

# LIBERATION

PUBLISHED BY THE PREPARATORY COMMISSION OF THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT

VOLUME II NO. 7

DECEMBER 10, 1973

## More mass arrests as Dec. 30 nears!



### MANY PROFESSORS, STUDENTS HELD; PRUDENTE ARRESTED

The Marcos martial law regime has unloosed another wave of arrests, in the wake of student-led demonstrations against other fascist dictatorships in different parts of the world and the growing demand that he relinquish power at the end of the year.

Hardest hit in the new campaign of repression were the schools, particularly the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, and the UP branches in other parts of the country. Professors and students were summarily rounded up and clamped in military prisons.

Earlier, the military struck at the religious sector, rounding up progressive priests, nuns and laymen in various raids on Catholic schools, convents, seminaries and even chapels.

Balita ng Malayang Pilipinas, which released the names of some of the professors and students hauled off to prison, said the mass arrests were aimed at preventing possible nationwide mass actions this month demanding an end to the Marcos regime.

Marcos' tenure in the presidency, ac-

ording to the 1935 Constitution, ends at high noon on Dec. 30.

Significantly, the renewed crackdown on the campuses follows mass actions in other parts of the world against fascist dictatorships, particularly the Thanom Kittikachorn martial law regime in Thailand, which was overthrown, and the Papadopoulos regime in Greece and the Pak Jung Hee dictatorship in south Korea.

Reports on these anti-fascist demonstrations abroad were largely suppressed or  
(Continued on page 2)

### MUSLIMS WIPE OUT MARINE COMPANY

JOJO, Sulu (RMP) -- At the time that the dictator Marcos was supposed to be meeting with "original" Muslim rebels in Suoc, this province, last Nov. 27, a full company (100 men) of Philippine Marines was being annihilated by Muslim freedom fighters in Sanga Sanga, at the southern tip of Tawi Tawi.

The marine company, assigned to guard a military airstrip that is being expanded, came under siege by the Muslims for two weeks. Since no reinforcement arrived on time, the unit was badly mauled. Thirty-three officers and men were confirmed killed and the rest seriously wounded.

It was at the Sanga Sanga airstrip that Executive Secretary Alejandro Melchor narrowly escaped getting caught in a surprise attack by Muslim anti-fascist forces last May. Melchor's plane was about to land when frantic alarms from beleaguered state forces on the ground diverted the aircraft. ●

#### Inside

◆ PASS ON  
AFTER  
READING

■ INTERVIEW WITH FR. ED DE LA TORRE ■ DRIVERS  
HIT OIL PRICE HIKE ■ SURVEY BY CHURCHMEN ■

# MASS ARRESTS

(From page 1)

distorted in the Marcos-controlled media.

According to BMP, mass arrests conducted in recent weeks were made at UP in Diliman, the UP College of Agriculture and Forestry in Los Baños, Laguna, and the UP branch in Baguio City. Arrests were also made in Tarlac, Tarlac, where the UP branch has remained padlocked by the dictatorship.

## In UP Diliman, Los Baños

Among the UP professors and students arrested in UP Diliman in late November and early December was Behn Cervantes, speech and drama instructor and a well-known figure in Philippine theater. Also arrested were cultural performers belonging to the UP Repertory Theater, whose stage presentations were apparently judged offensive by the dictatorship.

At UP Los Baños, a number of professors were arrested in their offices and classrooms. Among them were Dr. Ruben Aspiras, who teaches soil microbiology, Dr. Mariano de Ramos, professor of statistics, and Professors Pacifico Espanto (philosophy), Ben Soriano (English), Lourdes Go (mathematics and physics), Rane Alcosaba (mathematics and physics) and Dionisio Tolentino (forestry).

## 150 in Baguio City

Among the students arrested were Leilan Villanueva and Roger Elayda. They are now detained at Camp Vicente Lim in Canlubang, Laguna.

Reported picked up at the UP branch in Baguio City were 150 professors and students. An undetermined number of former students at the UP branch in Tarlac were also arrested in that province, BMP said.

## Dr. Prudente Picked up

Earlier, in late October, military intelligence men arrested Dr. Nemesio E. Prudente, former president of the Philippine College of Commerce and staunch critic of the martial law regime. He reportedly was picked up somewhere in Greater Manila while visiting some relatives.

Prudente is now detained at Camp Crame where he was also imprisoned for several months when the writ of habeas corpus was suspended by Marcos in 1971.

