the Civilian Home Defense Force and two civilians serving as couriers of election paraphernalia were killed in an ambush on election morning in Ozamis City. In the San Miguel encounter, two NPAs were killed and several were wounded. Armed men snatched and burned five ballot boxes in Payog, three in Divas, and two in San Pablo elsewhere in the province.

A 5:00 a.m. election day encounter in Lupon, Davao Oriental left four Philippine Constabulary soldiers and militiamen dead and another militiaman and an undetermined number of NPAs wounded. The combined team of soldiers and CHDF was on patrol when it encountered 30 NPAs in a gun-battle which lasted approximately half an hour.

SPARROW UNIT HITS INFORMER

Two PC soldiers and a female NPA died in a rash of election day incidents in Surigao del Sur, Davao del Norte, and Davao del Sur. The two constabulary men were killed in a skirmish in barangay Tabina, Surigao del Sur. The NPA fighter died in a clash in Kapalong, Davao del Norte. Three more soldiers were wounded

when their Landrover was ambushed in Sibulan, Davao del Sur.

Pilar, Bataan saw two separate actions. Two soldiers were killed and another seriously wounded on election eve. Elsewhere in the same town, a woman suspected as a PC informer was shot down in front of her husband by an NPA sparrow unit.

NPAs in Llorente, Eastern Samar engaged government soldiers in an hour-long gunfight leaving four Marcos soldiers dead and two others seriously wounded.

Government troops pursuing NPA ballot box snatchers in Makilala, North Cotabato suffered one killed and four others wounded.

DELIBERATE CONFUSION

The election week assault climaxed a build-up of activity which begun with the campaign itself. The *New York Times* noted May 9 that, beginning with the March 27 registration campaign, at least 250 had been killed in guerilla attacks on AFP units, policemen, and CHDF. The information was based on military reports.

Observers relying on government figures to calculate the intensity of the NPA assault were frustrated, however, by deliberate attempts to blur the issue of election-

related violence. Ferdinand Marcos blamed all violence on the NPA, even political assassinations of local officials, candidates and their supporters. In some of these, such as the slaying of a Nacionalista Party-Roy wing chairman and six companions in Sibalon, Antique, survivors actually identified the attackers as supporters of another candidate.

Nevertheless, certain actions stand out as clearly NPA-initiated. They include a clash between 100 red fighters and government troops in Esperanza, Agusan on April 10; to ambushes in barangay Dinonan, Isabela April 18; an April 20 encounter in Dusol, Sorsogon; and another that same day in which the alleged Chairman of the Communist Party's Regional Committee for Panay, Eduardo de la Fuentes, was slain.

Military sources on April 20 reported a total of 14 encounters "in the last few days" in Dolores, Eastern Samar and Misamis Oriental alone.

SOMETHING UP HIS SLEEVE?

A blustering Ferdinand Marcos warned two weeks before the elections that rebel activity had increased by 41% and dispatched six additional military battalions to Mindanao and other hot spots. New "Reaction Forces" were organized, composed of units from the PC, police, Navy and Air Force, for all 12 regions.

Military and police forces were placed on full alert in 126 towns and provinces tagged as potential trouble spots on May 10. That same day, checkpoints were established at key points throughout Metro-Manila.

Southcom chief Maj. Gen. Delfin Castro announced that, in Mindanao, eight Army battalions, including an artillery unit, had been deployed to bolster PC troops already in the field.

Opposition observers worried about Marcos' deliberate confusion between partisan political violence and stepped-up NPA activity, fearing the president had something up his sleeve.

Former Secretary of State Salvador P. Lopez recalled the "barrage of anti-Communist speeches just before martial law in 1972." Butz Aquino worried that Marcos' attacks might be "a prelude to some contingency plan he has" and speculated on the possibility of a post-election crackdown. □

U.S. Interest in R.P. Polls: Finding a Credible Democratic Alternative

By MA. LOURDES C. MANGAHAS

Reprinted from Bulletin Today Special Election Issue

A "fixation for elections" pure and simple—this is how American officials explain their keen interest in the May 14 Batasan elections. It's the process, not the outcome of the elections, they say. They have commented on issues but have not supported or opposed candidates.

The problem lies with those Filipinos who are so concerned with the U.S. presence in the country, a spokesman said. Former Ambassador Michael Armacost said he learned this much during his stay here: "Most Filipino politicians desire U.S. support, exaggerate U.S. influence, resent U.S. interference." In any case, he said, the U.S. is confident that whatever the poll outcome, the Americans will be able to work with those who will win the people's mandate.

If Armacost's statements were the basis, alleged U.S. interest in the May polls is just an "absurd claim" in some media quarters. However, if other factors were considered, such as the enormous volume of opinion U.S. officials have advanced on the elections and Philippine problems, the conduct and content of talks by visiting U.S. officials with opposition and civic leaders, and even official pronouncements of some U.S. officials, a different picture emerges.

Certain points are confirmed in the process: the U.S. has paid so much attention on and rendered so much assistance to solve Philippine problems since the last seven months; U.S. officials have defined the conditions necessary to insure the success of the elections; U.S. officials believe U.S. military and economic interests in the country are being threatened by the intensifying conflict in Philippine politics.

Barely a month after the murder on the tarmac, U.S. officials analyzed the consequences of the Aquino assassination and the significance of the May elections. In hearings conducted on these issues last September 13, and October 6 and 8, the U.S. House of Representatives subcommittee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs ruled that the Aquino killing and its aftermath protest have "placed in jeopardy the future of Philippine democracy, United States-Philippine Relations as we [U.S.] know it, and vital American security interests in East Asia."

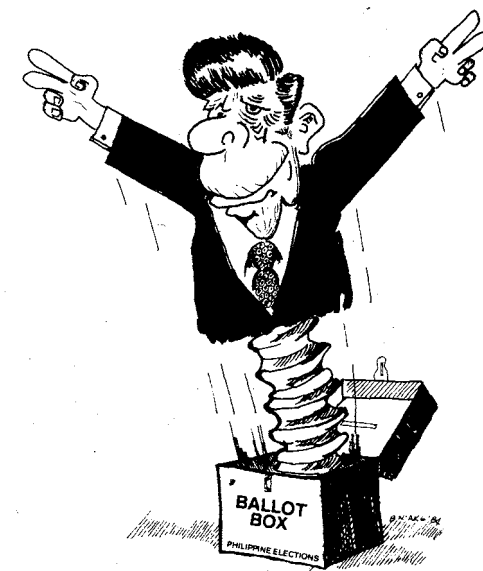
Subcommittee chairman Rep. Stephen Solarz cited trends in Philippine politics: there is growing support for the New People's Army throughout the country and more and more Filipinos are beginning to question whether peaceful change is possible. In this light, Solarz said the May elections could well be "a watershed in Philippine history" since it will provide a meaningful chance for those dissatisfied with government to bring about change through peaceful

means. If no such meaningful exercise is allowed the May elections will determine the extent to which Filipinos will decide to bring about change through the bullet, he said.

American officials took notice of the anger in the confetti thrown from high-rise buildings in Makati and the kilometers of roads covered by tens of thousands of protesting citizens. Such anger was vented on the Philippine government and underscored the obvious serious sickness in Philippine politics. Subcommittee member Joel Pritchard said: "The medicine has to be delivered to the patient pretty soon here or it is going to slide past a time when you can turn this process around, because we are having an erosion here and at some point, you get beyond the ability to turn it around except with a new crew, and putting in a new crew is pretty difficult, unless you do it—as I say, you can do it through elections."

To Pritchard and the subcommittee members, the medicine for this sickness is "bringing unity to the moderate opposition, and thus create a credible democratic alternative to both the waning Marcos regime and the rising forces of the violent left."

On October 6, the U.S. Congress passed with a vote of 413-3 House Congressional Resolution 187 which said that the U.S. strongly deplors the Aquino assassination, urges that a thorough, independent, and impartial investigation of the case be conducted, and stresses that "it is the U.S.



policy to support genuine, free, and fair elections to the national assembly in May 1984."

The resolution also asked the Philippine government "to take the necessary steps to secure the full participation of the opposition parties in these elections, including the prompt reconstitution of an objective, impartial electoral commission and the restoration of full freedom of the press."

U.S. interest in the May elections is apparently borne of its recognition of the event's importance and how the elections will be conducted.

