

## I Won't Bow to U.S. Pressures

By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

**T**he fact is, it is I who will decide just what we will do in this country," declared Philippine President Corazon Aquino September 4. "So a lot of other people can state or voice their opinions, and what matters in the long run is whether I will accept some of those recommendations or not."

Aquino's declaration of independence sent Reagan officials scampering for cover. After all, they knew she was provoked by critical noises that emanated from Washington on the eve of her first official visit to the U.S. on September 15.

Ferdinand Marcos, she explained, was particularly subject to pressure from the U.S. government because he "no longer enjoyed the support of the Philippine people and had to look elsewhere to prop him up."

"This," the president added, "is a different government and the relationship between the two governments should be one of mutual respect."

Aquino was responding to statements by unidentified Reagan administration officials attacking her policy of reconciliation with the New People's Army and Moro rebels. The comments were published in the September 1 *New York Times*. The officials, who asked not to be named, insisted that it was time for her to take tougher measures.

"There are real concerns in certain quarters. She had to make this [reconciliation] effort and she has made it and now it's time to move to the next step."

Without referring to his sources, an

official added that Communists are currently seizing more territory in order to improve their bargaining position. "We believe that there is a hard core in which military force is the only way it can be combatted [*sic*]," he added.

### 'IT'S A SIGNAL'

There was nothing new about the Reagan administration's get-tough approach to the Philippine insurgency. It has been espousing the same position since the day Aquino assumed power, and backing Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile's internal efforts to undermine the reconciliation efforts of his own government.

Only the diplomacy and pragmatism of Secretary of State George Shultz—whose role is frequently to take the raw edge off

the other Reagan boys' reactionary politics—has kept Washington from challenging the new president openly and directly.

That was what made the *New York Times* piece so significant. Through this most prestigious of U.S. daily papers, the anonymous Reagan officials assured the world and Aquino herself that their "concerns were virtually certain to be discussed" in two weeks when she meets with Reagan and other high-ranking officials on her U.S. trip.

"There will be no demands on our part, but there will be expressions of concerns," they concluded.

The comments provoked an irritated response from Malacañang the next day. "That's the way the Americans do it,"

*Continued on page 9*



New York Times



San Francisco Chronicle

## Ceasefire Talks Bog Down

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FIRST CLASS

## On Aquino's "Capacity to Govern"

From President Corazon Aquino's first month in office to the eve of her first working visit to the United States, almost nothing has been heard from the Reagan White House but murmured doubts about "her capacity to govern."

What the Reaganites are bellyaching about is not whether Aquino has effectively replaced Marcos' fascist legacy with liberal democracy, which she has. Neither are they complaining about the Philippines' continuing economic instability, a problem that cannot be overcome so quickly (especially by someone who does not profess to have a revolutionary economic program). What the Reaganites do not like is the pattern of some of her major decisions.

They are not cheered, for example, by the presence of human rights activists and progressive reformers in her cabinet. The appointment of some nationalists to the Constitutional Commission, which may yet produce an unprecedented pro-Filipino draft charter, has not endeared her to them. They are nervous about the deliberate ambiguity of her plan for the U.S. bases after the agreement expires in 1991. And horror of horrors, she seems bent on "dialoguing" with the Filipino communists and Moro rebels instead of crushing them with force as they would want her to do. In short, they doubt "her capacity to govern" because she won't dance to their tune.

The U.S. government is fond of misrepresenting democracy as being synonymous with its narrow national interests. It was therefore, quite easy for the Reaganites to declare the pliant Marcos "an adherent of democratic principles." They have yet to confer the same honor to the more deserving Aquino who in their minds only deserves to be told that Uncle Reagan doubts her capacity to govern.

Perhaps the Reaganites prefer the gratuitous pro-U.S. ditties hummed from time to time by a Laurel, or the operative anti-communism of a witchhunting Enrile. Go ahead, gentlemen. You only have one problem. These political figures do not enjoy popular support—precisely because the people detect in their behavior a self-boosterism that could endanger the precious democratic climate Filipinos are just beginning to enjoy. These boys may have the capacity to govern the Philippines for the United States, but what the people want are leaders who have the capacity to govern the Philippines for the Filipinos.

We join in the U.S. Filipino community's heartfelt welcome for President Corazon Aquino. We sincerely wish her well as she goes toe-to-toe with some of the meanest big boys on earth. □

### GUEST EDITORIAL:

## Appeal for a Non-Aligned Foreign Policy for the Philippines

The triumph of People's Power led by President Corazon Aquino, proved to the whole world the Filipino people's capacity to take their affairs into their own hands.

Filipinos regained their pride and dignity after years of humiliation and repression under the dictatorial whims of Ferdinand Marcos. They brought their country to a respected place in the world community of nations.

People's power brought more than national pride and dignity. Its victory has given the Filipino people a new opportunity to address the economic and social ills that have long plagued their nation.

The miserable impoverishment of Filipinos during the 20 years of Marcos rule resulted not only from the systematic thievery of the dictator and his cronies. It

was also the result of unequal economic relations with the United States and the unrestricted activities of multinational corporations.

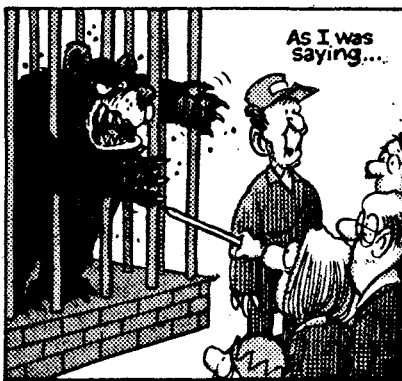
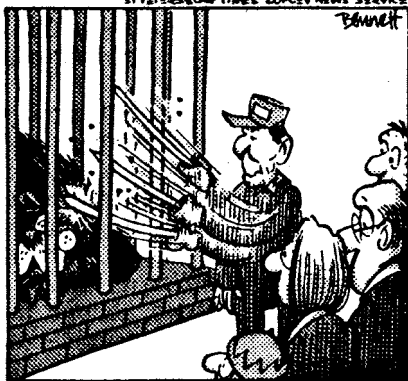
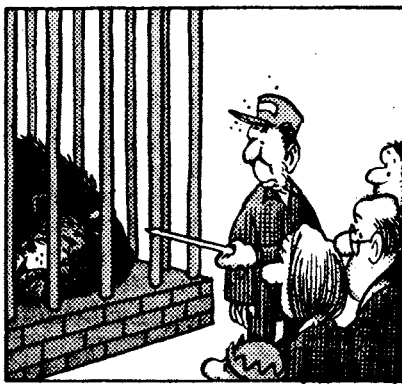
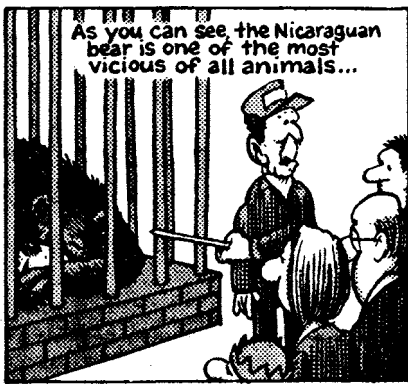
President Aquino has shown her determination to lead the national recovery from the ruins of dictatorship. But for our nation to stand on its feet, President Aquino must assert the Philippines' right to choose its own path of economic reconstruction. This includes seeking fairer terms of trade and assistance from our traditional partners while opening up beneficial economic relations with more countries regardless of their social systems.

The full development of the country's economic relations with other nations was stifled by overwhelming U.S. influence on its affairs and the puppetry of previous leaders. The Philippines must extricate itself from this stranglehold and exercise its sovereign right to establish and nurture mutually beneficial relations with as many countries as possible. The path of non-alignment in foreign relations is crucial not only for its national dignity but its economic survival and future progress as well.

On her first official visit to the United States, we, members of the Filipino community in the U.S. and Canada, most heartily welcome President Cory Aquino and express our firm support for her democratic government. We urge her to impress upon U.S. government officials and members of the private sector that lasting friendly relations can be based only on the equality and mutual respect for sovereignty and independence of nations.

Furthermore, we are truly hopeful that President Aquino will take heed of the growing sentiment among freedom-loving Filipinos in favor of a foreign policy of non-alignment, peace and non-intervention that is so crucial to the political and economic well-being of the Filipino people.

*This petition to President Corazon Aquino was released for signatures in mid-August. It was prepared by the Committee to Advance the Movement for Democracy and Independence (CAMDI).*



## Litter from Manila

## SINISTER OF DEFENSE

By INIDORO DELIHENCIA



I was beginning to lose all hope. President Marcos couldn't get out of Honolulu and still can't. The loyalists were running out of money. Elizabeth Taylor lost 50 pounds but the First Lady found them. Our generals became wimps and swore allegiance to Cory Aquino. And now, Arturo Tolentino does not even want to see another hotel for the rest of his life. Was I to be condemned to a life of nostalgia?

But then came he, the dark horseman of my dreams, emerging from the mist of past glory to rekindle my flagging spirit. He is the new vanguard we need. He had fearlessly descended to the den of iniquity, lounged there for awhile, and now he is back—and in a new cabinet at that. Who can be a better minister of defense than one who has a lot to defend?

True, he betrayed our cause once. But who can blame him for being a sensitive aesthete dedicated to the art of survival? I can forget the past. And what the hell, plotters can't be choosers. Go, Johnny, go. You are our best and only hope.

Johnny Ponce Enrile, always a good friend of mine, has all the qualities of the great leader our nation needs.

A man who has breakfast at the Intercontinental Hotel every morning certainly has no fear of taking power regardless of the room rates. Johnny tirelessly articulates his profound ideals, and speaks to anyone who is willing to listen—Rotary Clubs, traffic controller's associations, basketball leagues, you name it. When I caught up with him, he was on his way to speak at the Manila Poodle Owners Association children's party on the Strategic Importance of the U.S. Military Bases to the Regional Balance of Power.

The first thing I did was to congratulate him for opposing the ceasefire with the NPA.

"NPA?" he looked at me quizzically. "Actually, what I'm opposed to is a ceasefire in the cabinet. If I can just get my hands on those bleeding-heart human rightists, or human leftists, which is more accurate. Grrr!"

Was it really that bad?

"They are all too soft on the communists. 'The communists are also for the poor, yakkity, yak, yak.' Can you imagine what will happen to us if the poor take over? Just the Human Rights Commission and the PCGG are enough to give me nightmares. Oh, don't get me wrong, Doroy. I have nothing against the poor. Some of my best friends are poor. After they do business with me."

So what was he planning to do. Will there be a coup? Will we be in power again soon? Huh? Huh?

"Your mouth is watering, Doroy. It will not be hard, I believe. It's all a matter of alliances," he winked, flashing that roguish smile.

"First of all, I have a very loyal base in the military with my RAM or Replace Aquino Movement."

But that won't be enough.

"That's why I am also eyeing a pact with a disgruntled camp in the administration, a group that

describes itself as Left-out, Always Unlucky, Resentful, Ever Longing or LAUREL.

Yeah, but they can go one way or another. Didn't he have a more reliable civilian force?

"Funny you should ask. Well, I got a thing cooking with some of our old friends. I'm their hero now. They're called LOYALISTS which stands for Lousy, Obnoxious, Yucky, Always Loony, Ignorant, Stupid Though Sincere. They got people in the military too, and some more money coming from Hawaii."

OK, he's got RAM, possibly LAUREL, definitely the LOYALISTS. Were Cory and her softies aware of all this?

"Well, they're most worried about my RAM, especially because we've been adding to our gun collection. So, Cory is trying very, very hard to build her own alliance in the military."

And what was that called?

"RAMOS or Respect Aquino More, Offset that Sonofabitch, referring to me. RAMOS is very popular in the military."

Wooo. Sounded like bad news. Wasn't he scared?

"Why should I be? RAMOS or no RAMOS, I have an ultimate weapon based in Washington, D.C. It's called REAGAN which means Revive Enrile Actively, Gripe at Aquino Non-stop."

That was a relief. In fact, that was a great relief. So what was he waiting for? Why had he not made the move?

"Well you see, I'm not very popular and can't figure it out myself. Tell me, is it my hairstyle? Could it be my clothes, my breath . . . ?"

Oh, great. A hero who also wants to be popular. That's all we need now. I think I'm losing all hope after all. □

# Ceasefire Talks Bog Down

By CHRISTINE ARANETA

Barely a month into the government-National Democratic Front ceasefire negotiations, the talks appear to have ground to a halt while both sides engaged in a series of skirmishes through the media.

The latest volley was fired September 3 by NDF negotiators Satur Ocampo and Antonio Zumel who charged that several government officials were acting in bad faith and jeopardizing the peace talks.

The two were particularly irked by an "exposé" made several days earlier by Juan Ponce Enrile, Minister of Defense. Enrile, the most vocal opponent of the ceasefire proceedings, released privileged information allegedly based on the rebel agenda submitted to the government August 23.

According to him, the NDF position amounts to a demand for equal status with the government. Enrile said the NDF has proposed alternate venues, with government representatives meeting in guerilla zones and NDF representatives meeting in Manila.

He also claimed that the rebels want to fly the Communist flag alongside the Philippine flag in these official venues. Furthermore, the NDF wants to invite two mutually acceptable foreign ambassadors to witness the signing of the agreement and wants the pact registered with the United Nations.

"What is happening is they want belligerent status," claimed Enrile.

Zumel and Ocampo quickly denounced the "exposé" as distortions maliciously leaked to certain quarters in the mass media, and maintained that their suggestions were "earnest proposals for security guarantees, immunities and related matters."



## NORMAL MANEUVERING

Although other cabinet members would not comment on Enrile's interpretation, an official close to President Aquino said "We know what they are up to and we won't fall for it."

### As of Press time . . .

Government and NDF negotiators resumed talks September 6 and issued a joint statement agreeing to consider a 30-day ceasefire. NDF leaders Antonio Zumel and Satur Ocampo said they favored a halt to the fighting but would need to obtain the approval of their leadership first.

According to the *New York Times* report, September 7, the joint statement said the ceasefire proposal was based on

A cabinet official also characterized the current impasse as "maneuvering, a normal part of the early stages of talks," and asked rhetorically, "How long did it take Henry Kissinger to decide the shape of the negotiating table" at the start of the Paris

the recognition that both sides sought to avoid further killing, that this was a "purely internal affair of the Philippines" and that the truce would provide "the proper climate for continued talks for permanent peace."

The NDF stressed that they were only given instructions to obtain a ceasefire within the overall context of a peace settlement.

The talks resume in mid-September. □

peace talks during the Vietnam War.

Meanwhile, government negotiator and Minister of Agriculture Ramon Mitra held out hope that the meetings would soon resume and was instructed by President Aquino to get the rebels' explanation of a military engagement that breached a local ceasefire observance in Laac, Davao del Norte, Mindanao August 27.

Much of the squabbling over ground rules since the talks began August 5 has taken place over the media. Rightists have been quick to exploit the difficulties as proof that Aquino should get tougher on the rebels. Even the Reagan administration used the latest breakdown to put pressure on Aquino to opt for military confrontation over negotiations.

The president, however, remained unmoved. In response to an "anonymous" Reagan official's "get tough" suggestion, Aquino said, "It has been proven in the past that the solution to an insurgency problem cannot be solely a military solution, because if it were so, then Marcos would have succeeded in eliminating the insurgency in our country."

## MILITARY INTRANSIGENCE

The NDF blames the degeneration of the initial negotiations on the intransigence of the military, specifically the defense minister. Enrile has emerged as the premier anti-communist in the administration and is cheered on by Marcos loyalists who have taken to calling themselves "communist fighters."

Although Enrile declared that "we will implement [the president's] orders all the way to the last man," as soon as an agreement is reached, he also implied offensive action will resume when the talks break off.

