

34/03

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES LIBRARY  
FILIPINIANA SECTION

C.1

# LIBERATION

VOL. XII NO. 8 PUBLISHED BY THE NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC FRONT OF THE PHILIPPINES OCT.-NOV. 1984



**Political  
killings  
on the rise**

*You ain't  
seen nothin'  
yet!*

# Advance the armed resistance

No better measure is there of the Marcos regime's deterioration than the rash of political killings it has masterminded in the past months. Madness, no longer "temporary," nor acceptable as an "aberration," recently felled brave and honest men like Zorro Aguilar, Jacobo Amatong, Alex Orcullo and Cesar Climaco, now national heroes in the raging struggle against the dictatorship.

Despite the senselessness of it all, the increasing use of fascist terror has a logic all its own. Severely isolated, so removed politically from the vast majority, the Marcos clique uses force as the overriding if not the sole weapon to keep itself in power. For despite Reagan's generosity and despite aid from Reagan's allies, the Marcos clique remains on the defensive, fighting a war against millions of Filipinos marching into position.

The present tyrannical rule should have long ago come to an end but for the massive flow of weapons and other military and economic aid from US imperialism. Continued US support of the Marcos clique and the US pledge to modernize the Armed Forces of the Philippines have encouraged the dictator to unleash with greater brutality incalculable damage on the people.

In the face of state terrorism, it is urgent that we grasp this principle: the justness of the path we have chosen, the justness of armed struggle.

Experience has taught us that the only response against a full-blown fascist dictatorship is armed resistance. Armed resistance is the only effective weapon against a regime that rests mainly on force and continues to maintain and preserve itself by force.

When a mad dictator conserves its diminished powers by frenziedly exploding all its deadly weapons, the masses need all the more to concentrate their greatest energies and offer their best resources, to the advance and final victory of the armed struggle. Armed struggle assures us our survival, our means to assert our people's rights and the preservation of whatever gains we have made.

We must therefore advance further the armed struggle raging in the countryside by rendering material, financial and personnel support to the growing guerrilla movement. Armed groups which are already in existence, such as those of the NPA, BMA

and the Gerilya Anak-Pawis, must continue to launch impressive ambushes, raids and attacks, seizing arms from the enemy armory and decimating enemy troop strength.

Whenever there is a basis, we must form more and more armed units and unite with other existing armed groups on the basis of the overriding need to overthrow the dictator soon. The unity of various groups waging armed struggle is the only way to decisively weaken the main pillar of the reactionary state and build an authentic people's armed forces.

Those in the urban areas must continue to assist the armed struggle in the most all-rounded way possible. We must build support networks for logistics and intelligence, specifically serving armed city partisan units. These must conduct surveillance on enemy forces, informers and troops so that even in the cities they can be exposed and incapacitated.

At the same time, within our mass organizations, we must continue to build self-defense committees that have a striking capacity, effectively countering enemy moves at salvaging, kidnaping and assassination of mass leaders.

As we intensify the armed struggle, we must further advance and raise to a higher level the militant mass actions both quantitatively and qualitatively. We must be able to "mobilize the people in their millions for the revolution and militant democratic struggle." Never must we underestimate the contributions made by the open mass movement at pushing the disintegration and paralysis of the regime.

Above all, we must expand and secure the underground, the main backbone of the open democratic movement. We must continue to build, step by painstaking step, the underground mass organizations, expand their membership while being alert to enemy infiltration.

We reiterate our call to all sincere and genuine anti-dictatorship forces and to all allies, to close ranks in the face of escalating fascist terror. We call on them to persevere in all forms of struggle to overthrow the hated regime and hasten the day the people can set up a just rule under the democratic coalition government.

## IN THIS ISSUE

Cover: Political assassinations

Cover stories: As armed resistance increasingly threatens the US-Marcos dictatorship's rule in the country, so will US intervention and violent fascist attacks on the people's democratic movement escalate. In this issue, LIB discusses the US-Marcos regime's feverish attempts to preserve itself via deception and terror.

<b>EDITORIAL</b> .....	2
<b>COVER STORIES</b>	
A policy of terror .....	3
The game plan unfolds .....	7
<b>MAINSTREAM</b>	
Bigger and bolder .....	10
Hitting the mark .....	11
Scoring victories .....	12
NPA offensives .....	12
The teachers' underground .....	13

<b>SPARKS</b> .....	15
<b>CRACKS</b> .....	16
<b>INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY</b>	
Fighting for the homefront .....	17
<b>CULTURAL</b>	
Death shall have no dominion.....	18
Elegy .....	18
<b>POINTBLANK</b> .....	20

The National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) is the framework or channel for the unity, cooperation and coordination of all national democratic forces in the country. It traces its beginnings to the establishment of the Preparatory Commission for a National Democratic Front on April 24, 1973. The 1973 NDF Ten-Point Program upholds armed struggle as the main form of struggle to overthrow the US-Marcos dictatorship. LIBERATION is the official publication of the NDF.

# A policy of terror

US-Marcos regime scales up political murders to quell resistance

Sept. 25, 1984. Jacobo Amatong and Zorro Aguilar were shot dead along the streets of Dipolog City.

Oct. 19, 1984. Alexander Orcullo was gunned down in Davao City in the presence of his wife and child while they were on their way home.

Nov. 14, 1984. Cesar Climaco was shot in the nape while inspecting a fire-damaged area in Zamboanga City.

In a country where the list of politically motivated killings and disappearances has been running at an annual average rate of 370 during the last four years, four such new deaths in a span of two months could have hardly mattered. What raised public alarm over the incidents was the prominent stature of the victims. Even more alarming for many was the fact that the victims all shared one thing in common — they were all openly critical of the Marcos regime and the military.

Jacobo Amatong was the hard-hitting editor-publisher of *Mindanao Observer*; Zorro Aguilar was a well-known local civil rights lawyer; and, Alex Orcullo was a lawyer and editor of two local newspapers, the *Mindaweek* and *Mindacurrents* as well as the secretary-general of the lo-

cal chapter of the Coalition of Organizations for the Realization of Democracy (CORD), the largest alliance of progressive organizations in Mindanao. The latest victim, Cesar Climaco, attained national prominence as a graft-buster customs commissioner under the Macapagal administration and at the time of his death, was the mayor of Zamboanga City and an outspoken critic of the martial law regime and the military in Mindanao.

From these four murders can be deduced an emerging trend which seems to have picked up since former Sen. Benigno Aquino's slaying. The trend, carried out in major urban centers, involves the outright elimination of the government's political rivals and militant mass leaders.

Such a blatant manner of execution, however, is not new in the countryside. Even before the Aquino assassination, political killings by means of assassination was a common occurrence in rural areas. Victims are often suspected of being members or supporters of the New People's Army or leaders of the mass movement in their communities. Two of the more prominent assassination cases were those of Macli-ing Dulag, a Kalinga mass

leader, and Remberto "Bobby" de la Paz, a community doctor in Samar.

The evolution of political assassinations from the rural areas to the urban centers is apparently designed to further sow fear and terror among the people at a time of continuing massive unrest. Some observers also see the emerging pattern of assassinations as part of the regime's preparation for the 1986 local elections. Reports have it that Climaco and Orcullo had their eyes set on local government seats in the coming elections. As the 1986 and 1987 elections draw near, some quarters fear that more possible political rivals of the regime may be eliminated.

## Pointing the finger of guilt at the military

Because of its past dirty record, the military has once again stood out as the prime suspect in these recent political murders. The killings added more fuel to public outrage against the regime's armed minions following the indiscriminate shooting of demonstrators by Metrocom and police forces during recent rallies. The forcible dispersal of demonstrations had prompted Cardinal Jaime Sin to issue



Parallels in terror. Government soldiers with their mutilated victims in Cbalatenango, El Salvador

his strongest condemnation so far against the military on Oct. 2. Said Sin: "The military seems to believe that because the victims are primarily students, they can engage in a saturnalia of sadism and violence with impunity."

Sin's charges followed yet another damaging indictment of the military from the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), a non-governmental international commission of legal luminaries based in Geneva. Last Sept. 21, the ICJ released to the press a report based on first-hand data-gathering in the Philippines by commission members. The ICJ report concluded that "widespread human rights abuses by the military, including illegal killings, massacres, burning of villages, arbitrary arrests and torture, are still widespread in rural areas of the Philippines."

What intrigued—and alarmed—many was the fact that the recent series of political assassinations is being perpetrated at a time when the military needs the least adverse public attention. Following the indictment of three high-ranking generals and 23 military personnel by the majority members of the Agrava Board in connection with the Aquino slaying, many thought the military could ill-afford, at least for the moment, to commit grossly outrageous crimes that would only generate greater anger against it. But the killing of Zamboanga City mayor Cesar Climaco seems to have served notice that notwithstanding the all-time record unpopularity of the military and the pile of legal cases against it, the military's systematic violation of human rights will continue unabated.

#### Death squads

There is indeed much cause for alarm over the worsening state of military abuses in the country. Statistics recently released by the human rights watch-dog group, the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines (see tables), point to a pattern of increasing salvagings, disappearances and political arrests in the last four years. Though yet partial, the quarterly or trimestral reports for 1984 indicate that last year's total figures will be surpassed this year.

The highest recorded figures of human rights atrocities come from Mindanao. This is evidently part of the government's desperate drive to check the great strides taken by the revolutionary forces in the island in advancing guerrilla warfare in the rural areas and in intensifying partisan operations and the mass movement in urban centers.