The coming polls will be held under conditions of conflict—people and government drifting apart, people defying government through street politics, even as armed insurgency rises in the countryside. The elections could patch up such conflict or lead to further polarization, depending on

Continued on page 14

National Day of Protest Slams Polls

By VINCE REYES

Educational, lobby-ins, motorcades, and vigils, culminating in a National Day of Protest on May 14 drew the attention of Filipino communities in the U.S. and Canada, as the opposition movement here showed its militant support for the boycott of the National Assembly elections in the Philippines.

In San Francisco, 200 people, mostly Filipinos, staged a militant picket in front of the Philippine Consulate and then marched to Union Square in the heart of downtown where people listened to members of the Bay Area Alliance for Philippine Democracy.

The Alliance is composed of the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network, the International Movement for a Democratic Philippines, League of Filipino Students (USA), Philippine Education Support Committee, Movement for a Free Philippines, Philippine Support Committee, Church Network on the Philippines, and the Filipinos East Bay Network. The New Aquino Movement, although not formally a member of the Alliance participated in the Alliance-sponsored boycott activities during the week.

Earlier, during the lunch hour rush, the Alliance held a motorcade with brightly decorated cars and vans blasting anti-Marcos slogans through downtown San Francisco and Filipino neighborhoods.

In the three weeks preceding the National Day of Protest, the CAMD/PSN held a "Referendum *ng Bayan*" and distributed ballots to churches, Filipino neighborhoods, and schools. The ballots asked questions such as "Do you want Marcos out of office?" and "Do you want an end to U.S. domination of the Philippines?" Over 80% of the several hundred ballots collected gave Marcos thumbs down.

Two pickets, each drawing over 60 people, were held in front of the Philippine Consulate in New York City. Joining forces to support the boycott, the NAM, MFP, CAMD/PSN, and Justice for Aquino, Justice for All. All organized one of the protests.

Among the speakers were Miriam Fried-



Part of 200 protestors in San Francisco on May 14.

AK Photo



SANDIWA's Joe Pascual at Seattle picket.

AK Photo

AWARE (Alliance of Women for Action Towards Reconciliation), gave a solidarity message.

Earlier in the day, Rep. Howard Berman appeared at a press conference called by the CAMD/PSN and criticized the U.S. for propping up the dictatorship. Later in the afternoon of May 14, a second picket took place in front of the Federal Building sponsored by the MFP. The Friday before, a prayer-vigil was held by the May 14 committee.

In Seattle, 50 people joined a CAMD/PSN demonstration in front of the Philippine Consulate. The speakers included Joe Pascual, chairperson of SANDIWA; a representative from CISPES; Cindy Domingo of the CAMD/PSN, and representatives from the Filipinos for Jesse Jackson. That evening, a cultural program and candle offering was held at the St. James Cathedral.

Forty-five Filipinos listened to Alex Padilla of the Nationalist Alliance for Freedom, Justice and Democracy, Geline Avila of CAMD/PSN and Steve Psinakis at a forum in San Jose on May 12. The event was organized

70 people. Bonifacio Gillego from New York explained the boycott and attacked the hand of the U.S. in Philippine affairs. The event was also co-sponsored by the two groups.

Gillego proceeded to Montreal on May 6 with the same message. He was hosted by the CAMD chapter which had just sponsored a forum on Philippine political prisoners that was attended by 100 people the night before. A small but spirited picket on May 14 drew a number of "first-time" Filipino participants.

A flurry of political events sponsored by the Committee for Human Rights in the Philippines, kept Hawaii's Filipino community well informed on the election proceedings in the Philippines.

On May 7, a packed audience listened attentively to former Constitutional Convention delegate and radio commentator Ernesto Rondon who lambasted the Marcos regime and advocated a boycott of the election. Rondon, a leader of the Movement for a Free Philippines, dazzled his audience with a fiery speech in English, Tagalog and Ilocano, reminding many listeners of the "bomba"-type speeches delivered during Plaza Miranda rallies in the Philippines.

Rondon's string of speaking engagements, including a forum at the University of Hawaii, was sponsored jointly by the CHRP and the Union of Democratic Filipinos (KDP). In one forum, he was joined by Dr. Jonathan Fine, a Boston-based medical doctor who heads up the American Committee on Human Rights. Dr. Fine recently came back from a two-week fact finding mission in the Philippines, where he directly observed "massive pro-Marcos voter registration fraud in the country."

The Honolulu events were capped by a roadside protest fronting the Philippine Consulate on May 14, where activists displayed placards and banners denouncing the Marcos regime. Passing motorists honked their horns indicating their support of the protest. A photo of the event landed in the front page of a major daily newspaper, *Honolulu Star Bulletin*, the following day.

Prior to the May 14 National Day of Protest, anti-Marcos groups in several cities jointly lobbied congressmen for an end to U.S. aid. In all the protest activities, activists gathered petitions asking for the release of political prisoners. They displayed pictures of detainees Satur Ocampo, Isagani Serrano, Fidel Agcaoili, Bal Pinguel, Jose Ma. Sison, Boy Morales, Crispin Beltran, Edwin Lopez, Arturo Tabara, Noel Etabag, and Orlando Tizon while asking people to sign-up for membership in "adoption groups." □



MFP Executive Director Gaston Ortigas at Sacramento forum.

T. Pineda/Photo

lander of the New York City Council and Boni Gillego, a former Constitutional Convention delegate.

Individual members of the New York Philippine Jaycees and other community groups joined the rally.

An indoor rally that evening at the United Nations Church Center followed the demonstration. Individual members of the New York Philippine Jaycees and other community groups joined the rally. The May 14 Committee also held a picket in front of the Consulate, drawing 60 people.

One hundred placard-carrying marches gathered at Washington D.C.'s Dupont Center near the Philippine Consulate then marched down Connecticut Avenue to the White House. The event was sponsored by MFP, CAMD/PSN, PSC, Committee for Philippine Concerns, Church Coalition

for Human Rights in the Philippines.

On the previous Saturday, a Solidarity Night drew such groups as Casa El Salvador, Committee in Support of the People of El Salvador, ASOGUA (a Guatemalan support group) and the Black United Front. The program oriented members of other national liberation struggles to the significance of the May 14 elections and the boycott movement.

WHITE HOUSE PROTEST

The Los Angeles Philippine Consulate office was the site of a spirited picket led by the CAMD/PSN. The featured speakers included Tony Russo, a co-defendant in the Pentagon Papers case and representatives from the AGAPE fellowship and the Committee for a Democratic Palestine. Narz Lim, a member of a progressive women's organization in the Philippines,

jointly by the MFP and CAMD/PSN San Jose chapters led by Pepe Cruz and Becky Villones, respectively.

At a similar gathering in Sacramento, 35 people attended a political discussion led by Gaston Ortigas, MFP national executive director and Fely Villasin of the CAMD/PSN national staff. A singing group led by CAMD's Sonny Alforque spiced up the evening.

'BOMBA' IN HONOLULU

A demonstration and vigil held jointly by the CAMD/PSN and the MFP on May 14 in Toronto, Canada received the most extensive media coverage by far of an anti-Marcos event in that city. Ramon Sellevilla and Marta Ocampo, heads of the local MFP and CAMD, respectively, addressed the militant picket in front of the consulate.

A "build-up" educational on May 5 drew

Filipinos for Jackson Rainbow Politics Gains Momentum Among Pinoys

By VICKY PEREZ

The Reverend Jesse Jackson brought his campaign to California last month and electrified minority communities—including Filipinos—with his cry for “Peace Abroad, Justice At Home.” Even the decidedly unfriendly media conceded that Jackson’s multi-racial and multi-national Rainbow Coalition displayed its most vivid presence during the candidate’s recent romp through this state. At every stop, Jackson was mobbed by avid crowds of Blacks, Latinos, Asians, Arabs and whites in what appeared to be an updated version of the anti-war and civil rights movements of the 60s and 70s.

The California battle is expected to be the biggest yet, since the state holds the largest number of delegates, 306 from 45 congressional districts, with no candidate holding a strong lead. With only a few weeks remaining before the June primaries, the three contending candidates hope to win the support of the state’s minority communities, representing 33.5% of the population.



Jesse Jackson sports Philippine Boycott T-shirt.

Immigrant Services, Bay Area Committee Against Simpson/Mazzoli, the anti-Marcos opposition, Ang Katipunan, Asian Law Caucus and the KDP that he knew why they welcomed his visit so warmly.

