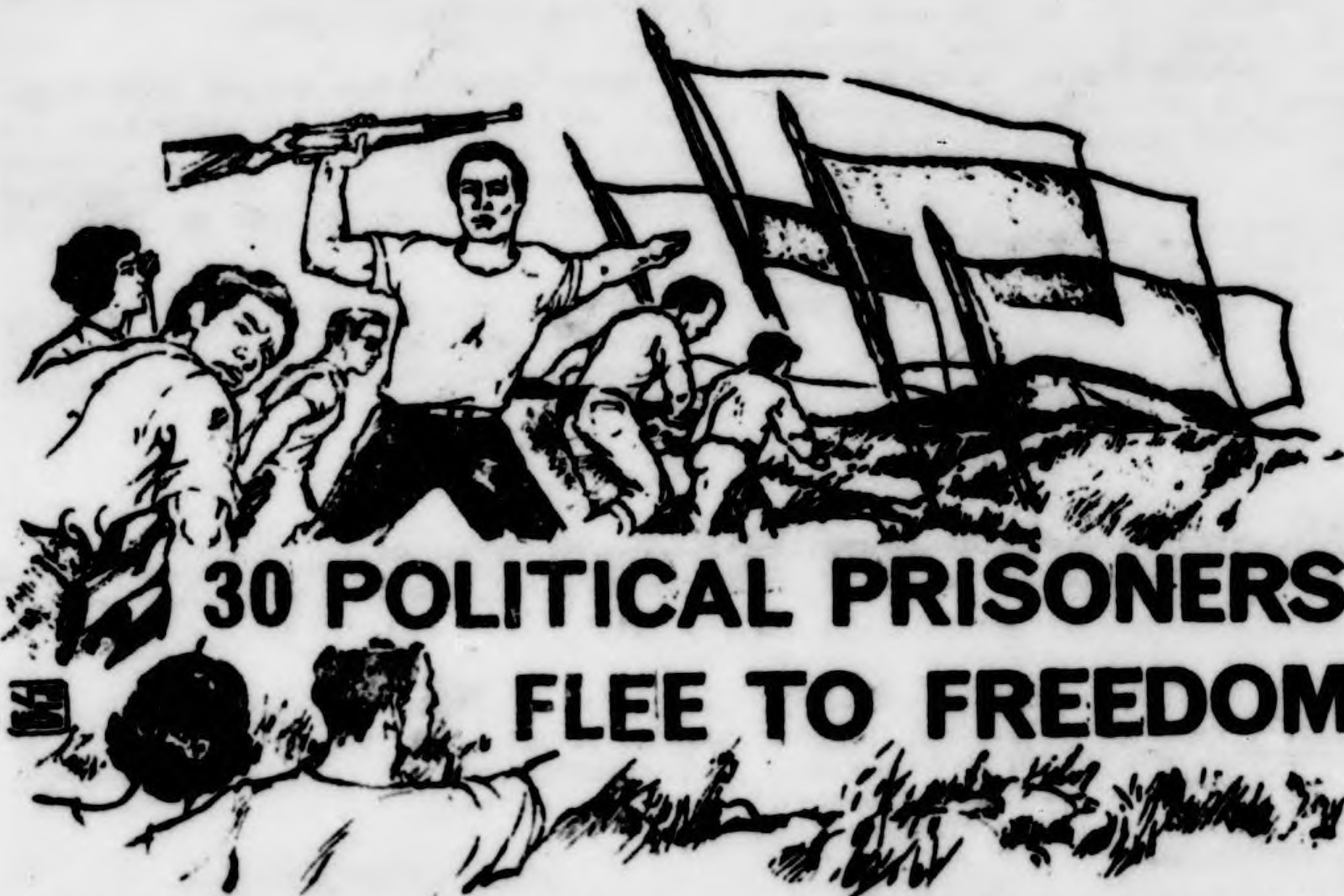


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30 POLITICAL PRISONERS FLEE TO FREEDOM

SORSOGON, Sorsogon, Jan. 30 -- Some 30 political prisoners escaped from the provincial jail in this capital town at dawn yesterday while the PC chief, Brig. Gen. Fidel Ramos, and his men were having a party nearby.

Among those who fled to freedom were former Mayor Johnson So of Matnog town, this province, cadres of the New People's Army, a number of youth activists, and peasants whose only "fault" was to organize themselves for their mutual protection.

They fled with nine shotguns, a Thompson submachinegun and an M-16 rifle (Armalite).

