



9th Anniversary of Marcos Dictatorship:

ENTER THE "NEW REPUBLIC"

New Coffin, Same Old Corpse

By NENE OJEDA
Staff Writer

Ferdinand Marcos could not contain his delight over Ronald Reagan's election.

Reagan, sabre-rattling and friendly to pro-U.S. dictators would be principally concerned with the U.S. bases and Marcos was confident that he would support their chief Philippine guardian at all costs.

But the leaked World Bank report's assessment that Marcos' rule was shaky jarred even the regime's most ardent backers. How could Reagan proceed with his open embrace when Marcos was faced with this fresh embarrassment?

SHOWTIME FOR BONZO

Always believing that one good turn deserves another, Marcos moved to make it easier for the Hollywood veteran.

Marcos launched his normalization drama entitled "The New Republic."

Act One: Martial law was formally lifted. Proclamation No. 2045 was announced January 17, 1981, "coincidentally" when the country was teeming with representatives of the international media who were preparing to cover the Pope's visit.

Act Two: The April 17 plebiscite changed the Philippine parliamentary system from one based on the British model to one based on the French.

This constitutional adjustment was necessary to eliminate the process provided for by the 1973 Constitution of convening a regular National Assembly and having a Prime Minister, as the chief executive, elected by and from that body. The adjustment allowed Marcos to call for a quick presidential election with the president, not the prime minister, as the chief executive.

Final act: A presidential election was hurriedly concluded. It was the "fresh popular mandate" designed to cover up the regime's recent embarrassments. Determined to facilitate Reagan's formal endorsement, Marcos made sure this recent "proof" of his regime's legitimacy would not be spoiled by any unwanted surprises.

Thus, among other safeguards, the minimum age for presidential candidates was raised to 50, disqualifying arch-rival Benigno Aquino by two years. A widespread boycott movement, however, managed to spoil the works. With all other viable oppositionists choosing to boycott, Marcos was forced to find his own opponent.

In desperation, the regime commissioned Alejo Santos, a loyal government employee who spent his campaign explaining his decision to run. Marcos meanwhile aimed his campaign, not against Santos, but against the boycott movement.

'A WONDERFUL VICTORY'

As expected, the Reagan administration warmly received the "normalization" drama even though it has exposed itself as a farce.

Secretary of State Alexander Haig, in Manila for an ASEAN conference, praised Marcos' "wonderful victory."

George Bush, representing the White House at the inauguration, toasted Marcos' "strict adherence to democratic principles and processes." Bush, of course, assured continued U.S. support.

FINISHING TOUCH: CABINET SHAKE-UP

Marcos has shown his pleasure for Washington's kindness by making certain organizational changes long sought-after by backers in U.S. political and financial circles.

In a cabinet shake-up, Marcos placed a small but strong core of technocrats popular with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) in key positions.

With Cesar Virata as Prime Minister and Jaime Laya, Placido Mapa, Roberto Ongpin, and Alejandro Melchor in top government posts, Washington can rest assured that it has a tight grip on the country's economic policy.

To further convince his backers about his regime's stability, Marcos appointed an Executive Committee which will govern in case of his incapacity. This provision for orderly succession assures foreign investors and the White House that chaos will not follow Marcos' death by natural or other causes.

REPRESSION AS USUAL

With open U.S. support guaranteed, Marcos has proceeded to repress popular opposition with new vigor.

He of course does not lack the legal cover for his iron-

fisted approach. While the term "martial law" has been erased, Marcos still wields his one-man rule. The 1973 Constitution's 6th amendment remains in force, guaranteeing that all presidential decrees, general orders, and letters of instructions issued during martial law still remain effective. Thus,

- The right to protest, organize, and demonstrate peacefully is still restricted by PD 90.
- PD 823 and GO 5 prohibit strikes in "vital industries."
- Press freedom is curtailed by LOI 1 and the Public Order Act which was enacted just before the lifting of marital law.

Marcos also announced shortly before January 17 that the Philippine military was not to be "restricted from the task of policing the security of the nation."

A vaguely-worded general order provides for preventive detention of those suspected of threatening national security. Threatening acts range from possession of subversive materials to "rumor-mongering."

Thus at the height of the boycott movement, Arrest, Search and Seizure Orders (ASSOs) were issued freely.

THE VICTIMS OF NORMALIZATION

Victims of the "normalized" regime have included 57 boycott leafleters in Metro-Manila, 300 farmers on their way to a boycott rally in Isabela and a group of nuns organizing a boycott picket in Olongapo.