The former PCC president has authored a book, Sa Kuko ng Limbas, that discusses the semicolonial and semifeudal character of Philippine society and exposes how US imperialism keeps a tight grip on the government and the economy.

Upon the imposition of martial law, Pru-

dente wrote an article published in the US denouncing the Marcos dictatorship and suggesting people's action to change it.

Meanwhile, BMP also reported that in Angeles City, military intelligence operatives of the First PC Zone arrested several persons on charges of subversion and other crimes.

## Arrests in Angeles City

Among those picked up were Vice-Mayor Alberto Pamintuan, Councilor Ramon Arcilla, former Councilor Fred de Leon, Lito Pañgulinan, president of the Angeles City Press and Radio Club, and his brother Fred, businessman Bert Mendoza, Angeles residents Pepito Gomez and Napoleon Pineda, Monico Garland, Elisco Cruz, Rogelio Dizon and Eleuterio Castro. They are now detained at Camp Olivas in San Fernando, Pampanga.

## Marcos' Tenure Questioned

BMP quoted sources close to Malacañang as saying that the dictator ordered the new campaign of repression because he was worried by intelligence reports about plans to hold mass actions demanding an end to the martial law regime.

The widespread mass actions are said to be planned by various groups for the latter part of December and early next year.

A number of groups here and abroad have questioned the legality of Marcos' tenure beyond 1973. Among these are the Movement for a Free Philippines, US-based and headed by former Con-Con delegate Raul S. Manglapus, and the Filipino Freedom Fighters, which claims to have retired AFP officers in its membership roster. ●

## Drivers protest oil price hike

Braving all sorts of threats and the actual arrest of some of their leaders, jeepney drivers and their wives staged strikes and other mass actions in four widely separate areas in the country to protest the drastic increase in gasoline and diesel oil prices.

The protest actions, held in Manila, Baguio City, Davao and Iloilo, were called immediately after the first round of price increase by ₱0.15 per liter last Oct. 20, and the second increase by ₱0.10 per liter last Nov. 27.

In Manila, jeepney drivers' wives numbering some 300, converged at the gates of Malacañang last Nov. 17 to complain about the hiked gasoline prices and the dictator-

(Continued on page 6)

Interview with Fr. Ed de la Torre

# 'Persecution always strengthens Christians'



With the Marcos martial law regime intensifying its campaign of repression against the Church, and the ranks of freedom-loving bishops, priests and nuns swelling to unite with the rest of the Filipino people, LIBERATION sought to feel the pulse of the anti-fascist struggle among clergymen and laymen alike.

It interviewed Fr. Edicio de la Torre, SVD, a youthful priest who co-founded the Christians for National Liberation (CNL), and one of the most militant organizers among the religious. Hereunder are our questions and Fr. de la Torre's answers.

**LIBERATION:** There apparently is a new wave of intense repression directed at the clergy. Why do you think is the dictator after the Catholic clergy?

**FR. DE LA TORRE:** Part of the reason is Marcos' fear that nationwide protest will erupt against his regime by the end of December. The arrests of clergymen and religious would simply be part of the general crackdown on all suspected potential opponents.

The other reason is deeper. The military had previously expressed criticism of the church people's active campaign against martial law in both the January fake assemblies and the July "referendum".

Starting with the conclusions of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' pastoral letter, this opposition has taken more open and more official form. We can only cite the joint protest of the Western Visayas bishops about the Antique incident, the open letter of support by the Bacolod clergy for Fr. (Luis) Jalandoni, Bishop (Francisco) Claver's open letter, and recently, the ecumenical letter protesting curtailment of the truth.

Here, the issue is not just the legality or constitutionality of Marcos' continuing rule but the right of the people to organize and educate themselves and therefore to have access to information in order to have real development.

## Response to Persecution

**LIBERATION:** How are clergymen reacting to this intense persecution?

**FR. DE LA TORRE:** Perhaps it is better to cite concrete examples. The Bacolod clergy issued an open letter of support for Fr. Jalandoni. The Redemptorist congregation supported Fr. (Fernando) Yusingco and worked for his temporary release. In another

diocese, 40 priests issued a declaration of principles and vowed to protest any arrest of their fellow priests by refusing to celebrate mass.

If Marcos and the military expect to scare the clergy through these arrests, they are stupid. This new repression will only strengthen the decision of those who have started to resist, and will help the others who are still hesitating, to make their final decision to fight. Persecution always strengthens Christians.