The escape was so well planned and carried out that it went without a hitch. Not a single shot was fired. What the political prisoners did was to disarm a guard at the

jail and tie him up to prevent him from raising an alarm.

A LIBERATION correspondent who interviewed some of the escaped political prisoners quoted them as saying they started the jailbreak at about 2 a.m. yesterday while the PC chief and his men were busy attending a party at the Sorsogon School of Arts and Trades.

The school is just a stone's throw from the provincial jail.

From the jail, the political prisoners crossed a ricefield into a barrio where they were wholeheartedly welcomed by the rural folk. It was at the barrio that they separated from one another.

The NEA cadres were reported to have returned to their posts. Ex-Mayor So was said

Inside

● NPA SLAYS TOP BICOL PC OFFICER ● FOUR PRIESTS ARRESTED ● 144 AFP TROOPERS VOW MARCOS
DOWNFALL ● COLONEL ZOBEL DECOMMISSIONED ● IMELDA -- BIG BUYER ● EDITORIAL ● POINT-BLANK

to have gone with them.

According to the escaped political prisoners interviewed by the LIBERATION correspondent, they planned their escape to freedom when they learned that they were being transferred to the headquarters of task force "Isarog" in Camarines Sur.

This camp of the fascist forces of the dictatorship is notorious for its vicious methods of torture perpetrated upon prisoners, especially those arrested for "subversion".

The "great escape" was the biggest ever in this province, and is the first mass flight to freedom by political prisoners since the dictator Marcos initiated the mass roundup of democratic and progressive elements upon his imposition of martial law last year.

It was a big blow to task force "Isarog" which had been boasting that it had suppressed the anti-fascist movement in the Bicol Region.

On the other hand, it is expected to

serve as an inspiration to the thousands of other political prisoners still detained arbitrarily in the military camps and in civilian prisons throughout the country.

On account of the mass jailbreak, and the encounter in Camarines Sur last Jan. 22 at which the assistant PC provincial commander was killed (see following article), puppet troops have set up checkpoints in various parts of the Bicol Region.

At these checkpoints, the passengers of all passing buses are made to alight and to produce their residence certificates or other identification papers.

Those who have not secured 1973 "cedulas" or other means of identification are given a "lecture" at the military camps. Those on urgent business who remonstrate with the fascist troops over the delay are detained.

As a result, these victims of the high-handedness of the military in the region are swelling the ranks of the anti-fascist forces.●

NPA slays top Bicol PC officer

IRIGA CITY, Jan. 23 (Delayed) -- A ranking PC officer in Camarines Sur and eight other PC troopers were killed in an ambush staged by the New People's Army on a jeepload of AFP soldiers in Barrio Sta. Maria, this city, yesterday.

Slain was Capt. Ernesto Maristela, assistant PC provincial commander of Camarines Sur. Two other PC officers were killed in the ambush.

Rural folk of Barrio Sta. Maria said Maristela and his men were on their way to a "loyalty oath-taking" ceremony in front of the barrio's elementary school when they were attacked.

The people of Camarines Sur heaved a collective sigh of relief upon hearing of Maristela's death because this PC officer had launched a terror campaign in the province, especially among the rural folk.

Before the ambush at which he met his death, Maristela had been boasting that his mercenary troops had "crushed" the anti-fascist revolutionary movement in the province.

The ambush in Barrio Sta. Maria was the

people's reply to the military's empty boasts about having broken the revolutionary movement not only in this province but elsewhere in Bicol.

People's Forces Gaining

SORSOGON, Sorsogon, Jan. 15 (Delayed) -- The New People's Army and allied democratic forces in this province have been scoring one victory after another in guerrilla actions against the forces of the US-Marcos dictatorship.

Among these were:

1. An encounter in Barcelona, this province, last December 9 at which four PC soldiers were killed.

2. The disarming of three soldiers by the peasant masses in Bulan, this province. The peasants confiscated three .45 caliber pistols from the troopers.

In the December 9 encounter in Barcelona, a trick of the fascist forces to conceal their setbacks was exposed. Some of those killed were stripped of their uniforms and their bodies were covered with

sand.

The troopers appeared ridiculous and fooled nobody but themselves when they clothed one of their dead with a shirt marked, "NPA '72" (Nagkakaisang Progresibong Artista-arkitekto).

The four soldiers were slain while their unit was conducting "mopping-up operations" in the barrios of Barcelona. Little did they know as they left their camp that they themselves would be "mopped up" by the NPA.