The military has also unleashed terror equal to or even greater than that during martial law.

- Retaliating for the death of 124 soldiers killed in a popular uprising against military brutality on Pata Island, the AFP launched a 15,000-strong operation against the population.
- As 3,000 Quezon residents marched into Guinayagan town to protest military abuse, the 223rd PC Battalion opened fire on "orders from above." Four died and 17 were wounded.
- Reacting to a huge Daet, Camarines Norte boycott rally, soldiers of the 424th Battalion fatally shot four demonstrators and wounded hundreds more.
- Torture has literally acquired a new twist. Added to the military's chamber of horrors was the "cantilever method." To extract information from boycott organizers in Southern Luzon, torturers suspended victims across a frame of two-by-two's. The detainees' necks were then twisted and their heads hit against the walls.
- Standard torture methods of water cure, electric shock and sexual harassment have become more prominent in reports of human rights violations.
- A rise in "salvaging," the Marcos government's policy of summary execution has likewise been reported. Victims have included two young Muslim boys, a former U.S.-based Catholic priest, a fisherman, and a university professor.
- Legal humanitarian groups have not been spared. Two workers for the Task Force Detainees investigating the Daet Massacre were arrested.

MILITARY RULE STAYS

Marcos underscored his determination to continue ruling with an iron hand when he appointed Major General Fabian Ver as Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces last August.

Ver has long been considered a Marcos man. He has risen to power as Chief of Presidential Guards and as head of the notorious National Intelligence and Security Agency (NISA), posts he continues to hold. His recent appointment means that the head of the country's secret police also heads the entire armed forces.

Strongman Ver's appointment is a clearcut warning to the opposition that repression remains as the key ingredient of the regime's political administration. □

U.S.-R.P. Relations

Shifting Sands in S.E. Asia

By VINCE REYES
Staff Writer

It is "deplorable" said President-elect Ronald Reagan just a few weeks before his inauguration, to subject a long-term U.S. ally to Jimmy Carter's human rights test. Reagan was speaking to none other than Imelda Marcos who was visiting in New York.

The new U.S. president proved as good as his word. After a mere eight months in office, a renewed U.S.-Philippine friendship is not merely alive, but flourishing and the term "human rights" has dropped out of the





Arriving for ASEAN conference, Haig reviews honor guard at airport. Bush confers with Marcos during visit: "We love your commitment to democratic principles."

U.S. foreign policy vocabulary.

This "no-nonsense" support for repressive anti-communist dictatorship is representative of Reagan's stance in the entire Southeast Asian region—and in the rest of the "Free World." Amidst rough-riding B-style fanfare, Reagan has taken over with a "get tough America" approach, getting rid of the "marshmallow" foreign policy associated with Carter.

"A SOVIET IN EVERY PLOT"

At the heart of U.S. foreign policy is its grim determination to stamp out national liberation movements which in the past two decades have been responsible for the diminishing size of the areas of U.S. domination and influence.

Regardless of these movements' varying attitudes and actual ties with the Soviet Union, the fact is they seek to break Third World nations free from an international political and economic orbit dominated by the U.S. Victorious liberation movements also inevitably choose socialism over a capitalist path of development. With that decision, they objectively locate themselves within another international economic system and become more receptive to countries like Cuba, Vietnam, North Korea, the Eastern bloc nations and the USSR than to the U.S.

Thus, Reagan sees the Soviet Union as the hidden hand behind all liberation struggles and the kingpin of this growing international trend. In Southeast Asia therefore, his goal is to forge a counterrevolutionary and "anti-Soviet" political-military alliance similar to the fronts the U.S. is forging with reactionary regimes in Latin America and the Middle East.

The current U.S.-R.P. relationship must be viewed in this context.

WHY RONNIE LOVES FERDIE

The Philippines is definitely one Third World country the U.S. wants to keep an eye on. So far, the Marcos government has not made any headway in stamping out a spreading underground revolutionary movement whose aims are to liberate the Philippines from U.S. domination and to restructure society.

This movement, headed by the National Democratic Front and its military arm, the New People's Army, promises to pose a serious threat to U.S. investments. More, the detachment of the country from the U.S. orbit will jeopardize the U.S.' political-military position not only in Southeast Asia but in other regions as well—similar to the setback produced by America's "loss of Iran."

It is no secret that the U.S. military bases in the Philippines play a major role in Washington's global military strategy. A rightwing think tank has described Subic Naval Base and Clark Air Force Base as "probably the most important basing complex in the world if considered in terms of the U.S. policy of naval projection." The U.S. has deployed warships from the Philippines into the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf during the Iran and Afghanistan crises principally to warn the Soviet Union.