**LIBERATION:** There is a new tax on income and property dictated against the religious, especially the Catholic Church. What do you think is the dictator's purpose and how does the Church look at this matter?

**FR. DE LA TORRE:** Even the relatively conservative church leaders see this move as an attempt to control all non-government institutions as fascists usually do. The amount involved (around ₱5 million) is not big enough to be the principal reason....What they oppose is the intent of the dictatorship and also the general question of how tax money is used: primarily for further military suppression of the dictatorship's critics, including church people.

## On Jalandoni Affair

**LIBERATION:** What do the clergy think of the Jalandoni affair? How do you view this as a CNL activist?

**FR. DE LA TORRE:** In general, those who have known Louie Jalandoni and his work judged him according to his own request (a verbal message sent from prison): "After much consideration, I have accepted the national democratic revolution as the Christian answer to the present unjust situation. I have freely and voluntarily become a member of the Communist Party....In the light of this, judge me, my friends, not in

(Turn to next page)

## DE LA TORRE... (From page 3)

the light of what you hear of what our enemies say, but in the light of our actions and our lives. I ask that you do not judge by what you may not know well enough -- of what is communism -- but by what you now know -- of dictatorship."

Even relatively reactionary church people say that one should look at Louie's decision seriously since he is a man of integrity and intelligence.

Personally, I look at Louie's decision as proof of his basic admirable quality -- of committing himself to the people to its ultimate consequences. This is in contrast to many of us who would like to commit to the service of the people, but always with conditions. In the process of struggle, it is easier to understand what real service to the people demands.

Louie is one of the founding members of CNL, and CNL fully supports him in his commitment.

### Political Positions of Clergy

LIBERATION: What are the political positions the members of the clergy take at this time vis-a-vis the Marcos dictatorship?

FR. DE LA TORRE: Without claiming to be exhaustive, I can identify three main positions. One is the national democratic position. Church people in this group oppose dictatorship because it serves a system that is semi-colonial and semi-feudal. They also realize that the most effective and principled way to overthrow the dictatorship and build a really new Philippines is through protracted people's war. They therefore support armed struggle and are open to coalition with non-Christian forces like the Muslims and the Marxists.

A much bigger group can be roughly described as anti-fascist. Some of them have notions of anti-imperialism. Most are protesting the violations of fundamental rights. Many of them are motivated by a sense of duty to the people. They say, "If the Church does not speak out in defense of those who cannot speak and have no power, the Church will be judged as a failure."

The two points raised by the CBCP are, I think, representative of the issues this group fights for: 1) real development needs the participation of the people through free organizations; 2) real participation of the people demands that they have access to free information.

A third group is a combination of the people who are still deceived by Marcos' propaganda and think that the present op-

pression is a small price for development. Some of them, however, have already expressed doubts and even criticisms of the regime since it has started to hurt even their own interests.

LIBERATION: What immediate or long-range goals do you see emanating from these political positions?

FR. DE LA TORRE: The national democrats have consolidated their ranks and have either involved themselves in joint programs with other underground forces or are planning to launch independent (but coordinated) actions.

I think the biggest immediate developments will be among the ranks of the anti-fascists. They will both consolidate into more organized groups and will develop the basis of their opposition along national democratic lines. For example, some of them have started to secretly support armed struggle. Majority, however, are in non-armed activity.

The opposition launched by the Filipino Freedom Fighters will mobilize people from the third group and some from the second. This resistance focuses on the illegitimacy of the Marcos regime. But even now, it is developing the basis of its resistance to include more substantial issues like civil liberties and people's participation.

### Role of the Clergy

LIBERATION: How do you view the role of the clergy under the present regime?

FR. DE LA TORRE: From dialogues with different groups of priests, I think the principal role of the clergy is to speak the truth. Close to the traditional role of the clergy is the question of moral judgment in the present situation. I think the trend is developing for denunciations, first of abuses and then of the source of abuses, i.e., the dictatorship itself and the system it maintains.

The complementary side to moral denunciation of the present regime is moral support for the resistance waged by the people. Very often, this need not be expressed in words. Simple acts like receiving and distributing resistance papers and giving material help to activists speak louder.

From personal experience, there is another priestly role to play in the underground, and this is to help pave the way for discussions and coordination among different political groups. I think even Church people who do not represent particular organizations could take upon themselves the task of contacting and bringing together different organizations in order to bring about a working condition of their efforts. ●

# A Survey by Church Leaders

[First of a Three-part Series]

## LIFE UNDER MARTIAL LAW

"The State is becoming totalitarian..."