The three soldiers who lost their .45

Nun, priests arrested

The growing militant participation of the clergy in the struggle against the dictatorship has led to intensified fascist depredations against them.

Among the latest victims are Father Roger Abasolo, who was arrested in the first week of February; Father Jose Geronimo, parish priest of Sta. Cruz, Manila and Father Jose Canu of the La Salle Fathers, who were both arrested on January 30; and Sister Conchita Valerio, Religious of the Virgin Mary (RVM), who is now being held under house arrest.

Earlier, on January 28, Father Moises Andrada, OP, and five seminarians were arrested by agents of the dictatorship.

Father Abasolo was a leader of the National Organisation of Concerned Citizens (NoCC) which actively campaigned against the Marcos constitution before the plebiscite was called off by the dictatorship.

Father Geronimo was the "master of ceremonies" of the "Misa Para Sa Kalayaan" held at the Binondo church on January 21. The "Misa" was held as a mass protest against the death of civil liberties of the Filipino people and against the dictatorship.

It is believed that Father Geronimo's arrest was the state's immediate reaction to his patriotic sermon during the "Misa" at which he vehemently condemned the tyranny of the fascist dictatorship against the Filipino people.

Father Canu, before his arrest, had been active in community work among the urban poor near the La Salle Fathers' home on Hillcrest, Queson City. He is a leader of "Mga Kaibigan ng ZOTO (Zone One Tondo Organisation)".

Sister Valerio also had been active in ZOTO projects and was active in the cam-

caliber pistols to the peasants in Bulan were disarmed as they sat in a passenger bus waiting for the vehicle to start on its trip.

Barrio folk told LIBERATION that the fascist nature of the intelligence men in mufti oftentimes surfaces. They said the soldiers go on drinking sprees, force the peasants to cook them chicken for "pulutan" and depart without as much as a thank you. ©



campaign against the Marcos constitution.

This latest crackdown on anti-fascist elements in the clergy is only a continuation of the dictatorship's repressive measures against progressive members of religious orders who have worked against injustices perpetrated by the state on the Filipino people.

Earlier, the San Francisco Examiner had reported the deportation from the Philippines of two American priests belonging to the Franciscan Order. The priests were identified as Fathers Bruno Hicks and John Peterson.

The two priests, according to the American newspaper, worked in social action projects in Guihulngan, Negros Oriental, and operated a Catholic radio station there which had been involved for years in programs that advocated land reform and the organization of sugar workers, and analyzed the structures that oppressed the masses of the Filipino people.

Another foreign priest, Father Leopold Vanvogh, a Dutch Carmelite assigned as social action director in Leno, was also shipped out in the same surreptitious manner as the Franciscan priests.

Heads of religious orders concerned are now protesting to Malacañang the various arrests of and other repressive measures against their members. ●

144 AFP officers vow Marcos downfall

One hundred forty-four officers of the reactionary Armed Forces of the Philippines and men under them have banded together under an anti-fascist banner and have pledged to help bring about the downfall of the US-Marcos fascist regime.

Organizing themselves into the "Revolutionary League of Officers and Men of the Armed Forces of the Philippines", the soldiers issued a manifesto saying:

"Let it be known to the entire people that we are resolved to take part in a popular movement to overthrow the Marcos dictatorship."

Working underground for the moment, they declared that "at the opportune time", they would move in concert with their countrymen to frustrate the dictator Marcos' "evil ambition" to rule for life by force.

In the league are five full colonels, 11 lieutenant colonels, 15 majors, 30 captains and 83 first and second lieutenants. They come from the AFP's three major services.

These officers are sworn to lay down their lives if necessary to uphold the interests of the masses of the Filipino people as against the selfish interests of US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

The formation of the league confirms foreign journalists' reports of serious rifts within the reactionary AFP.

League to Back Popular Resistance

From their secret headquarters, the anti-fascist officers and men within the AFP said in their manifesto that they only needed 10 influential leaders -- be they senators, governors or congressmen -- who would stand up in as many provinces and their revolutionary league would help lead popular resistance.

"Subsequently," they said, "we in the AFP who are opposed to the Marcos dictatorship will act and command our men to side with that popular resistance. When this occurs, we are certain that there will be more officers and men ... who will rally to the flag..."

Explaining their decision to join the rest of their countrymen in the struggle

for liberation, the revolutionary soldiers cited the dictatorship's "unbridled abuses against the people".