Enrile, in fact, appears intent on dampening every opportunity that would favor the holding of talks. Observers including government officials contend that Enrile's cold war campaign is a self-serving maneuver designed to make him the rallying point of a coalescing "new right."

Continued on page 15

# Aquino, Misuari Talk Peace

In a dramatic rendezvous on September 5 in the Muslim-dominated southern island of Jolo, President Corazon Aquino and Nur Misuari, chairman of the Moro National Liberation Front, held a one-hour "peace dialogue" on ending a conflict that has cost more than 60,000 lives since 1972.

Over the strong objections of some of her advisers, Aquino broke with established protocol by venturing into the rebels' turf to demonstrate her sincerity.

Officers belonging to the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) expressed cynicism over the planned talks between Aquino and Misuari.

RAM spokesmen said the president should not make policy agreements with the MNLF head but with the Moro people.

The officers sources belittled Misuari as only one of several rival factions and called him a slave of foreign powers, specifically of Libya.

RAM officers also strongly objected to Aquino going south to meet Misuari in his rebel stronghold.

"It could be a sign of the president's humility but it will affect our national prestige and give Misuari's group some legal status of belligerency because it is the head-of-state dealing with them," complained one officer.

But, as Aquino frequently stressed these past few weeks, she was the boss.

"I came here all the way in the quest of peace, despite the objections of my own armed forces, to reach out to my Moslem brothers," she told Misuari.

## 'NOT AN ENEMY'

The MNLF chief in turn stressed his own difficulty in obtaining permission from

his followers to conduct an unprecedented meeting. "In all our 400 years there has never been such a meeting with the leader of my people's enemy."

"Nur, I am not your enemy," Aquino reassured Misuari. She dissociated her government from the previous one which had reneged on the terms of the Tripoli Agreement—the pact signed between the MNLF and the Marcos regime in 1976 granting autonomy to 13 Moslem provinces.

Marcos never gave local autonomous bodies any real power or funding and the agreement collapsed.

Efforts to bring the two parties back to the negotiating table had repeatedly ended in failure. After several attempts, Indonesia—a predominantly Moslem country—finally abandoned its role of mediator in the conflict, which by 1977 had claimed 60,000 lives.

During her recent visit to Indonesia, Aquino got a pledge from the Suharto regime that it would not support a secessionist movement in Mindanao.

## POSTURING

Prior to the meeting, both sides engaged in hardline posturing. "I am not demanding the creation of an individual state. It already exists," Misuari told his followers before the meeting with Aquino. "We have been a nation and we shall remain a nation forever separate from all other nations, including the Philippines."

Aquino, meanwhile, told an army detachment involved in the fighting with the rebels, that no part of the republic can ever be separated "where soldiers have spilled their blood." She declared that Mindanao belongs to all, including Muslims and Christians, "who have expended sweat, tears, and blood to make it a home for all



Foreground: Nur Misuari, President Aquino, Desdemona Tan-Misuari, Defense Minister Enrile, Filipinos.

A week earlier, a constitutional commission committee voted to grant limited autonomy to certain Muslim regions in Mindanao—a move seen by observers as an attempt to defuse the secessionist threat.

## MORO CONGRESS

Despite Misuari's recent hardline statements, his aides have told the press that he might be open to some form of self-rule short of full independence. The problem for Misuari is to convince his constituency to accept such a settlement.

In the MNLF congress held just prior to the dialogue, Misuari received a mandate from the 10,000 rebels in attendance to negotiate an agreement with the government. According to him, however, the leaders of his organization were unable to reach consensus on the minimum acceptable arrangement.

Matters are further complicated by the existence of several rival factions that openly challenge Misuari's claim to the leadership of the rebellion.

The original MNLF organization splintered into four factions in the late 1970s over leadership conflicts, political differences and tribal antagonisms.

The largest faction under the leadership of Misuari maintained the demand of secession from the republic.

The three other factions—the Moro Islamic Liberation Front under Hashim Salamat, the MNLF Reformist Faction under Dimas Pundato, and the Bangsa Moro Liberation Organization—all opted for varying degrees of autonomy.

## INITIAL THREAT

Before the meeting between Aquino and Misuari, rival Muslim faction leaders urged that the meeting be held in Malacañang instead of Mindanao to eliminate the suspicion of other Muslim tribes that Aquino is favoring the Tausug—Misuari's tribe of origin. Some announced that they would defy any agreements reached at the meeting.

Misuari's group is the largest of the rival factions. Moreover, it is recognized by the Organization of Islamic Countries. Misuari claims that rival Muslim leader Pundato had already agreed to unite behind the MNLF and that he was currently conducting unification talks with another major rival, Hashim Salamat. He further estimates that the MNLF troop strength now stands at over 20,000 armed regulars.

Until the actual peace talks begin, Aquino and Misuari agreed to maintain the truce that was reached when Aquino came to power. Both parties also agreed that future negotiations would be held under the auspices of the OIC. □

San Francisco Chronicle

# From Legal Quixote to Legal Top Gun



T. Rocamora

**S**edfrey Ordonez, Solicitor General of the Philippines, visited four U.S. cities last month to meet with legal circles and talk to very receptive members of the Filipino community. Ordonez belongs to that crop of human rights lawyers who never tired of challenging the Marcos regime despite heartbreaking odds.

Ordonez was one of Benigno Aquino's defense lawyers, and defended many other political prisoners. He was with the law firm of Salonga, Ordonez and Yap. He was also one of the three framers of President Corazon Aquino's Freedom Constitution, a delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention and has authored several provisions to reform the judiciary.

AK's Christine Araneta and Nancy Rocamora caught up with him for an interview. For starters, they asked Ordonez for a bird's eye view of the dizzying cliffs and canyons of Philippine jurisprudence. It went something like this:

The actual starting point of the current legal system was December 10, 1898 when the Philippines was ceded by Spain to the U.S. under the Treaty of Paris. On that date, the political laws of the Philippines including taxation and constitutional law were automatically abrogated and American political law concepts were introduced. However, the non-political laws that regulated property, family life, penal laws, etc., were preserved in the changeover from Spanish traditions. But the political laws of the U.S. immediately became a part of the laws of the Philippines.

Then, the United States began to recast our procedural laws, civil procedures and criminal procedures. In the selection and adoption of a model for civil procedure for the Philippines, California was chosen, because of the cultural similarities between California and Philippine society, both of them having been former colonies of Spain. So, the code of civil procedure in California became a part of the Philippine legal system.

As for Philippine criminal procedure, it was again, copied from the prevailing criminal procedure in the U.S. With the loss of Philippine national sovereignty, American procedure and principles of constitutional law became an integral part of the Philippine legal system. This continued unchanged up to the present. Thus, apart from probable differences in the set up or jurisdiction of the various courts, U.S. judicial procedure is the operative model for the Philippines.

As to the judicial hierarchy, the Philippine Supreme Court functions just like the U.S. Supreme Court. Below that is the Court of Appeals, formerly called the intermediate appellate court. The base or the backbone of the Philippine legal system is now the regional trial court which is the equivalent of U.S. district courts and below that, are the local or municipal courts. That is the judicial hierarchy.

Then the Marcos constitution adopted the 1971 Constitutional Convention's Tanodbayan, a constitutional body that functions as a prosecution arm in going after grafters in office. Thereafter, the Sandiganbayan was created as a special graft court. The prosecution of graft cases was taken out of the regular courts and brought under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Sandiganbayan. The Aquino murder trial was presided over by the Sandiganbayan not by the regular courts and the Tanodbayan prosecuted it instead of the Minister of Justice. The reason was that it involved the abuse of public office by members of the military service (it included one civilian).

Then the questions began covering the judicial hierarchy, experiences with the Marcos military courts, the reopening of the Aquino case, and hidden wealth.

AK: Do you feel that the Sandiganbayan is an important part of the legal system?

SO: Yes, because in the past we had various kinds of

special graft courts. Right after the end of the Japanese occupation, we set up People's Courts to try the collaborators. Thereafter, we had special tribunals to try special graft cases until we found it necessary to establish one body that dealt exclusively with graft cases committed by public officials—thus, the Sandiganbayan provisions for this were made by the 1971 constitutional convention. So it really goes back to the concept of fundamental law. It's not really a creation of Marcos. Unless you consider all the provisions of the 1971 constitutional a product of Marcos' diabolical schemes.

AK: Do you think the new constitution will include the Sandiganbayan?

SO: Yes, I believe the tendency would be to recognize the Sandiganbayan as a constitutional body.

AK: What about the military courts, have they been abolished?

SO: No. Normally, in times of peace, crimes committed by military personnel are triable only by court martial. But during the martial law regime, military commissions were created which were vested with the authority to try civilians accused of committing crimes under martial law. We had a long line of litigation challenging that. [Benigno] Aquino was the first to challenge the jurisdiction of military commissions over various civilians especially if the offenses were supposedly committed during the period prior to the declaration of martial law.

AK: He didn't have much success, did he?

SO: Aquino's bid was defeated, he was convicted and given the death sentence. We litigated long and bitterly but we lost. And so you had that structure under martial law: court martial of military personnel who have committed offenses in the performance of their duties and military commission which tried cases committed by civilians. So, the military courts are not really an integral part of the judicial machinery.

**'Should the Supreme Court decide to reopen the Aquino case, there will be no time lost in setting up the prosecution.'**

AK: What are they then?

SO: Military courts are executive adjuncts of the military, for the enforcement of military discipline. That is the reason generally, a judgment of court martial cannot be reviewed by the Supreme Court, unless there is a violation of a constitutional right in their proceedings. That is why the Supreme Court at first refused to review the conviction of Ninoy Aquino. But then we found another way . . . .

AK: And what is that legal theory?

SO: We had argued and lost on the proposition that the creation of a military commission was illegal, that it had no reason to try Aquino, as it would deprive him of liberty and the right to due process. We lost that. Then I came across a newspaper account of how the Supreme Court of Pakistan issued a writ of habeas corpus requiring the court martial to elevate its records on the conviction of Ali Bhutto. Ali Bhutto had been sentenced to death by the military court.

So we came back with a new petition using the precedent set in Pakistan as a basis. We argued that a civilian tried by a military commission is, in effect, deprived of equal protection by the law because a civilian is being tried according to military standards. Surprisingly, the Supreme Court issued a restraining order—similar to what happened in Pakistan—restraining the military from carrying out the death sentence imposed on Aquino. That was really a great surprise! Unfortunately, the Pakistan Supreme Court eventually denied that bid of Ali Bhutto and he was hanged.

AK: Wasn't that bad news?

SO: Well, when our case was being reviewed, Ninoy had a heart attack and so eventually he was allowed to leave, but with a death sentence pending against him. Then, with the lifting of martial law in 1981, the military commissions were phased out. Even before the February revolution there were no more military commissions. All the case filed in the martial courts had been transferred to the civil courts.

AK: What will happen with the legal proceedings during martial law, will lawyers use them as legal precedents?

SO: Well there are different circumstances now. There probably will be greater tolerance by the Supreme Court to apply basic concepts of American constitutional law. You must remember that martial law government was a unique case, a class by itself, so it could innovate and take measures which do not conform to normal, conventional legal thinking. Now, since we are back to a regime of constitutionality, I believe there will be greater use of the valid principles of due process, habeas corpus and so on, as understood in the American legal tradition.

AK: So now, for example, the Aquino murder case can be prosecuted fully.

SO: First some background on that. The prosecution efforts are to bring to justice the persons who were responsible for the double murders of Aquino and Galman who was initially suspected as the gunman. The Sandiganbayan rendered a verdict acquitting all the suspects. Immediately, the Galman counsel filed a petition to the Supreme Court asking for a reopening of the trial, on the grounds that it was not a fair trial. Anyway, this petition was overtaken by the February revolution. When the new Supreme Court was constituted, it took up the motion for retrial.

AK: As chief prosecutor, do you think the case can be retried?

SO: The Supreme Court required my office to submit comments favoring or opposing the motion for reopening. In my comments I noted that the concept of double jeopardy, which prevents a person from being tried twice for the same offense—after being acquitted he can't be tried again—is still very much alive in Philippine law. But if it can be shown that the trial was conducted by a court that was not independent or there was intervention, say by Marcos, or that the prosecution was not doing its job as it should, then there was a miscarriage of justice and the Supreme Court can reopen the trial. Double jeopardy cannot be invoked as a defense. On the other hand, if the Supreme Court should judge that there was no intervention then its clear duty is to apply the principle of double jeopardy. For this reason, I recommended the creation of an independent commission headed up by a retired justice of the Supreme Court who will make that assessment. The Supreme Court created a commission headed by retired Justice Conrado Vasquez, which was ordered to make a report within 30 days. But I wish to emphasize that that commission will not investigate the facts of the murder. It's concerned only with the conduct of the trial.

AK: Do you think there was intervention, that the trial was not fair?

SO: I believe so, because in the proceedings of the Vasquez Committee, the two prosecutors, of course in their own two versions, said they were called to Malacañang Palace and the three judges who rendered the decision were also called to the Palace. Under those circumstances, it is very difficult to believe that they were called to Malacañang just for a social visit. That is why many believe there was executive intervention and if that was so, there was no fair trial.

AK: If the Vasquez Committee indeed says there was a miscarriage of justice, what will the Aquino administration do with the case?

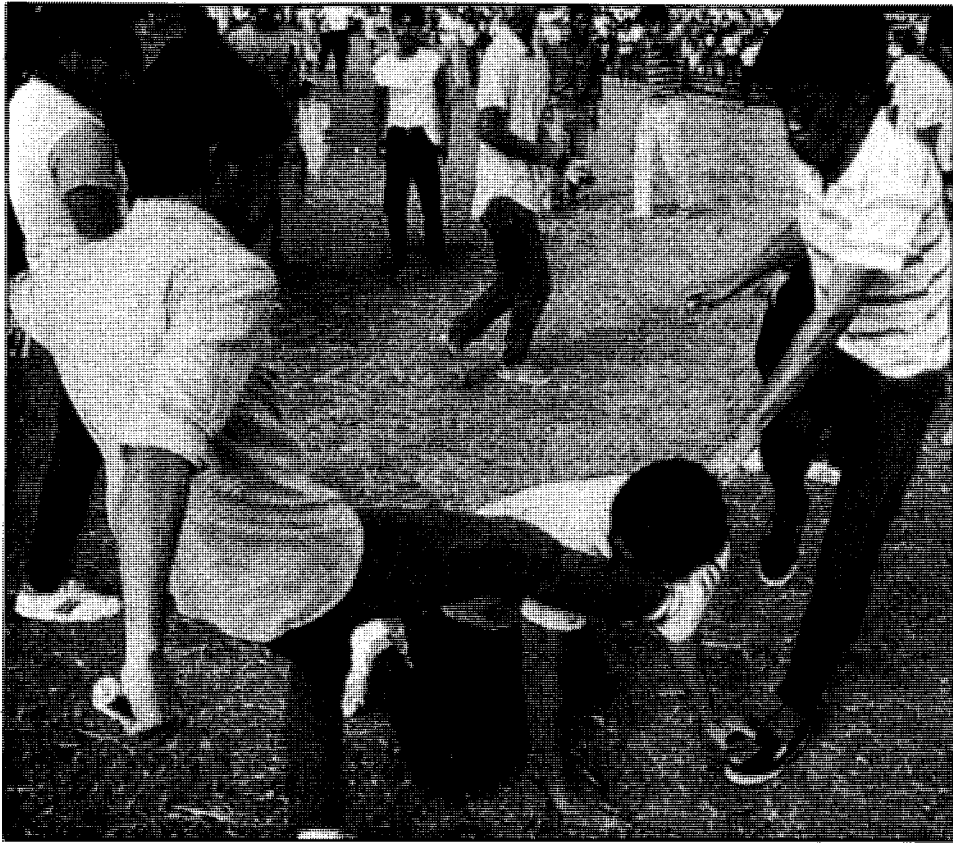
SO: It will be given first priority. The moment the Supreme Court renders a resolution there will be no time lost in setting up the prosecution.