"There is abuse of human rights..."

"There is little participation of the people in decision making..."

"The present economic policy is questionable..."

"The poor bear an unequal share of sacrifices required for economic growth..."

These are the fundamental conclusions drawn from a recent survey conducted under the auspices of the Major Religious Superiors, an organization of heads of religious orders in the country. The respondents included bishops, priests and nuns, and laymen and laywomen.

### OPPOSITION TO THE REGIME

Considered by many priests and other Church people as a major step by the religious orders in developing their opposition to the Marcos martial law regime, the survey was undertaken to provide a basis in defining the Church's role under martial law in the country.

Significantly, the Church came in for its share of criticism. It was accused of "cooperating with the government for everything" and closing its eyes to "oppression and injustice" instead of speaking out courageously, whatever the risks.

The findings were summed up in a 23-page document entitled, "Summary of National Survey of Major Religious Superiors". It cited cases of the Marcos regime's abuses of the people's rights to peaceful assembly, association, information and privacy, torture of prisoners, and oppression of workers and peasants.

### CLERGY AND LAITY POLLED

The interviews were conducted last October. Of 154 persons polled, 14 were bishops, 59 priests, 22 sisters, 3 brothers, and 56 laymen and laywomen. They were asked to state the facts and express the prevailing views of people in their areas.

Seventy-five per cent of all the respondents felt the political situation has become worse under martial law. According to them, those in power are the same politicians before martial law. The military au-

thorities were seen as "party to the abuses".

"There is a marriage of convenience from which both the military and politicians profit," the survey said. "The ordinary people are the ones who suffer."

The document added that "there is no one to defend their (the people's) rights. They have no recourse from either the abuses of the military or the politicians, and abuses are common. There is a general feeling that all important decisions are made in Manila; that the barangays merely echo these decisions".

All over the country, the survey went on, "harassment and intimidation were common in both the referendum and plebiscite....People were not free to vote their minds. They knew this and resented the manipulation".

### MILITARY MOST ABUSIVE

Among the Marcos regime's agencies, the military was pointed to as the most abusive and corrupt. In Central Luzon, the First PC Zone command provides protection to gambling and houses of prostitution, the survey said. In Cebu and Eastern Visayas, the Third PC Zone command protects smuggling and vice. In Zamboanga del Norte, the military was denounced for oppressing Muslim civilians, while in Mindoro, the PC was accused of grabbing land from the Mangyans.

When the rich violate the law, the survey said, "the PC defend their interests against the poor, often by harassment (and) threats and if these do not work, imprisonment on false charges".

Regarding political prisoners in all regions of the country, the survey showed that they are generally accused of "subversion". They are subjected to physical torture and their families and relatives are placed under surveillance. "Extortion money is asked of prisoners for their release," the survey added.

### RISING PRICES

All the respondents agreed that prices of goods have risen "drastically", "tremendously" or "very much". Prices, they said,

(Turn to next page)

## SURVEY... (From page 5)

have "doubled, tripled or quadrupled" since martial law.

In Northern Luzon and Northern Mindanao, the prices of basic food commodities such as rice, corn, sugar, milk, fish and pork have increased by 55 per cent on the average, the survey showed. In Southwestern Mindanao and Jolo, the average increase in food costs was 80 per cent.

"Prices of construction materials have also increased by 45% in Northern Luzon, 105% in the Southern Tagalog region, 85% in Northern Mindanao, and 110% in Southwestern Mindanao and Sulu," the survey said.

### MARCOS BLAMED FOR RUNAWAY PRICES

The Marcos regime was blamed for the runaway prices. "It has over-emphasized export crops such as sugar," the survey said. "The seed and fertilizer requirements of the Masagana 99 program are unrealistic."

The martial law regime also was blamed for failing to control hoarding and profiteering, and for the conversion of ricelands to other crops.

The people, the survey showed, are generally "resentful and angry" about the rising prices, food shortages and rationing. It often took them a whole day to buy one or two gantas of rice, it added. In this connection, the "referendum" of last July became a source of "disillusionment" because it failed to provide any relief from the acute food problem.

### INCREASE IN PEOPLE'S AWARENESS

As a result of the general oppressive situation in the whole country, the survey said, there has been an increase in the people's "awareness" of the national situation. This was traced to "government control of the mass media; the discrepancy between what actually happens and what is reported; loss of freedom;...manipulation of the referendum; increasing militarization and the fact that the military are 'mayabang' (proud) and 'abusado' (abusive)".