The long-range projection of naval and air power are also key offensive functions in Southeast Asia, East Asia, the Near East and East Africa.

Obviously, Reagan knows that his ability to secure the region and preserve a component of U.S. global firepower depends as much on Marcos' ability to stem the Filipino revolutionary tide. Of course, Marcos' desire to stay in power fits well into their alliance. With Reagan on his side, Marcos has acquired a longer lease on life.

ASEAN: IDEAL ANTI-COMMUNIST ALLIES

U.S. foreign policy finds a place for everyone in its new Asia strategy. Japan is to widen its military protection of Asian sea lanes even though it means significantly increasing its constitutionally-restrained defense budget. The U.S. is encouraging South Korea to suppress internal disorders and to keep a provocative stance toward North Korea.

To round out the U.S.' strategy in the region, the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) is being built up to play an important role in keeping order in the Pacific Rim. If Reagan is looking for a group to follow his anti-Communist cue, he has found it in the ASEAN leadership.

● **Thailand.** Thailand's current prime minister General Prem Tinsulanond, came to power this year following General Kriangsak. His position is relatively weak and he is thus not expected to last long. Leadership in Thailand today, however, rests on power within the military and political dissent from other quarters is not tolerated.

● **Indonesia.** Perhaps the most infamous of ASEAN's leaders, Indonesia's president Suharto came to power in 1964 after an anti-communist bloodbath that victimized half a million people. This stamped out the opposition of all but the most conservative stripe.

● **Malaysia.** Premier Mohammad Mahathir was elected to office only last July. In a country plagued by racial strife, he is considered a Malay chauvinist. Though his politics are unknown, Malaysia just passed a "public societies act" requiring all political organizations to register with the government with penalties for failure.

CHINA: THE UNEXPECTED FRIEND

Adding strength to Reagan's new aggressive stance in Asia has been China's turnabout foreign policy. Once the U.S.' adversary, China has offered to share a bed with the U.S. based on a common anti-Soviet stance.

Such is China's paranoia toward the Soviet Union that it has implied that continued U.S. military presence is a welcome deterrent to "Soviet inroads" in the region.

The Vietnam-Cambodia conflict brought to a head by China's backing of Pol Pot has convinced it that Vietnam is the Soviet agent in the region. Thus, China has escalated its efforts to woo the U.S. into a "united front." Although cautious, the U.S. needs no further seduction.

Chinese Premier Zhou Ziyang has also thrown in his support for ASEAN stating that "China sincerely wishes to see a strong, united and prosperous ASEAN. The stronger the better, the more united, the better."

CHANGING FACE OF SOUTHEAST ASIA

Ironically, just ten years ago Southeast Asia was seen as the bastion of opposition to U.S. imperialism. Inspired by the victories of Vietnam, Laos and Cambo-

dia, the communist parties in the Philippines, Malaysia and Thailand made significant strides in reviving anti-U.S. liberation struggles. It was generally assumed that more Southeast Asian nations will be freed from U.S. hold sooner than later.

But the U.S.-China alliance has altered Asia's political complexion dramatically.

China's eagerness to consolidate this alliance has led it to currying favors from the region's pro-U.S. strongmen. This explains its backing of ASEAN and Premier Zhou's statement that China will not give material support for liberation forces in the region.

Peking's turnaround has thrown revolutionaries into political and ideological discord. The Malaysian party, long a close follower of China's leadership is quite willing to enter into an alliance with its antagonists in the name of an anti-Vietnam, "anti-Soviet" struggle. The pro-China Thai Communist Party meanwhile has been wracked by defections as its leadership has been unable to decisively steer an independent ideological course. The only remaining viable revolutionary force in the region remains in the Philippines, where the CPP has consistently maintained that U.S. imperialism is the Filipinos' main enemy.

However, the absence of other liberation movements in the region that can divide the U.S. attention means that the world's strongest power can concentrate its efforts in the Philippines. With the Philippines constituting a key axis in its global military system, the U.S. has even more reason to quell the national democratic movement at all cost.

Herein lies the deeper significance of renewed U.S. backing for Marcos within the context of a U.S.-China partnership in Southeast Asia. While the conditions for the growth of the revolutionary movement remains excellent and the Filipino left's competence is developing rapidly, the road to an early victory is strewn with a set of new and difficult problems. □

The Economy

A Year Older and Deeper in Debt

By NANCY ROCAMORA
Staff Writer

Rising prices... layoffs... disappearing financiers... panicky stockmarkets...