AK: But do you think that the Aquino administration can also live with a contrary decision by the court?

SO: I believe so. The judiciary is supposed to be independent. The administration cannot make an outcry

Continued on page 14

# Loyalists Lose Steam, Enrile Doesn't



Loyalists beating victim to death at the Luneta.

By NANCY F. ROCAMORA

Marking the final chapter in a tale that Manila residents were quick to brand the Manila Hotel "coup d'etat," Philippine Justice Minister Nepatali Gonzales September 1 announced that all charges had been dropped against Arturo Tolentino and his co-conspirators.

Charges of rebellion were filed against 41 leaders of the takeover plot. The government, however, offered to drop all charges against coup participants willing to swear loyalty to the Freedom Constitution. The 15 military men charged chose to exercise that option and joined with the entire Philippine military in swearing the oath August 1.

Tolentino and his civilian supporters, however, refused and a month of bargaining for a compromise oath ensued between representatives of Tolentino and the Justice Ministry.

Tolentino finally agreed to a pledge of allegiance to the Republic of the Philippines, recognizing "the existence of the present government" and renouncing "the use of force and violence" against President Aquino.

The aborted putsch had its light and dark moments. Declaring himself "acting president," Tolentino set up office at the historic hotel July 6 surrounded by 300 military supporters and a number of civilian loyalists. But half of the military men abandoned him when they heard that Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile was not part of the coup. The rest negotiated a surrender within 36 hours.

Enrile, the only official in the capital at the time, quickly absolved the errant military men and made light of Tolentino's transgression. "What did he do anyway except drink a few bottles of whiskey and brandy?"

## LOYALIST ACTIVITIES WIND DOWN

Loyalist activities had begun to diminish in the wake of two murders. Steve Rodriguez, a passerby at a July 27 pro-Marcos rally was clubbed and kicked to death by loyalists as they were dispersed by Manila police. His offense: wearing yellow, the color associated with Aquino.

Then on August 19, Felizardo Lota, a "young Turk" of the *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* and former Batangas provincial fiscal, was gunned down in front of the Manila Hilton as he left a meeting with the movement's leaders. Loyalists were quick to insist that a plot was afoot to eliminate them.

But Manila police found instead that the murder more likely had to do with money matters and possibly internal con-

flicts within the loyalist camp. Several days later, Bernardo Diaz, loyalist leader and chairman of the *Ako'y Pilipino* Movement, was charged with the murder before the Manila Fiscal's Office. Known as the movement's moneybag, Lota recently had an argument over a missing P800,000. Lota was reportedly responsible for the money.

Whatever the truth behind the Lota murder, it and the government's crackdown on Rodriguez' killers had a decidedly chilling effect on pro-Marcos activities.

Meanwhile, Marcos' political party, the KBL, reconvened and announced that it was drafting its own new constitution which would be presented for a "plebiscite" simultaneously with the one being drafted by the Constitutional Commission.

At their August 16 meeting, KBL members also unanimously supported a bluntly phrased resolution aimed at the U.S.: "Return Ferdinand Marcos, and the U.S. bases can stay here beyond 1991."

## RED SCARE

Meanwhile Enrile, believed by many to have had a role in the Manila Hotel escapade, continued to make trouble despite his pledges of support for Aquino. One newspaper, in fact, called for his resignation or, failing that, asked Aquino to fire him.

As the *Manila Chronicle* put it, "Mr. Enrile has stepped up his campaign to criticize what he sees as the uneven application of the President's reconciliation policy (with the leftist insurgency) and to underline policy differences over the United States military bases."

"In what seems to be calculated provocation, Mr. Enrile has not missed any

opportunity to accent, in public forums, the position that the U.S. bases must stay," the editors added. "In arguing his case, Mr. Enrile has made it an art form to muddle the reconciliation issue and to play demagogue in a cheap attempt to buy loyalty of the soldiers."

Enrile's assault was on a variety of fronts. On August 17, he announced to the cabinet a three-stage communist plan to infiltrate and take over the Philippine government. Some government positions, he insisted, were already occupied by communists.

## MINISTERS SCRAMBLE TO EXPLAIN

When Local Governments Minister Aquilino Pimentel challenged Enrile to name names, the Defense Minister instead ticked off a list of ministries and positions. Some of the people involved, he added, were members of the Communist Party's Central Committee.

The task of identifying the individuals was completed in part by Lota before his killing. Lota mentioned Victor Bulatao, Executive Assistant to the Agrarian Reform Minister; Alex Birondo, Assistant to the Labor Minister; Abel Hurtado of the Philippines Ports Authority; Vicente Ladd of the Philippine Coconut Authority and Nemesio Prudente, President of the Philippine Polytechnic University. Lota failed to fill in all the blanks for Enrile who included the Presidential Center for Special Studies and the Presidential Task Force on Cooperatives.

Various ministers were quick to respond. Oscar Santos of the Coconut Authority announced that leftists in his department had been working under contract and those contracts had expired. PSCC chief Teodoro Locsin added that two of his workers had been relieved.

One week later the cabinet met again and Presidential Spokesman Rene Saguisag noted that Aquino remained true to her initial promise not to work with the communist insurgents. However, he added, there is nothing to stop former rebels from joining and working with the government.

## ASSASSINATION PLOT?

Enrile also had other irons in the fire. On August 13 he informed the cabinet of a loyalist plot to kidnap Aquino, along with leading government and military figures. The president, according to Pimentel, was amused by the information.

The Defense Minister then proceeded to announce a plot to the public via an address to the Inner Wheel Club, an organization of wives of government officials. Waving what he called a "well-documented intelligence report" before television cameras, he revealed that the plot called for the seizure of Malacañang communication centers and nine military camps around Metro-Manila as well as the abduction of 44 civilian and military figures. One day later, all of Manila was on red alert.

The arrest August 18 of Jaime Lazo, cousin of Hawaiian-based Marcos backer Joe Lazo, in a plot to assassinate Aquino suggests that there may have been some truth behind Enrile's dark warnings. But his flamboyance in exposing it to the press suggested that he was more interested in rattling Aquino than in protecting her.

Finally, the Defense Minister ominously slipped 100 Israeli Uzi submachine guns into the country August 8 purportedly as part of his ministry's "military training equipment."

The guns, however, were addressed to Enrile c/o Col. Gregorio B. Honasan, leader of the Reform the Armed Forces Movement (RAM) which has become something of a personal army for Enrile. The shipment seemed to confirm accusations by members of Aquino's security force that RAM was increasing its supply of weapons although the Defense Ministry was refusing an adequate armed security force for the President.

## SHOWING WHO'S BOSS

Meanwhile, Aquino, while downplaying the differences between herself and Enrile and acting with leniency toward the Manila Hotel plotters, continued to let the world know who was boss.

In spite of dropping the charges against all 41 initially accused of rebellion, three military men seen as moving forces behind the abortive coup were relieved of their responsibilities and placed under house arrest.

These included Brig. Gen. Jaime Echeverria, former chief of the southern Mindanao Regional Command, Brig. Gen. Jose Ma. Zumel, former superintendent of the Philippine Military Academy and Col. Rolando Abadilla, former chief of the Metrocom Intelligence and Security Group and one of the most hated torturers of the Marcos era.

Reports remain confused as to whether the Brig. Gen. Antonio Palafox, former commanding general of the 5th Infantry Division and coup participant has been retired.

At the same time, the President proceeded to promote 16 colonels to brigadier general and three navy captains to commodore. They represent, according to Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo, "the prejudiced group" within the Philippine armed forces.

The advancement of these officers was frozen for years by former chief of staff Fabian Ver's practice of retaining over-staying generals to preserve the Marcos regime's iron control over the military. This break in the log jam can only gain Aquino support among the officers whose careers were long frustrated under the dictator.

Aquino also came down with full force against the murderers of Rodriguez. Two men were charged August 2 and arrest orders were issued for three loyalist leaders and 50 others photographed cheering on or participating in the young man's mauling.

"The full force of the law will be meted out to those who may be found guilty," the President told a press conference. "There will be swift disposition of this incident, which shows the utter bankruptcy of the tactics employed by the pathetic few who still cling to a lost cause." □



Military swears allegiance to the government.

# ConCom Brings Comfort and Controversy



Lorenzo Tanada leads ConCom delegates back to the session. From left: Jaime Tadeo, Wilfredo Villacorta, Tanada, Ponciano Bennagen.

Manila Chronicle

By WICKS GEAGA

After three months of deliberations by the Constitutional Commission appointed by President Corazon Aquino, the contours of the nation's new charter are beginning to emerge.

To conservatives, the provisions emanating from the ConCom represent a lamentable departure from tradition and a dangerous flirtation with radicalism. Some leftists note the limitations of the emerging draft but welcome it as a rejection of the Marcos legacy. Others, however, are suspicious of the Constitutional Commission's liberal declarations and say it does not go far enough.

Understandably, provisions dealing with democratic rights are the most inspired ones. From the beginning to end, the ConCom process was infused with a mission to forever rid the country of every trace of its fascist past.

"The Commission is seized by a messianic complex," said one commissioner. "We are motivated by the politics of redemption as if we could redeem mankind from the morass of Marcos."

## BILL OF RIGHTS

The article on the Bill of Rights passed by the Commission restores all the civil

liberties that were flagrantly violated under the dictatorship and dismantles the legal structures that propped up Marcos' rule.

Unlimited rights to travel and change abode are provided, according to one commissioner, to prevent the "hamletting" or displacement of entire barrios or villages during military campaigns against insurgents.

Safehouses and secret interrogation chambers used by the military to investigate and often torture individuals suspected of political offenses were declared illegal. A corresponding provision also prohibits the detention of people "merely by reason of their political belief."

The power to widely and arbitrarily issue arrest and seizure orders—a mainstay of Marcos' repressive reign—is also banned by the article.

## PEOPLE'S POWER

In recognition of the "people's power" phenomenon that was largely responsible for Marcos' ouster, the ConCom approved provisions that would theoretically institutionalize that movement's expressions.

Concretely, the Commission agreed that "people's organizations" should participate directly at all levels of government by approving or rejecting laws passed by Congress. In order to exercise this power, organizations wishing to challenge particular laws must represent at least 10% of registered voters.

In an unprecedented constitutional move, the Commission also voted to allow seats in the new Congress to representatives of different sectors including youth, women, farmers, and minorities.

In another precedent-setting action, the body passed a resolution on labor's right to strike, calling attention to Marcos' widespread brutal suppression of workers' rights.

## NATIONALISM

The most controversial debates have reflected the considerable political presence of nationalists in the constitutional body. The draft preamble declares the Philippine's neutrality and non-alignment, and further calls for the country to be free of nuclear weapons.

The foreign policy declaration is no doubt aimed at rectifying the country's long history of subordination to U.S. foreign policy and is the source of great concern in Washington.

Directly affected are the two large American bases at Clark and Subic, the U.S. privilege to quietly traffic nuclear-armed ships and aircraft in and out of the country, and the widely believed storage of nuclear weapons in the military facilities.

Most distressing to U.S. officials was the passage—at the committee stage—of a resolution declaring that the current agreement permitting the U.S. to maintain

its two huge bases should be allowed to expire in 1991 and that the government should have no option to renegotiate a new pact.

Opposition to this provision is expected to come from two blocs in the larger body. One group does not want the constitution to deal with the bases at all, while another wants the bases agreement to be renegotiated after its 1991 expiration.

In another controversy, members of the "nationalist bloc" temporarily walked out of a ConCom session in protest of a vote retaining the equity ratio of 60% Filipino ownership to 40% foreign investment. Some of the protestors joined up with critics like Hilarion Henares, Jr., and Alejandro Lichauco outside the ConCom and accused some commissioners of being tools of the American Chamber of Commerce and the multinationals. Film director Lino Brocka resigned from the body altogether.

However, human rights lawyer Felicitas Aquino and Jose Suarez, both identified with the nationalists said they did not wish to be identified with the actions of the other critics. Aquino maintains that despite some setbacks for the nationalist cause, the commission remains important because "it is today's bulwark in the critical transition from a revolutionary to a constitutional government."

Due to the expected debates on issues affecting American interests, ConCom proceedings have been rife with rumors of U.S. meddling.

## LEG ROOM

Reports in the Manila press claimed that representatives of the U.S. have made available \$20 million in "research" funds to "facilitate" the ConCom's work. Commission president Cecilia Muñoz Palma denied the existence of any such funding.

The U.S., though, still has a lot of leg room. Although the commission has passed resolutions, each resolution is liable to be voted on again as the body goes through the whole draft for approval. Then, the draft charter must be ratified in a plebiscite.

One of the most outspoken critics of the commission is Jose Ma. Sison, founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, and long-time political prisoner under Marcos.

On August 9, Sison described the emerging charter as "semi-colonial and semi-feudal," "embellished with the jargon of bourgeois nationalism and liberal democracy." Sison is skeptical of the "nationalist and democratic" provisions' effectiveness in satisfying the popular demand for land reform or ending foreign domination of the economy. □

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# Non-Alignment And Economics



Ortega, Kadhaffi and Castro at Non-Aligned meeting in Zimbabwe.

New York Times

By EDDIE ESCULTURA

For the Western powers, the rise of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries must have been a startling phenomenon. Surpassing even the United Nations in expansion of membership and influence, the MNC has grown from 25 countries at its founding conference in Belgrade, Yugoslavia in 1961 to 100 countries and two liberation movements today.

Almost two-thirds of all the countries of the world are part of the MNC, giving it a clout the Western Powers simply cannot ignore. Even countries that are still politically subjugated by the Western capitalist powers find themselves compelled to be at least in the periphery of the MNC.

At the 1979 6th MNC summit conference in Havana, Cuba, 115 countries participated—an impressive figure in view of Washington's diplomatic pressure and the intrigues by the People's Republic of China (not a member of the MNC) discouraging participation because they oppose Havana as the site of the conference. Even the Philippines under Marcos had to send a delegation there.

The idea of non-alignment, first proclaimed by Jawaharlal Nehru in 1946, emerged out of the search for ways to protect the independence India was about to gain from Britain.

With the formation of military alliances by the U.S. and its allies such as the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the Baghdad Pact, non-alignment became the political expression of the weaker nations' desire for peace and independence.

## ECONOMIC CONCERNS

In the last decade the non-aligned movement has become more concerned with economics, political independence being bound up with economic strength.

Most of the MNC's economic demands are directed at the capitalist powers. For example, it wants breathing space from the huge foreign debt suffocating poor countries, a debt that already passed the trillion mark by 1983. Debtor nations have to shell out more than \$100 billion a year in interest payments alone. Given the sputtering economies of these countries it has now become mathematically impossible to liquidate the foreign debt except by default.

But in the absence of a strong common front among debtors at this time, it seems feasible to win only certain concessions from the big lenders. Within the MNC, the Cartagena Group of 11 Latin American countries are trying to put together a strategy for dealing with the debt and negotiating with the creditors.

Led by the biggest debtors—Brazil, Mexico and Argentina—the group is trying to enlist the participation of the other heavily indebted countries such as South Korea and the Philippines.

Peru, a member of the MNC, has taken a unilateral action by reducing debt service payment to 10% of its gross foreign earnings. (The Philippines pays the equivalent of 50% of its annual foreign earnings of \$5.5 billion.)

## CALL FOR DEVELOPMENT FUND

One proposal widely discussed in the MNC and presented on its behalf at the UN by Fidel Castro calls for Western powers to trim down arms spending and from the savings allocate \$300 billion to build up the economies of the developing countries (DCs).

While this could alleviate the problem of underdevelopment, it would hardly offset the reverse outflow

of capital from poor countries to the Western powers.