Respondents who claimed there was a decrease in the people's "awareness" said this was due to the fact that "genuine issues are no longer discussed in the mass media".

### 'NEUTRALITY' OF CHURCH

An overwhelming majority of the respondents felt that the "performance of the Church under martial law" had been very poor. The Church was seen as "cooperating with the government in everything", it is "going along with the present situation de-

spite...oppression and injustice", and has "no plan of action, no clear stand".

The "neutrality" of the Church, the survey said, has caused a general feeling of frustration among many priests who are not allowed by the bishops to "speak out to denounce abuses".

### ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT NEEDED

Generally, the respondents felt that the Church "must become more actively involved". Basing itself on the "Gospel message", the survey said, the Church "must speak out against manipulation, injustice and oppression of all kinds, and not just in vague and general terms".

People felt that the Church must be close to the people, "feel what the people feel". It must be "a sign of the faith it preaches". It may suffer but it must take that risk if it is to serve the people. ●

## DRIVERS...

(From page 2)

ship's plan to prohibit jeepneys from Manila's streets.

In Baguio City, jeepney drivers plying the Rock Quarry-City Camp route and the Plaza-Mines View Park and Kilometer 7 and 8 routes struck the first few days after the ₱0.15-increase took effect.

Jeepney drivers likewise stayed off the road in Davao, unless the fares were adjusted upwards to make up for the increased fuel cost. They returned to their routes only when local government authorities assured them that action would be taken on their demand.

In Iloilo, hundreds of jeepney drivers on the La Paz-Iloilo and Jaro-Iloilo routes also struck. They parked their vehicles in front of the Iloilo PC headquarters in Port Pedro Abad and presented to the PC provincial commander a petition for increased fares.

Instead of listening to them, Balita ng Malayang Pilipinas reported, the PC commander ordered the drivers' arrest and the confiscation of their driver's licenses. Heading those arrested was Arturo Jover, president of the La Paz Drivers Association.

A week later, jeepney drivers on the Oton-Iloilo route converged on Plaza Libertad in front of the Iloilo City Hall to demand an increase in fares.

In some cases, commuters voluntarily paid higher fares in gesture of sympathy with the drivers. Such was the case in Baguio City, according to Pahayagang Bayan, an anti-dictatorship underground newspaper in Northern Luzon. ●

# Christians and the NDF's Ten-Point Program

The interview with Fr. Edicio de la Torre in this issue, as well as his previous statements (New York Times, Oct. 18, 1973; LIBERATION, Vol. II, No. 6, Nov. 30), declaring his clear and unequivocal commitment to the people's liberation struggle under the banner of the National Democratic Front, serve as an inspiration for other progressive individuals and groups.

More than giving inspiration, the unsparring efforts of Fr. de la Torre and the Christians for National Liberation in helping to broaden and strengthen the people's anti-fascist alliance are concrete proof that progressive Christians, clergymen and the rest of the Filipino people refuse to bow down to fascist persecution, and that more and more are joining the struggle to liberate the country from the clutches of the US-Marcos dictatorship.

Fr. de la Torre's position underlines the need for the broadest possible cooperation among all progressive and anti-fascist classes, sectors, organizations and individuals as a prerequisite for the people's victory over the tyrannical regime.

It goes without saying that LIBERATION, within the limits of its resources, will continue to provide the widest possible dissemination for Fr. de la Torre's call and the efforts of other Christians and clergymen in helping to forge the people's anti-fascist unity.

For instance, starting with this issue, LIBERATION is presenting a three-part series on the findings of a national survey on the political and economic effects of martial law conducted by the Major Religious Superiors, an organization of the heads of all orders of Catholic priests and nuns in the country.

We take occasion to reprint here the Ten-Point Program of the National Democratic Front as embodied in its Preparatory Commission's declaration, "Unite to Overthrow the US-Marcos Dictatorship!". We believe it serves as the broadest and firmest possible political basis for the people's unity needed to topple the dictatorship and win national freedom and genuine democracy.