“Because of my candidacy, for the first time you really feel welcome. That is the goal of the Rainbow Coalition—minorities should make one another feel welcome. I know how it feels to be rejected. You are not welcome in your own home in the Philippines and you are not welcome in your new home here. Soon, we will claim both homes.”

In the morning, the Texons served Jackson a Filipino breakfast.

The Jackson campaign has also sought the representation of the U.S.-based anti-Marcos opposition in its major campaign Geline Avila, national coordinator of the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship/Philippine Solidarity Network, spoke before 4,000 people during Jackson’s Berkeley rally on May — and before 2,500 people on the same day during a Black community rally at the Oakland Hyatt Regency.

RUNNING WITH JACKSON

For its part, the Filipinos for Jackson hosted a forum attended by leaders of the New Aquino Movement, the Movement for a Free Philippines, other opposition groups, as well as by minority rights advocates in the Filipino community. Guest speaker Ramsey Clark, former Attorney General under the Johnson administration said that Jackson’s campaign offers American voters “the most exciting opportunity in our lifetime.” Clark described Jackson as someone who offers the poor a meaningful reason to participate in the political system.

Clark, a close associate of Jackson for many years, is a former member of a team that went to the Philippines in 1977 to investigate the human rights conditions there. He has remained a vocal Marcos critic.

Filipinos for Jackson has made presentations before the Consortium of Filipino Democratic Clubs in San Mateo and Monterey Counties, and before the Filipino American Political Movement of Alameda County during a candidate’s forum May 20.

Renato Geniblazo, president of the FAP-MAC, explained that Filipinos must face the political reality that there is no strong Filipino voice in electoral politics. The

Continued on page 10



The candidate poses with hosts and their relatives; Jackson stayed overnight with the Texons of Daly City.

“Jackson is gaining support from the Filipino community,” says Leni Marin of Filipinos for Jackson in the Bay Area. “He is the only candidate who is really committed to understanding the plight of minorities, and he is putting our issues on the political stage.”

Indeed, the Jackson campaign has made special efforts, with the help of Filipinos for Jackson, to mobilize the Filipino vote.

“Politicians are afraid to touch Filipinos,” Jackson said at one stop, “because it means they’ll have to take a position in relation to Marcos; or they’re afraid to touch the Arabs because they’ll have to take a stand on the Middle East.”

STAYS WITH FILIPINO FAMILY

As part of his campaign goal “to view issues from the other side,” Jackson stayed overnight with a Filipino family on May 14 in Daly City’s Blossom Valley, a district that is 80% Filipino. His hosts, Luz and Jun Texon, their relatives, and other Jackson supporters shared with the candidate their views on the Philippines and repressive immigration legislation.

Jackson told the Texons as well as the community leaders representing the Filipino



Jackson meets with (l to r): Leni Marin of Filipinos for Jackson, Geline Avila, AK editor Cruz, and other community leaders.

Rainbow Momentum . . .



Geline Avila addresses Black community rally for Jackson in Oakland.

Continued from page 9

only way to be recognized, he said, is to link up with other minority communities.

"We need a strong voice as a minority. By running with Jackson, we can have a recognized voice. He is being recognized, and that's something we as a minority can be proud of.

"Joining the bandwagon for the 'winner' is not good, we will end up victims of tokenism. Mondale and Hart are using minorities to

get the vote, their sincerity is lukewarm. With Jesse, the voice we hear is sincere, from the heart."

Filipinos for Jackson in Los Angeles is gearing up to bring the issues to the community through forums and presentations, and like the Bay Area FFJ, will intensify voter registration efforts before the June 5 primaries.

NEW TREND

Marin observed that there is a trend of

organizing Filipino Democratic clubs and political organizations in the community. "What we're seeing," Marin told *Ang Katipunan* "is a whole trend of Filipinos trying to become part of the political mainstream. These clubs are not Party initiatives. These are grassroots efforts."

But because they are minorities, Marin said, these groups are locked out, or are peripheral to Democratic Party functions. "Even those Filipinos who consider themselves Party veterans are still peripheral to the Party. Those with Jesse don't have any illusions about the role of racism in

the Democratic Party," Marin explained.

Even though the pro-Mondale current among Filipinos is still intact, Marin said, Rainbow politics are gaining momentum.

"Community groups have been very receptive to our presentations," she explained. "More people are coming out to support Jackson's domestic and foreign policies. We're a growing trend that can't be ignored.

Jackson's initial California blitz kept up an active presence especially among Blacks, Latinos and Asians. Often, he warned of the need, not only to join the political



Former Attorney General Ramsey Clark speaks to Philippine opposition leaders on behalf of Jesse Jackson.

mainstream, but to change the direction of the stream.

"We need more than a new president, we need a new direction," he said, speaking of the need for equality in the areas of employment, housing, education and peace in foreign policy.

On May 13, he spoke before a crowd of 1,000 Asian Americans in a rally in San Francisco's Chinatown. Earlier in the day, he made a rousing appearance at the Mexican American Political Association convention in San Jose.

On May 17, Jackson spoke at a rally of 500 in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo. Jackson marched in a demonstration against the Simpson-Mazzoli bill May 19 at City Hall with 5,000 Latinos, Asians, whites and Blacks. There, Jackson spoke of the slave-like conditions the undocumented must work and live in, and pledged his support to immigrant rights. □

For information on FFJ activities, call (213) 250-0602 for Los Angeles, (415) 533-9285 for the Bay Area.



Filipinos join march against Simpson/Mazzoli in Los Angeles.

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I WAS AFRAID OF THIS.....



For those concerned readers who waited for their March issue—don't despair. Through a mailing error on our part, the March issue was sent out late. Readers should have received that issue by now—but if not, drop us a line and we will correct the problem as soon as possible.

MOVING? Send us your new address as soon as possible so that you don't miss a single issue.

Filipino Couple Denounces INS Agent

By VICKY PEREZ

We left the Philippines because there is no democracy there. We came to the U.S. where democracy is supposed to be at its peak, and here you are, this kind of thing happens," said Emily Cruz, describing the harassment they suffered in the hands of a bullying Immigration and Naturalization Services agent in the early morning of May 21 at their San Jose residence.

INS agent Willie Witt allegedly approached Pat Bernal, a boarder at Emily and Pepe Cruz's home, asking for the whereabouts of one Vince Basa.

When Bernal claimed he did not know Basa, Witt became argumentative and demanded Bernal's immigration papers. Bernal requested that Witt remain in the garage, but the agent followed him into his bedroom.

After Bernal produced his green card, Witt questioned him again about Basa.

When Bernal again denied knowledge of Basa, Witt questioned Bernal about where he works, the legal status of his wife and threatened him and his wife with deportation "for lying."

Witt then ordered that Emily be awakened. She also denied knowledge of Basa's whereabouts and asked for the agent's identification upon which Witt shouted, "Don't tell me you don't know this guy—you're lying and that's a federal offense, you could be prosecuted."

By then, Emily said, her two kids were crying and she told Witt to speak to her husband who was at work. Witt talked to Pepe on the phone asking for the same information. Then he demanded Emily's green card.

"I've heard of your tactics," Emily told Witt, "but this is ridiculous." After grabbing the green card from her wallet, Witt threw it back. The agent justified his actions by saying, "You people come into this country and break the laws. This is a federal

offense and you are going to be deported."

By then, Emily said, she was enraged, and asked again for his identification. Before she could get all the information, Witt promptly left, muttering "We're going to prosecute you."

When John Senko, INS director for the region was informed of the incident, he claimed that the charges were exaggerated, and that he condoned the agent's actions in that situation. Just prior to the raid, Senko had reported that raids were not occurring in residential areas.

"Witt is one of our best agents," Senko stated on local TV. "He did the right thing . . . he is very intelligent." A week later, Senko issued a memo saying agents were not allowed to go into homes without search warrants.

San Jose is witnessing increased INS efforts to apprehend undocumented residents. Last April, the agency promised to conduct at least two raids a week in work places. A few weeks ago, two Filipinos were allegedly beaten by INS agents in nearby Milpitas. Even the city's chief of police refused to assist in the raids on the grounds that they focus on foreign-looking individuals and are therefore inherently discriminatory, and they disrupt business activity.

After talking to several lawyers, the Cruzes learned there had been more cases like theirs. Emily said theirs was minor compared to others, but the victims were afraid to talk about it.