The U.S. alone draws a staggering amount of capital from the DCs. Since 1980 the U.S. has drawn yearly \$10 billion in transnational profits, \$28 billion in interest payments on foreign loans, \$11.6 billion generated by the inflated U.S. dollar, \$15 billion from discrepancies between export and import prices (trade imbalance) and \$4 billion from the brain drain—for a total of \$80 billion annually.

More affluent members of the MNC are also being asked to pitch in. Surplus funds of \$60 billion accumulated in 1974 and in the possession of the oil-exporting countries are being eyed to augment the proposed development fund. These surplus funds are presently invested in the U.S. and Western Europe. Only \$2 billion of this amount were transferred to the DCs that year.

Under the proposed fund, credits would be given with conditions adequate for the development of the countries that need them. They are not to be channelled to serve the interests of tiny minorities or foreign monopolies. Back in 1973, at the 4th MNC summit conference in Algiers, the MNC's oil-exporting members already made a commitment to assist in such development effort.

## A Thorn In the U.S. Side

It was quite obvious that the U.S. media did not look kindly at the 8th Movement of Non-Aligned Countries summit conference in Harare, Zimbabwe last month where 100 member-countries and the Palestine Liberation Organization and Southwest African People's Organization of Namibia participated. Mostly what U.S. readers got were reports focusing on Moammar Kadhaffi's ultra-radical harangues, Iran's divisive demands to expel Iraq, and Singapore's pro-U.S. and anti-Soviet positions.

Western powers, the U.S. in particular, were never happy with the political independence displayed by MNC members. In the middle of the Harare conference, the Reagan administration rudely announced it was cutting off aid to conference host Zimbabwe, for "diplomatic misbehavior." It was certainly an announcement that did not elicit sympathy for the U.S.

Today the MNC represents the vast majority of countries and its influence is felt in the United Nations and in the North-South dialogue between the industrialized capitalist powers and the developing countries (DCs), especially on the matter of debt and U.S. foreign policy. Former U.S. ambassador to the UN Jeane Kirkpatrick was outraged by the fact that the developing countries in the last few years voted 84% of the time against the U.S. while the Soviet Union got better than 80% approval during UN deliberations. Thus, the U.S. has always argued that the MNC is not really non-aligned but leans towards the socialist bloc.

But non-alignment has never meant neutrality. At the 1983 7th summit conference in Delhi, India, the late Prime Minister Indira Gandhi stressed that non-alignment was "not neutral."

Earlier, in 1981, Gandhi asserted that "It is untenable to interpret non-alignment as equidistance from the superpowers. On the contrary . . . it means taking every chance to improve the outlook for peace . . . and adopt a clear stand on matters which we have strong convictions." Such matter, she said, include opposition to racism and colonialism.

Economic development, however, means overcoming the impact of the colonial past. Even for the 80 countries or so that have gained political independence, economic liberation has not been possible due to their integration into the world capitalist system.

## ANOTHER COURSE

Given their low level of industrial development, they are only able to supply the international market with cheap raw materials. Here lies the reason for their perennial trade imbalance, and the drain on capital made worse by the huge foreign debt burden. Failure to accumulate capital for industrialization is at the root of economic backwardness. By banding together, many MNC members hope to extract economic concessions from the dominant Western bloc.

Some countries have deliberately charted a course that would allow them to get concessions from both capitalist and socialist powers while building up their own economic base, a sort of tightrope strategy for economic development commonly known as "non-capitalist development."

India, Syria, Zambia, Tanzania, Democratic Yemen, and Algeria are straining towards this course as well as newly liberated countries like Angola, Mozambique, Nicaragua among others.

One feature of this strategy is the strengthening of the public sector, the regulation of the private sector and the introduction of some level of economic planning.

Economic planning is aimed at the maximum utilization of available resources to process commodities (so that exports will no longer be cheap raw materials alone) to offset trade imbalance and inequity, and accumulating capital for industrial development.

## SOCIALIST AID

Another feature of this strategy is the tapping of aid, loans and trade with the socialist bloc. This method of course, requires a readiness to assert independence and a willingness to withstand Western bloc pressures.

The socialist countries are only too willing to help to the extent that their own economies can afford. From their point of view, advancing the industrial, scientific and technological capacity of developing nations can only help weaken the West's hegemony as well as its aggressive "encirclement" of the socialist camp.

For countries who want to avail of socialist assistance, the terms can be very attractive. Unlike aid from the big capitalist countries, socialist aid is not done through direct investments. It is done through grants and credits

Continued on page 15

# BUOD NG MGA BALITA

## NEW LEFT PARTY FORMED

After a 39-year absence, the Left has re-entered the electoral arena with the formation of *Partido ng Bayan* organization August 30 at the Folk Arts Theatre, Metro-Manila. An estimated 1,758 regional and sectoral representatives as well as local and foreign guests and observers attended the founding congress.

In his address, Jose Ma. Sison chair of the PNP Preparatory Committee, explained the objectives of the new formation: "In previous times, it is quite ironic that the people's democratic movement could be so bitterly divided over the question of electoral participation or boycott and yet surrender to the anti-fascist reactionaries the initiative to form legal parties and field candidates. Now, the Partido ng Bayan can build its own strength on a nationwide scale and win political victories on its own account."

Although the PNP principally addresses itself to worker and peasant participation, Sison said that PNP "is both a party of the Left and the Middle . . . and [all] people fighting for liberation and all-round social progress."

Fellow organizer and long-time Sison associate, Bernabe Buscayno, delivered the keynote address during which time he exhorted participants to grasp and master the electoral process as an arena of struggle for progressive forces.

### RIGHTISTS REACT

Conservatives quickly took the opportunity to attack the PNP as an attempt by the left to have "the best of both worlds." Former labor minister Blas Ople said the PNP's entry into the political arena shows that the communists have taken advantage of the parliamentary struggle and yet maintain its armed operations in the countryside. Rene Cayetano, secretary-general of the Nacionalista Party said "The Partido ng Bayan is no more than a clone of the Communist Party, seeking to win power through the ballots, while leaving the CPP to carry on its program through the use of violence."

PNP organizers maintain that the new organization has no relationship to the CPP and Sison added, "This party will have its own political and organizational integrity."

Other commentators, however, were encouraged that the Left will be joining the political mainstream. The *New Philippine Daily Express* editorialized:

"That an avowed revolutionary would choose a legal avenue to ventilate his ideals ought to speak well of the present order . . . What is important is that the party's platform can now be subjected to political scrutiny and that its members will not have to resort to underground means to be heard."

The last time communists fielded and successfully elected representatives to office was in the 1947 Congressional contests. The Communists were then ousted from office by the conservative majority. Since then, much Left organizing has taken extra-legal forms. □

## THOUSANDS MARK NINOY'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY

President Corazon Aquino opened the August 21 commemoration of Benigno Aquino's death with a dedication of a brass and stone plaque on the tarmac at the Manila International Airport where her husband was murdered. Mrs. Coretta Scott King, widow of slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., called Aquino a "towering giant in the non-violent struggle for freedom and human rights."

Three hours later, the President addressed a crowd of 50,000 people at the Rizal Park where she was greeted with a thunderous welcome. Her eyes glistened with tears as she said, "This day has its sadness. But when I see you by the thousands . . . the sadness goes and I believe we will succeed."

In a speech at the same rally, former Senator Lorenzo Tañada said that the large turnout was important because "in these times of difficulty, we must show everyone, especially the military, that the nation loves Aquino."

At a nationally televised Roman Catholic mass at Sto. Domingo Church where Aquino's body had lain in state, the President told the nation:

"Tyranny sowed a bullet and reaped a revolution. One man sprawled on the tarmac, one seed fallen to the ground watered with blood. One man threw in his life . . . and brought us home a harvest of freedom."

The only dark spot of the day occurred when a power outage that affected vast areas of Luzon including



Partido ng Bayan Board of Directors: (l-r) Bernabe Buscayno, Rolando Oialia, Jose Ma. Sison, Alan Jazmines, Crispin Beltran, and Grace de la Costa.

Manila cut short a dinner-time ceremony with the President at the Manila Hotel. However, National Power Corporation chairman Vicente Paterno assured the nation that it was a "technical system fault" and that there was no sabotage.

Some nervous guests started asking, "Where is Enrile?" To this day, questions remain as to Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile's relationship to the abortive coup that made the same hotel as its headquarters. □

## CAVEATS ISSUED ON MARCOS TEXTBOOKS

For 20 years that Ferdinand Marcos was in power, Philippine textbooks:

- taught school children that Marcos was the father of the nation and its savior;

- portrayed him as a near-omnipotent force who saved the country from disintegration when he assumed the presidency in 1966;

- extolled his wife, Imelda, as a queen who rescued poor Filipinos; and

- listed Marcos among such well-known characters as Emilio Aguinaldo and Jesus Christ.

Said Pacifico Aprieto of the Ministry of Education's instruction materials division, "These books were almost like brainwashing or indoctrinating the students."

Now the new government wants an end to that brainwashing. The Ministry of Education has distributed a guide to teachers on how to deal with references to Marcos and his wife until new books are printed.

The new guide tells teachers to eliminate references that "heap excessive praise" on the Marcoses. It advises teachers to talk with students about the accomplishments of other presidents. Aprieto said the new teachers' guide is aimed at pre-empting certain passages in 70 million textbooks.

Melba de Guzman, secretary-general of the national Alliance of Concerned Teachers said that a program in educational revision must be included for instructors, not just students. "The problem is if you just change the teachers' manual and if the teachers are not properly re-oriented, something might go wrong," she said.

President Aquino considers textbook revision vital to her program of political, social, and economic reforms. "Our people," she said, "have to unlearn what Marcos taught them about politics and government."

Aquino has set a low-key approach. She said she wants to be the "exact opposite of Marcos," who had portraits of himself and his wife hung in almost every government office and classroom. Streets, parks and towns were named after Marcos, his father and his wife.

Aquino has rejected the suggestion that the Manila International Airport, where her husband, former senator Benigno Aquino, was killed, be named after him. She also refused to declare August 21, the date her husband was assassinated, a national holiday. □

## FUGITIVE CRONIES FOUND

Orlando Dulay, ex-governor of Quirino Province and wanted for the murders of Aquino poll watchers, was accidentally discovered hiding out at the Lawrence, New Jersey mansion of the Marcos family August 28.

A sheriff's deputy chanced upon Dulay during an inspection of the 6-bedroom mansion. Dulay evidently had occupied the caretaker's apartment and was removing trash at the time. Lawrence Township police also reported that much of the valuables—furnishings and art—had been removed from the premises.

Dulay was held for questioning but subsequently released while Aquino government lawyers have hired an agency to track him down. Dulay's passport was immediately cancelled by Philippine officials.

In a similar development, former Philippine Ambassador to the Vatican, Bienvenido Tantoco and five other Filipinos were arrested August 22 on arms-trafficking charges.

Italian police found an arsenal of light and heavy arms in the diplomatic residence where Tantoco, a close associate of Marcos still live. Tantoco is reported to be one of Marcos' fronts for holdings abroad including commercial buildings in New York. □

## ODDS AND ENDS

**Southeast Asia Pacific Standard Time?** If Camalio Alfararo of Los Angeles had his way, statehood would be "in," sovereignty "out." Alfararo, an organizer of the First International Statehood Conference, is pushing for the inclusion of the Philippines as the 51st state of the U.S.

"The timing is economically, politically, and militarily perfect," reasoned the Filipino engineer who said that four groups met in Arizona late August to discuss the proposal. And moreover, he continued, "the U.S. needs fresh blood."

"Forty years from now, you and I might be retired. The U.S. is aging and our children are going to be affected by the demographic changes. Who is going to pay the taxes to support us?" According to Alfararo, the young people of the Philippines could. "In the Philippines, one of every two people is under the age of 20." That would mean that 30 million Filipinos could be the backbone of the social security system.

As to the logistical and cultural problems posed by such a proposal, Alfararo impatiently quipped: "Russia has 14 time zones, we'd have 12." Stunning logic, simple solution. □

**MIA Is Safe, But U.S. is Not Sorry.** A U.S. travel advisory issued last July warning travellers about poor security conditions at the Manila International Airport, has been finally lifted. After a Federal Aviation Administration team scrutinized the MIA and found its security measures improved, if not superceding international standards in certain areas, the advisory was lifted September 2.

In July, during the peak of the summer tourist season, Transportation Secretary Elizabeth Dole ordered copies of the advisory to be prominently posted in airports, and circulated widely in the travel industry. Philippine officials criticized the travel advisory as prejudicial and without basis. With the recent FAA assessment bearing out the MIA's safety, Sec. Dole has yet to explain the reasons for the issuance of the travel advisory. □



# Jobs in Doldrums, Employers in Tantrums

By WICKS GEAGA

While Philippine labor gets some relief from the sympathetic and supportive gestures of Corazon Aquino's government, its desperate plight is not getting any better. Employers blame "radicalism" in the government. The government blames employers for being unsympathetic.

The lingering depression in world market prices of the country's primary export products has left 2.6 million completely out of work and millions more simply eking out a survival on subsistence employment.

Labor Minister Augusto Sanchez believes that the situation will get worse before it gets better, and the statistics tend to bear out his view.

Aside from creating gainful employment for the masses of unemployed and underemployed, the ministry must further worry about the 700,000 workers that annually join the workforce.

## GOVERNMENT LAYOFFS

In an effort to increase efficiency in its own operations, the government is projected to layoff 500,000 employees in the coming months. While intended to help make a serious dent in its huge budget deficit, the move will obviously not improve the employment situation any.

The growing trend in financial bankruptcies and corporate retrenchment is equally worrisome. Last year saw the closure of 1,479 firms; of these, 169 were permanent.

Employers cited the high cost of production materials and inflated loan interest rates as the main reasons for plant shutdowns and mass worker layoffs. As a result, industry operated at a mere 40% of capacity in 1985.

Since the changeover in government, the situation has only eased a bit. As of May this year, 511 companies had either suspended production (58 permanently) or scaled down their operations.

## CORY'S PROMISES

The repatriation of overseas workers—especially from the Middle East which is



Striker collects donations: Political changes for the better, but no economic relief yet.

undergoing an economic slowdown—is another added burden to the country's employment woes. Of the 390,000 Filipino nationals currently working abroad, 20,000 are expected to return home yearly.

The severity of the employment problem has compelled President Aquino to declare it as one of her administration's top priorities. One of Aquino's first moves was to try to consolidate crucial support from labor by announcing major changes in the government's labor policies.

Before large crowds of workers and labor groups last May Day, Aquino pledged to abrogate repressive legislation passed under Marcos and integrate mandatory cost of living allowances into basic pay.

Recognizing the complete lack of workers rights under Marcos and the restiveness that it created among workers, Aquino proposed more favorable terms for labor.

These include the reduction of the needed vote to launch a strike from two-thirds to a simple majority, lowering the number of signatures required to petition for union certification from 30% to 20%, and foregoing the 15-day cooling-off period between the time the strike notice is given and the actual walkout in cases of union busting.

## BUSINESS ALARMED

The reaction from the business sector, as expected, was one of shock and alarm. A day after Aquino's policy announcement, the Employers Confederation of the

Philippines predicted "dire consequences" if the government continued on its proposed course.

Meanwhile the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines almost guaranteed a dearth of new investment in the country as a result of the changes.

Charges are now flying all over the business community that the government's pro-labor stance is fueling the wave of strikes sweeping the country.

Some complain that the number of strikes this year has already surpassed that for the whole of 1985 and is preventing economic recovery.

Others charge that many of the strikes are "politically motivated" and triggered by outside agitators out to destabilize the government.

They further conclude that the increased strike activity is directly behind sluggish foreign and domestic investment in the country's industry.