The Philippine economy this year gave every sign that something was seriously amiss. After nine years of authoritarian rule, the flaws in the Marcos regime's economic policy were becoming glaringly obvious.

Hardest hit, as usual, were Juan and Juanita de la Cruz. For example:

● Between the months of January and March, 1981, 55,000 workers in Metro-Manila alone were laid off.

● The *Bulletin Today* revealed in March 1981 that the country's minimum wage law covers only 15% of the labor force. The *Daily Express* admitted that only 10% of the business community had complied with the minimum wage law since 1976. The official minimum



Filipinas working in multinational-owned electronics plant. Low price of Philippine exports hurts Coconut farmer most. Local textile industry: Doomed?

wage remained at ₱17/day.

● A church-group study revealed that the only way public school teachers survive on their ₱750/month salaries is by engaging in sidelines. That way they hope to bring in the ₱43.06 daily required to feed an average family.

● Academics found the cost of primary school at ₱822 per child per year, well beyond the reach of the average family.

● Two days after his June "re-election," Marcos raised the price of rice by 14%. The prices for major grade fertilizers were raised 18% giving hard-pressed peasants no real respite despite an increase in the price of palay and corn.

● Marcos' land reform program has been judged a dismal failure by even his foreign backers and no new efforts to rescue it have been initiated.

WORST YEAR SINCE 1949

According to Central Bank Governor Jaime Laya, it was the worst year in Philippine economic history since 1949.

The overall growth rate for 1980, initially projected at 5.7% registered a dismal 4.7% with some observers suggesting that the real figure was actually worse. It was the lowest growth rate in ASEAN.

It was a year of economic crisis for international capital as a whole. The Philippine economy, tightly enmeshed in that system, was hardly likely to be spared.

Marcos' basic economic policy—proudly termed by World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) backers as "export-led growth"—has in fact, enmeshed the Philippine economy even more tightly in that international system with its devastating ills.

The aim of export-led growth is simple enough. It hopes to provide cheap labor for giant multinationals seeking to escape the high wages of developed countries. At the same time, it confines domestic production to the generation of dollar-earning exports namely, cheap raw materials and semi-finished or light manufacturing goods to be sold abroad. Its end result is increased poverty for the Filipino worker and the country's increased dependence on the unpredictable international export market for its revenues.

Ferdinand Marcos has done his best to develop the country according to the World Bank blueprint. Since the declaration of martial law and the illegalization of strikes, he has kept wages in check to the point where, by 1977, he could boast to foreign investors of the cheapest labor in Asia. He has also provided juicy tax breaks for foreign investors.

Foreign investment in the Philippines since martial law has risen, growing by 15.3% in 1978 and an astonishing 22.3% in 1979.

To further tempt multinationals, he has pumped vast sums into infrastructure: roads, bridges, generators, ports, and export-processing zones.

These projects ate up huge loans from the World Bank-IMF and other international lenders. In order to service these debts, Marcos has to get even more loans. The country's foreign debt as of June 1981 hit \$13.8 billion. This debt trap also diminishes whatever gains in dollar earnings may have been registered through increased export production.

Adding to the woes of Marcos' "export-led" economic strategy, the prices of key Philippine exports have plummeted in the world market. Exports suffered their first real decline in 10 years during the first six months of 1981.

Coconut, copper and sugar were floundering in the world market. Marcos' attempts to artificially raise their prices by hoarding sugar and coconut have backfired, forcing him to sell at a loss or leaving him saddled with an unusable glut.

STRIPPING AWAY LAST SHREDS OF PROTECTION

Despite the economy's sluggishness, World Bank planners are prescribing more of the same policy. "Too little" of the economy is involved with exports, Marcos' mentors claim. They are also calling for "industrial restructuring," meaning the elimination of all barriers to foreign penetration of the economy.

As of 1980, the World Bank message to Marcos was, "Stop coddling Philippine business!"

"Coddling" meant the tariff structure—or what was left of the taxes levied on foreign goods in order to protect domestic manufacturers from the overpowering competition of foreign multinationals.

In 1981, the Philippines received a \$200 million "industrial restructuring loan" from the World Bank. As part of the package, Marcos reduced tariffs on 472 products last January. Further reductions are planned.

FEWER JOBS FOR WORKERS

Industrial restructuring is likely to mean the end of many domestic consumer industries. One doomed local industry is textiles.