"The new scale of state terrorism has buttressed further the nagging suspicion of the existence of 'death squads' under the employ of the Marcos dictatorship," Sister Mariani Dimaranan, head of Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, warned last Nov. 22 of the presence of paramilitary death squads in the country. She charged that there are more than



TABLE 1: SALVAGINGS (1973-1984)

Year	Metro Manila	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao	Total
1973		1			1
1974					
1975		11			11
1976		16			16
1977		24	21	6	51
1978	1	25	44	16	86
1979		56	38	102	196
1980		45	36	137	218
1981		65	28	228	321
1982		46	28	136	210
1983	1	62	41	265	369
1984 (Jan-June)		47	9 (Jan-May)	52 (Jan-March)	108
Total	2	398	245	942	1,586

200 death squads operating in the insurgency-torn island of Mindanao alone. These are usually made up of pseudo-Christian and anti-Communist groups and the so-called Philippine Liberation Organization (PLO) which groups former Muslim separatists now in the employ of the military.

Death squads are right-wing groups which have acquired world-wide notoriety for their responsibility in the gruesome mass killings in Latin America. An essential bolt in the repressive machineries of Latin American fascist regimes, these terrorist groups kill at will political activists and progressives or just about anybody whom the authorities want killed or don't mind being killed. In Latin America, death squads can be grouped into two broad types: civilian thugs hired by ruling elites and military men disguised

as civilians moonlighting as murderers and acting on official orders of their superiors. Both types operate under the protection and direction of the highest military authorities. In El Salvador, where death squads are believed responsible for most of the 30,000 or so political killings since 1980, they take names like Secret Anti-Communist Army and Maximilino Hernandez Martinez Death Brigade (named after the country's most blood-thirsty dictator).

Obviously irked by allusions to death squads *a la* Latin America operating in the country, Marcos, in a speech before the AFP last month, lashed at those who were wont to draw a parallel between the Philippines and the so-called "banana republics" of Latin America. But notwithstanding Marcos' strong protestations, striking



Protest funeral: Davanenos in rites (left) for slain mass leader Alex Orcullo (right)



**TABLE 2: DISAPPEARANCES (1974-1984)**

Year	Metro Manila	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao	Total
1974	1	4		1	6
1975	1	4			5
1976	2	33			35
1977	2	11	1	3	17
1978	1	3	4	2	10
1979	2	12		34	48
1980	2	17			19
1981		8		45	53
1982		16	2	24	42
1983	2	13	15	115	145
1984 (Jan-June)	7	13	6 (Jan-May)	27 (Jan-March)	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>251</b>	<b>428</b>

parallels between the Philippine situation and the Latin American countries do exist.

As in the Philippines, most of these Latin American countries like Uruguay, Brazil, El Salvador, and Peru have been the hotbeds of revolution and right-wing reaction for the last two decades. In the Latin American countries in particular, the rise of repressive regimes could be traced back to the triumph of the national liberation movement led by Fidel Castro of Cuba.

After the Cuban victory and increasingly during the next years of the Vietnam War, US political and military policy-makers had incessantly drummed up the concept of "preventive counter-insurgency." Behind the technical jargon lies a simple yet ruthlessly US objective: the suppression of militant progressive and revolutionary forces in developing countries. Invariably, in

all these countries, the US had high stakes to protect, be it economic holdings and investments or military installations. Progressive political scientists have dubbed these repressive client regimes of the US, the National Security States (NSS).

Similar to the present regime in the Philippines, these NSS regimes are dominated by local business and politico-military elites who voraciously enrich themselves in office. Under US patronage, this ruling elite strives to create a good climate for US investments at the cost of the people's general poverty and misery. Because the very raison d'être for the creation of the NSS is to amass profits for local and big business, state economic policies ultimately meant cheap wages, the expropriation of small peasant holdings and the wanton plunder of natural resources.

To quell dissent and unrest, National Security States adopt iron-fisted political policies. In the name of wiping out the "enemies of the state," militant peasant organizations, labor unions and student organizations are busted and progressive and democratic religious, intellectual and political figures are liquidated. Thus has terrorism, the ultimate mode of rule of unpopular regimes, become an integral feature of the NSS. The preeminent role of the military and the institutionalization of torture and other brutal, inhuman methods highlight such state terrorism.

A case in point is El Salvador. In the wake of rising popular protests and the increasing influence and strength of the popular resistance front, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), the US-backed Duarte government has escalated state terrorism. Progressive organizations are banned, democratic rights are curtailed and militant dissenters are assassinated or salvaged.

The El Salvador situation bears a striking resemblance to that of the Philippines. Here, the military is likewise used as the state's primary instrument of repression against a wide range of oppositionists. The military forces exist primarily to protect and maintain the interests of the Marcos ruling faction, other local ruling elites and, of course, US imperialism. Such has been the leading role of the military under the Marcos dictatorship, that it has gained an unprecedented role in the economy, become an integral part of the power structure and evolved into one of the key pillars of the state.

#### Image-building

But useful though the military has been to Marcos' rule, today, it has become the greatest liability to a regime desperately seeking to mend its badly tattered image. Following the Aquino assassination, the most celebrated murder case in Philippine history, the regime knows that the AFP's repeated abuses can no longer be summarily dismissed as isolated incidents or "fictitious products of rumor-mongering enemies of the state." Recently, it adopted a posture of house-cleaning while maintaining full support for and confidence in the military establishment to assuage public clamor over military abuses.

To ease somehow the pressure of public reaction over the military's Sept. 27 shooting of demonstrators, the regime immediately opened a series of fact-finding hearings on the incident at the KBL-dominated parliament. As if to show that it meant business, no less than the regime's chief prosecutor, Estelito Mendoza, headed the Batasan Committee on Justice, Human Rights and Good Government. But Mendoza's bullying presence alone was enough to portend the futility of the hearings. In the first session on Oct. 1, Mendoza sought to make clear that the hearings were set up "not to esta-



Salvage victims. Funeral of nine farmers of Langoni, Negros Occidental killed by PC

blish responsibility in the shooting incident but to merely gather facts relevant to formulating legislation that may prevent similar 'outbreaks of violence' in the future."

In its handling of the military in the Aquino case, the regime has adopted the same posture of giving in to public pressure up to a certain point in order to contain bigger damage against itself. As can be gleaned from Justice Corazon Agrava's minority report, the regime is resigned to sacrificing a few subordinate officers and men of the military in order to preserve the military institution and its own rule.

Even then, the regime has been careful to limit the level of culpability in the case. Hence, its overt show of anger at the majority board's sweeping indictment of the ranking military officers. What the Marcos ruling faction is concerned with at the moment is not only to protect Marcos' most trusted generals, but to cover up as well the damaging fact that behind the most brazen political murder in the nation's recent history are no less than the commander-in-chief and the highest-ranking general of the land, Marcos himself and Ver. According to political observers, the regime fears that a guilty verdict for AFP chief-of-staff General Ver will be tantamount to laying bare the whole truth that the use of terror— political murders, massacres, torture and other forms of human rights violations— is a central policy of the regime executed by its very ring leaders.

Right after his installment as acting chief-of-staff on Oct. 24, Gen. Fidel Ramos put the image-building of the military as his prime agenda. With Ver at bay, awaiting an expected not-guilty verdict by the regime's Tanodbayan court, Ramos took up the cudgels of "weeding out" what he claimed as "a mere two percent bad eggs in the AFP." He immediately launched a mass media binge to project the military as "a protector, not oppressor of the people," and not incidentally, himself as the crusading "professional soldier." Ramos also directed the formation of a top-level AFP special action committee on Nov. 11 to "look into complaints of human rights violations and military abuses."

#### US' blueprint for the Philippine military

Much of Ramos' recent house-cleaning efforts within the AFP fit like a glove with recent US policies vis-a-vis the serious problems facing the Marcos regime and the military. This fact alone tends to confirm many earlier suspicions that no less than the US itself had exerted pressure for Ver's ouster and Ramos' installation in office. The US, apparently, sees Ramos, a West Point graduate, as more of a US boy than Ver, a confirmed Marcos loyalist and hatchetman. The US also holds greater confidence and trust in Ramos whom it views as more capable of

"reforming" and "modernizing" the AFP to make it more effective in crushing the revolutionary resistance movement in the Philippines.

Testifying before the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asian and Pacific Affairs last Oct. 3, Assistant Defense Secretary Richard Armitage expressed best the dominant US perception and policy on the Philippine military at present. Said Armitage: "The AFP has been described as part of the problem. The De-

partment of Defense believes the AFP is also part of the solution. The Philippine Armed Forces are unquestionably an important national institution that have the potential to become the underlying source of stability during this period of economic difficulties and in the face of an expanding communist insurgency . . . The Department of Defense believes there is a solid cadre of competent, patriotic officers in the AFP who have the determination to institute the necessary reforms and turn



TABLE 3: POLITICAL ARRESTS (1977-1984)

Year	Metro Manila	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao	Total
1977	414	345	214	378	1351
1978	320	202	193	905	1620
1979	265	183	111	1402	1961
1980	170	125	141	526	962
1981	52	304	255	766	1377
1982	226	795	76	814	1911
1983	185	152	108	1643	2088
1984 (Jan-June)	293	146	111 (Jan-May)	248 (Jan-March)	798
<b>Total</b>	<b>1925</b>	<b>2252</b>	<b>1209</b>	<b>6482</b>	<b>12,068</b>



TABLE 4: MILITARIZATION REPORT (1983)

	Metro Manila	Luzon	Visayas	Mindanao	Total
<b>Mass Arrests</b>					
Incidents	7		7	18	32
Persons arrested	136	16	42	182	376
<b>Torture Cases</b>		42		602	644
<b>Detainees (end-1983)</b>	143	139	47	526	855
<b>Massacres</b>					
Incidents		1	1	28	30
Persons killed			4	159	163
<b>Bombings</b>					
Incidents				15	15
Persons affected				73	73
<b>Strafing</b>		1	3	43	47

the NPA tide."