## PRO-LABOR MINISTER

Minister Sanchez, not a darling of the employers for his "pro-labor" pronouncements, rejects the charges as either overly exaggerated, out of context, or unfounded.

Sanchez points out that while the number of strikes have increased, the duration of most disputes has shortened. He credits the labor ministry with promoting industrial peace by settling disputes in the shortest time possible.

ton criticized Marcos for his purely militaristic approach in dealing with the insurgency and urged him to adopt economic and social reforms.

Western diplomats in Manila further pointed to the problems of training, equipment and morale which plague the Philippine military. It is simply not prepared to carry out a counterinsurgency effort, they insisted.

Aquino and her officials left no doubt in anyone's mind that the new president will hold her own when confronted by the biggest guns of the most warlike country in the world.

At the same time Aquino proved to have mastered the art of signal-sending herself. Graciously providing the U.S. president with a way out, she noted that the negative comments did not appear to have come from Ronald Reagan but from people who do not "want me to succeed."

## 'A TOUGH LADY'

Responding just as quick on this side of the ocean to the administration's criticism was Aquino's staunchest supporter among the Republicans. Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard Lugar (R-Ind.) told a September 2 press conference, "Enough is enough. We should cease and desist from any additional gratuitous comments."

Lugar, who recently returned from an August 18-20 visit to Manila, noted, "My overall judgment is one of considerable confidence in President Aquino. This is a tough lady who has a tough job."

"She is the only hope," he added on NBC's "Today" show. "That is something we ought to know in this country. All the rumors about the longevity of that govern-

ment are nonsense, but the problems are very real, and her visit to America in mid-September is critical for her and for us."

The SFRC Chairman assured Aquino of unequivocal U.S. support during his August visit, a support which he insisted was not related to the question of whether or not she will extend the lease on U.S. military bases in the Philippines.

"I suspect that if there are any doubters, they will be dissuaded by the reception the President receives when she arrives in the U.S. in September," he noted. Lugar predicted that "every senator, every congressman [will] want to be photographed with her, an outpouring of affection."

## ASEAN FIRST

Lugar admitted during his press conference that he had encountered concerns similar to those of the Reagan administration on his Asia trip which included stops in Japan, Indonesia, Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji. Some of his time, he claimed, was spent convincing Asian leaders of the competence of the Aquino government.

But Aquino hardly needed a press agent, even one as prestigious as Richard Lugar. Forging ties with her neighbors occupied a leading position on the Philippine president's agenda as she illustrated by her August 24-27 visit to Indonesia and Singapore.

Many observers labelled the visit to the two countries, members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, a "dry run" for the U.S. trip. But Aquino herself listed her reasons for choosing to visit Indonesia and Singapore before the big powers, the U.S. and Japan, on her regular biweekly television program.

Sanchez believes that, contrary to employer charges, economic demands remain the underlying cause of most strikes, as workers' wages have lagged far behind abnormally high rates of inflation—50% in 1984 and 23% in 1985. The average earnings of a factory worker in Metro Manila, for example, can provide for only 70% of the basic needs of an average family of five.

Supporters of the labor minister further argue that the total number of workers affected by strikes constitute only .6% of the total workforce.

Such a small proportion of strike-affected workers, they reason, is hardly enough to create the havoc on economic recovery and on investor confidence that employers repeatedly allege.

Many view the critical attitude of the business sector as an excuse for not cooperating more fully with the government's economic efforts. Without mincing words, President Aquino has blasted the business community for resting on its laurels and being selfish while the country is desperately groping for a way out of its economic morass.

But employers are still not enthusiastic about investing in a government they perceive as being too radical for their profit margins. They are especially trying to link Sanchez to the left-led *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (KMU—or May First Movement).

Last April, the labor ministry officially recognized the KMU—which claims a membership of 600,000 nationwide—as a legitimate trade union center. Until then, only the moderate-to-right Trade Union Congress of the Philippines held that position.

As a leading member of the Sanchez-initiated Labor Advisory and Consultative Council, the KMU plays a key role in helping draft policies on behalf of the labor movement, which the labor minister often incorporates into his own program.

Employers used to the anti-labor atmosphere of the Marcos era are climbing up the wall. But as Sanchez once said, "What's wrong with having a pro-labor labor minister?" □

Foremost on the list were her "preference in tackling first issues relating to ASEAN before attending to issues arising from relations with the world at large" and "projecting the solidarity of the Philippines with ASEAN."

Other goals included projecting the country's stability, establishing personal rapport with her counterparts, underscoring the country's special relations with Indonesia and reciprocating Singapore Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's recent visit to the Philippines.

## SUHARTO'S ADVICE

The trip was planned as a working one, aimed at rectifying the Philippines' imbalance of trade with both the oil-producing Indonesia and trade-intensive Singapore.

The western press was most fascinated with Suharto's advice to the Philippine president on how to handle communists properly. Suharto's crackdown on Indonesian communists resulted in the deaths of between 500,000 and one million people and the jailing of hundreds of thousands more. However, Aquino and the strongman signed only a memorandum of understanding covering trade, communications, tourism, and joint air and rescue operations.

In Singapore, Aquino was greeted by a wild crowd of Filipino residents chanting, "Cory! Cory!" and had to be restrained by Singapore police and her own security forces from plunging in to greet them.

Here she not only met at length with Lee, but addressed members of the Federated Chambers of Commerce and Industry, inviting them to invest in the Philippines.

The day following her return, Aquino opened a conference of ASEAN economic

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# Cory on U.S. I

Continued from front page

remarked a cabinet official. "It's a signal and it's very significant."

Added another, "This was entirely un-called for, two weeks before her trip. They float these things to put her on the defensive, which she will never be."

"It's almost as if they don't want her to succeed, the better to control her," he added. "But this housewife knows what she is doing."

Reagan, who was vacationing in his ranch in Santa Barbara, California, quickly backtracked. Presidential spokesman Larry Speakes denied that the White House intended to put pressure on Aquino or that they were critical of her policies.

## PROVIDING REAGAN AN OUT

Malacañang officials found the unidentified Reagan officials' comments particularly malicious since negotiations with the communist rebels had just begun and Aquino was scheduled to travel to Jolo to meet with Moro rebel leader Nur Misuari later in the week.

After all, noted one, "how long did it take Kissinger to arrange the shape of the table with the North Vietnamese?"

Added Amado Doronila, liberal editor of the *Manila Chronicle* and no Enrile fan, "I believe this is going to reinforce the position of Enrile and strengthen his own argument in Manila."

One Palace source pointed to the irony of the get-tough stand. Almost exactly a year ago, unidentified sources in Washing-

# Back from the USSR

By ISABEL BAUTISTA

Taking a trip to the Soviet Union is like opening a Pandora's box. More so, after the Chernobyl nuclear accident. The myths surrounding this huge country, which spans 11 time zones from east to west, just about jump at you from everybody and anybody who learns of the trip.

"Did I hear you right? You're going to Russia?" a co-worker asked incredulously. "They're not going to let you go around and enjoy yourself. The KGB will be after you all the time. You can't take pictures of things you like. Go to the Caribbean instead. There's more nightlife there."

I told him that at the moment I was not interested in the Caribbean. And furthermore, it's the Soviet Union and not Russia. Russia is just one of the Soviet Union's many republics.

Another acquaintance, an anti-nuclear believer, commented, "What for do you want to spend your vacation there? You'll be able to light up your apartment with the clothes you used in Kiev."

Statements like these were typical, and understandable. After all, no less than the President of the United States himself has dubbed the Soviet Union the "evil empire," ruled and peopled by Darth Vaders.

But, as far as I am concerned, Ronald Reagan considered former Philippine dictator Marcos an adherent of democracy. And I have a sneaky suspicion that he still does. So who and what is to be believed?

To answer that question was the main reason I wanted to go. I wanted to know for myself, to learn to differentiate myth from reality. I was fortunate to have found somebody who was also interested in visiting the USSR for his own reasons. Economically speaking, of course, in a tour two people are always better than one.

Our itinerary had to be cleared with Intourist, the Soviet travel organization. At first, I was skeptical of Intourist but when the trip ended we were extremely glad we put ourselves in its expert hands.

All our tour guides—Natasha who stayed with us throughout the tour, and our local guides in each city—were helpful and informative. The hotel rooms were spotlessly clean and comfortable. The food, although not made for dieters and athletes because it consisted largely of meat and potatoes, was well-prepared and came in overwhelming portions. Transportation was never a problem. Porters who did not require tips took care of our baggage. Tour bus drivers and guides saw to it that our bags were safely delivered to our hotels. Always, an Intourist representative quickly and efficiently arranged to have us taken to our destination, even when we were no longer part of a tour group. For us, part of the New York hoi polloi, this was the life. At least for three whole weeks. And what a change of scenery it was.

We got stuck in a traffic jam on the way to JFK airport. Then from out of nowhere, a white van screeched to a halt in front of our cab. A police car blocked the van, a cop came out and pulled out his gun. We were sure our trip was over before it ever began. Fortunately, the cop didn't fire but nonchalantly holstered his gun and drove off. It was, therefore, a boon to our blood pressure to find that in the USSR, cops don't carry guns.

We toured six cities of the European republics of the Soviet Union. Get ready for this: the Russian Federated Soviet Socialist Republic, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, the Moldavian Soviet Socialist Republic, and the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic. We covered that in two weeks. For the third week, we explored Leningrad and Moscow on our own.

Our group included two American couples (a physicist and a linguist who are both teachers in Minnesota), and an ex-U.S. Army man who is now a high-school teacher and his wife. The fourth couple were emigres from the Ukraine and Byelorussian and have lived in the United States and Canada since the end of World War II.



The woman emigrated to Canada from a Nazi labor camp in Germany. She was taken prisoner when she was 16 when the Nazis invaded her town. She has not found any member of her family and assumes they were all killed by the Nazis.

Her husband settled in Buffalo, New York as a machinist. It was his first trip back to his land of birth, while it was her second. She first came back in 1978, and had this to say on her second trip: "In eight years, there have been so many changes, so many improvements, so many things done."

Having the Russian-speaking couple with us throughout the tour was a blessing. It was easier to communicate with Soviet citizens when our tour guides were not available.

## MOSCOW

To our delight, our hotel room in Moscow overlooked the Kremlin and the Red Square. There was no mistaking the grand beauty of St. Basil's Cathedral. Our first sight of it couldn't have been more perfectly timed—when the sun's rays brought out the resplendent colors of the dazzling cupolas.

**'Oh, Filipinisky,' exclaimed the Russian youth. 'Aquino, Cory. No more Marcos. Good. Good.'**

The Lenin Mausoleum did not have the equally famous long line of tourists when we first saw it. It was almost seven o'clock and Red Square was about to rest for the night. But darkness didn't come upon Moscow until past 11 p.m. in the summer, and even later in Leningrad which is famous for its White Nights festival.

At Red Square, we took a look at Lenin and the Kremlin Wall where the ashes of American communists William Haywood and John Reed and other Soviet and international figures who contributed to socialism are interred.

In Moscow suburb, my companion at last was reunited with his great aunt, Goldie. We tracked her down at a nursing home for the aged called Internat 17.

Although an American, Goldie chose to return to the Soviet Union in 1934 with her husband and nine-year-

old son to "help in building socialism."

She is 86 and alone now. Her husband is dead and her only child died fighting the Nazis. Like any Soviet senior citizen, Goldie gets free food, housing and medical care. Since she is a private pensioner, she has her own personal allowance. Her only minor regret is the lack of English speakers in the home, except for a sturdy 92-year-old Australian socialist who is her dearest and closest friend.

In spite of their being non-Soviets, Goldie and her friend enjoy the respect and camaraderie of the Soviet residents. In the dining room, we were introduced as Goldie's relatives from New York. There was an outburst of greetings, hearty smiles and a round of warm handshakes. A nurse even gave us presents to take home.

Goldie was ever the militant. "The Soviets make up a great nation," she said. "As the vanguard of socialism, the Soviet Union knows its internationalist duty. Unlike China which doesn't know who its friends are. They denounce the Soviets after what we've done for them, and instead collaborate with American imperialism. That is what Maoism can do."

We saw Goldie again before we left for the United States. We just had to see her again.

Our other unscheduled encounter with Muscovites was in front of a bookstore selling international publications. We came during lunch hour, and just like in any other European city, Moscow's commercial establishments were closed for lunch.

As we waited for the store to open, a young man approached and tried out his halting English. After much effort, he finally found out that I wasn't an American but a Filipino.

"Oh, Filipinisky," he exclaimed. "Aquino, Cory. No more Marcos. Good. Good." He guffawed. I knew what he meant. Our new Soviet friend then ran out of the bookstore to buy us crunchy, chocolate-covered popsicles.

At the Central Lenin Museum, the middle-aged war veteran who served as our guide talked to us about the man who is loved and revered by all.

"No matter what you personally think of Lenin, to us he is our beloved leader. Before the Great October Socialist Revolution led by him, Russia was in the dark ages. Under the tsar, the people were impoverished and enslaved. Russia was backward. We were behind the other countries of Europe. But Lenin changed all that."

Then off to the USSR Economic Achievements Exhibition we went for a quick look at the best of Soviet achievements in the 70 years since the October Revolution. Most impressive were the exhibits on Soviet space exploration which rivals that of the United States.

Back in our hotel dining room, one of the couples told an anecdote about our Economic Achievement Exhibition guide, Ludmilla.

"Did you all notice how she was limping?" asked the wife. "When she climbed up our bus today, we over-

*Continued on page 11*

# Back from USSR

Continued from page 10

heard her talking to Natasha. She said, 'Natasha, God punished me yesterday. I sprained my ankle because I did not go to church. I was very busy.' She was almost in tears. I thought the Soviets don't believe in God!' The couple, who were practicing Baptists, beamed.

Being New Yorkers, we were interested in something, very close to our hearts. We wanted to see the subway, or as Muscovites call it, the Metro.

The Moscow subway is a sight that will warm any strap-hanger's heart. Immaculately clean and free of graffiti, the subway stations are made of marble and decorated like museums, with chandeliers, mosaics, sculptures, and semi-precious stones. And the trains were on time, too. Holy cow!

## ODESSA

The city of Odessa is synonymous with the Black Sea and its powers of healing both mind and body. We did not have time to take a dip in its warm waters, so we settled for just ogling Soviet bodies, bikini-clad and shiny, baking in the sun.



Aunt Goldie, now 86, chose to live in the Soviet Union since 1934 to "help in building socialism."

The beach scene in Odessa included hundreds of wooden beds instead of the familiar multi-colored beach umbrellas and towels of Jones Beach. There were also food stands, but other stalls sold books, clothes, watches, and there were even shoe repair shops.

Surprised, we asked our guide, Liza, who spoke unaccented English because she grew up in Canada but returned to the Soviet Union with her Russian parents, why there were repair shops on the beach, of all places. "Simple," she answered. "It is convenient for the people so the state allows repair stalls here."

Odessa maintains many sanatoriums. These function as vacation resorts for workers. Upon the recommendation of a physician or based on a worker's good labor marks, the labor union can send a worker to recuperate or rest with his or her family in a sanatorium. The union pays from one-third to the total cost of the stay.

We had a no-holds barred round-table discussion with a professor. As our guide promised, the professor answered all our questions candidly.

For example, on housing:

"One of our major problems in this country is housing. Not that we have homeless people. We have a right to housing, based on our constitution.

"But what is our problem? The German bombing and invasion devastated our homes and buildings during the second world war. We had to build new homes for the war victims as soon as possible. Moreover, we had to meet the increase in population.

"We were able to meet the basic requirement for housing. But now we are in a new period. We need quality, not just quantity. That's what we're doing now, building better housing. An apartment should be available for each family who needs it. Right now, there are still two-generation families in one apartment. We would like to do away with that."