The death of local industries will strike hard at Filipino workers. Not only will more and more foreign goods flood the local market, the latest World Bank policy twist means more shutdowns and layoffs. Jobs will become even more insecure—and new ones more difficult to find.

Meanwhile, the world of high finance was in a state of disarray.

● Textile magnate and financier Dewey Dee disappeared in February 1981 leaving behind \$80 million in unpaid debts.

● Edgy investors pulled money out of investment

houses resulting in their near collapse.

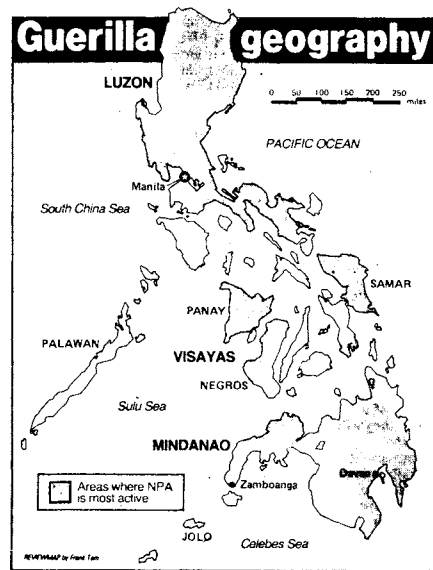
● The country's biggest business conglomerates, including those owned by Marcos cronies, required massive infusions of public cash (a la Chrysler) to save them from collapse.

CODDLING CRONIES

Marcos' cronies were victims of both a worldwide slowdown and their own poor planning. Building up overnight empires on the shifting sands of short-term, high-interest loans, they remained dependent on quick, high profits. When the economy slowed down, they were unable to pay their debts.

While Marcos is only too willing to heed the World Bank's demand that domestic capital not be protected from foreign competition, when crony money is at stake, Marcos is willing to do just about anything to protect it.

Rodolfo Cuenca's Construction and Development Corporation of the Philippines received ₱550 million.



Areas of intense NPA operations. Soldiers of Moro National Liberation Front (MNLFF).



Herminio Disini's financial empire received ₱280 million from the government-owned Development Bank of the Philippines.

MORE SERIOUS "RESTRUCTURING" NEEDED

After nine years of authoritarian rule, Ferdinand Marcos has succeeded in imprisoning the nation within a self-defeating economic strategy.

The more politically-conscious Filipinos thus look upon post-"normalization" talk of easing up on labor with considerable cynicism. They know that part of Marcos' World Bank-directed policy is the creation of an unlimited and indefinite pool of cheap labor.

They look with equal cynicism on the latest World Bank cure-all for the Philippine economy. They suspect that a far more fundamental "restructuring" is in order. The more courageous have in fact, resorted to social revolution as the means to this restructuring.

Meanwhile they know that Marcos will continue to apply the soothing balm of cash bail-outs to over-extended cronies. And while Marcos dutifully follows international capital's prescriptions for Philippine development, it is once more the Filipino people who will be forced to swallow the bitter medicine. □

The Resistance to Marcos:

The Left Looms Larger

By EMIL DeGUZMAN
Staff Writer

The elite opposition to Marcos has always commanded much of the international media's attention. Prominent as former politicians and "moderate" (meaning pro-U.S. and anti-communist in their political positions), they have been regarded by Washington circles and by the media as the "safe" opposition.

For years, Marcos' traditional rivals now grouped around the United Democratic Opposition (UNIDO) have been portrayed as the most viable alternative to the regime. During Carter's years they rode high—boldly flinging threats at Malacanang. They mixed freely with top Carter officials and indeed in many instances it seemed that they were close to power. Talk of coup d'etat was in the air. For them, the overthrow of Marcos through U.S. intercession was a real possibility.

Benigno Aquino's exile to the U.S. was another high point for the elite opposition. With Marcos' most charismatic rival free to operate here, their lobbying for U.S. favor was expected to gain more ground.

To make their opposition clearer to Marcos and to signal to the White House their seriousness as contenders for power, a segment of this opposition embarked on their first military adventure. As Aquino mesmerized Filipino audiences with explosive attacks on the regime, the "April 6th Liberation Movement" set off a series of bombs in Manila.

Hit by the incendiaries were businesses that were close to Marcos, one explosion killing an American tourist. The most sensational bombing was one that disrupted a tourism convention and ruffled Marcos who

was the guest speaker. Aquino, Psinakis, Manglapus, and other top MFP leaders openly identified themselves with these "guerrilla activities." Political figures such as Roxas, Tanada, Salonga, and Laurel shuffled back and forth from the Philippines holding secretive caucuses with their counterparts here. The elite opposition was abuzz with activity.