"There is no more doubt that Marcos has the insatiable ambition of staying in power without end and at whatever cost," the league said. Further on, it added, "Marcos can no longer be dislodged from power without the use of revolutionary force."

Regarding the dictator's flattery that he is out to "save the Republic and build a new society", the league said this was nothing but an excuse to "seize power in order to preserve the status quo, especially his ill-gotten wealth".

It likewise denounced the "citizens' assemblies" which, it said, were "mere tricks for creating a semblance of popular support for the Marcos dictatorship and its anomalous brand of 'constitutional rule'".

The people have been divested of their democratic rights, the league added, "for the sake of serving the selfish and narrow interests of Marcos and...what the revolutionary activists have precisely described as US imperialism (including Japanese interests), feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism".

"Gains" Under Martial Law Debunked

The revolutionary AFP officers and men then proceeded to analyze the seven priority areas of the dictatorship. Following are some of their comments:

On peace and order -- "The setting up of the Marcos dictatorship is the single biggest crime causing unprecedented social unrest and rebellion...The executors of Marcos' order in the AFP (Enrile, Espino, Ramos) have been responsible for criminal abuses inherent in such widespread activities as zoning (zona), torture, massacres, extortion, etc. Martial law is...responsible for the mass evacuation and dislocation of the lives of at least 50,000 people in the Cagayan Valley and hundreds of thousands of both Christians and Muslims in Mindanao... The 'private armies', especially those in alliance with Marcos, are still around and keep their unregistered firearms. The arrest and disarming of such warlords as Abellan, Alberto, Crisologo and the like were

mere palabas."

On land reform -- "Marcos is the last person to be expected to be for land reform. He is a big landlord. He owns huge estates in the Cagayan Valley, Ortigas Avenue, Nueva Ecija, Mindoro, Negros, Panay and Mindanao. Without hesitation, he dispatches huge military forces to suppress the peasant masses whenever they are already fighting for their land."

On economic development -- "Contrary to the puppet views of Marcos, US and Japanese investments will not solve the basic economic ills of the country. As a matter of fact, it is foreign imperialism which has been responsible for making the country a mere source of raw materials and cheap labor, a dumping ground for imported manufactures and a field for lopsided quick-profit investments."

On development of moral values -- "It is not true that graft and corruption have ceased upon the imposition of martial rule. Big-time graft and corruption continue... Officers and men of the AFP, especially those close to Marcos, are now living it up. They are now the dispensers of license for gambling and prostitution houses... and other activities of ill repute. They extort freely from business establishments and ordinary people. There is a thriving racket

even in the issuance of curfew passes and all sorts of military clearance."

On government reorganization -- "The misfits still abound in the government; Marcos himself is the best example of these... If there is going to be any retrenchment..., it is mainly to scrounge for funds for the build-up of military personnel and equipment and the launching of more massive military operations against the people."

On educational reforms -- "The 'educational reforms' of the Marcos dictatorship involve mainly the application of recommendations of the Presidential Commission to Survey Philippine Education (PCSPE), a body instigated and financed by the World Bank and the Ford Foundation... Progressive teachers and students have been forced out of schools, colleges and universities."

On social services -- "A regime that relies on sheer armed forces cannot be expected to provide social services to the people... Under the Marcos regime, the SSS, GSIS, Medicare, PACD and the SWA have been used as mere milking cows of the corrupt bureaucrats... We are certain that with the increase of popular resistance, funds will flow to the AFP but not to social services. Although we belong to the AFP, we detest this... because it is meant to suppress the people and exacerbate their sufferings."●

Col. Zobel decommissioned

While the alleged plot against the one-man rule of Marcos could have been merely a product of his sick mind, its effects have been very real indeed.

Even before the assassination attempt against his wife, he had caused the arrest of Eugenio Lopez, Jr., Jesus Cabarrus, Jr., Sergio "Serge" Osmena III and Eduardo Figueras, among others.

The "plot" provided Marcos with a pretext for holding these wealthy scions as hostages in his unbridled efforts to concentrate not only power but also riches in his own hands.

Recently, Marcos served warning to the Zobel-Ayala family when he "deactivated" Col. Enrique Zobel of the Philippine Air Force.

Zobel's services were terminated without the benefit of a letter by way of explanation. His terse "orders" were relayed to

him by telegram from Malacañang.

According to close associates of Zobel, two things could have precipitated the Malacañang action against the wealthy colonel.