Rent in the USSR has not been raised since 1928. It has remained at \$12 a month for an average-sized apartment which can accommodate a family with two children. An average worker earns \$180 a month.

Why there were a lot of soldiers in Moscow in particular:

"There is a law that all military personnel should wear their uniforms at all times, even when they're not on duty. Some of those soldiers you saw in Moscow are actually on vacation. Often, soldiers use their leaves to see Moscow, especially if they live in other parts of the Soviet Union."

Why a tourist cannot find certain books on the Soviet role in World War II:

"Even though this country has a tremendous printing industry, our books are never enough. We are a land of readers. Books sell very fast. We make it a hobby to collect books and build a library.

"You may have gone to the wrong bookstore. Or the book you want may be out of print."

So why do people read so much?

"It is a reflection on our educational system. We have free education up to university level. Free education is guaranteed to everybody. Like housing, it is a right of any Soviet citizen. In a survey done by the United Nations on the literacy rate among the nations of the world, the Soviet Union ranks second. First is Iceland. The United States? It ranked 49."

## KISHINEV

Like Moscow, Kishinev was abuzz with construction. In the downtown area, modern, western-style buildings are going up. But the hustle and bustle of a big city is noticeably still absent in Kishinev.

The city's center is Revolution Square, surrounded by a park depicting Moldavia's history, from its wars with neighboring Romania to its liberation from the Nazis. We saw a newly-wed couple and their entourage offering flowers to Lenin's monument after their wedding.

The Soviets instituted the policy that Moldavians who choose to go to a school whose medium of instruction is Russian should be taught Moldavian as a second language, or vice versa. This way the problem of unifying a country as big as the Soviet Union and preserving the indigenous language and culture is resolved.

## KIEV

It would have been more devastating for the Soviet Union had Kiev been contaminated by the disaster at Chernobyl. It is the third largest Soviet city and also one of the most beautiful. Kiev runs alongside the sparkling Dnieper River. Sixty percent greenery, abundant with parks and fountains, the city also holds some of the greatest relics of mankind, like the gorgeous St. Sofia's Cathedral and the Kiev Pechery Historical and Cultural Preserves which has a maze of caves with mummified bodies of monks.

Fortunately, Kiev was spared the worst of the Chernobyl accident. The first few days after the nuclear explosion though, the city residents were asked to bathe twice a day and take their food products to testing centers to check for contamination. When the authorities determined that Kiev was safe, life returned to normal. The only existing reminders of the disaster were the hourly water hosing of the city for dust contamination and the warning not to eat berries.

Being among the first few tourists who came to Kiev after Chernobyl, the Soviets called us "the brave ones" and thanked us for going on with the tour. But to have missed Kiev would have been a disaster in its own right.

Aside from its natural beauty, artists have added great sculptures and monuments commemorating the city's history. "The Soviets sure know how to make monuments," said an American. To bring back the grandeur of Kiev before the Nazi invasion, the city built buildings that are the exact copies of the structures that were destroyed during the war, using old photographs of the city as guide.

But structures were not the only things the war destroyed. Kiev's residents resisted the German invaders valiantly. The Nazis killed every third citizen of the city.

The passion with which the Soviets recall World War II was only matched by their enthusiasm for their free educational system. We were taken to the Shevchenko State University whose facade has traditionally been painted red. Tatyana talked about her graduation from college with a degree in English.

"Even before my graduation, I was already guaranteed a job by the state. It's in our constitution. We don't have unemployment here. After graduation, there was already a job waiting for me based on my degree and other qualifications. They asked me to stay for a year. After that, I applied to Intourist. I was accepted and here I am."

## MINSK

Like Kiev, Minsk, the capital of the Byelorussian Republic, was also devastated by the Nazis. Every second citizen in Minsk, every fourth Byelorussian in the republic perished in the war.

Unlike Kiev, Minsk is a simple city, like a thriving industrial town in the United States. It is Detroit's sister city and produces cars for the Soviet Union.

Minsk is the Soviet's sports mecca where world-class athletes are trained. This city has 30 stadiums all to itself. But Minsk gave us another treat—a chance to see Soviet classical ballet at its best for peanuts. The Minsk Ballet Company—which now rivals the Bolshoi as our guides proudly pointed out—gave us Tchaikovsky's The Nutcracker, for the equivalent of \$2.50. Ballet and other cultural events are subsidized by the state so

prices are accessible to the public.

## LENINGRAD

Leningrad, the seat of the October socialist revolution, reminded us most of New York. Walking down Nevsky Prospekt is as stifling as walking down Fifth Avenue during rush hour.

Our guide, Vera, a baby-faced 24-year-old, said tourists partly account for the crowdedness. Four million foreign tourists flock to Leningrad each year, not to mention Soviet tourists.

But on weekends, Leningrad is quiet, almost deserted. Most Leningraders have vacation houses outside the city where they spend their weekends. Our hotel's cleaning lady owns one.

The Nazis blockaded Leningrad for 900 days, from September 1941 to January 1944. Cut off from the rest of the Soviet Union, the city withstood the German siege despite starvation and death until the Nazis were routed. The Piskaryovskoye Memorial Cemetery serves as the burial site of the victims of the blockade.

The ravages of war are still fresh in the minds of Leningraders. On the streets, citizens would walk up to us with appeals to work for peace, for Americans to plead with the Reagan administration to seriously consider the Soviet Communist Party General Secretary Gorbachev's peace proposals to join the Soviet weapons test moratorium.

From residents patrolling their streets against littering came this simple plea: "We will meet you anytime in any sports field. But please, let us not meet in the field of war."

Their war memorials are daily reminders. "Tell us, why would we want war when we have just rebuilt our cities?"

Our group parted in Leningrad. What was an ordinary tourist jaunt actually provoked many questions. But for the Baptist couple, the ex-Army man and his wife, the Soviet Union will not be so simple anymore. It is certainly "different." And it works. I don't know if any of them liked it like my friend and I did. But Reagan and Stallone certainly will not have the last say.

Back in New York, my hairdresser said only "a real Soviet" can know "what it is like over there." She introduced me to Nina, a manicurist and a Russian emigre from Leningrad.

"Nina used to have a good job in Russia but she came here and does not wish to leave," said my hairdresser in an obvious attempt to "de-program" me.

But Nina herself was a surprise. "Isn't Leningrad beautiful? I love that city."

"Yes, I loved it," I said. "The culture, the museums . . ."

"But, Nina, you don't want to go back there anymore, do you?" my hairdresser butted in aghast at what she was hearing.

"Yes, I've seen them all—the ballet, concerts, music. Everything, I'm tired of them," Nina confirmed.

"See," said my hairdresser triumphantly.



Historic mosaics greet Moscow subway riders.

But Nina went on. "There's so much culture in the USSR. Here, in America, there's nothing. The cultural level of the people is very low. Over here, people worship only money. They love money. The only thing they respect is money." After a brief pause, Nina said matter-of-factly, "That's why I'm here. I love money. I work two jobs to make lots of money."

Outside, the trunk of my friend's car was being broken into by a young thief—while my friend was sitting inside the car.

We were back from the USSR, and I couldn't believe I was feeling depressed. The Philippines kept coming to mind, and how things could be and should be. □

## Auctioned Marcos Items:

# Great Wealth and Bad Taste

By MADGE BELLO

Some came as serious bidders, others were there mainly to satisfy their curiosity about the legendary Marcos lifestyle. The auction of the lavish furnishings at the disgraced couple's New York City mansion was an event simply too hard to miss. All in all, about 2,000 people came to the August 15-16 "Marcos Estate: Auction the Past to Serve the Future" sell-off at the Viscount International Hotel at the JFK International Airport in New York City.

Although all the Gauguins, Picassos, Van Goghs, Monets, and Cezannes were gone, there were enough treasures left at the Marcoses' 30-room Manhattan townhouse to gross \$800,000 at the auction.

Proceeds will be used by the Philippine Commission on Good Government to retrieve \$10 billion worth of valuables the Marcoses had squirreled away before they fled the Philippines last February 25. The 772 lots auctioned off unexpectedly went for prices higher than sponsors originally anticipated.

"People were bidding not because of the aesthetics or value of the items," said Therese Rodriguez, a PCGG volunteer. "Some did it because they felt it was a way of helping the new government."

An almost lifesize camel made of natural sea shells priced at \$700 actually sold for over \$1,000. Pillows embroidered with inscriptions like "Nouveau Riche Is Better Than No Riche At All," and "To Be Rich Is No Longer A Sin, It's A Miracle," went for an amazing \$800. The pillows used to litter the discotheque on the sixth floor of the 15 E. 66th Street townhouse.

One Filipino bidder, who did not want to be identified, said that some of the items had a lot of political and historical value. "Years from now they will be collector's items in the same way that a lot of the Nazi war memorabilia are today," she added.

A week prior to the auction, the general public had a chance to survey the posh 6-floor mansion for a fee of \$8. More than half of the 4,000 who came were Filipinos who came to have a first and last glance of the Marcoses' New York Malacañang.

Items uncovered by New York appraiser Kenneth Linsner included the tasteful and

the gaudy.

Ten-foot tall paintings of Ferdinand and Imelda entitled "Triumph of Beauty," and portraits of Ronald and Nancy Reagan adorned the walls. The paintings, believed to have been commissioned by Imelda Marcos for a hefty sum of \$100,000, were tagged at \$2,000 a piece by the auctioneers but sold for a generous \$7,500 and \$27,500, respectively.

There is widespread speculation that the Marcoses bought the paintings back themselves. There is also a rumor that the Reagans may have bought the majestic recreations of themselves, which were appraised at only \$1,000 a piece.

Valuable relics like a pair of 19th century sterling silver wine coolers worth about \$25,000 each, were found stashed away in a box disguised as the caretaker's property.

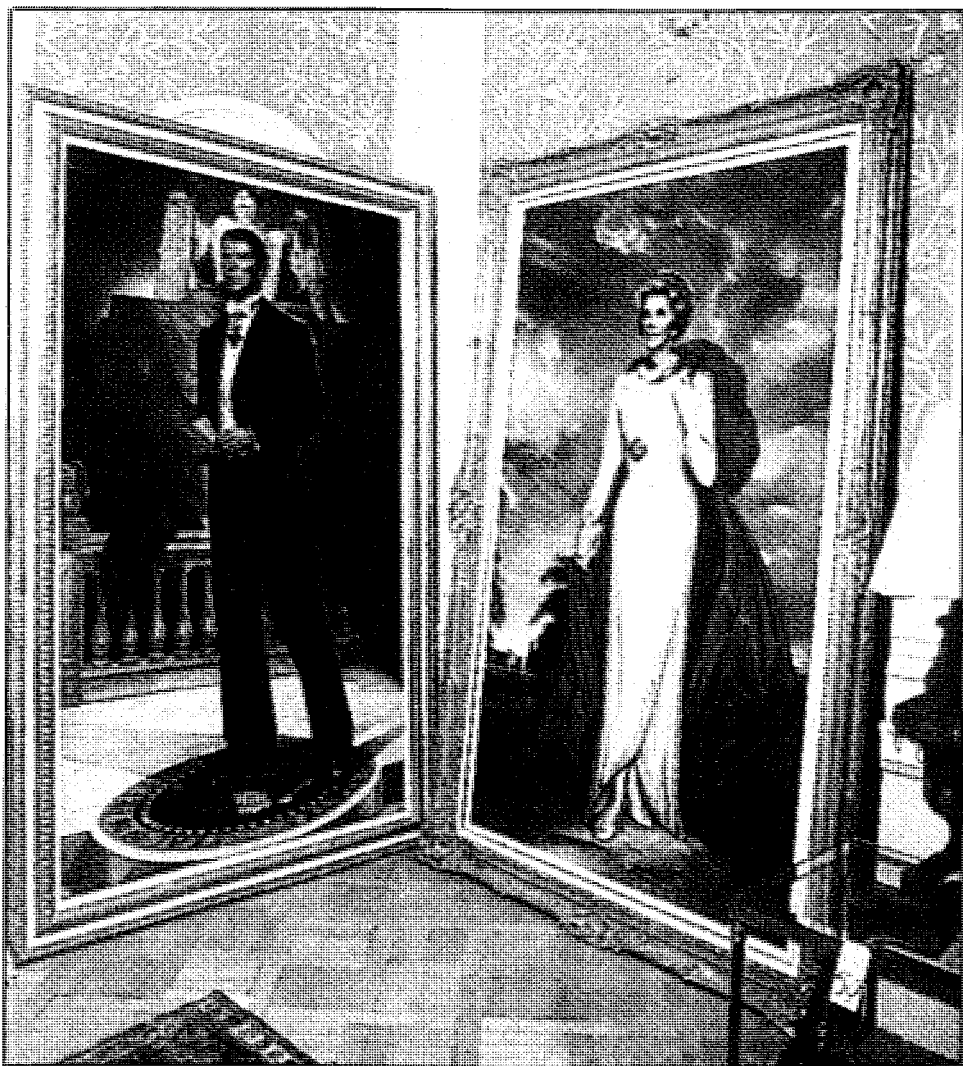
Steuben stemware valued at \$200 a piece were lying on their sides atop kitchen cabinets. There were crates upon crates of unopened crystal candleholders, enough china, sterling silverware and fine glassware to serve an army, more than 1,000 pounds of monogrammed silk and satin bedsheets, rare books and three Steinway grand pianos.

There were a few valuable antique furniture and porcelain vases left, but the rest are believed to be hidden in warehouses in the New York metropolitan area.

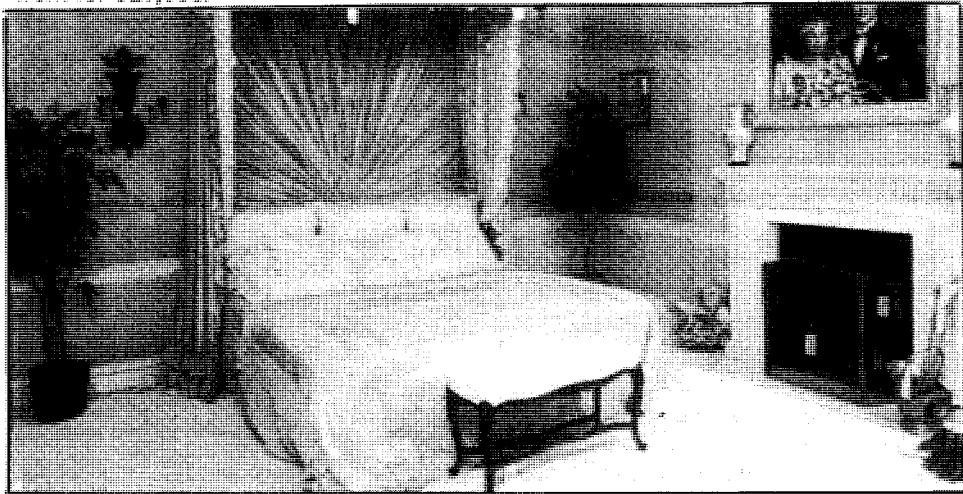
A Monet said to be worth more than \$2 million is now in the hands of a Swiss collector. Nine pieces of furniture from an 18th-century collection bought wholesale by Imelda five years ago from the estate of Mr. and Mrs. Leslie R. Samuels are with a New York dealer.

Paintings of Filipino artists like Fernando Amorsolo and lesser known ones decked some walls "sort of to camouflage what used to be there," said Rodriguez. But a search found plaques describing the missing paintings, believed to be worth at least \$100 million, which disappeared within three days after Marcos was overthrown.