Citing the serious magnitude of the AFP's abuses against civilians which favor the growth of the NPA, Armitage urged the House to boost "current efforts to reform the AFP and institute better discipline" by assuring for its part, continued logistical and training support for the military and "not to write it off as being hopelessly corrupt and ineffective."

Earlier this year, the US Defense Department in a report to the US State Committee on Foreign Relations had also urged



the US Congress to provide \$85 million in security assistance (\$25 million in military grants and \$60 million in foreign military sales credits) to the Philippines for fiscal year 1985. This report emphasized the serious problems in equipment, mobility and logistics the AFP is facing as a result of the 25 percent decline in real terms of the military's budget over the past decade.

For the Filipino people, these US aid packages will have far-reaching effects in even more real — and brutal — terms. Increasing US military aid to the Philippines will mean a greater rise in the incidence, nay, systematic trend of military abuses nationwide. As it is, all indications show that the human rights situation in the country will further worsen. As armed resistance and the urban protest movement continue to grow, and with the US' all-out support for the military, all the more will the Marcos regime be emboldened to step up its widescale terrorism.

Of course, in an attempt to deflect public criticism, the regime and its US patron can always issue pronouncements or draw up programs about reforming or disciplining the military. But so discredited, so disgraced has the military been in these past years that no amount of US aid or piecemeal reforms can bring it back into the good graces of the people. As the guardians of a corrupt and oppressive order and the executors of a bloodthirsty regime, the fascist military forces must likewise be swept out along with their commander-in-chief — Marcos.

Angel Nicolas and Alfredo Amuyao

## The game plan unfolds

US steps up pace of intervention as elections near



High stakes: US bases in the Philippines

Something is afoot in the policy-making chambers of the US. The plans involve Marcos, his rivals in the traditional political opposition, and that magic formula US officials like to swear by — demonstration elections (see LIB, March 1984). The dark plottings were first revealed with the May 14 tussle known as the Batasang Pambansa polls. The rest of the scheme is even now being unravelled as election years 1986 and 1987 draw closer.

The shape of things to come, as the US would have it, has been made known by no less than Ronald Reagan himself in one of his more unforgettable foreign policy blitzes during the US presidential elections: "I know there are things there in the Philippines that do not look good to us from the standpoint right now of democratic rights, but what is the alternative — It is a large communist movement to take over the Philippines... I think we're better off, with the Philippines, of

trying to retain their friendship and help them right the wrongs we see rather than throwing them to the wolves and facing a communist power in the Pacific."

Reagan aides winced and US State Department officials more given to political double-talk wished that their boss were less candid and crude in enunciating current US policy toward the Philippines. But what the Reagan spiel laid out in plain and simple terms, the State Department merely repeated in more roundabout language: "The vigorous communist insurgency in the Philippines would be the likely source of a non-democratic change of government" and the US would "not find this satisfactory." State Department spokesmen, however, to mollify Reagan critics, hurriedly added that the political options in the Philippines were not really that limited. "There is certainly recognition on everybody's part that there are other forces working to preserve (US-style) democracy in the Philippines."

These twin statements issued in the

heat of the US presidential campaign unmask the US' tactical policy in the Philippines at present: to extend unstinted support to the Marcos clique, while at the same time accommodating elite political forces whom the dictator has angered by his lengthy and continued monopoly of power. The US plan implies the exertion of more vigorous efforts to reconcile the bickering factions of the ruling elite in the hope of isolating progressive and revolutionary forces and halting the over-all advance of the national democratic movement.

#### Act I: the May 14 polls

It is partly this desire to reconcile the elite's warring factions that spurred the US to invest considerably in the May 14 elections. Precious time, energy and money were spent in this "litmus test to democracy" so that the US could woo back the disenchanted elite. From the major task of courting political parties and convincing personalities to participate, to the minor detail of flying in — direct from the US — indelible ink for fingerprinting, the US made sure that the May 14 elections would provide the traditional opposition a fighting chance in the parliamentary struggle for power.

For a time, it seemed that the outcome of the May 14 polls was a self-fulfilling prophecy for its master strategist. Elated US officials adjudged election results as "satisfactory." Voluminous reports submitted by American field researchers to the US Congress and the US Senate were as quick to hail the poll results as they were to belittle the gains of the boycott movement. Said Marjorie Niehaus of the Congressional Research Service, "the elections indicated significant support for democratic processes rather than (for) radical strategies." For their part, researchers Frederick Brown and Carl Ford in their US Senate-commissioned study, stated that "the boycott movement by radical oppositionists failed badly. The election (on the other hand) created the possibility of an effective parliamentary opposition."

The obsession to consolidate the ranks of the elite has been such that the tirades from oppositionists long-suppressed by



US play: Partial elections



Partners in crime: Reagan and Marcos

martial law and now aching for expression, became only a minor problem. "What is important," said former US ambassador to the Philippines William Sullivan at a House Committee hearing in February, "is that the contest will be taking place within the halls of parliament rather than in the hills or in the streets." He added, "the rhetoric of endless debate is a small price to pay to avoid the dangerous polarization of forces should the disenfranchised elite side instead with the (radicals)."

Dovetailing with this drive to reconcile the Marcos faction with the aspiring elite were the moves to channel the revolutionary anger of the people to the narrow confines of parliamentarism. Lures of free discussions and debates at the Batasan came as attempts were made to make the elected opposition as vociferous and fierce-looking as possible. Oppositionists were even joined by personalities from Marcos' KBL in the rigmorale that characterizes discourses in the Batasan, spurring US Assistant Secretary of State Paul Wolfowitz to enthuse shortly after the Batasan opening that "the parliament has altered the political equation." His excitement stemmed from the phenomenon that "such issues as the President's power to legislate by decree are being debated (even) by such figures as Foreign Minister (Arturo) Tolentino and Prime Minister (Cesar) Virata, (who have) called for a compromise (solution to the problem)."

There is indeed much to satisfy the US in the war of words raging in Batasan halls. US officials hope that the facade of democracy created by the sham parliament can draw the people's attention — and involvement — away from more progressive options of change. But unfortunately for the US, neither the speeches of the seated opposition nor the "rebel" voices within the KBL have drowned the cries from the parliament of the streets and the sound of NPA gunfire in the countryside.

In fact, hardly had the opposition winners taken their seats when a volley of mass protests greeted the anxious regime in July. At the precise opening of the Batasan, some 50,000 people prepared to mass at the Liwasang Bonifacio to articulate the real state of the nation. To date, the militant road to change, which the boycott movement represented, continues to draw more and more awakened Filipinos toward the overthrow of the US-Marcos regime.

If the beleaguered dictatorship had gained from the elections at all, it gained nothing more than a brief reprieve from the seething political situation. It succeeded only in temporarily appeasing a few segments of the members of the ruling elite and in obtaining some elbow room for reconciling the contending factions of the elite. Even then, the growth of the militant mass movement and the support accorded to it by a growing segment of the people is attracting not a few oppositionists.

#### Easing political tensions

Clearly, the US had to move fast to ease mounting political tensions. The release of the Agrava Fact-Finding Board's report this October was one such timely move calculated to let out some steam in the politically explosive situation.

First came the deliberate leaks to the US mass media of the board's consensus on a military conspiracy. Just before the release of the majority report, the board's four members were reportedly closeted with US Ambassador Stephen Bosworth and were treated to generous offers of political asylum in the United States, if they so needed to escape the avenging hands of the dictator. Then came the tacit approval to indict Ver which led to the promotion of Lt. Gen. Fidel Ramos as AFP chief of staff. Next came statements from Bosworth and the State Department lauding the board's re-



port as a step toward the "strengthening of democratic institutions."

Finally came the State Department reaction that the regime should "adhere to the rule of law and pursue (the Aquino assassination) case vigorously." This comment was in itself an admonition against Marcos' plottings to disregard the majority report and come up with his own watered-down decision.

Taken at face-value, this string of events would seem to point to an irrevocable trend by the US toward abandoning its client regime. But the almost simultaneous approval by the IMF of the regime's much-awaited \$630 million standby credit facility as well as the quick disbursement of close to \$1 billion in bilateral aid from the US and the expected inflow of added funds from other creditors all following the Agrava majority report, show that a precipitate US withdrawal of support for Marcos is not in the offing.

Wolfowitz summed up the real meaning of such recent US moves when he said, paraphrasing Reagan: "Let's work with this government, let's not try to undermine it, but at the same time, let's put in very strong advice, even in appropriate cases, pressure, to produce change."

Apparently, the kind of change the US wants is to "liberalize" or "open up" the system so that Marcos' authoritarian powers are shared by the traditional opposition who could then be counted upon to solidly support the dictator in his forays against the growing revolutionary forces. "We agree," Wolfowitz continues, "that one of the keys to effectively combat the communist insurgency is the restoration of democratic institutions in the Philippines. And that's why we've been working particularly hard since the Aquino assassination to try to bring about fundamental changes. Setting up the Agrava Commission itself was one of those first acts. The conduct of the elections in May (was another) . . . . But many more changes are still needed."