"1. Unite all anti-imperialist and democratic forces in order to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship and work for the establishment of a coalition government based on a truly democratic system of government;

"2. Expose and oppose US imperialism as the mastermind behind the setting up of the fascist dictatorship, struggle for the nullification of all unequal treaties and arrangements with this imperialist power, and call for the nationalization of all its properties in the country;

"3. Fight for the re-establishment of all the democratic rights of the people, such as freedom of speech, the press, assembly, association, movement, religious belief, and the right to due process;

"4. Gather all possible political and material support for the underground and the armed resistance against the US-Marcos dictatorship;

"5. Support a genuine land reform programme that can liberate the peasant masses from feudal and semi-feudal exploitation and raise agricultural production through cooperation;

"6. Work for the improvement of the people's livelihood, guarantee the right to work and protect national capital against foreign monopoly capital;

"7. Promote a national, scientific and mass culture and combat imperialist, feudal and fascist culture;

"8. Support the national minorities, especially those in Mindanao and the mountain provinces, in their struggle for self-determination and democracy;

"9. Punish after public trial the ringleaders of the Marcos fascist gang for their crimes against the people and confiscate all their ill-gotten wealth; and

"10. Unite with all peoples fighting imperialism and seek their support for the Philippine revolutionary struggle."

From time to time, we are told that this or that political prisoner has been released from this or that RHCAD (Regional Command for the Administration of Detainees).

We have determined that in many cases, the "release" of prisoners occurs only in the Marcos-controlled mass media. A prisoner "released" from, say, RHCAD I, at times ends up merely being transferred to RHCAD II.

No, that is not a benign smile we see on the countenance of the Marcos martial law regime. It is a grimace, contemptuous and malevolent.

• • •

At the convention of the Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines last Dec. 6, the dictator is reported to have "renewed his appeal" that "the more affluent sectors desist from any undue display of wealth and conspicuous consumption".

"Extravagance at a time of acute deprivation is nothing short of criminal," he is quoted to have said. "As a matter of fact, we have laws punishing such anti-social acts in times of crisis."

From the dictator's statement, the only thing that makes sense is his belated admission that the Filipino people are living in "times of crisis" and are in a state of "acute deprivation".

As for extravagance, ostentation and conspicuous consumption, the biggest flaunters are himself and his family.

• • •

In the last issue of LIBERATION, we reprinted excerpts from Australian newspaper reports which gave glowing accounts of how Imelda Marcos, bedecked with jewelry from head to toe, sought to rival Queen Elizabeth of England in pomp and circumstance. That was at the inauguration of the Sydney Opera House.

Now we have another report, this time from the United States, that the dictator's wife and daughter Imee were "stars" at a fancy party Nov. 10 at the Pierre Hotel on New York City's Fifth Avenue. "Co-stars" were American car magnate Henry Ford II and his wife Christina, both of them cronies of the Marcoses.

For good measure, their party was picketed by Filipinos of the "Committee in Support of the Victims of the New Society" who pointed out that while hunger and oppression are the lot of millions of their countrymen, there is the dictator's family in wanton carousal around the world.

Further evidence of the Marcoses' hypocrisy is found in the New York Times issue of Nov. 5. In a dispatch datelined Manila and with Joseph Lelyveld's byline, it is said in part:

"The First Lady, Mrs. Imelda Marcos, was on hand recently for the opening of an exhibition of the Philippine Institute of Interior Design, held in the sumptuous Cultural Center...

"This show is supposed to be an annual affair, but this was the first in four years. In 1970, when masses of students were taking to the streets to demonstrate against the lavish life-styles of the rich, the decorators thought a cancellation prudent. Now, with martial law in force, they felt emboldened to show their latest ideas."

"New society", indeed!

• • •

The dictator's censors must have been napping. They let pass the Nov. 12 issue of the American newsmagazine Newsweek.

In its "letters to the editor" section was a note from a Wayne E. Moore, apparently a foreigner residing in Manila, complaining about subscription copies of Newsweek being impounded by the dictatorship because they contained unflattering but truthful accounts of repression, Marcos style.

Added Moore in his letter: "Many have become accustomed to news blackouts of even the mildest criticism of the Marcos regime... Many of those who openly dissent from Mr. Marcos are imprisoned -- or even killed -- and branded as subversives or Communists..."

• • •

Nixon's secretary, Rose Mary Woods, is reported to have admitted "accidentally" obliterating 18 minutes of a Watergate tape in which was recorded an important conversation between Nixon and his disgraced "Praetorian guard", H. R. Haldeman. Miss Woods is either one of the world's most incompetent secretaries -- or the best liar.

Incidentally, under terrific pressure from the American people, the discredited Nixon was compelled to bare his assets. Eyebrows were raised when he was found to have amassed more than a million dollars.

That's really nothing. If we can get Nixon's puppet, Marcos, to make an honest disclosure of all his illegally acquired wealth, Nixon would appear a pauper in comparison. •