Members of the New York PCGG expressed satisfaction at the monetary and political mileage generated by the auction. They hope to hold similar events in the near future on currently frozen Marcos assets in Hawaii, New Jersey, Texas, and California. □



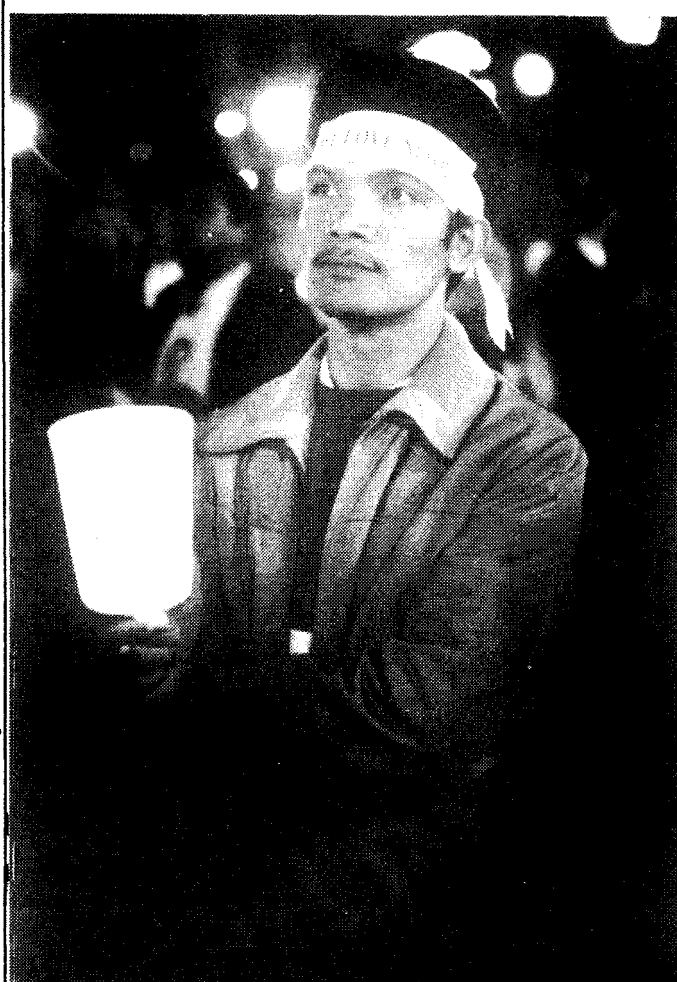
Majestic recreation of Ronald and Nancy Reagan, priced at \$1,000 each amazingly went for \$27,500.



Imelda's Manhattan townhouse bedroom was almost a replica of her lavish Malacañang bedroom brocaded bedspread, throw pillows, canopy, and all.



"Filipino Women in America: 1860-1985," a photo exhibit, opened in Berkeley, CA, September 7. The exhibit traced the presence of Filipino women in the U.S. to the little-known Filipino settlement in Louisiana as early as 1765. It also documented the role played by Filipino women through the three waves of immigration to the U.S. Filipinas in prominent civic, academic, and governmental positions were highlighted. The exhibit will be displayed in several other cities in the next few months. It was put together by the Demonstration Project for Asian Americans.



The anniversary of the assassination of Benigno Aquino was commemorated in several cities in the U.S. August 21 with candlelight vigils, masses and rallies.





Solicitor General Ordonez addresses San Francisco crowd.

## Ordonez

Continued from page 4

against the very court it has presented to the people as composed of independent-minded judges.

AK: You're saying the new Supreme Court is a well-respected one.

SO: Yes. Even the verdict applying the principle of double jeopardy will be accepted because the new Supreme court, as constituted, enjoys the confidence of the Filipino people. It includes persons of independent judgement. The initial appointments have been very well received although originally there were 15 and the composition has been reduced to 11 with only four of the old Supreme Court remaining. Initially, there will be those who will be disappointed if the court decides there was no executive intervention in the trial despite indications that in fact there had been. But the integrity of the court will offset that disappointment.

On the other hand, if the Supreme Court rules that, based on the Vasquez findings, there should be a new trial, probably the people will be jubilant. It would be in accord with a prevailing sentiment that there was a miscarriage of justice. But whatever decision is made, it would probably be in keeping with our concept of rule of law.

AK: To shift to another topic, what about political prisoners? Are there still political prisoners?

SO: One of the claims of achievement of the Aquino administration is that it has freed all political prisoners. I believe this to be true. There are certain persons who are in jail who claim they are also political prisoners and should be freed like [Boy] Morales and [Ed] Olaguer. But if you examine the nature of the charges made against them, they're common crimes. Olaguer and Morales and Joma Sison were prosecuted for political offenses. But when one is prosecuted for murder or robbery without any relationship to politics, those are common crimes.

AK: What about claims of the Task Force Detainees that there continue to be political prisoners? The Task Force Detainees knows the distinction between a common crime and a political crime.

SO: I believe that if there are any persons languishing in jail I believe that they are not there for the commission of

crimes of a political nature. When I was in the private sector, among the human rights lawyers, we filed case after case in the Supreme Court, questioning detention without due process, deprivations of rights without due process, salvagings and things like that. The Solicitor General, Estelito Mendoza, was very busy defending the government. Now that I've become solicitor general only one case has been filed for habeas corpus, involving a military officer. So, I don't defend the government anymore. There are very few challenges. So I'm always kidding: this is one time I don't do anything, and I am happy about it. Probably, this is an indicator of this administration's respect for human rights.

AK: What about the human rights commission? Has it referred cases to you yet for prosecution?

SO: To this date, nothing has been referred to me. But there is a Commission on Human Rights within the military establishment which has been created I believe on orders of Gen. Ramos. By the way, the Human Rights Commission headed by Jose Diokno, according to plans of the Constitutional Commission, may be elevated to a constitutional body. And that would probably be the best recognition that any government can give to the protection of human rights.

AK: What are the other legal challenges facing the regime?

SO: Dissidence and the communist movement. Not the Muslim separatist movement or the loyalists. The loyalists can be dealt with immediately but the dissidents cannot be dealt with immediately. We are for dialogue. But after the dialogue fails, there will be more aggressive measures. With respect to the loyalists, it will not be a long engagement. With a popular government, it is easy to put down.

AK: So your operating assumption is that the ceasefire is a temporary measure and you don't anticipate a settlement.

SO: Essentially it is temporary, it's a truce.

AK: Are you suggesting that the talks are going to fail?

SO: No, I'm not making that assumption. Essentially, Satur Ocampo and Anotnio Zumel are ideologists, but I don't think they command the loyalties of many

## Cory on U.S. II

Continued from page 9

ministers in Manila, urging them to work to bring their countries' economies "as close together as our hearts." She also pledged to work for ASEAN unity in counteracting Western trade protectionism which has victimized exports from the region.

According to Philippine Trade Minister Jose Concepcion, the officials planned to discuss a proposed across-the-board tariff reduction program that would abolish duties on all products traded within the region by the end of the century.

Although ASEAN has removed or reduced tariffs on 18,431 items, this represents only 2% of regional trade. For example, the Philippines recently cut its

tariff from 20 to 18% for ASEAN producers of snow plows, not exactly a major item in the tropical region.

### LAUREL MAKES A FUSS

Having established her international priorities, Aquino was thus free to turn her attention to preparations for the U.S. visit. Unfortunately, these were marred by machinations and posturings of some of her own cabinet members.

Vice President Salvador Laurel shocked observers in mid-August when he announced to a chapter of his United Nationalist Democratic Opposition that Aquino had asked him to take over as acting president during her trip, and that he would remove "all undesirable Cabinet ministers"

when he assumed the job.

Observers presumed he was speaking specifically of Minister of Local Governments Aquilino Pimentel, Labor Minister Augusto Sanchez and Executive Secretary Joker Arroyo. Their suspicions were reinforced one day later when former senator Rene Espina, Secretary-General of UNIDO, launched a campaign to get rid of the three ministers.

Arroyo immediately responded that Aquino would continue to manage the affairs of state by remote control. He added that he doubted Laurel had actually made such comments.

"If we look into the record, Laurel's past statements were marked by prudence and grace."

But the issue wasn't dead. One day later, on August 11, Espina insisted that "Mr. Arroyo," who, according to tradition dating back to 1946, would be left to manage matters in Aquino's absence, "definitely does not have the popular mandate to qualify."

people in the hills whose ranks have been swelled not by ideologists but by peasants who hated Marcos.

AK: Those you consider diehards, is there a chance you may work with them also?

SO: It all depends upon the policies of the current administration. There are those who are left of center who are now in government service, and these persons are well known to the public. The cases of Olaguer, Morales, or Agcaoili, are examples of persons who have been let out of prison and are now serving the government. The administration is pursuing these talks otherwise the people in the hills will become truly one with the ideologists. Peasant groups for example, have grievances to make but the answer is not communism. Actually what they want is that the government give them more attention. The government can become more paternalistic or altruistic. At least that is my perception of Central Luzon. I am in Central Luzon every weekend. The people in the hills are deprived but they are not ideologists.

AK: What is your perception of the way the U.S. views President Aquino?

SO: Well, first, my opinion is that the U.S. has expressed general support for the government and this was certainly less than what was expected. In the press, the coverage has been generally favorable. It is difficult to give an assessment of the Reagan policy which has its consequences not only on us but on other nations as well. It will have an effect on El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico. I think Reagan is holding back although on a personal level, I think he admires what has taken place in the Philippines. The public perception here in the United States is that Cory represents the new morality.

AK: There is a struggle going on within the U.S. government. Shultz wants to finesse Cory, Reagan and Weinberger want to apply more pressure. It often comes out as an economic versus military aid debate.

SO: I can very well understand the preference of President Aquino for economic aid. Much of the success of her government will depend on the achievement of economic stability.

AK: Others in the Reagan administration disagree. Do you think they are really sympathetic?

SO: These policy matters can shift very easily.

AK: Do you think the abolition of the U.S. bases should be written in the constitution?

SO: Well, when I left the country the discussions were already going on and it seems that the hardliners were no longer insisting on writing it into the draft inasmuch as the bases agreement will expire in 1991. There is a trend of thinking that says our approach to the bases issue must be one of deferment instead of confrontation at this time. But whatever happens it will be an issue in the national elections—to the senate and the lower house. And I am certain that when the President places her support behind the constitution, it will be ratified by the plebiscite. You are aware of the great popularity of the President.

AK: On another topic, why is the Swiss government cooperating with you? There are, as you know, a lot of other dirty money, gangster money, laundered and sitting in Swiss banks.

SO: You know the reason for this is Marcos himself. He left behind him a trail of documents indicating that he had bank accounts in Switzerland. How could the Swiss government ignore that fact that we had in our possession proof of the ownership of numbered accounts? It would have been ridiculous if they disputed that. They couldn't refuse to cooperate because we documented that the accounts were really there. That probably explains it.

AK: Are there precedents in international law that would assist in the recovery efforts?

SO: We have not yet invoked that at present. We are depending on goodwill. □

Aquino finally issued Administrative Order No. 4, giving instructions on how matters were to be run during her absence. Arroyo would sign all papers and decide on routine matters. Laurel was to preside over cabinet meetings.

But Laurel, who has never made a secret of his presidential ambitions, suggested that a caretaker figure was required. He finally proposed that the National Security Council be appointed to the position, a suggestion that was politely rejected.

Meanwhile, the Reaganites have been busy with damage control, being extra careful that no foot finds its way into the mouth again. State Department officials have gone so far as to tell Ferdinand Marcos to keep quiet while the new president is in the United States. But there is still no guarantee that the Reagan administration won't throw a couple of curved balls at Aquino's way. But there is no guarantee either that Aquino won't toss a couple right back. □

# Ceasefire

Continued from page 3

He has been identified with the revived Nacionalista Party which is sponging up the *Kilusang Bagong Lipunan* remnants and expecting a fresh infusion of members from the UNIDO. Led by Vice President Salvador Laurel, UNIDO has been entangled in a rivalry with PDP-Laban, a party close to Aquino.

## INFILTRATION

On August 12, Enrile claimed that Communists have ranking positions in government, "close to the ministerial level."

Then on August 28, another of his well-timed releases said the Communist Party of the Philippines has a three-phase plan of seizing power by 1991.

The plan allegedly calls for active infiltration of the government, participation in the local elections, and the exploitation of the peace talks as a respite to build up armed forces and launch fresh offensives. The defense minister claimed that the dragging out of the peace talks was a deliberate ploy to immobilize the armed forces, with the resulting impasse serving to hold in check any dissipation of the rebel ranks.

Zumel and Ocampo have had their hands full responding to the anti-communist hysteria circulating fast and thick in Manila political circles.

"We interpret the statements and actions of Enrile as indicative of the reluctance on the part of the military establishment to see the negotiations 'proceed smoothly.'"

Ocampo also denied that the left would use the negotiations to re-arm and retrain its forces in anticipation of a broader war following a ceasefire.

To underscore the "NDF's proclaimed commitment to peace," Ocampo added, "We are not for a simple aim of entering into a ceasefire agreement. We would like to see an approach by both sides where we can find a common ground. . . . Our view is that the armed struggle can only be

solved through a comprehensive political settlement."

Ocampo also said: "We would like the bloodletting to stop, but we know the armed forces would prefer a military solution."

## ACTIVE DEFENSE

That the military is itching at the chance to decimate the NPA is certain. It appears to be held only somewhat in check by a popularly supported government whose preferred method is negotiations and dialogue, and a popular clamor for peace.

Although the defense minister and the armed forces have called for a posture of "active defense," it is no secret that significant troop deployments have occurred in recent months.

Specifically, military presence has been bolstered in Kalinga-Apayao, Cagayan, Misamis Oriental, Ifugao, Nueva Vizcaya, Davao and Bicol and Southern Tagalog regions.

Six combat battalions and 42 armored vehicles have been re-deployed to provincial hotspots. Although religious, civilian and NDF groups have clamored for the dismantling of the 52,000 Civilian Home Defense Forces, as a precondition for improving the local peace and order situation, the CHDF has remained intact.

Aquino's proposed reforms in the military—such as the transfer of police supervision to the local civilian authorities, the promotion of respected generals, bringing a civic-minded style to the armed forces—have yet to take full effect. For now, Aquino has to rely on her generals to "honor their word."

But the military still seems to follow the beat of a different drummer, as shown by the Laac, Davao del Norte incident. According to accounts of both civilian and military authorities, 80 members of a scout ranger unit penetrated into NPA territory, provoking the attack. The troops refused to pull out despite the NPA's appeal for intercession by the governor and the Regional military commander and despite an earlier appeal that the jungle unit no

longer conduct operations in the area.

## SAFE CONDUCT FLAP

With the atmosphere heavily charged, the left seems to be waiting to see if the government can prevail over the military and restrain it from acting drastically. This was put to test recently over the terms of safe conduct passes for the NDF negotiators.

Prior to leaving for the U.S. for medical treatment, former senator Jose Diokno assured the NDF side that the safe conduct passes guarantee them freedom of movement to and from the negotiating site and freedom from harassment, surveillance, and arrest.

Specifically, this means that armed bodyguards of the NDF side would not be disarmed by the military. In the handwritten passes issued by Armed Forces chief General Fidel Ramos, however, the passes were only good for 30 days and required the participants to disarm. The NDF rejected the terms, delaying a long-awaited second meeting to discuss the proposed agenda.

Ramos rescinded the passes and claimed that the guidelines were only "recommendatory in nature." According to Mitra, the delay in issuing new passes to the NDF came from conflicting guidelines between the government and the military top brass on the safe conduct terms.

The NDF also hinted, that they were less than satisfied with Mitra's performance, despite the fact that Zumel, Ocampo and Mitra were all at one time press colleagues and the first meeting was more akin to "a reunion of reporters pounding the beat."

As the flap over the safe conduct passes ensued, and Mitra, in the NDF's perception was not able to quickly deliver, the NDF took a different tact.

The NDF side asked Mitra to present his credentials and a statement from Aquino authorizing him to represent the government in the talks. There were also veiled criticisms by Zumel over the haphazard conduct of the first two meetings during which time "matters were not recorded, leading to a mix-up."