The first stems from the Zobel's insufficient contribution to the Marcos coffers and the colonel's unresponsiveness to madame's caprices.

Secondly, staff officers in the AFP are apprehensive about the "popularity" of Zobel and fear that he may take it in his head to form a "rebel" group in the PAF. The military top brass are not taking any chances, especially since Zobel is slated to be promoted to general next year.

The Ayala Corporation, which is owned by the Zobel family, has extensive holdings in real estate, such as Forbes Park and such other "enclaves" of the rich as Magallanes, Dasmarinas, Bel-Air, Urdaneta and San Lo-

renzo villages.

The corporation also controls FGU and Filipinas Life Insurance Corporation, CCP Finance Corporation and People's Bank and Trust Company. Besides owning buildings at Makati Commercial Center and Magallanes Commercial Center, it also owns Hotel-Intercontinental in Makati, Davao Insular Hotel and a tourist hotel being constructed in Calatagan, Batangas.

At present, Enrique Zobel is kept apprehensive over the fate of Ayala Corporation by rumors from Malacañang of an impending crackdown on the corporation for tax-evasion.

Imelda — Big Buyer

THE FOLLOWING ITEM BY MAXINE CHESHIRE APPEARED IN THE JANUARY 25 ISSUE OF THE SAN FRANCISCO EXAMINER:

When Philippines President Marcos' wife went shopping in the Kenton Center's expensive boutiques last week, one of her husband's military aides came along behind her, paying cash for everything from a roll of \$20 bills.

Before she finished in the shops of designer Valentino and Cartier's, she had spent \$8000. Most of that was at Cartier's for the works of Aldo Cippulo, the jet set Cellini who is famous for his \$1000 gold "love bracelets" which have become status symbols among such couples as Liz and Richard Burton.

Mrs. Marcos, who was getting a movie star treatment during her stay in Washington, was flashing perfect, almond-shaped fingernails lacquered silver and at least an inch long.

Even her two bandaged fingers, still healing from the knife wounds of an attempted assassination, glittered with the sterling polish.

"They were undamaged when my fingers were cut," she said. "Five days after (the attack), I had a manicurist summoned. My doctors protested, because they needed to look at my nails every day to see if I was healing properly, no black spots behind them or anything."

"I told them, fine, I'll use polish remover and let you look and then get them manicured again. I'm very vain about my nails."●

FOREIGN NEWS COMMENT

King Marcos

THE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM THE JANUARY 19 EDITORIAL OF THE HONOLULU STAR-BULLETIN:

Ferdinand E. Marcos has in effect crowned himself king of the Philippines by brazenly junking the plebiscite that was to have decided the fate of that country's new constitution. That constitution permits him to remain in power indefinitely -- until he chooses to call elections.

Marcos claims the "citizens' assemblies" that considered the constitution and his martial law policies made the plebiscite unnecessary. But there was no secret ballot, and opponents were muzzled -- the deck was obviously stacked. Although he insisted the assemblies showed overwhelming support for him, it has been reported that the plebiscite was abandoned because the voters would not have approved the constitutional change.

Without freedom of speech, the plebiscite would have been unacceptable in any case, and should have been deferred until martial law had ended. But the assemblies, conducted with all the impartiality of a kangaroo court, were even worse.

Now that the people have been denied the opportunity to decide a question so fundamental as a new constitution, there can be no question that Philippine democracy is shattered and that a dictator rules. The question now is how long.●



Revolt in AFP further isolates US-Marcos clique



We are in receipt of a manifesto issued by 144 officers of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and men under them, repudiating the US-Marcos dictatorship.

In the same declaration, the AFP officers and men pledged to join the rest of their countrymen "at the opportune time" to bring about the downfall of the despicable fascist regime.

That members of the reactionary AFP should disavow the dictatorship illustrates the utter isolation of the US-Marcos clique from the Filipino people.

They are, after all, the very force that Marcos and his US imperialist masters expect to prop up their tottering rule.

No less significant to our mind are events in recent days which clearly demonstrate the intensifying opposition of the various sectors of Philippine society to the fascist dictatorship.

These events, some of them reported upon in this issue of *LIBERATION*, include (a) the renewed crackdown on priests, nuns and seminarians for their anti-fascist activities, (b) the resurgence of the national democratic movement in campuses around the country, (c) the recent victories posted by the New People's Army, (d) the valiant armed resistance of the national minorities in Mindanao to efforts to subjugate them, and (e) the burgeoning world opinion against the dictatorship.