"We're unique, because we're going to do something about it," she said. "We can't let them do things like that."

The Cruzes have filed charges with the San Jose Police Department against INS agent Witt, and have asked the support of the Filipino American Political Association, the Asian Law Caucus, and Rep. Norman Mineta (D-SJ). Pepe is a leading member of the Movement for a Free Philippines in San Jose.

The Cruzes want to file a class action suit to defend the rights of others similarly harassed. In an effort to rally the Filipino and Mexican communities against harassment, the Cruzes are organizing a demonstration in front of the INS office in downtown San Jose, Friday, June 1 at noon.

"As Filipinos, we try so hard to be so law abiding—you are careful about walking on the 'walk' light at the crosswalk. Then, some creep walks in and says you're violating the law by being in this country—he's talking about the Filipino people when he says 'you,'" said an angry Emily. □

Nursing Home Workers End Strike



By VINCE REYES

Daly City—Convalescent home workers, the majority of whom are Filipinos, ended a month long strike over wage and benefit increases after coming to an agreement with the management of the St. Francis Heights Convalescent Home and the St. Francis Pavilion Convalescent Home in Daly City.

The workers began their strike last April 16 after new contract negotiations broke down around salary differences and work hours. The previous contract had expired on March 31.

The personnel affected included Licensed Vocational Nurses, attendants, ward clerks, kitchen, laundry and utility employees. Ninety-five percent of the 300 workers who went out on strike were Filipinos. The rest were Blacks, whites and Samoans.

The breakdown in negotiations occurred when the owners, Thomas Nico, Evelyn Goddard and Rusty Rhoades refused to raise wages claiming it would impose economic hardship on the business. They also claimed that rates for patient care is higher at the St. Francis homes because employees are paid more there relative to other nursing homes. Nurse aides at the St. Francis homes currently receive from \$5.11 to \$5.91 per hour.

But Felix Smith, SEIU Local 250 representative said the raises should be based on the employer's "ability to pay" rather than on comparison to other homes. The St. Francis homes are very large operations and Smith explained that the hospitals can afford to pay their employees more because there are a lower number of Medi-Cal patients under their care.

According to Smith, the issue which caused the strike was the management's attempts to impose cutbacks on wage scales, health insurance benefits and holidays.

The management wanted to cut back the eight-hour work day to 7-1/2 which would force employees to take a cut in pay. The management used the argument that a routine 30-minute daily briefing was "non-productive time."

"Employees deserve every penny they work for," asserted Smith. "It is an insult and an outright attack on employees to tear down wages, particularly for those who work in convalescent hospitals."

"These people do more work than employees in regular hospitals. The patients here never leave until they die, this creates very stressful working conditions . . . people receive very individualized care."

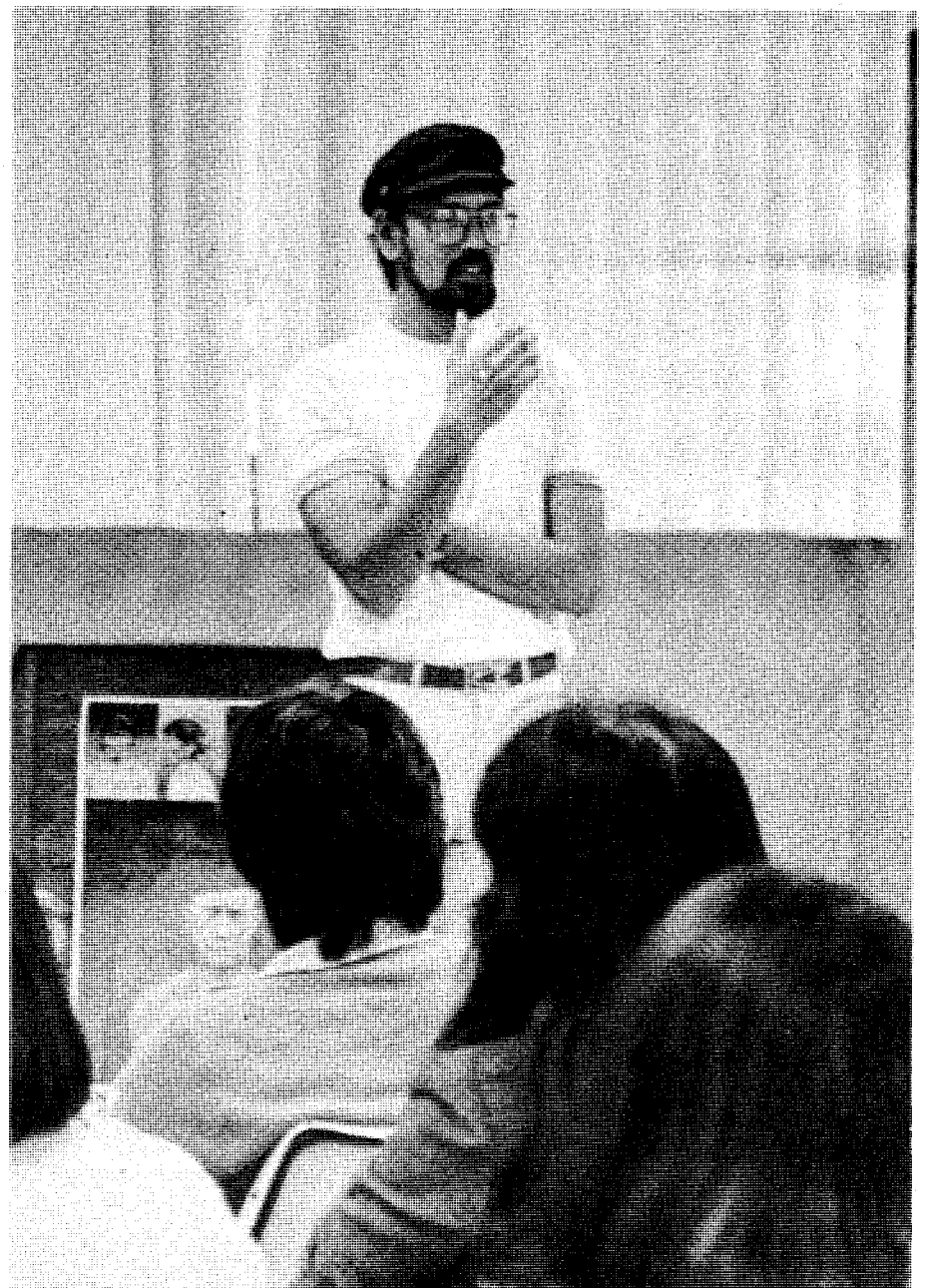
St. Francis tried to break the strike by using scabs, including people without proper training. The strikers however, made it clear they did not want to cause undue hardship on patients and in some cases, allowed workers to go back to care for particular patients.

The strike ended when a satisfactory agreement was reached on a new three-year contract. New hires will get a wage cut of 45¢ an hour and will receive a 50/50 health plan coverage, meaning that employees pay half and the employer pays half.

The normal work day will be cut from eight hours to 7-1/2 hours but the employees have the right to vote for a new schedule to enable them to work the additional (optional) half hour and get paid for eight hours a day.

The contract also allows for wage increases in increments from 5¢ to 15¢ per hour, commensurate with seniority, over the next three years. □

Reception for Bencab



Nancy Rocamora

Ang Katipunan and the Institute for Philippine Resources and Information held a reception for Philippine artist Ben Cabrera May 20 in Oakland, California.

Cabrera, who signs his work "Bencab," was passing through the Bay Area at the conclusion of his one-man retrospective exhibit at the Honolulu Academy of Fine Arts. He is the first Filipino artist to have his works so displayed in Honolulu. (See AK, Vol. X, No. 5)

The reception was attended by progressive Bay Area artists and members of the Filipino community. Cabrera showed a videotape made in 1980 which documents the evolution of his work from the late sixties on. He then answered questions from the audience on current conditions for artists in the Philippines, the role of social consciousness in art, and his own future. □

Voices

Ang Bilin

1
 "Sa bayang pagasa"
 ang tawag ni Rizal,
 nang kapanahunang
 siya'y papanao na
 sa pinaghandugan
 lubos na pagibig
 dugo't kabuhayan.

2
 Ito ang iniwan
 ng ating bayani,
 sa noo'y sumisibol
 na batang lalake;
 isang biling banal
 na iniwi-iwi
 hindi nililimot
 kahit sa sarili.