But their bombs and bombast rang with some desperation. And as things are turning out, they may have been the "moderate" opposition's last gasp. By the last half of 1981—after the "lifting of martial law," the plebiscite and the presidential election—the elite opposition has fallen into a state of demoralization and disarray.

ONLY TWO CHOICES LEFT

Behind the elite opposition's loss of steam is the change of White House residents, a change which also reflects a shift in the U.S. ruling circle's approach to the "Philippine question." Having staked their political

fortunes on U.S. backing, they find the Reagan administration has pulled the rug from under their feet. Vice President Bush' congratulatory toast at Marcos' inauguration was the confirmation of betrayal.

Reagan's policy towards Marcos is only a shade different from Carter's. But this shade means a whole lot to the elite opposition. In fact, it dashes any of their remaining hopes for a political comeback.

Carter had hoped that a rapprochement between Marcos and his disenfranchised rivals would be the best way to protect U.S. interests. Thus, Carter pressured a stubborn Marcos to give significant concessions to his rivals (the "human rights" policy). Carter believed that the restoration of the old formal democracy—the rotation of power between factions of the elite—would make it easier for the U.S. to openly support the Philippine government against a growing anti-imperialist movement. But Marcos, guarding his throne jealously, resisted Carter's pressures.

Reagan's aggressive foreign policy however, will have none of Carter's complex liberal maneuverings. If a dictator is what it takes to preserve U.S. interests the U.S. must befriend that dictator. By way of an official rationale Reagan has this to offer: it is okay to support an authoritarian regime, "authoritarian is not the same as totalitarian."

Reagan's full endorsement of Marcos has therefore left the pro-U.S. elite opposition stranded. To add insult to injury, *Far Eastern Economic Review's* Rodney Tasker reports that "According to some diplomatic sources, the U.S. State Department has indicated to the moderates that it would prefer that they try to work with Marcos. This would help to thwart any gains of the radical left."

In other words, the only choices left to the elite opposition is to be pro-Marcos or pro-Left. Being anti-Marcos but pro-U.S. will no longer lead them anywhere.

"The political scene has become polarized," Tasker comments. Observers report that a portion of the so-called moderates are toying with the idea of reconciling with Marcos under his terms—perhaps by joining "advisory bodies" where they can function as "critical collaborators." Others who want to keep up an uncompromising stance have nowhere to go but the national democratic Left. Indeed, quite a few UNIDO officials have expressed their willingness to do "joint work" with the National Democratic Front.

This dilemma surfaced sharply during the nationwide boycott against the presidential elections. UNIDO was split, with some of its members wanting to participate in the rigged polls. Leaders such as Aquino and Salvador Laurel hesitated to endorse the boycott until the plebiscite was over and the movement in full gear. UNIDO eventually moved with the boycott only to realize that the NDF was the most influential and organized force behind the movement.

LEFT LEADERSHIP, LEFT VICTORY

The boycott movement did indeed represent a major victory for the Philippine Left. It was the boldest nationwide political campaign the NDF has coordinated to date.

Throughout the country, millions received boycott literature. An estimated 260,000 joined rallies and marches held one after another during the 46-day period between May 1 and June 15 in 12 cities and 36 towns. Thousands more were able to attend forums and cultural protest events.

Though Marcos in the end claimed an 88% voter turnout the boycott undoubtedly damped his tactics. Even his sympathizers in the western press looked on the results with skepticism. The movement's (People's MIND) estimate however later showed that 53% refused to vote.

STRIKES TEST CHARACTER OF LIFTING

The boycott was a result of painstaking work by the national democratic Left carried out sector by sector and issue by issue.

Some of its staunchest supporters came from the labor sector. Under the leadership of the *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (KMU, May First Movement), labor at once responded to the "lifting" of martial law with a series of militant actions.

Testing "normalization," workers in Metro-Manila held over 200 strikes. At one point these averaged one a day. During a huge May 1 rally in Metro-Manila this year, the KMU wilfully fused the call for boycott with the labor day activity.

ACTIVE STUDENT, RELIGIOUS PARTICIPATION

Students played an active role in the campaign. Campuses teemed with boycott literature and became sites of anti-imperialist, anti-Marcos forums and demonstrations.