#### '86 and '87: Vintage years

The forthcoming elections in 1986 and 1987 are such changes. As in the May 14 hoopla, US officials at all levels are now using these new electoral ploys to expand their contacts with political, business,

church and professional groups. Concrete pledges of power-sharing are being made to the traditional opposition, on condition that they cut off ties with militant mass organizations. Extra efforts are being exerted to reach out to political expatriates in the US willing to foist themselves as credible oppositionists. To show that the US means business, even Jaime Cardinal Sin was given an audience by Ronald Reagan himself during a hectic campaign in New York and was apparently nudged on to criticize the dictator.

As in May 14, the broadening of contacts is aimed at pressuring Marcos into sharing more power and at reassuring oppositionists that US military and economic aid is intended not solely for the Marcos clique but for the whole ruling system, themselves included. The unerring signal, as Kai Bird of the *Foreign Service Journal* put it, is that "Marcos (is) no longer Washington's only boy in town."

The stepped-up pace of the US' own electioneering campaign for the '86 and '87 polls is due to the crucial role both these schemes have attained in the eyes of the US. In their study, Brown and Ford acknowledged the significant nature of the coming polls: "If these do not lead to the progress of 'reforms' and 'democratic practices,' (read: sharing of power with the elite), the elections could become a symbol of political frustration and lead to the deepened polarization of a society already dangerously split." Though it was said of the May 14 elections, it now appears that '86 and '87 are considered the real "watershed years" in the history of Philippine politics.

But in view of Marcos' obdurate hold on power, it seems it is not enough to keep impressing upon him that stability "will come about only through greater openness and competition on both political and economic fronts." (Wolfowitz)

Because of this, the US is now raising the spectre of the NPA to push Marcos into reconciling with other political factions. Thus, the US has lately been warning the dictator and the quarrelsome elite by citing figures of NPA strength in the range of "20,000 guerrillas, 10,000 of them armed and a mass base of about one million" (Brown and Ford).

"More important than the numbers

themselves are the long-term trends. The NPA," Wolfowitz says, "has expanded beyond the traditional center of Philippine radicalism in Central Luzon, to establish a meaningful presence in about two-thirds of the country's provinces. Both the number and scale of armed encounters with the Armed Forces are growing, and in some rural areas, especially in Mindanao, the government is widely perceived as on the defensive."

Rep. Steven Solarz of the Congressional Sub-Committee on East Asian and Pacific Affairs, also testified that "if the NPA continues to make gains . . . (it) could be in a position to pose a very significant challenge." Because of poor coordination among departments and agencies of the Marcos government, Ford and Brown also concluded that "there are doubts that the civilian government and the AFP are up to meeting the communist challenge."

#### US dilemma

But even the threat of guerrilla victories and the deliberate bloating of figures on the armed opposition are not sure-fire means to drive the traditional opposition to the arms of the Marcos regime. Raring to hold real power themselves, many oppositionists are not likely to be satisfied with the few slices of power Marcos will throw from the table. Some of them may even turn a cold shoulder to all US offers, realizing perhaps that history is not on the side of either Marcos or his master. On the other hand, the ever intransigent Marcos continues to resist US pressures for him to liberalize and has intoned that "neither bullets nor ballots" can make him relinquish his tenacious hold on power.

Compounding the US dilemma is the rising popularity and influence of the open mass movement which is increasingly attracting the more progressive and liberal oppositionists. Even the more conservative section of the political opposition, forced to recognize the significance and strength of open protest actions, has been participating in such mass actions, if not launching its own.

As the over-all revolutionary movement intensifies and Marcos clings on to power, the US will encounter more problems in wooing the opposition away from militant courses of action. As it is now, the US is already besieged with street demonstrations targeting US imperialism as the author of the hated dictatorship. US schemes to dress its client regime in sheep's clothing to conceal its abominable features are becoming more evident to the people. But even as a growing people's movement continues to expose US imperialism's hidden hand in directing Philippine politics, the US bases and enormous business interests in the Philippines are high stakes that will force the US to accelerate the pace of intervention.

Ami Alejandro and Victoria Manalo



Instrument of repression: US fighter plane

# Bigger and bolder

**NPA's in Mindanao employ more sophisticated guerrilla tactics in advancing people's war**

Recent offensives staged by the New People's Army in Mindanao dramatize the Red fighters' growing capacity to employ more and more sophisticated guerrilla warfare tactics in striking against enemy forces. A case in point is the recent raid on the advanced command post of the Alpha Coy of the 28th IB of the Philippine Army stationed at Diatagon, Lianga, Surigao del Sur.

Last Nov. 3, in a bold daylight attack, some 200 Red fighters caught the enemy with complete surprise. Never did the military think that the NPA would dare strike at a camp of a regular military unit with company strength in broad daylight.

According to reports received by LIB, the NPA unit that was to conduct the raid stationed itself in the barrios surrounding the target enemy camp as early as the dawn of Nov. 3. Hours later, they implemented the first phase of the operation by proceeding to the compounds of the Lianga Bay Logging Co. and Abena Mining Corp. where the guerrillas commandeered six service dump trucks.

Aboard the dump trucks they mounted with M60 machine guns and M79 grenade launchers, the NPA's began the raid at 3:30 p.m. Many enemy soldiers fell as the first volley of shots was fired. The NPA assault team engaged the surprised troopers in a fierce five-hour gunbattle. After the raid, at least 18 soldiers, including a second lieutenant, were killed. The barriofolk later reported that an unconfirmed number of soldiers also died on the way to and in the hospital.

From the battle scene, the NPA guerrillas carted away two M60 machine guns, several M16s, Browning automatic rifles (BARs) and M79s and hundreds of bullets as well as grenades, radio communication equipment and uniforms. Contrary to reports by the controlled media, the Red fighters sustained only two casualties.

As the main body of the NPA unit withdrew, blocking forces stayed behind to pin down enemy reinforcements. They later blew up two bridges connecting the barrio proper to the army camp area to hinder the movements of enemy forces sent to follow their escape route.

The daring raid could not have been staged successfully without the help of the masses in the area, said LIB correspondents. From gathering information on enemy movements, to preparing battle food



*Daring maneuvers: Red fighters practice assault positions*

rations, to caring for wounded guerrillas, the masses rendered invaluable assistance to the Red fighters. Not only did the barriofolk residing around the army camp desist from warning the enemy soldiers on the NPA presence, they also refused to extend any help after the attack.

LIB correspondents also reported several successful disarming operations by the NPA in other provinces of Mindanao during the past months:

In June, Red fighters confiscated 15 high-powered rifles from the ICHDF in Olin, Bagangga, Davao Oriental. In another operation, they seized 11 high-powered rifles from ICHDF forces under the command of Datu Mapando. In these instances, the Red fighters were able to stage the disarming operations without firing a single shot.

In July, the NPA secondary regional guerrilla unit in the Mati-Bagangga area in Davao Oriental, launched an ambush, seizing one BAR, one M79 and one garand.

Last July 8, an NPA platoon-size unit ambushed elements of the 37th IB at kilometer 86, Nabunturan, and confiscated one M79 and one M16.

Last July 9, in a raid-assault on an enemy unit at Langtod, Laac, Davao del Norte, one high-powered rifle was seized.

In a disarming operation in Maragusan last July, one garand was seized.

In the same month, the main guerrilla unit added one BAR and one garand to the NPA arsenal after a raid conducted in Bagong Silang.

A raid by a guerrilla unit on a 37th IB-PA post in Tagnanam, Mabini, Davao del Norte yielded an M16.

Security guards of the Montelibano Plantation were also disarmed by the NPA of one M16 and 15 shotguns.

In Mabini, a teen-age Red fighter took the initiative and single-handedly disarmed three security men and seized three shotguns.

The NPA in Mindanao attributes these successes to the "disciplined implementation by guerrilla units of the policy of seizing the initiative in battle through the elements of surprise and deception and close coordination. Such tactics effectively place the target enemy units in a passive position, thus often leaving them with no choice but to surrender."

These daring assaults on regular enemy units and the rising number of successful disarming operations surely point to the NPA's growing capacity to intensify guerrilla warfare and inflict heavy losses on the enemy.

**Beda de Silva**

"Swift, daring and creative."

This was how *Himagsik*, revolutionary mass newspaper in Central Luzon, described the series of armed offensives launched by the NPA and the organized masses in the region from September to November, that resulted in at least 21 enemy forces killed and 23 firearms seized.

Most of the military offensives were sparrow and disarming operations that sought to rid the area of notorious CHDF and military men who actively opposed the revolution and owed blood debts to the people. In many of these undertakings, the local masses showed their support for the revolution by helping the NPA gather intelligence information about enemy movements.

Four such operations launched this November in Bataan and Pampanga provide striking examples. Last Nov. 19, NPA partisans killed CHDF member Ando "Dinalan" Aguas and seized his M16 and hundreds of bullets. Aguas had long been engaged in counter-revolutionary activities as a member of both the CHDF and the "Monkees," a terrorist group organized by the AFP in the '60s. He was responsible for the death of many people whom he identified as NPA guerrillas or sympathizers. Aguas' murderous career ended when Red fighters, who patiently kept watch over his day-to-day activities, shot him in his *carinderia* near Golongco highway in Dolores, San Fernando, Pampanga.