3
 Ang bayani natin
 pinatay, pumanao,
 bilin niya'y ginalang
 ng mga naiwan;
 ang mga binata
 ginamit na ilao
 taguri ni Rizal
 sa kanilang buhay.

4
 Sa panahong yao'y
 mga lumalaban
 ay mga lalaking
 lubos na matapang;
 sa lakas at giting
 sila'y inasahan
 sa ganyang inantay
 di naman nagkulang.

5
 Di lang kabataan
 ang pinagbilinan
 ng bayani natin
 bago siya mamatay;
 babaing Malolos
 kanyang sinulatan
 at pinaalaalang
 sila'y kailangan

6
 At mayroon din naman
 sa ating salaysay
 na mga babaing
 marunong, matapang;
 Tandang Sora'y isa
 sa kadakilaan
 pagtulong sa hukbo
 linaan ang buhay.

8
 Sa buhay na ating
 dinadanas ngayon,
 babae't lalake
 ay magkakatulong;
 lalake't babae
 ay sumasalubong
 kahit na mamatay
 sulong din nang sulong.

9
 Marahil kung buhay
 ang ating bayani,
 matutuwa siya't
 ipagkakapuring
 sa hirap ng bayan
 lahat sumasali
 upang iya'y maahon
 sa pagkadohagi.

10
 Wala ng mahinhin
 mayuming dalaga,
 na di nagdadala
 galit na bandila;
 na di lumalaban
 at di nagmamartsa
 ang siklab ng poot
 ay ipinakikita.

7
 Huag ding kalimutan
 ang ibang babae,
 sa bahay, sa bayan
 di lang palamuti;
 Ginang Diego Silang
 siya'y sinasabing
 babaing may sigla't
 sa baya'y nagsilbi.

11
 Wala ng matanda
 wala na ring bata,
 na di sumisigaw
 mura't alipusta;
 kung ito'y makita
 ng bayaning dakila
 ang kanyang puso'y
 sisidlan ng tuwa.

12
 "Lumabang mahigpit!"
 "Diktador'y ibuwall!"
 "Alisin sa bayan!"
 "Itapon sa sukal!"
 iyan ang ituturo
 ng amang si Rizal
 Kung nakikita niya
 ang gulo ng bayan.

13
 At tayo ng lahat
 ang pagbibilinan
 na tayo'ng bahalang
 mag-ahon sa bayan;
 balikatin natin
 kanyang kaligtasan
 iyan ang bagong bilin
 na ating pakinggan.

14
 "Sa bayang pagasa"
 iyo'y ako't ikao,
 Pilipino tayo't
 baya'y minamahal
 magtulungan tayo
 at huag maghiwalay
 Pilipinas natin
 tayo'y kailangan!

—ni Conrado Sandiko

Conrado Sandiko grew up in a farm in Bulacan and has been writing poems since he was 14 years old. He comes from a family of cultural workers who use artistic expression as a vehicle of resistance against injustice and oppression. His father, as a young man, was jailed by the Spaniards for distributing "Solidaridad," a "subversive" newspaper published during the Spanish colonial period.

Tondo

Langaw, lamok, putik
 Mabantot
 Na pusali
 Putik kahit saan
 Tulay.

Bata . . .
 Madusing
 Tagging-baro
 Gutom, hubad, dukha

Bahay . . . gawa sa
 Kahon ng Darigold
 Tag-araw . . .
 Paano sa tag-ulan?

Basurero
 Sa tambakan . . .
 Pulot, kalkal, halungkat
 Lata, bote, papel

Hintay!
 Ano ito?
 Pagkain! akin 'to
 Hindi, sa akin!
 Putang-ina!
 Ako ang nauna
 Iskwater.

Mataas na bakod
 (ni hindi makasilip)
 Pinturang puti
 Bakit . . . ?

Ahh, ang Papa ay
 Nasa Maynila.

j. antonio
 4/3/84

Joey, an active organizer in the Philippines, came to the U.S. to be with his parents. Now 24, he lives on the East Coast and hopes to go back to the Philippines.

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.

1. 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.

2. 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.

3. Photos of art work will be sent back upon request by the contributor.

4. 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.

For Cynthia Maglaya December 20, 1947 - May 23, 1983

Cynthia Maglaya
 Patriot of the Philippines
 With a vision of your land made free
 From Marcos' deadening grip,
 A vision of your land made free
 From the choking claws of Washington.

Cynthia Maglaya
 Your consciousness took root in
 the sixties' storms
 And blossomed like a vivid rose,
 Commitment and zeal the persistent pruners
 Shaping the petals and thorns.

Cynthia Maglaya
 You left behind the sheltered ways
 That chance bestowed upon you
 To build another beachhead for
 the Filipino struggle

Here in the belly
 Here in the land
 Of Little Rock
 And Jacksonville
 and the Ku Klux Klan.

Cynthia Maglaya
 Your frail and slender arms
 Embraced the world,
 From the barricades of Mindanao
 To the trenches of
 Chalatenango.

Cynthia Maglaya
 Your thoughtfulness and warmth
 Inspired trust in all you worked with
 And your careful, piercing mind inspired
 A trembling in the enemy.

Cynthia Maglaya
 Injustice wrenched your heart
 And in its face you stood
 Despite the pain and torment
 A pillar made of iron.

Cynthia Maglaya
 Your life is of such valor
 That all those who know
 What is crumbling on this spinning globe
 And what is permanent say

Cynthia Maglaya—
 Revolutionary

Cynthia Maglaya—
 Presente!

Marian McDonald
 June, 1983

Cynthia Maglaya was a founding member of the Katipunan ng mga Demokratikong Pilipino and for several years was in its national leadership. She died last year after a prolonged illness. Cynthia remained a dedicated activist to her last days.

GARY REYES is a 26-year-old Filipino-American living in Stockton, California. He is a photographer for the *Fairfield Daily Republic* and freelances for local magazines and wire services. His photographs of anti-Marcos activities have appeared in past issues of the *AK*. The photographs shown here are from a larger collection shot in 1979 while Reyes was doing volunteer work with elderly Filipinos in the Sacramento Delta.



The Delta

Remnants of an American Dream

The delta is a large expanse of "islands" carved out of the valley by the tributaries of the Sacramento River. The fertile ground was the foundation of California's agricultural industry in the late 1800s and early 1900s. As the agri-business subsided and became mechanized, the many labor camps and little towns sprinkled over the region became enclaves for retired Asian and Latino farmworkers.



Today they are known as *Filipino Pioneers*. In the '20s and '30s they were immigrants to a new land with hopes and aspirations in the land of opportunity.

They are a dying breed of men whose sweat and toil have made great contributions to the agricultural richness of the Delta which surrounds them. Their story is about untold hardship, loneliness and struggle, all in the pursuit of the American Dream. While most of them are retired now, their pensions are barely enough to survive on. Tourists merely pass the rickety buildings with awe and curiosity. To an old Filipino, he must call it home.

Gary Reyes



Movie Review

'The Good Fight' A Moving Tribute to Anti-Fascism

By WICKS GEAGA

Beleaguered by the fascist forces of Generalissimo Francisco Franco, the new and popularly elected Republican government of Spain issued a world-wide call for help in July 1936. Among the 42,000 volunteers from 52 nations who immediately responded were the 3,200 ragtag American fighters who formed the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Most had never held a gun in their life, much less had military training.

"The Good Fight" is a documentary on the Lincoln Brigade. It is an inspiring memorial that on the one hand, captures a proud example of international solidarity on the part of American citizens and on the other, exposes their government's hypocrisy. Many volunteers were already politically active, emerging from the Great Depression of the 1930s as labor organizers, tenant-rights activists, unemployment council members, and communists.

Some joined the fight out of moral outrage. "I'm not just gonna sit down . . . when men, women, children are getting bombed," recalls one veteran, describing the indiscriminate bombing of heavily-populated civilian areas by the fascist forces.

Others saw their struggle for social change in this country as inextricably bound up with the survival of the young Spanish Republic, the first democratically-elected government in Spain's history. They were convinced that its destruction by the fascists would be a historic setback for the left-liberal forces leading that country out of its feudal and poverty-stricken past. In its battle against poverty and illiteracy, the Republican (Loyalist) government had built 8,000 new schools and began to introduce sweeping land reform in its first year alone.