The hunted *Kabataan Makabayan* (KM—Nationalist Youth) once again emerged as a leading force in the student movement which to date is challenging excessive tuition hikes, the absence of democratic rights, and military harassment on campuses.

Rank-and-file members of the Philippine clergy also swung into boycott activity. Earlier this year, this sector was stirred to action by the visit to the Philippines of Pope John Paul II. Many opposed the visit itself, urging the Pontiff not to come as the visit would only be seen as an endorsement of the Marcos regime.

Shortly before the visit, white-robed priests, nuns and seminarians spearheaded the largest post-martial law demonstration denouncing the "fake lifting of martial law." Over 7,000 rallied in two demonstrations in Manila. Their militance placed the Pontiff in a highly charged diplomatic setting. A wrist-slapping criticism of Marcos' human rights violations was necessary to maintain his credibility with the politicized clergy.

PEOPLE'S ARMY LEADS RURAL PROTEST

The peasantry, often widely separated from urban centers, participated in the boycott in imaginative ways. One peasant group in a remote part of Samar sent a raft bearing boycott slogans down a river to be viewed by other barrios.

But most peasant participation was made possible with the aid of the New People's Army (NPA). It organized forums and teach-ins in numerous barrios. At the same time, its units timed military attacks for election day to complement the protest activities.

In remote Hungduan, Ifugao, NPA guerrillas took over the town to hold a boycott meeting after confiscating weapons from the military. In Caranglan, Nueva Ecija, the NPA turned a farewell party for two Japanese reforestation technicians into a boycott forum.

The NPA's participation reflected a much-increased military strength. It has expanded its operations to 27 fronts in 43 out of the country's 72 provinces. Armed with better weapons taken from ambushes, the NPA can now move in company formations to strike at Marcos' armed forces.

MNLF—VICTORY ON DIPLOMATIC FRONT

Maintaining its goal of secession, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) kept wide distance from the election. Within the last several years, however, the MNLF and NPA have heightened their cooperation, much to Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile's distress. The two groups observe each other's territory and help each other escape the AFP.

On the diplomatic front this year, the MNLF once more refused to negotiate with Marcos and reiterated its demand for secession. The Islamic Conference fully supported this stance despite repeated efforts by Marcos to win the Muslim nations to his position.

TOUGH FIGHT AHEAD

It was overall a year of substantial gains for the Philippine Left. U.S. support for the dictatorship has made it clearer that Filipinos have no other alternative but to join the anti-imperialist movement. The National Democratic Front with its successful first nationwide

political campaign, showed its viability as a political force to both the national and international public.

But given the NDF's unique status as the only rising anti-imperialist force in Southeast Asia, and the U.S. resolve to defend its military bases at all costs, the wind of reaction can be expected to bear down hard on the only force capable of dismantling the dictatorship.

Reagan's full support for Marcos is ominous. It signifies the unanimity of will between the country's most unpopular ruler and the world's biggest military power. The maturing revolutionary movement is bound for confrontation with an enemy that has not only proven itself formidable but also destructively ruthless. □

The Opposition Abroad:

FM Would Have Slept Better Without It

The signs of stepped-up U.S. support for Marcos necessarily called for stepped up opposition to the regime internationally. Groups in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Australia, and Hong Kong moved quickly to meet the task.

TRIBUNAL CONDEMNS MARCOS REGIME

The most spectacular event of the year was the trial of the Marcos regime before the Permanent People's Tribunal in Antwerp, Belgium in early November, international legal experts and civil rights leaders found the Marcos government guilty of "blatant abuse of state power."

This same legal body also recognized the National Democratic Front and the Moro National Liberation Front as genuine representatives of the Filipino and Bangso Moro peoples.

Two years' preparatory work by the Holland-based *Komiteng Sambayanang Pilipino* (KSP) and other Philippine support groups in Europe went into the Tribunal.

The three-day hearing saw witnesses brought from the Philippines to represent labor, women, Moro, and other national minorities, and the armed opposition. Testimony and documentation of the U.S. role in the continued political and economic domination of the country was presented by Walden Bello and Joel Rocamora, members of the North America-based International Association of Filipino Patriots.

With over 3,000 pages of personal testimony, reports, and supporting documents, Tribunal President, the Nobel Prize winning George Wald, called the trial a "thorough indictment of the Marcos regime and U.S. complicity."

Coinciding with the trial preparations was the formal opening of the National Democratic Front office in Rome late last year. From here, Luis Jalandoni, the NDF official representative abroad launched formal liaison work with other national liberation groups. The office also began publication of an official newsletter, *NDF News* in English and French.