The same fate met Police Capt. Orlando Caalim of Abucay, Bataan. Caalim was a notorious enemy agent who cruelly tortured captured Red fighters. Last Nov. 17, Caalim took his last jeepney ride home. Unknown to him, among his fellow passengers were NPA partisans. After the jeepney he was riding in had moved a few meters forward, the partisans ordered the jeepney driver to stop the vehicle at Barrio Gabun. There, a waiting guerrilla shot the police chief dead.

The long hand of revolutionary justice does not spare even those who incurred blood debts many years back and who think they have escaped the people's ire. About a decade after committing anti-people crimes, PC Sgt. Norberto Iguico met his end. He used to guide constabulary troops in their counter-insurgency operations in Bataan in the '70s and was responsible for the death of an NPA team leader in 1974. Made a regular PC trooper by his military employers, he later joined the 120th PC Company based in Baggao, Cagayan. When he came home recently to Mulawin in Orani, Bataan, the NPAs immediately drafted plans for his execution. Revolutionary justice finally caught up with Iguico last Nov. 11 when an NPA sparrow unit shot him in his house.

But it is not only NPA guerrillas who can launch such offensives. Activists and the masses have also been conducting military operations on their own whenever and wherever they have the opportunity



Girding for battle: NPA guerrillas drilling in the field

## Hitting the mark

Central Luzon NPA launches series of partisan operations

to do so. Last Nov. 2, youth activists in Barrio Bano in Arayat, Pampanga, proved this when they chanced upon Max Mallari, a notorious criminal who was also a CHDF member. Mallari was engaged in a drinking bout when one activist sneaked up on him and hit him on the head. Quickly, another activist seized his M16 and shot the unconscious CHDF. The youths undertook the daring disarming operation despite the presence of a PC detachment in the barrio.

The previous month, NPA guerrillas also raided the Philippine Air Force (PAF) detachment in Atlu Bola, Mabalacat, Pampanga, according to *Himagsik*. The Oct. 14 raid, which lasted for only five minutes, resulted in the death of one enemy trooper and the confiscation of four M16s plus 12 magazines full of bullets.

The Red fighters could not have successfully conducted the noonday raid without the intelligence information provided by the local masses, said *Himagsik*. Prior to the assault, the NPA had learned from the barriofolk that the detachment was manned by only five soldiers, and that on Oct. 14, the commander and one other soldier left for Angeles City to attend a fiesta. When the NPA entered the detachment, a trooper who was playing basketball was killed before he could call for help. Two other soldiers who were in the kitchen cooking, ran away and hid in a nearby sugarcane field.

The detachment in Barrio Atlu Bola is attached to the PAF's First Rifle Squadron based in Tabun, Mabalacat, about seven kilometers away. It is one of seven PAF detachments located in seven barrios in Mabalacat, which serve as Clark Air Base's first

line of defense in case the US military base is attacked.

The raid on the PAF detachment is also the third major military offensive launched by the NPA in the town of Mabalacat in last eight years. In November 1976, Red fighters confiscated 43 firearms from the CHDF units of five barrios. In August 1980, NPA guerrillas disarmed the CHDF in one barrio and two sitios of 13 carbines and ammunition.

On Oct. 7, an NPA unit also seized one M16 from a PC trooper in San Rafael, Bulacan, according to *Himagsik*. Earlier, on Sept. 18, guerrillas disguised as government troopers likewise disarmed a CHDF of his M2 carbine in Ala-uli, Pilar, Bataan.

Partial reports from *Himagsik* correspondents also showed that other sparrow and disarming operations were conducted in Pampanga, Bataan, Zambales, Aurora, Nueva Ecija and Bulacan from September to November. In these operations, the NPA meted the death penalty against one PC sergeant, one police captain, one CHDF, 12 informers and a notorious robber. The guerrillas also confiscated one M16, one M2, six carbines, one shotgun, and six pistols and revolvers. In a number of cases, however, enemy troopers disarmed by Red fighters were not killed because they did not resist and had committed no crimes against the people.

These recent offensives indicate that even as the NPA in Central Luzon operates under the very shadows of two huge US military installations, it is surely clearing the way for bigger and bolder attacks against the regime's US-funded troops.

Victoria Manalo

# Scoring victories

## Samar Red fighters undertake successive armed offensives

Red fighters in Samar once more proved their ability to advance guerrilla warfare and neutralize enemy forces on the island in a series of offensives last September. This was shown in separate raids conducted by the NPA last Sept. 24 in Eastern and Western Samar.

The first guerrilla offensive took place in Arteche, Eastern Samar. According to *Larab*, revolutionary mass paper in the island, NPA fighters dressed in military uniforms entered the town at about 7 a.m. Their target: the municipal hall. As the guerrillas approached the plaza, the combined force of PC, police and CHDF men who were on their way home after guarding the municipal hall overnight, detected the presence of the Red fighters and immediately ran away. This left the NPAs free to proceed to the PC office housed in the municipal building.

Upon reaching the PC headquarters, the Red fighters tricked the commanding officer into guiding them toward the house of the town's chief of police. Outside the municipal hall, however, the officer noticed the other Red fighters in civilian clothes who were doing back-up maneuvers. Alarmed, the PC officer drew his gun but an NPA guerrilla quickly shot him. A brief gunbattle ensued when two CHDF mercenaries at the municipal hall resisted. Wounded, the CHDFs escaped, enabling the Red fighters to seize two M16s, two M1s, a .38 revolver and ammunition from the PC office.

At 9:45 p.m. that night, another NPA unit swept into the town of Paranas in neighboring Western Samar. The besieged PC, police and CHDF team in the town locked itself in the municipal building and exchanged fire with the NPAs. During the battle, policemen who were being sought by the other Red fighters in their houses ran toward the sea and escaped under cover of darkness.

Meantime, a skirmish took place when two troopers on board a military jeep from Catbalogan City encountered the NPA blocking force at the entrance to Paranas. The NPAs killed the startled troopers.

Before withdrawing, the NPA assault team in the town was able to confiscate one M16, one M1, a Liama pistol, a .38 revolver, rounds of ammunition and other military equipment.

In a previous incident, the NPA also showed that it has genuine concern for the people even as it relentlessly pursues its goal of annihilating the enemy in com-

bat. According to reports from *Larab*, 12 fully-armed elements of the 15th IB left camp at about 1:00 last Sept. 14 to create trouble at the town fiesta in Gamay, Northern Samar. But little did they know that an NPA unit lay patiently in wait to spring an ambush. After 15 minutes had elapsed, the troopers started entering the killing zone at Barangay Bato. Although timing was crucial, the NPA could not proceed with the offensive as planned because of the presence of several civilians whom the fascist troopers herded to shield themselves from a possible ambush. The NPA decided not to wait for all of the enemy soldiers to stream into the killing zone since the safety of civilians was of paramount importance. As soon as enough troopers were within range, the signal to fire was given.

In the 10-minute ambush, five troopers died on the spot and three M16s and one M203 were seized. The surviving soldiers ran away in panic toward their camp. There were no losses on the part of the NPA and the civilians. Indeed, it was an event that left no doubt on the minds of the townspeople who their real protectors are.

*Larab* also reported that from May to September, a series of disarming operations launched by the NPA, local activists and the organized masses netted four M16s, a grenade and assorted ammunition.

Last May 29, guerrillas confiscated two M16s from troopers of the 20th Infantry

Battalion (IB) of the Philippine Army during a fiesta in Barangay Magsaysay, Basey, Western Samar. Again, last Aug. 13, a 15-year-old youth from Balangiga, Eastern Samar left for the mountains to join the NPA after he seized an M1 and 16 bullets from his uncle who was a CHDF member. On Aug. 19, three young members of an NPA sparrow unit confiscated one M1, one grenade and a magazine clip of bullets in Lawaan, Eastern Samar. In another sparrow operation, a youth from Maulong, Catbalogan, Western Samar contributed an M16 to the NPA arsenal.

In Pambujan, Northern Samar, local cadres stopped a motorboat negotiating the river at Barangay Giparayan. The passengers, who turned out to be troopers in civilian clothes, were carrying the payroll of AFP troopers assigned in the area. The jubilant activists thus gained for the armed struggle not just one M16, but P19,000 as well.

Meanwhile, members of the people's militia based in Pinabacdao, Western Samar who were armed only with homemade shotguns, also took the initiative and killed two troopers from the 20th Infantry Battalion last Aug. 11. The two soldiers were participants in a two-day counter-insurgency operation involving about 100 soldiers of the 20th IB. *Larab* reported that the only achievement of this operation was the arrest and torture of two farmers.

Upon the soldiers' return from their military operation, they were met with sniper fire from the militia team positioned in Barangay Pitaon. Retreating in confusion, the troopers left behind four magazines of bullets and ammunition for an M203, all of which the militia members promptly seized and gave to the NPA.

The mounting scale of tactical offensives launched recently by the NPA and the revolutionary masses in Samar all point to the rapid advance of guerrilla warfare on the island.

Juan Picas

## NPA offensives in Leyte, Quezon

New People's Army guerrillas raided the Abuyog Penal Colony in Leyte last Sept. 16 and seized two garands, one machine gun, 16 shotguns, two .38 revolvers, one radio, rounds of ammunition, typewriters and other equipment. According to LIB informants, the NPA successfully undertook the operation without inflicting any casualties, and did not allow the convicts in the penal colony to escape after the place was overrun. Earlier that day, NPA partisans also disarmed five government troopers of their .45 revolvers in Burawen, Leyte. LIB correspondents also said that local military officials, alarmed at the rising incidence of NPA offensives, have started conducting hamletting operations in three barangays adjacent to the penal colony.