No wonder it had the fierce support of Spanish peasants and workers who, with international support, held-off Franco's German- and Italian-backed forces for close to three years—much longer than the "one-

week" resistance Franco had announced at the start of the war.

BETRAYAL BY THE DEMOCRACIES

But the rightwing coalition—the military, the Church and the Spanish oligarchy—would accept nothing less than a return to the old order and eventually emerged victorious.

While international solidarity was crucial in prolonging the Republic's valiant resistance, most historians agree that the withholding of aid by most self-proclaimed democratic capitalist states contributed significantly to the government's eventual downfall. A Republican victory could have stopped the Axis powers dead on their initial tracks. Instead, Franco's victory enabled them to fine tune their war machinery before launching the bloodbath of World War II.

Aid from the Soviet Union and Mexico—the only sources of military hardware for the Republic—was hardly a fair match against the fascist arsenal of 1,000



Members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

Robert Capa

tanks, 3,000 artillery pieces, over 100,000 small arms, hundreds of fighter bombers, along with 100,000 German and Italian shock troops.

The U.S. not only declined to contribute to the Loyalist cause, it even legislated its refusal to sell arms to the Republic, an unprecedented action against a duly-elected government. While conservatives, the established media, and the Catholic Church vigorously supported the U.S. embargo, a movement that included such notables as Paul Robeson, Albert Einstein, Langston Hughes, and Ernest Hemingway fought hard (and in vain) to overturn it.

FIRST INTEGRATED FORCE

"The Good Fight's" expertly woven format of interviews, photos, newsreel footage, posters, songs, and shots of Spanish scenery brings to life a chapter of history that is either unknown to most Americans or distorted beyond recognition. Through the moving and often humorous testimony of 11 Brigade veterans, filmmakers Noel Buckner, Mary Dore and Sara Sills, who wrote, produced and directed the film acquaint the viewer with a mission that seems foreign to the American experience.

Black volunteer and nurse Salaria Keo O'Reilly describes the atmosphere in the first fully integrated American fighting force: "I had no problems being Black . . . and even forgot all about (my color) until I returned home." The Brigade's anti-racist orientation was inseparable from its anti-fascist spirit and intersected with the vision that guided the Loyalist effort to build a revolutionary new society.

While not all volunteers went to Spain as dedicated political activists, most of the survivors returned with a burning commitment to carry on the struggle. Hounded as "premature anti-fascists" on their return, harassed during the McCarthy period, and reactivated during the mass struggles of the 60s and 70s, most of those still living continue to be politically active.

Notes well-known Brigade veteran, Bill Bailey: "Hitler and Mussolini said they were saving Spain from communism, and today, there's this man in the White House trying to lull us to sleep with the same rotten, phony theory."

Sixteen hundred combatants of the Lincoln Brigade fell and never returned from Spain. But their spirit of international solidarity should be an example to those critical of the U.S. government's continued march alongside the fascist columns of the world. □

Credible Alternative . . .

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how credible and meaningful the process will be. John C. Monjo, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, said: "Elections widely seen as fair and equitable can contribute significantly to stability and the avoidance of political polarization."

U.S. AID

Beyond the May elections, the U.S. looks at how stability may be restored to the floundering ship of state in the Philippines. Just as the demonstrations of the last quarter of 1983 were gaining momentum, the country's economy started sliding into crisis. The U.S. alone, among all the Philippines' trading partners, rushed to the rescue.

Since last October, the U.S. has facilitated the release of \$600 million in various financing schemes to the Philippines, including a \$200-million commodity credit assistance and \$400-million various financing from the U.S. Export-Import Bank. During the same period, the Philippines was simply not a no-risk economy in which a creditor could funnel funds with confidence. The country had just closed the year with a \$25-billion external debt, suspended import letters-of-credit, secured a moratorium on payment of maturing foreign obligation, and disemployed tens of thousands of workers due to suspension and reduction in production. That such U.S. credit was given betrays the U.S.'s special treatment of the Philippines.

Political analysts believe the grant of credit was a political, more than a business, decision. They say it was through the economic aid angle that the U.S. conditioned the Philippine government's approval of the U.S.'s agenda for a credible May polls. A U.S. Embassy spokesman understandably denied this supposition, and said the aid package was meant to alleviate

the economic plight of Filipinos, more than any other consideration.

The extent to which the U.S.'s preference for free and open elections will be realized hinges, of course, on the cooperation of the Marcos government. While economic aid was promptly assured, some forms of U.S. censure of the Philippine regime has been noted, making for a pressure-prop, push-pull U.S. approach to the "Marcos problem."

Last February, the Solarz subcommittee revised the \$180-million aid package due the Philippines this year as part of the terms of the 1983 Military Bases Agreement review. From an original mix of \$60 million foreign military sales credit, \$25 million military assistance grant, and \$95 million economic support fund, the subcommittee approved, instead, only \$25 million military aid and \$155 million economic support fund.

The move was seen as an effort to push Mr. Marcos to agree to the suggested conduct of the May elections. Solarz argued, however, the subcommittee made its decision because he believes that unless the country's severe economic crisis is effectively addressed, economic collapse may follow and political chaos would ensue.

DISCUSSIONS

That the U.S. prefers the conduct of credible elections now is also indicated by discussions visiting U.S. officials have conducted with members of the opposition and civic leaders. The overriding purpose of these officials, oppositionists said, is to urge participation in the elections.

Last February, Stanley Roth, Solarz's aide, arrived in Manila to collate feedback on the Solarz subcommittee's revision of the 1984 aid package. William Kimberling of the U.S. federal commission on Elections reportedly discussed with local Comelec officials the need "to minimize frauds," and with Namfrel chairman Jose Concepcion Jr., ways to avoid poll cheating.

In March, Philip Kaplan, State Department Policy Planning Council staff director, told Filipino diplomats that a lot of attention has been given the Philippine elections because it is expected to help

regain the confidence of international and commercial bankers. At about the same time, State Department country director for the Philippines Ulrich Strauss went to Mindanao to inquire about the strength of the New People's Army and the boycott movement.

Other U.S. officials based at the Manila embassy, including First Secretary Richard Holmes and Deputy Chief of Mission John Rich are often seen at political actions, intently listening to speeches and jotting down notes. New Political Officer Earl St. Aubin Scarlett has reportedly made the rounds of oppositionists, trying to establish friendship bonds.

A U.S. embassy spokesman said the allegedly unusual number of U.S. officials visiting Manila is actually nothing extraordinary. He said these officials have come around as part of their tour of various Asian cities.

All these opinions of various U.S. officials on the elections have been summarized in the testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee of new U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines Stephen Bosworth.

FIVE ELEMENTS

U.S. policy toward the Philippines feature five key elements, which Bosworth said, are:

1. The U.S. strongly supports efforts to rebuild democratic political institutions. The Batasan elections is an important step in this process and the U.S. is encouraged by the progress made so far on such matters as the election ground rules.

2. The U.S. strongly supports a full investigation of the Aquino assassination.

3. The U.S. will continue to encourage and assist the Philippines in overcoming its current economic crisis.

4. The U.S. will continue its security relationship with the Philippines and U.S. military bases will continue to be vital to U.S. security in East Asia.

5. The U.S. will continue to engage in active diplomacy with the Philippines on human rights.

Bosworth's commendation of progress so far made on such matters as the ground rules for the elections is reportedly not

shared by U.S. President Reagan.

In a letter to President Marcos dated March 29, Reagan stressed U.S. commitment to free and open elections and assured that the May polls is "strictly a Philippine matter."

A story on the letter which appeared in the *Christian Science Monitor* (April 16, 1984) cited certain essential items in the letter, which were not reported by the local press. The letter said the U.S. government "is deeply interested in the outcome of the elections and has not yet come to a judgment if elections are likely to be fair."

The *Christian Science* story said U.S. officials have noted "troubling developments" in the Philippine officials' decision not to print ballots in one place, "which can increase the possibility of ballot-box stuffing, an electoral commission that appears to be heavily stacked in favor of Mr. Marcos's supporters, and allegations that flying voters registered in more than one location."

There is a strong case for the view that the U.S. is indeed, a very interested observer in the May elections. If stakes must be discussed, the U.S. has admitted that among the strategic interests it wants to secure in the face of instability in Philippine politics are major U.S. military bases, including Clark Air base and Subic Bay naval base with essential command, control, communication, and intelligence functions, and at least \$2 billion in direct U.S. investments in the country. Already, reports of growing anti-American sentiments among Filipinos have been called "disconcerting" by U.S. officials, especially since "the United States has been regarded with great esteem in the Philippines for many years."