The NDF's expressed preference for Diokno's participation in the talks led Mitra to stress that they are dealing with a government and not individuals. In Diokno's absence, another government negotiator, Teofisto Guingona, Auditor General, was appointed.

## CAPITULATIONISM?

While delays resulting from the NDF's security concerns are understandable, political observers in Manila are also not sure whether much of its hesitation is coming from the lack of solid agreement within the rebel ranks in support of the negotiations.

Officially, the Communist Party of the Philippines-NDF have asked their followers to lend "critical support" to Aquino and the liberal democrats, and her "progressive policies." But there appears to be varying interpretations of this policy, with "critical" being the most pronounced tendency, said a movement source.

More intriguing was a statement issued by an "NPA Special Operations Command" condemning the ceasefire talks as tantamount to "capitulationism" and predicting the "organizational death of the NPA." The talks, the statement said, amounted to the beginning of "careers of certain CPP members in the NDF."

The General Staff of the NPA quickly issued a rebuttal, saying that the entire rank-and-file was behind the ceasefire and that the NPA-SOC was an invention of rightists who want to sow confusion and division in the revolutionary ranks.

The anonymous NPA-SOC responded that they would soon surface and derided the NPA-General Staff as a hastily organized body that was set up after its leaders succeeded in supplanting CPP officials who "allegedly made the boycott mistake."

Whether the NPA-SOC is an invention of skillful intelligence agents or a reflection of deep divisions within the left, its posture certainly corresponds with Enrile and Washington's wishes for the ceasefire talks to fail. □

2. The abolition of the cash bond requirement among recruitment agencies "to allow idle capital or non-performing assets to be channelled or invested in more productive undertakings." This requirement is seen as "an additional cash outlay on top of the minimum capitalization requirement which also proved to be insufficient to answer for the joint and sole liabilities of licensed agencies.

## WORKERS' WELFARE

The most sensitive issue is the manpower export industry is workers' welfare. The prevalence of exploitation and abuse committed by both local agencies and foreign employers against migrant workers has heightened the need for more protection for workers. One of the major considerations in this area is sexual abuse of women.

To avoid exploitation of women workers abroad, the government is entertaining the idea of promulgating a ban on the hiring of women domestic helpers and entertainers. But this policy would only be effective if complemented by an employment generation strategy inside the country, for as long as the economy is unable to absorb and support its manpower, women, and for that matter, anybody, will always want to seek "better" opportunities abroad.

Another government alternative is the forging of bilateral government-to-government agreements to institutionalize protective measures for migrant workers. At present, the Philippine government has little clout, if any, in cases involving employer-employee relations. If such agreements were implemented, foreign employers may be held liable in such cases.

The government also eyes the lifting of the ban on the direct hiring of seamen to prevent manning agencies from drastically cutting salaries by collecting usurious placement fees and to allow seamen to bargain for better wages. However, this may also jeopardize seamen's protection since they may fall victims to unscrupulous employers.

Though unfavorable to some agency owners, the government also considers an alternative the ban on the deployment of workers in war-risk areas such as in Iraq and Iran.

Lastly, the government seeks to assist returning workers in their reintegration in the country after years of working overseas. POEA claims that it wants to help workers in their search for local employment or in the establishment of small-scale businesses.

As of this writing, the POEA is busy making preparations for the holding of a multi-sectoral consultation among migrant workers, private recruitment agencies, and the government. The consultation objective is to create a venue for discussion among these sectors and to draft resolutions based on these discussions. No policy statements nor promulgations has been finalized by the government as yet. Till then, migrant workers are keeping their hopes high that verbal assaults from the private sector and pressures from the elitist group of government won't bring the issue of workers rights and welfare to oblivion. □

# Non-Aligned

Continued from page 16

channelled to the public sector.

Emphasis is given to transfer of technology, energy development, infrastructure and capital goods production and scientific and technological training. In Cuba's case, Soviet aid helped modernize the sugar industry, mechanize agriculture, and make Cuba number one among all nations in health care delivery. (There are twice as many Cuban doctors doing humanitarian work around the world as those working under the UN's World Health Organization.)

Socialist loans come with a radically different set of conditions. They are generally long-term (at least a 12-year period of maturity) and granted at minimal interest—no more than 2.5% annually.

Loans are generally payable in kind, usually from the output of the enterprises built with them. When difficulties arise, interest payment can be waived, thus a debt crisis does not automatically come along with socialist loans. (Cuba has waived interest payment for 20 years.)

Even the export of raw materials to socialist countries has certain advantages and involves a different pricing structure. It is based on the overall exchange of commodities between the countries involved.

For example, the Soviets buy Cuban sugar at a price much higher than the world market price. The price is determined by the import needs Cuba has to meet through its sugar earnings. A specific raw material is given a fair value and not artificially undervalued as in the case of trade with the Western bloc.

As the MNC gains more clout, it is possible that more countries will use economic relations with the socialist camp as a counterforce to the capitalist powers.

## ECONOMIC NECESSITY

For many developing countries a policy of non-alignment is becoming a matter of economic necessity. It is not surprising that virtually no developing country, regardless of the current ideological leanings of its leaders, has remained untouched by the influence of the MNC.

For the Philippines which is at a political crossroad, non-alignment increasingly will be a subject of debate. Even Deputy Foreign Minister Jose Ingles was impressed enough by the MNC to obliquely criticize those in his

country who "talk more American than the Americans."

President Corazon Aquino has also exhibited a "non-aligned" impulse when she recently promised the Association of Southeast Asian Nations that she would work for the unity of Southeast Asian nations against the West's protectionist measures.

However, for the Philippines, the single most serious obstacle to non-alignment is the presence of the U.S. military bases. The bases are a component of the Mutual Defense Pact with the U.S., a military alliance. With that pact and those bases around, the Philippines cannot become a member of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. □

# Overseas

Continued from page 7

POEA in the recruitment and placement of workers overseas. In fact, the POEA is toying with the idea of taking over the private sector and assuming exclusive responsibility in the deployment of migrant workers.

As for the private recruitment agencies, the POEA should think otherwise or a fierce battle for survival will have to ensue. On the contrary, agencies recommend that the government dismantle its recruitment functions to allow the private sector a wider market. They argue that the POEA poses unfair competition because it also acts as the regulator of the industry. But then again, the government says that, in fact, its participation in the industry is "limited to only 25% of the total deployment as recorded in 1985." The option of abolishing or retaining such functions may be left open to foreign clients who want to deal with government agencies instead of private agencies.

To enhance the viability of the industry, private sector participants also propose that placement fee restrictions be done away with. Agencies view legally allowable placement fee rates as unrealistic considering the high cost of recruitment and mobilization. According to them, the rise of recruitment-related violations, specifically, illegal exaction cases, is due primarily to these high mobilization-costs which have compelled them to exact placement fees way above that which is allowed by government. (At present, the placement fee ceiling is set at ₱5,000 while agencies collect from ₱10,000 to ₱22,000.) Of course, workers burdened by such fees have something else to say.

The private sector's other concerns are:

1. The institutionalization of a universal system to replace the three-tiered licensing which discriminates among placement agencies, construction contractors, and manning agencies. Agencies claim that such institutionalization would allow them to deploy any skill qualification and would afford them opportunities of securing all types of projects abroad.

# Whose Interests Shall Prevail?



Prospective contract workers vie for overseas placement.

Reprinted from THE PINOY OVERSEAS CHRONICLE, July 1986

While the erstwhile overseers of the Ministry of Labor and Employment tended to be impervious to the demands of workers, the present dispensation manifests a leaning towards the sentiments of labor. Various policy announcements and promulgations prove this.

The pro-labor stance adopted by the MOLE has caught the ire of capitalists and industrialists who claim that Minister Bobbit Sanchez is out to disrupt industrial peace by encouraging workers to strike through his strike liberalization policies. This, according to them, is detrimental to economic development because this drives away capital and creates a business climate considered "high risk" by foreign investors. The disincentive to invest, in turn, results to greater unemployment and a deeper economic quagmire.

Anxious as they are and eager to preserve the state of affairs that characterized the Marcosian era, when capitalists were pampered at the expense of workers, employers staged a systematic propaganda campaign to disenfranchise the Minister and his ministry. Along with the Employers' Confederation of the Philippines' moves to oust the Minister are witch-hunting tactics labelling him a communist. Proof of his being a communist, so they say, is his profit-sharing between laborers and capitalists. Media campaigns are likewise launched to build up controversies within the ministry. Sensational are news items regarding internal rift and disagreements on policy issues.

Even the Trade Unions' Congress of the Philippines, a labor federation closely identified with the deposed Marcos regime, has also called for the ouster of Sanchez in a petition paper presented during the tripartite conference held sometime last May. Following the same McCarthyist doctrine used by some business groups, TUCP accuses the Minister of being biased in favor of *Kilusang Mayo Uno*, a left-leaning and, allegedly, a communist-infiltrated labor federation, and of catalyzing a communist takeover of government.

Of course it is presumptuous to equate a pro-labor and pro-people stance with communism. It is sheer stupidity, even, to attribute only to the communists the ability of being the vanguards of the poor and oppressed. After all, the liberal democrats, the social democrats, the national democrats, the bourgeois reformists, and even the apolitical by-standers and fence-sitters claim that they too are pro-people and, as such, sympathetic to the plight of the least of their brothers, namely, the peasants and workers. They may be so to some degree, anyway.

## NAME CALLING

So much for political name calling. The point is that the wariness concerning MOLE's policy formulations has likewise placed the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration under the private sector's close watch. Questions linger in the minds of private recruitment agencies regarding the policy thrusts of the POEA. Will it adopt MOLE's pro-labor stance to the detriment of private recruitment agencies? Will it enforce harsh police measures to lessen, if not eliminate, irregularities in the industry? How does it perceive the manpower export industry as an alternative to domestic employment generation? What will it do to effectively eradicate abuse and exploitation of labor? Will its policies jeopardize business interest?

Notwithstanding such apprehensions, private recruitment

agencies engage in aggressive lobbying campaigns to court POEA's sympathies. While applauding some of POEA's pronouncements, they are also quick to retaliate, through the mass media, at unfavorable moves by the POEA. Alas goes the "carrot and stick" syndrome.

Not altogether unmoved by the pressures of recruitment agencies and still aiming to promote the welfare of migrant workers, the POEA finds itself in an edgy position, hesitant as yet to implement concrete plans for the manpower export industry.

For starters, the POEA has published and distributed memorandum circulars for stricter implementation of past rules and regulations. In these circulars, it reiterated the minimum requirements for contract such as, guaranteed wages and overtime pay based on government-set standards, free transportation to and from job site, free medical and dental treatment, just causes for contract termination, workmen's compensation benefits and war hazard protection repatriation of remains and properties in case of death, adequate board and lodging facilities, grievance machinery for workers, among others.

The industry faces multifarious problems. Discussion on some of these problem areas places POEA in a not-so-comfortable and a not-so-conclusive position.

## MARKETING

As somebody aptly puts it, the overseas employment

**'The government should look into the track record of host countries on the treatment of migrant workers.'**

industry is a "demand's market," meaning, conditions that prevail are set or dictated by sectors comprising the demand side of Adam Smith's economic forces. This leaves the supply side, in this case the migrant workers, vulnerable to the whims of people in the demand segment, the foreign employers or principals.

This bleak business atmosphere, according to the government, is due to the decline in the volume of world trade and the slump in oil prices and overall revenues of manpower-importing countries. In the Middle East, where the bulk of Filipino migrant workers are deployed, for instance, lesser oil revenues has slowed the pace of construction works which, in turn resulted to a cut in the demand for expatriate labor. Companies can no longer afford to hire as much migrant workers as they used to. Nationalization policies are being implemented, thus, restricting the entry and employment of overseas workers.

A shrinking market for labor is bad enough for the industry. What more if it is coupled by harsh international competition? The availability of countless workers from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand, India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka who accept lower wages than Filipinos has serious repercussions in the bargaining power of Filipino expatriate workers. The tendency is to pass on to worker-applicants recruitment-related expenditures and to downgrade the terms and conditions of employment.

Cognizant of this fact, recruitment agencies propose that

the existing policy of according multiple accreditation to foreign employers be abolished. They argue that by allowing foreign employers to deal with more than one agency for the fulfillment of their manpower needs, local competition worsens. So does the perennial problem of illegal recruitment activities and fraud.

## SOLUTIONS

Various solutions have been recommended to ease these problems.

The labor sector, represented by KAISAHAN or *Kaisahan ng mga Pilipino sa Ibayong Dagat*, says that, "Over and above 'market demand,' it is proposed that the government look into the track record of host countries on the treatment of migrant workers, the legal protection and guarantees available to them."

Bilateral agreements should be forged with governments of manpower-importing countries to assure the well-being of Filipino expatriates in spite of the deteriorating market. More importantly, the government should reorient the overseas employment program to put greater emphasis on the need for domestic employment generation, which, the workers believe, is the ultimate solution to the problems accompanying outmigration.

On the other hand, the private sector-prescribed remedy involves an intensification of marketing and promotional campaigns overseas through governmental and non-governmental missions. This should be complemented by an intensive skills training and strict trade testing to upgrade the quality of workers sent abroad. Since the trend shows that demand has shifted from construction and low-skilled workers to service, operations and other high-skilled workers, a manpower pool or skills bank of qualified and highly skilled workers should be maintained to increase Filipino competitiveness in such skills. But the government is still quite undecided on whether it will maintain the country's competitive status in the low-skilled labor market or develop new markets for high-skilled workers.

Needless to say, the migration of workers to foreign lands has caused enough brain and brawn drain to the country's labor force. The loss of highly educated and highly productive Filipino workers has created a liability in the economy's development efforts. Others argue therefore that the government should regulate the outflow of skilled workers and strictly intervene in the movement of skills.

Some recruitment agencies further propose the floating of wage rates to replace the present scheme of pegging the minimum wage at \$250. The rationale for this proposal, according to them, is that it would enhance competitiveness of Filipino manpower in the already diminishing international market through the free interplay of the supply and demand factors. Still, other private sector participants espouse the lowering of minimum wage rates instead of total abolition of government controls in the determination of wages.

These proposals are obviously objectionable to workers inasmuch as non-protection concerning wages redounds to the degradation of workers and signals the total collapse of the manpower export industry. Already, workers are suffering the consequences of their commodification. "Removing wage prohibitions would manifest an utter disregard for their well-being," KAISAHAN exclaims.

## LICENSING AND REGULATION

As if the market situation and harsh international competition are not worse enough, the industry still have to contend with a much harsher competition among recruitment agencies in the home front. The disproportionate number of recruitment agencies in the country has caused a lot of heartaches among victims of excessive fee exaction, employment contract substitution, illegal recruitment, falsification of documents, and other similar fraud.

The susceptibility of workers to fraud and exploitation underscores the need for effective government supervision and regulation of the industry. There must be strict monitoring and strict enforcement of rules to ensure the integrity of business operations. Viability of recruitment agencies should also be guaranteed. Weed out non-viable agencies to trim down the number of industry participants. Corollarily, the government should strictly implement LOI 1190 which bans the issuance of new licenses to fledgling employment agencies.

## ILLEGAL RECRUITMENT

The above-mentioned proposals, KAISAHAN states, should be implemented along with the following: 1) the reactivation of the Task Force on Illegal Recruitment to facilitate prosecution of illegal recruiters; 2) the implementation of effective nationwide information campaigns regarding illegal recruitment; 3) institution of specific courts to adjudicate illegal recruitment cases; 4) provision of heavier penalties to unscrupulous agency owners; 5) delegation of police powers to the Minister of Labor to enable him to make arrests as stipulated in PD 120 and EO 1922; and, 6) the review of the minimum requirements regarding deployment.

These measures entail a greater role played by the

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