Over in Quezon, NPA sparrow units confiscated one M16 from two CHDF men in a disarming operation at the train station in Gumaca. The guerrillas killed one CHDF and wounded the other in the first military operation launched by Red fighters in the area which is only one kilometer away from a CHDF camp and Camp Natividad, headquarters of the 232nd PC Battalion.

According to *Kalatas*, revolutionary mass paper in Southern Tagalog, two informers and two CHDF men were also killed by NPA guerrillas in a series of sparrow operations launched from September to October. The NPA offensives caused the military to stay away from Gumaca for a week, and have also led to an exodus of government informers from the area.



Teachers in protest march: Laying the foundation of a new educational system

## The teachers' underground

KAGUMA membership expands as teachers' struggles intensify

One Saturday afternoon, a dozen or so teachers from various public schools in Metro Manila gathered for a political discussion. A popular teacher-organizer led the discussion by presenting the different forces and organizations that made up the whole range of the country's political spectrum. As she ticked off the names of national democratic mass organizations that went underground in 1972, among them the Katipunan ng mga Gurong Makabayan (KAGUMA), suddenly, a hand was urgently raised in question. The hand was that of a kindly matronly-looking mathematics teacher in her forties, who stood up and asked in earnest, "How does one go about joining the KAGUMA?"

The anecdote, recounted by Lourdes, a full-time KAGUMA organizer, serves to underscore the changes that have overtaken the once docile and politically conservative teachers' sector. The coming of age of this important group much utilized by the regime signals a big step in the overall effort to advance the Filipino people's struggle against the US-Marcos dictatorship.

KAGUMA, of course, is the leading revolutionary mass organization of the teachers' sector. It is a member of the National Democratic Front and boasts of a network nationwide. It is greatly responsible

for the progress achieved by both the teachers' open and underground movements in recent years.

In the open mass movement, 1983 was the year when mentors and other education workers made their mark as a potent force in mass struggles. Early that year, they launched nationwide an unprecedented number of protest actions in the form of walk-outs, mass leaves, strikes and slowdowns, and later joined in significant numbers, the various protest actions held in the wake of the Aquino assassination.

"Beginning in 1982 and throughout the first half of 1983, the teachers captured headlines as they raised issues such as low pay and inadequate benefits, unjust termination, their right to organize and their desire for a more relevant educational system," said Lourdes. "It was only an event as heinous and as heavily laden with national implications as the Aquino assassination that managed to relegate teachers' protest actions to a secondary position," she said.

### Growth of the teachers' underground

The teachers' increased participation in the open protest movement has been matched by an almost parallel rise in the

numbers who have since opted to join the teachers' underground. But teachers, of course, have long been involved in various capacities in the revolutionary movement. In the countryside, especially, they have been among the first to be organized into the underground because of their easy grasp of political issues. Their influential position in the community has enabled them to reach out and spread revolutionary propaganda to even more people. Many have later been known to undertake the highest form of service to the revolution by directly joining the armed struggle, while others have become full-time activists.

But since the late '70s, when stress was laid on the participation of professionals and other middle forces in the revolution, teachers have increasingly been organized as a sector. Accordingly, contact-building and the establishment of KAGUMA cells among teachers in Metro Manila and the provinces have stepped up in the last five years.

From 1982-March 1983 alone, for example, the number of Metro Manila KAGUMA cells increased by 150 percent. The figure does not include the favorable expansion observed during the first semester of schoolyear 1984-85. In the countryside, especially in the Bicol region and Mindanao, KAGUMA cell expansion has even been greater. As a result of the national democratic revolution's strong influence in these areas, it is often only a matter of time before teachers already sympathetic to the movement are organized into cells with a KAGUMA orientation.

Lourdes herself is an outstanding example of the expansion and progress of KAGUMA. For two years, she taught in a public school where she was recruited into the teachers' underground. Her varied and learning experiences in teacher-organizing work speeded up her decision to become a full-time activist.

Lourdes narrated to LIB KAGUMA's methods of organizing. "Before a KAGUMA cell is formed, teacher recruits are first organized into a contact group that undertakes discussions on various teachers' and national issues," she explained. "Slowly, its members are introduced to the underground and are given instruction on the KAGUMA's and the NDF's program of action. When the contact group is ready to make plans and implement the KAGUMA program in its area, it is transformed into a cell composed of at least three persons. When there are at least three cells, a KAGUMA chapter may be formed."

In the present stage of the struggle, the KAGUMA's primary task is to help advance, sustain, and intensify political campaigns and struggles on pressing national issues. Apart from this general task, which is also the responsibility of all other national democratic political forces, KAGUMA members shoulder specific tasks in accordance with their role as intellectuals. Along with

students, they are tasked with advancing the cultural revolution and the propaganda movement for national democracy, and to promote a nationalist, scientific and mass-oriented educational system thereby laying down the foundation of the new educational system. Another important task is to struggle for the sector's democratic rights and economic welfare.

KAGUMA members also have a special role in winning over the broadest sections of the middle forces for the revolution. This can be done not only in schools but also in urban and rural communities, where the teachers' unique social position often enables them to do organizing and propaganda work more effectively than others. Still another task is to render technical or direct assistance to the armed struggle.

#### Transcending problems

The widespread political awakening

in a feudal and bureaucratic set-up where kowtowing to the demands of the status quo is considered a virtue, and where the conservative principal's or supervisor's word is law. This is especially true in the public schools," she said. "On the other hand, historically, the public school teachers have been the most organized sub-sector. We can work within established faculty groups and other existing professional organizations. And although the leadership of these groups has been traditionally conservative and centered on personalities, we can develop a more progressive leadership and transform these groups into becoming more issue-oriented," said Lourdes.

"Thus transformed, the teachers' associations may be good venues for both sweeping propaganda work and solid organizing for KAGUMA. But of course," she continued, "in some cases where the leaders are very conservative and hinder

some form of faculty organization that will work for the teachers' interests and raise their political consciousness. It is well within their rights to establish unions, but these are usually immediately subject to harassment. Thus, teachers in schools with extremely repressive administrations must adapt their organizing work to prevailing conditions and prevent the precipitate suppression of teachers' organizations by the school authorities," said Lourdes.

"Ironically, though," notes Lourdes, "it is sometimes easier for teachers in these schools to be drawn into participation in political struggles, because in this case, conservative school administrators tend to be more lenient or are relieved, perhaps, when it is the state and not they that the teachers identify as their targets." On the other hand, there is sometimes a tendency for teachers to train all their guns at the school head. Thus, KAGUMA cadres always take care in pointing out in their propaganda and organizational work, that reactionary school officials are definitely a part of, though not the root cause, of their problems.

"We see to it that the teachers' economic demands and their other difficulties within the school set-up are linked to the issue of state and imperialist control over the educational system. Thus, economic issues and school-based issues are always related to broader political issues," stressed Lourdes.

An effective way to prevent teachers from limiting their concerns within the school's four walls is to foster alliance work among their colleagues in various schools. "The importance of alliance work can not be overemphasized," said Lourdes. "Through their frequent interaction with their co-teachers in other schools, teachers gain a deeper understanding of the problems afflicting them as a sector. Besides," she notes, "alliance work also offers a broad base for KAGUMA organizing. With our work in alliances, we are able to reach more schools with our sweeping propaganda, an important precedent for solid organizing. Solid organizing, in turn, ensures the alliance of a real mass base among the teachers."

"It is also through alliances that many teachers are able to involve themselves in political struggles," added Lourdes. "Through their political involvement, teachers learn that their problems are but a manifestation of a bigger problem — that of the continuing existence of the US-Marcos dictatorship. And that legal means are not enough to excise this problem."

Gradually, the efforts of KAGUMA cadres like Lourdes are paying off. Today, more and more of the country's schoolteachers are, like the *maestra* in the anecdote, expressing their eagerness to join the revolutionary underground.

Victoria Manalo



*Docile no longer: Teachers struggling for their rights and welfare*

among the middle forces spawned by the Aquino assassination has also made it easier to organize teachers into the underground, thus enabling more of them to fulfill their general and special tasks in the revolution. "Because of this," said Lourdes, "there is a growing need for more KAGUMA organizers."

Consequently, and also because teacher-organizing is mostly done in the school setting, many KAGUMA cadres are at the same time full-time teachers who have to balance their time spent teaching in the classroom and undertaking political work among fellow teachers. Besides this, KAGUMA members have to take pains to be good and responsible teachers, for this is the surest way to gain credibility and earn the respect of their peers. It is an oft-quoted dictum in the KAGUMA that "to be a good organizer, one has to be a good teacher."

"Besides the problem of finding time to do all her tasks, the KAGUMA organizer encounters other difficulties in the course of her work," said Lourdes. "There remains the fact that teachers are enmeshed

change, it is better to establish an entirely new mass organization or alliance. It is important to stress, however, that our ultimate aim is to have organizations which, because of their progressive orientation, remain stable and reliable venues for organizing work. It would not do to have our organizing work in teachers' groups depend always on whether their leaders are progressive or not," added Lourdes.