To urge the Marcos government to concede to credible May elections, while encouraging the political opposition to join the political exercise are variations of one theme of U.S. policy. The purpose is to convince the Filipino that there is still some chance at change through elections. Elections, for all their limitations, after all insure that there will be no radical change from the Philippine position of friendship to the U.S. and acceptance of its bases and economic investments. □

Analysis: What Demos Fear About Jackson

Jesse to Democrats: No More Free Rides

By WICKS GEAGA

"With mixed feelings," is probably even too understated a way to describe how the established leaders of the Democratic Party view the Jesse Jackson bid for the presidential nomination. On the one hand, the Democratic Party leadership recognizes the crucial importance of Jackson rallying the Black and minority vote in the campaign to oust Reagan in November.

According to a study issued by the Joint Center for Political Studies, "A Democratic presidential victory in 1984 is inconceivable without a strong Black showing in northern cities and the South." Even in their relatively low turnout, Blacks produced 20% of the Democratic vote in the last three presidential elections.

On the other hand, the Democrats are edgy over Jackson's avowed aim of "renegotiating our covenant with the Democratic Party." Violating longstanding tradition, Jackson refuses to unconditionally deliver the Black vote to the Democrats in return for token favors.

More, he has proceeded to make this Black vote the core of a "Rainbow Coalition" of the "rejected, dispossessed and disenfranchized," the point being to force the Democratic Party to deal seriously with a constituency that has "self-respect and independence" and a growing muscle at the polls. "Ultimately," said Jackson, "the poor do not just want liberal friends, they want to be empowered."

With Jackson doing rather well in the primaries—after having just inspired the registration in unprecedented numbers of new Black and minority voters—the Party heads are being forced "to be nice to Jackson," promising him minor concessions around convention groundrules. But they can hardly mask their greatest fear: that Jackson's anti-racist and anti-war "Rainbow" politics might eventually split the Democratic Party.

PERENNIAL LOSERS

Especially since WWII, the liberal wing of the U.S. ruling class, in alliance with the aristocratic sectors of the country's work force, has succeeded in legitimizing the Democratic Party's role as the "defender of working people's interests" within the two-party system.

Unlike the working classes of capitalist Western Europe, which have their own labor parties, the politically immature U.S. working class has identified its political interests with the liberal elements of its ruling class under the Democratic Party's banner.

Despite the repeated failure of Democratic administrations to deliver on their campaign promises to the deprived lower strata of the working population, they have nevertheless maintained the allegiance of the more privileged and predominantly white upper sectors. The leadership of "Big Labor" (which includes the major unions such as AFL-CIO and Teamsters) in particular, has consistently pledged support for every major U.S. imperialist campaign since WWII—from the Korean War to the aggression in Vietnam and now, to Reagan's militarist intervention in the Middle East and Central America.

In return for its loyalty, the Democratic Party has ensured the protection of Big Labor's narrow interests, e.g., the continued supply of "butter" even while most government resources were being melted into "guns" during the Vietnam war era.

The perennial losers in this unholy arrangement, of course, are the unrepresented and unorganized sectors of workers—mostly in the lower strata which is disproportionately comprised of Blacks and other minorities—who bear the brunt of attacks, especially during times of economic downturn.

DISILLUSIONMENT

In the face of the current Republican rampage, the Democrats have chosen to protect mainly its alliance with Big Labor. As Jackson declared in his candidacy announcement: "The Reagan administration has turned its back on civil rights, human rights and the poor—both in this country and in the world... [and] regrettably, the Democratic Party and its leaders have remained too silent and too passive in the face of the onslaughts."

It is no accident that disillusionment with the Democratic Party runs deepest within the Black community. Ever since achieving the Voting Rights Act in 1965, after years of hard-fought struggle, the Black community has witnessed the repeated betrayal of their interests by the Democrats and steady erosion of their historic gains from the Civil Rights era.

With no alternative party (the Republicans being a



Richardo Valdivieso



Mario Ruiz/Picture Group

Jackson supporters: "The poor don't want just liberal friends, they want to be empowered."

lost cause) to bring their concerns to, Black participation in the polls has declined markedly after the initial enthusiasm triggered by the passage of the Voting Rights Act. From 50% of those eligible to vote in 1972, Black voter participation dropped to below 40% in 1980, significantly below the national turnout.

Low Black turnout especially in the South, however, reflects not only deep disillusionment but also the various racist practices that still inhibit the Black vote: double primaries, gerrymandering and outright racist terror and harassment.

HAROLD WASHINGTON'S CAMPAIGN

Catching most political observers by surprise, the qualitative reversal of this dismal trend in Black politics occurred in the midst of Harold Washington's candidacy for mayor of Chicago in the fall of last year.

Running on an explicitly anti-Reagan, anti-racist and anti-war program, Washington succeeded in galvanizing an overwhelming majority of the Black community and enough of the progressive white vote to barely squeak by his Republican rival for the victory.

But the triumph was much more than the election of the first Black mayor in "the most racist city in the U.S." More significant in the long run for Black politics in particular and working class politics in general are the rich lessons reaped from the campaign.

The Chicago race, first of all, witnessed the most dramatic resurgence of political activity in the Black community since the Civil Rights movement. Hardest hit by Reagan's cutbacks and racist policies, the Black community was the natural base for Washington's

markedly progressive platform, which directly challenged the city's glaringly entrenched system of white supremacy as well as the Republicans' rightwing agenda in Washington.

The campaign not only unleashed the tremendous political potential of Chicago's Black and Latino communities, it once again exposed the betrayal of the Democratic Party whose leaders tried to undermine the Washington candidacy.

"Our liberal allies, Kennedy and Mondale, came riding into town with smoking guns supporting party regulars over the progressive Black candidate," Jackson recalled. "In other words, the progressive wing of the Democratic Party was moving to the right... if it had been left to them, the rise of the Black political movement would have been stopped, stillborn."

Drawing lessons from the experience of the Washington campaign, Jackson took the lead in duplicating the effort on a national scale. Jackson's candidacy is based on the same strategy of politically activating the Black community, while simultaneously building around it a "rainbow coalition" of minorities, women, gays, poor, and other rejected sectors of society.

Jackson is demanding that the Democratic Party explicitly include in its program the diverse and heretofore unaddressed concerns of this coalition—concerns embodied in his all-sided program of "Peace abroad and justice at home."

Central to the Jackson strategy for the empowerment of the Rainbow Coalition within the Democratic Party is his challenge to established party rules which have been designed to preserve the monopoly of power by the traditional party leadership.

Jackson's impressive showing in the primaries has already forced the Party to grant certain concessions, a change from its original refusal to even negotiate. In return for a pledge from Jackson to maintain party unity at the coming convention, Party head Charles Manatt recently agreed to award Jackson additional uncommitted delegates in order to offset what he admits are unfair delegate selection rules. (Jackson has won 17% of the popular vote but has earned only 7% of the delegates

while Mondale has won 39% of the popular vote and yet received 50% of the delegates.) Manatt also committed party support for voter registration efforts, another one of Jackson's demands. On other crucial issues such as dual primaries—a practice in the South which allows white candidates to defeat successful Black nominees in another run-off—Jackson merely received vague assurances of their consideration sometime in the future.

Whatever concessions and compromises it may yield for the sake of party unity, the Jackson Rainbow Coalition's course of nurturing an independent political muscle has already been set.

Undoubtedly, Jackson has recognized from the beginning that only a broad multi-ethnic coalition that speaks to the diverse but predominantly working class interests of its members can sustain an independent anti-racist and anti-war current within the Democratic Party.

Yet despite his declared commitment to maintain the unity of the party in its drive to unseat Reagan, Jackson has implied that a split in the unforeseeable future cannot be ruled out altogether, especially "if the old wineskins of the party refuse to admit the new wine."