The failure of the dictatorship alternately to terrorize and cajole the masses of the people into falling in line with its anti-democratic rule should convince even the most skeptical that Marcos and his backers may have a lot of bark but not much bite.

In their manifesto, the revolutionary AFP officers and men gave as the rationale for their decision the "unbridled abuses (of the dictatorship) against the people".

Also, they pinpointed the enemies of the Filipino masses to be US imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat capitalism.

Against the altogether transparent propaganda of the US-Marcos clique that the Filipino soldiers are fighting for "democracy" and "our free way of life", the AFP officers and men are discovering the verities of their existence.

In point of fact, they are expected to play a progressively leading part in suppressing the people's legitimate aspirations for liberation from the evils that have kept them in poverty and bondage.

Certainly, as it is constituted and motivated, the AFP is meant to provide the cannon fodder to uphold a decadent and fascist regime.

As the Filipino people, in their vast millions, move to strike the final blow for their liberation, they welcome the decision of the patriotic AFP officers and men to join hands with them in the sacred and historic task.

When they do act "at the opportune time", the progressive AFP men will be welcomed in revolutionary fraternity and camaraderie by the people as Lieuts. Victor Corpus and Crispin Tagamolila were welcomed in an earlier day.

And they will know that they and other democratic sectors of society now struggling in various ways against the dictatorship shall have brought national salvation that much closer.●

The truth will out. And this is exactly what happened in the television commentary of that reliable Malacañang leechdog, Emilio Jurado.

Towards the conclusion of Jurado's expectedly inane commentary last January 15, there were the usual slogans of the dictatorship.

Something went haywire, however, and in the ruse, what came out was the guide by which the dictator had been ruling the country: "Ang panga-abuso...ang kailangan."

* * *

While on the subject of the dictator's empty slogans, we might pass on to you the not-so-funny story we have received about TV funnyman Ariel Ureta.

Remembering a TV commercial for bicycles and caught in one of his playful moods, Ureta told his audiences, "Sa ika-uunlad ng bayan, BISIKIETA ang kailangan".

He was promptly picked up by the military, brought to camp, and was made to huff and puff the whole day -- on a bicycle.

* * *

In the "constitution" approved in haste by the Marcos-dominated constitutional convention and "proclaimed" by the dictator as "ratified" by the Filipino people is a provision (Sec. 20, Article VIII) which reads as follows:

"The Prime Minister shall act on every bill passed by the National Assembly within thirty forces, or to any penal institution, or government orphanage or days after the date of receipt thereof; otherwise, it shall become a law as if he had signed it."

Now, then, dear reader. Does the Prime Minister go to the orphanage and the bill to prison, or is it the other way around?

* * *

The dictator tried to put on the charm at his recent press conference. He told the foreign press that thenceforth, he would be available for interviews at which the journalists would be free to raise whatever questions they had in mind.

Taking Marcos' statement at face value,

two Australian journalists asked some rather pointed questions at the press conference, some bearing on his maneuver to perpetuate himself in power through the so-called citizens' assemblies which he himself had rigged.

At the end of the press conference, the two newsmen were "invited" to the military camp for interrogation.

The colonel who quizzed them had a likely story why the foreign journalists were "invited". Having been to Australia, he said, he just wanted to exchange views with them on the subject of their country.

Ho-hum!

* * *

The dictator's wife, Imelda, made some sense for a change when she said in the United States January 26 that there is oppression in Asia.

"How can you have democracy when some people are oppressing others in your country?" she asked, arching an eyebrow for effect.

The people of Asia cannot really enjoy the benefits of national democracy until they get rid of such oppressors as Park Chung Hee, Nguyen Van Thieu, Suharto, Lon Nol, Kittikachorn, Chiang Kai-shek, Marcos and their US imperialist masters.

* * *

Pampanga has a new PC provincial commander.

The official announcement said the previous commander, Col. Ponciano Gonzales, had died of a stroke "while supervising a military operation in the mountains of Hacienda Dolores in Porac, Pampanga".

Namatay sa takot?

* * *

At the Supreme Court hearings on the Marcos "constitution", Chief Justice Concepcion asked Solicitor General Mendoza why it was that the court proceedings were never reported upon by the media.

Aware that the newspapers and radio-TV stations are in the vise of Marcos censors, Mendoza could only mumble, "I'll look into that, Your Honor".