#### Linking sectoral and national issues

"In private schools, and even in state colleges and universities, however, organizing work may sometimes take on a different dimension," continued Lourdes. "For example, except for some sectarian schools with liberal administrators, or other institutions with relatively long, established democratic traditions, many teachers in these sub-sectors are prevented from working for their welfare because they are not organized, or if so, are grouped into associations that are no more than social clubs."

"In many cases," said Lourdes, "the first task facing us is the establishment of

# SPARKS

News about the resistance movement

## DEMOS DEMAND ARREST OF AQUINO CONSPIRATORS

About 100 members of GABRIELA, WOMB, League of Filipino Students and CORD picketed Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City last Nov. 14, demanding the arrest and indictment of Gen. Fabian Ver and 24 other officers and men named by the Agrava Fact-Finding Board as conspirators in the assassination of ex-Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr.

The protesters decried the regime's lenient treatment of the indictables, citing that Generals Ver and Olivas were merely allowed to go on leave, while the rest were only placed under technical arrest. They deplored the regime's double standard of justice, saying that in other cases, "common criminals with lesser offenses are thrown in jail, mere suspects in national security cases are issued PDAs and even innocent persons are wrongfully made to suffer for crimes they did not commit."

Earlier, multi-sectoral rallies were held on Oct. 25 and 30, deploring the outcome of the Agrava Board investigation. The first rally, led by the Nationalist Alliance, criticized the fact-finding team for failing to pinpoint the real mastermind of the murder of Aquino. The Oct. 30 rally, which was supposed to be held at the Ugarte Field in Makati, was violently dispersed by anti-riot squads which lobbed tear gas bombs and trained water hoses at the demonstrators.

## FAKE LAND REFORM HIT

The government's farcical land reform program was denounced by about 200 farmers in a picket held in front of the Ministry of Agriculture last Oct. 20. The picket was part of the series of activities launched by the Forum for Rural Concerns in connection with the Oct. 18-21 celebration of Peasant Solidarity Week.

Calling for a "genuine and sincere redistribution of land," the rallyists denounced PD 27, the so-called Tenant Emancipation Act, saying that it only covers ricelands which comprise a mere 13.7 percent of the country's agricultural lands, and that only 13 percent of the Philippines' nine million farmers fall under the regime's "operation land transfer" and "operation leasehold" programs. The farmers also decried the monopoly of transnational corporations on expensive agricultural inputs.

## SALAKBAYAN HELD

Hundreds of professionals, students, church people, businessmen, workers and slum dwellers held a motorcade from Metro Manila to Bataan last Oct. 5-7 to demand the dismantling of the Bataan nuclear plant. Dubbed "Salakay ng Bayan Laban sa Planta Nukleyar" (Salakbayan), the three-day motorcade sponsored by GABRIELA and the August Twenty-One Movement (ATOM) reeled off from the Ugarte Field in Makati and featured "lightning rallies" participated in by residents of major towns along the motorcade route. A warm reception awaited the rallyists in every town as marching bands greeted them and food donations were distributed. Town mayors welcomed the marchers and also voiced their opposition to the nuclear power plant. The lightning rallies were held to inform the townspeople about the dangers of the nuclear plant. Upon reaching Morong, Bataan, the protesters staged a demonstration where they burned an effigy of a giant skull symbolizing the death and devastation that a nuclear reactor can bring.

## BANK EMPLOYEES STAGE MARCH-RALLY

Two hundred employees from 23 banks staged a march-rally along Ayala Ave. last Oct. 1 to protest IMF-World Bank intervention in the banking industry and the country's economy in general. The protesters, all members of the Bank Employees La-

bor Alliance (BELA), expressed fears that the Philippine banking system was slowly falling into the hands of the foreign finance institutions.

They assailed the IMF-World Bank's dictations on the country's banking system which have led to bank mergers, devaluation and high interest rates on government securities. The rallyists also expressed support for striking employes of Pilipinas Bank by stopping over at the Makati Stock Exchange building, where the strikers were holding pickets daily.



Bank employes: Against IMF-WB control

## PEN URGES DETAINED POET'S RELEASE

PEN (Poets, Essayists and Novelists) American Center based in New York City issued a case sheet and a formal statement urging the release of poet and journalist Mila Aguilar-Roque, who is currently being held in solitary confinement at Camp Crame. Roque was described as a "long-time critic of the Marcos dictatorship."

PEN cited the circumstances surrounding Aguilar's arrest as typical of the "Draconian tactics employed by the Marcos regime to stifle dissent in an increasingly volatile political atmosphere." The writers' group pointed out that when the original charge of subversion against Roque was reduced to the relatively minor charge of "illegal possession of subversive materials" by a civilian court, the military promptly slapped a Preventive Detention Action (PDA) against her, thus preempting her release on bail. PEN urged its members to write letters to Marcos and US ambassador Stephen Bosworth in behalf of Roque.

## RALLIES MARK AQUINO, BONIFACIO ANNIVERSARIES

Anti-dictatorship rallies, marches and strikes erupted nationwide on Nov. 27, the birth anniversary of assassinated opposition leader Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., culminating in massive day-long protest actions on Nov. 30, the 121st birth anniversary of Andres Bonifacio.

In Central and Northern Luzon, more than 5,000 demonstrators from six provinces gathered in front of the main gate of Clark Air Base in Angeles City to denounce US intervention in the country and the presence of US military bases and multinational corporations. In Metro Manila, three huge rallies were held, two of them in front of the US embassy. On Nov. 27, some 10,000 people gathered at the Quirino grandstand in Luneta to commemorate the birth anniversary of slain opposition leader Benigno Aquino Jr. Two days later, students marched from Plaza Bonifacio to the US embassy to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Kabataang Makabayan. The following day, more than 15,000 workers, students, urban poor and professionals marched from 11 points in the metropolis to Plaza Bonifacio, then to the US embassy and to the Quirino grandstand to denounce the US-Marcos dictatorship. They burned effigies of Marcos and Reagan mounted on a crocodile symbolizing the AFP.

# CRACKS

Indicators of the regime's crisis

## THE MORIBUND MILITARY

The faction-ridden AFP is crumbling from the worsening demoralization within its ranks. First came the majority report of the Agrava Fact-Finding Board naming AFP chief of staff Gen. Fabian Ver, two other generals and many other lower-ranking military men as conspirators in the Aquino assassination. Notwithstanding the "VIP treatment" accorded Ver, military men viewed Marcos' sacrifice of his closest confidante and trusted ally on the altar of US pressure and public outrage as a dangerous move that could spark a mutiny among Ver's supporters in the military rank-and-file. The air is presently rife with rumors of a coup being hatched by disgruntled AFP officers. Then three days later came the infamous full-page military manifesto purportedly signed by 68 top generals and flag officers signifying canine devotion to the "downtrodden" Ver. In two days, however, the same newspapers that carried the manifesto ran a disclaimer from one of the "signatories," Brig. Gen. Ramon J. Farolan. Farolan denied ever having signed the manifesto or having authorized anyone to sign in his behalf.

The disclosure raised suspicions that the signatures of the other military officers were also forged or included without their permission. Many also wondered just how much pressure might have been put on some — if not all — of the officers to declare their "total and unqualified support" to the discredited general, and how far the patrons of Ver and the other officers were willing to go to influence the final outcome of the Aquino-Galman murder case. Already, there are talks of a power play between Ver's allies and those rankled by the general's corrupt and "unprofessional" ways. Many officers have made no secret of their dissatisfaction with Ver's over-centralized control of the AFP and his penchant for playing favorites. With all these squabbles and in-fighting plaguing his badly demoralized military machinery, Marcos is bound to find it increasingly difficult to depend on its effective support in propping up his dictatorial rule.



## SHOCKING STORY

Consumers had a shock of sorts when the National Power Corporation (NPC) and the Meralco announced recently an increase in power rates. Meralco gave two reasons for the hike: the revision of its subsidy scheme (part of an IMF directive to utility firms to drastically reduce or eliminate consumer subsidies altogether) and the increase in the cost of power it buys from the NPC. Under the old subsidy system, consumers using only up to 200 kilowatt-hours (kwh) of electricity were entitled to reduced power costs. The revised system, however, would lower this subsidized level of consumption to just 180 kwh. To be immediately affected by this are about half a million Meralco customers who, because of their disqualification from the subsidy, will now be paying 100 percent more than their usual bills. But the bad news doesn't end here: more customers will conti-

nue having the shock of their lives because in the next five years, Meralco will be gradually lowering the level of subsidized consumption until it tapers down to just 50 kwh. This would include only those households whose use for electricity in a month is confined to turning on two 50-watt incandescent light bulbs for a few hours every night. On top of the Meralco price hike, the NPC has also decided to raise power rates by another 18 percent, citing as reasons the floating peso, the subsequent oil price hike last Oct. 20 and the government's withdrawal of tax exemption privileges on the NPC's fuel purchases from the oil companies.