Such a view is first of all grounded on the assessment that the Rainbow Coalition can only grow in influence, even after the 1984 election—regardless of its outcome, and whether or not Jackson remains at its helm. The Jackson campaign is already talking about winning more local elections a la Harold Washington, and winning congressional seats in an effort to change the complexion of Capitol Hill. □

Repressive Bills

'Anti-Terrorist' Drive Threatens Rights



By EDDIE ESCULTURA

At a press conference on Central America last April 5, President Ronald Reagan said the United States should have declared war on Vietnam. One of the reasons, he said was "because of what was happening in our country, in which none of the rules of warfare could apply with regard to lending aid and comfort to the enemy." In other words, war should have been declared so that its domestic opponents could have been prosecuted as traitors.

Let it not be said that President Reagan was only waxing nostalgic, for while he has not quite formally declared war on anyone yet, he has recently moved to set a legal basis for direct U.S. military actions against "enemies abroad." Almost simultaneously—and with the help of the Republican-controlled Senate—he set in motion legislation that would strike down homegrown opponents of his administration's foreign policy.

On April 3, the administration issued National Security Directive 138 which permits "pre-emptive strikes" and reprisals against "terrorists" abroad. The hit list has not yet been officially released but Robert Sayre, Director of the State Department's Office for Combatting Terrorism cited the Soviet Union, Syria, North Korea, Libya, and Cuba as "nations that use terrorism as an instrument of international policy."

MILITARY STRIKE GROUPS

Other targets frequently mentioned at the State Department are Iran, Nicaragua, and South Yemen. The list of "terrorist" groups is expected to include those engaged in liberation struggles such as the Palestinian Liberation Organization, Irish Republican Army, African National Congress, Namibia's SWAPO, El Salvador's FMLN, and the New People's Army and other opponents of Ferdinand Marcos in the Philippines.

NSD 138 also raises the combat readiness of various special forces units of the armed forces. These forces have now been brought under the unified command of the Joint Special Operations to Act Overseas which is directly under the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The command is preparing lists of potential "terrorist" targets for pre-emptive strikes.

What NSD 138 amounts to is a green light for U.S. covert operations against independent governments or revolutionary movements that threaten perceived U.S. interests in any part of the globe. It would enable the U.S. to conduct quick military actions without the formality of a war declaration or the need for Congressional approval.

The Soviet response to NSD 138 was sharp and quick. "The Washington rulers are not concerned with 'the struggle against terrorism,'" the Soviet news agency Tass noted on April 18. "Acting under the

pretext of that 'struggle' they themselves try to use even wider scale intervention, threats and terror against the people rejecting American diktat, against the national liberation movements, against all forces of peace and progress." The mission of the U.S. "strike groups," Moscow said, "includes acts of sabotage and terrorism in territories of the sovereign countries whose policy is objectionable to Washington."

'TERRORISTS' AT HOME

But Reagan is not aiming solely at targets abroad. Having labeled liberation movements terrorist, he has proceeded, in effect, to categorize their supporters here as the same. On April 26 Reagan sent to Congress a comprehensive "anti-terrorism" package consisting of four bills.

The first two bills deal with hostage-taking and hijacking and the other two are entitled, "Prohibition Against the Training or Support of Terrorist Organization Act of 1984," and "Act for Rewards for Information Concerning Terrorist Acts."

Critics note that these bills are based on the administration's thinking that popular solidarity with liberation movements and militant opposition to U.S. foreign policy constitute acts of "lending aid and comfort to the enemy."

The last two bills include the following features:

- Up to 10 years imprisonment and a fine of up to \$100,000 or five times the compensation received, whichever is greater, for any nationals of the U.S., permanent resident aliens or business entities at home or abroad, who assist or "act in concert" with groups or countries designated by the Secretary of State as "terrorists."

- The U.S. Secretary of State is empowered to designate groups or countries as "terrorists" if their acts are deemed to constitute a threat to U.S. national security or foreign relations, or to the physical security of American persons and property.

- A defendant charged with aiding a "terrorist" group cannot challenge in court the accuracy of the Secretary's designation.

- All persons who are properly authorized by the U.S. government to assist pro-U.S. terrorist or insurgent groups are exempted from the bill's provisions.

These provisions virtually give the executive branch dictatorial powers in the formulation and execution of foreign policy as any opponent can be designated "terrorist" and be prosecuted without being able to legally challenge such designation.

Rep. Don Edwards (D-CA), Chairman of the House Judiciary subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights, said the measures have "serious constitutional problems because the Secretary can, by edict, almost create the crime himself."

Other provisions regarding rewards conjure up images of

friends and family members turning in "terrorists" among them:

- Rewards of up to \$500,000 are authorized for information leading to the arrest or conviction of any individual for conspiring or attempting an act of "terrorism" or leading to the prevention of such an act.

- Persons qualified for a reward are entitled to secret identity and eligibility for the government witness protection program. In case the informant is an alien, he or she will be eligible for admission to the U.S. as a permanent resident, along with the immediate family.

The last provision, giving incentives to aliens to inform against their own people in exchange for the right to immigrate, is particularly insidious. It appears aimed at sowing divisions among supporters of liberation movements whether they are in their native lands or in immigrant and refugee communities here.

Reagan's initiatives moved the Palestine Congress of North America, an umbrella group for Palestinians in the U.S. and Canada, to comment: "The U.S. is moving little by little towards a police state. People don't always recognize it because the changes are not so dramatic."

HELP FROM FRIENDS

Complementing Reagan's anti-terrorism package are four "crime bills" approved by the Republican-controlled Senate between February 2 and February 9. Senate Bills 1762, 1763, 1764, and 1765, which constitute the Reagan administration's "crime package" have been dubbed "the sons" of the notorious Nixon-Mitchell Senate Bill No. 1 or SB-1.

SB 1762 brings home the equivalent of "pre-emptive strikes." This bill makes speeches that exhort to violence illegal, even if no criminal acts result from them. It expands the federal authority for wire tapping and stopping and searching persons without warrants.

Worse, SB 1762 authorizes preventive detention for months, without any trial, if the authorities decide that the person is "dangerous." The bill also allows the government to appeal a sentence it considers lenient—a clear violation of a person's basic guarantee against double jeopardy.

SB 1765 restores the death penalty even for certain acts that do not prescribe death, such as treason and espionage. The death penalty was used in 1953 against Julius and Ethel Rosenberg who were framed up for espionage.

SB 1763 restricts the right of prisoners to appeal in federal courts while SB 1765 amounts to abolishing the Exclusionary Rule developed by the Supreme Court to guarantee the fourth Amendment prohibition against unreasonable searches and seizures. The rule requires the courts to exclude illegally seized evidence in criminal trials.

LIBERAL OPPOSITION

The "anti-crime" bills' sponsors include such rightwing senators as Strom Thurmond, Paul Laxalt, and Jesse Helms. However, Congress liberals Ted Kennedy and Joseph Biden of Delaware also support the package except the death penalty provisions. Both previously supported the notorious SB-1.

Reagan's "anti-crime" package has come under fire from liberals and civil libertarians. Senator Howard Metzenbaum of Ohio suggested that SB 1764 "ought to be renumbered S 1984 because this bill is one step—a major one at that—in the direction of George Orwell's 1984." This bill, he said, "is going to invade the constitutional rights of people."

Maine's Senator George Mitchell warned: "Without question, this is an effort to deal with the so-called social issues agenda, which the President has promised to his conservative supporters."

In the House, opposition is being led by Rep. John Conyers of the Black Caucus and Peter Rodino, Chairman of the House Judiciary Committee.

A *Chicago Sun-Times* editorial said the "crime bill is a crime" while the *Christian Science Monitor* said "The crime legislation... would overturn some basic tradition in American justice and attempt to overturn Supreme Court rulings dating back to 1914 that exclude illegally seized evidence from trials."

Campaigns against Reagan's "anti-terrorist and anti-crime" legislations are being spearheaded by the National Committee Against Repressive Legislation and the American Civil Liberties Union. Active opposition also comes from the National Association of Blacks in Criminal Justice, National Urban League, National Conference of Black Lawyers, American Bar Association, National Lawyers Guild and the Inter-religious Task Force on Criminal Justice.

Such opposition however, has more than just repressive legislation to challenge. The dangerous bills are evidently the siblings of a distinctive foreign policy. In his first speech at the White House as Secretary of State, Alexander Haig declared, "International terrorism will take the place of human rights as the chief concern of U.S. foreign policy."

This policy requires a consensus at home, the building of which inevitably necessitates the suppression of domestic opposition. The spate of Reaganesque "anti-crime" and "anti-terrorism" legislation only serves to highlight the fact that fascism abroad ultimately rears its ugly head at home. □