AMLC BECOMES CAMD

With the launching of the three-act "normalization" charade in Manila, opposition groups abroad were quick to respond.

The North America-based Anti-Martial Law Coalition held forums and distributed thousands of pamphlets explaining the motives behind the deceptive lifting of martial law. The AMLC vowed continued opposition while it changed its name to the Coalition Against the Marcos Dictatorship (CAMD).

A statement condemning the martial law lifting as "cruel deception" was jointly signed by CAMD, the CAMD's Congress Task Force (CTF) and the Movement for a Free Philippines.

Despite political differences concerning the U.S. role, ex-Senator Benigno Aquino, Walden Bello of the CTF and Jon Melegrito of the KDP presided over a well-attended press conference in Washington, D.C.

Meanwhile, Aquino and some prominent MFP leaders amplified their explicit support for the terror bombings against the regime. □

BALIK-BOYCOTT

Most significant of the CAMD's work this year was its response to the presidential election. As the boycott movement built to a climax, CAMD launched a "balik-boycott" campaign. The goal, to urge overseas Filipinos to write to relatives urging them to boycott the plebiscite and elections.

The CAMD also held spirited demonstrations and forums nationwide, discrediting the plebiscite and the elections. In New York, the CAMD held a public balloting and found 440 out of 445 disapproved of Marcos' continued rule.

U.S. SUPPORT POSES CHALLENGE

Reagan's election in November signalled the rise in U.S. militarism and active intervention in developing countries. Under this ominous circumstance, the Philippine Solidarity Network (PSN) quickly rose to prominence. "We see the need to unflinchingly oppose U.S. intervention in the Philippines," said PSN National Coordinator Elaine Elinson.

The PSN, many of whose members are newcomers to the Philippine support movement, also pledged to strengthen the links between the Filipino resistance and the progressive concerns of the American people.

ILWU BACKS PHILIPPINE LABOR

PSN tapped an important new source of support last May when the International Longshoremen and Warehouse Workers Union (ILWU), in its 24th Biennial convention, passed a resolution promising to hold educational programs and to foster relations with the Filipino labor movement.

The sorry plight of Filipino workers was presented through the efforts of the ILWU Local 37, led by Secretary/Treasurer Silme Domingo and Dispatcher Gene Viernes.

Both Domingo and Viernes who were KDP activists consulted with the PSN and used the group's materials in lobbying for ILWU's support.

Viernes had returned from the Philippines where he met with Felixberto Olalia, president of the biggest organization of progressive laborers in the Philippines, KMU.

The victory was dampened only a few weeks later when both unionists were murdered in Seattle. Their deaths have been indirectly linked to the Marcos government. Suspect and murder weapon owner Tony Baruso is a close friend and annual visitor of Ferdinand Marcos, lending further credence to the suspicions raised by the Seattle press.

CTF COUP

The Congress Task Force shook the world of high finance with a "coup" in October of last year.

Together with the Washington-based magazine *Counterspy*, CTF leaked to the press a secret World Bank-commissioned study known as the Ascher Report. The report assessed Marcos as "unstable." Calls from worried investors and financiers poured into the CTF office and Marcos was forced to prove his "stability" by stepping up his "normalization" exercises.

Stung by the U.S.-based opposition, Marcos started a campaign to extradite movement leaders under the guise of prosecuting the "conspirators" behind the Manila bombings. Conveniently included in the "hit list" were CAMD and KDP leaders who actually do not support the bombings.

MORE MATERIAL SUPPORT

Opposition groups in Asia and Australia also kept up a steady barrage against the regime.

- "Exposure tours" of the Philippines were sponsored by the Philippine Action Group (PAG) in Australia. The PAG-Adelaide also publishes and distribute the monthly *Philippine News*.

- Solidarity groups in Japan caused trouble for "sex tour" operators leading to the business' decline in the Philippines. Opposition to the Bataan nuclear plant was also hot in Japan.

- The Resource Centre on Philippine Concerns in Hong Kong continued to distribute underground and religious papers from the Philippines as well as its own bimonthly publication *Solidaridad II*.

The overseas counterparts of the Philippine resistance clearly demonstrated this year that they can be counted on. But most all of them will agree that with Reagan's open, no-holds-barred bailing out of Marcos, much more challenging work lies ahead. □



Luis Jalandoni, official NDF representative in Europe. CAMD National Staff. From left: Rafael Orpilla; Rene Cruz, Geline Avila, and Maxie Villones. PSN's Elaine Elinson.