## MAHARISHI MANIA

People no longer give a hoot about the Maharishi cult but for a time, nothing else quite tickled the nation's collective psyche as much as the esoteric sect's attempts to play politics with the dictator, and to worm its way into the Philippine educational system. The Maharishieks first caught the public eye with their frequent press releases and television spiels wherein they touted their Unified Field Theory as the acme of scientific knowledge. How the cult has been able to afford precious air time and newspaper space to push their version of panacea for all the world's ills was the foremost question on everyone's minds. Eyebrows were further raised when the cult published a full-page ad where it bestowed the dictator and his lady with fancy titles such as "Founding Father of the Age of Enlightenment" and the "Crown of Consciousness of the Royal Order of the Age of Enlightenment." The ultimate bombshell, however, was the sect's reported purchase of the financially-distressed University of the East and its planned acquisition of other insolvent schools. The controversy gave way to a word war between detractors and defenders of the cult. It wasn't long before Catholic church patriarch Jaime Cardinal Sin stepped in to declare Maharishi teachings as contrary to church dogma. After some protracted hearings and debates, the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports and the Securities and Exchange Commission "settled" the question on the sect's school-buying spree by ruling that the cult was ineligible to fully own corporations in the Philippines. But when the heat of the Maharishi mania finally dissipated, the meaning of the entire episode slowly dawned on the people's minds: it was but a cleverly cooked-up diversion to let off some of the steam that had been massing up from the long drawn-out investigation of Aquino's assassination.

## CRYING OVER SPILLED MILK

The Marcos regime is in such a tight fix that it is now friking its one-time buddies — otherwise known as the Marcos cronies — to account for billions of pesos that went down the drain in government-sponsored projects. The Office of the Government Corporate Counsel (OGCC), a credit investigation body created by Marcos to go after fast-disappearing cronies, has started investigating 35 cases of overpricing and purchasing of defective equipment as well as collusion between government and private individuals in committing various business malpractices. Among the first targets of the probe are erstwhile Marcos chums Rudolfo Cuenca and Herminio Disini, both of whom figured in multi-billion peso infrastructure projects. But the regime may well be crying over spilled milk. The results of the OGCC investigation merely confirmed what many people already knew: that the personal assets of these cronies involved in the collapse of many government-guaranteed projects have already been stashed abroad. Disini himself is now known to be living off his ill-gotten wealth in a manor somewhere in Switzerland. But granting that the OGCC would go about its work earnestly, the regime's problems of fiscal hemorrhage are far from over. Last year, a total of P7.44 billion was lost by 22 corporations fully-owned or operated by the government. Leading the pack were Marinduque Mining and Industrial Corp., Philippine Airlines, National Galleon Shipping Corp., Philippine Shipyard and Engineering Corp., Philippine Veterans Bank and Pilipinas Bank. And many more are expected to join the club this year.





*Organized nurses in the US: Struggling in support of the Philippine homeland*

## INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

# Fighting for the homefront

**Filipino nurses in the US organize NDF underground network**

Despite a full two years in the rich, cold metropolis of Washington D.C., Tina still feels like fish out of water, and at particularly lonely and depressing times, her throat thickens to visions of home: the sun, the laughter, the warmth and, above all, the sweep of the revolution.

Tina is one of the over two million Filipinos now in the US who were forced to seek better opportunities far from home. As a nurse, she went to the US to help her debt-ridden family. But not too many dollars have flown to her expectant father in Davao since she left. She had to pay the employment agency for placement and passage. And the changing seasons in an alien land compelled her to buy apparel in good quantity, and accessories that will help her cope with the harshness of the climate.

So she sought to keep her expenses to the minimum. Her apartment, shared with another nurse, was dominated only by a twin bed and a work table. She had consistently desisted from buying furniture and other expensive household items. In fact, the bulk of her motley possessions came from friends moving to new states

or else picked up from the streets lying among the wasteful American society's garbage heap.

Now there was more reason to scrimp on every penny. Tina was rushing to an NDF meeting. And comrades who had less financial security than she would need her overtime pay so they could carry on their revolutionary work. There was much to be done.

Right now, they were involved in building an NDF cell among nurses. Tina and Jane, another dedicated comrade from Northern Luzon, had gathered together other nurses for a basic education session, mainly consisting of a discussion of the Philippines' basic problems, the roots of these problems and the viable solutions offered by the national democratic program.

Tina's heart raced with her feet as she ran past the neat green expanse of the suburbs to catch the 7:15 a.m. train. She hardly slept last night, having worked on the 11 p.m.-7 a.m. shift at the suburban hospital, but she felt fresh. Spirited. Today was no ordinary day, it contained the promise of a milestone: seven nurses would formally join the NDF this morning, re-

ceive political education and be counted as new members in the growing revolutionary underground for the Philippine revolution.

Why underground? In the US? Tina recalled the comrade who had drawn her into the underground: The latter had said, "The deceptive air of bourgeois democracy in the US should not fool us. We are working right inside the homebase of US imperialism and US enemy agents are everywhere. In all seriousness, we should set up a dynamic underground that is closely linked with the masses and secured from the enemy. We know that sincere organized efforts to overthrow the reviled Marcos dictatorship will be the object of intense US attacks."

Although it was difficult and required a lot of sacrifice for the nurses to have regular meetings, they succeeded in working out arrangements that were secure yet promoted their revolutionary collective and political involvement.

Tina felt extraordinarily spirited today because their long months of hard work — frequent travel and visits, midnight meetings and mass actions — were now begin-



*Growing solidarity: More Americans for the national democratic movement*

ning to bear fruit. More Filipino nurses were now able to analyze their own situation and plan concrete actions at their particular institutions. Several unions and associations were being set up that would uphold nurses' rights, encourage collective leadership and sustained action. A solid measure of the progress of Tina's group was the emergence of a mass organization involving the most nationalistic, progressive nurses from various hospitals. This organization assured the tempering of more mass leaders and activists in struggles for their democratic rights, and more, for struggles in support of the Philippine homeland.

All these efforts form part of the broader strategy of Filipino national democrat nurses in the US to organize NDF cells and form secret activities such as finance, propaganda and research for the Philippine revolution as well as establish solidarity ties with other revolutionary groups. These nurses also participate in mass campaigns which give depth and perspective to the broad anti-dictatorship movement in the Philippines.

"We try to increasingly infuse anti-fascist campaigns with an anti-imperialist content," said Tina. "This is to stress the point that the forces that expelled Filipino nurses from home are the US domination of the Philippine educational system, the US need for skilled, and cheap labor, and the widespread poverty and exploitation imposed by the US and its agencies.

"The more firmly this is grasped," added

Tina, "the deeper the commitment becomes to end the violence of the Marcos regime and its US master. The greater also the creativity inspired to use all novel open and secret means — through grassroots and liberal circles, mass media and underground press, in the US Congress and on the streets — to further in an all-sided way the national democratic struggle," she noted.

In fact, it has been a frenetic year for Tina and her comrades. Last September 22, she and other nurses joined a mass action organized by Filipino oppositionist organizations and American sympathizers to commemorate the 12th anniversary of martial law. Their hour of protest coincided with the hour of the forcible dispersal of the Sept. 21 rally in Mendiola that ended with water cannon bursts and the tearing of protesters. The outdoor rally in front of the Philippine embassy in Washington D.C. echoed the fury of Mendiola: "Dismantle the US-backed Dictatorship! Stop US Aid!"

Sept. 22 was another high point in the international mass movement. Things will even be better after this, Tina mused, as she got off the train and into the bus that would take her to the place where the comrades were meeting. The bus crawled alongside the rush of men and women, armies of the embattled city, marching to work. The bus went past the tinsel department stores where the gleam of glass and steel dashed in her eyes. Tina decided to get off the slow bus and walk the rest of the

way. She wanted to see her comrades sooner.

In the garish wealth that now surrounded her, it was the simple comfort of being close to comrades who persistently encouraged her that kept Tina going. There were shortcomings, for sure, but there were tremendous gains, too, among which was what Nena, a new activist, had intimated when she said, "We have proved something in these months. We are women who seriously desire our country's good. No, we are not women out only to line our pockets with dollars and have a good time."

In the process of their collective revolutionary work, Tina and Jene have become very good friends, sisters and comrades. Sometimes, amid many problems and mounting work, they would kid each other, when they read of NPA offensives, saying, "Sige, dito ka na, uswi na ako sa Pilipinas," and images of the mountains and the Red fighters and other comrades would make them homesick.

Tina and other progressive Filipino nurses and comrades realize they have to work hard to organize themselves and gather all the possible material and political support they can to advance the Philippine revolutionary struggle. They know that they have to work hard to organize in order to rejoin friends, other comrades in the land that, for them, will always be home.

Ami Alejandro/USA

## CULTURAL

### DEATH SHALL HAVE NO DOMINION

*In Memoriam: Zacarias Agatep (Ka Duxa) and Alfredo Cesar (Ka Doming). Slain in Salcedo, Ilocos Sur, Oct. 11, 1982*

Death shall have no dominion  
The people release you from its shackles  
And hold you in being in their hearts  
Fallen comrades you rise anew with the masses

And now you are more guerrillas  
Far reaching and persistent as sun and moon  
Lightning/ shadowing the hills and valleys  
And coves of Ilocos

No enemy can block the trails  
Salcedo is now everyone/ everywhere  
Where once you served the people  
Where others continue the good work of revolution

For you are story now  
Recalled and relived by poor peasants and workers  
For you are poems now  
Sung by Red fighters and cadres to the people

You add to the people's firepower  
Their arsenal of proletarian mind/ gun and grenade/  
Mass organization and Party cell  
You are spirit force greater than you

Linking plow to carabao/ the farmer to the land  
Hammer to anvil/ the worker to the toiling masses  
Mass force of mass movement ruthless as floods  
Friendly as the feel of birds

Never shall you cease to serve  
Future is long/ generations arriving  
You prove selflessness unto death opens us earth  
Cracks us rock/ and death shall have no dominion

Ruben Anib



### ELEGY for Purificacion Pedro

She was our gift of pure woman  
Who carried us when we gave her away.  
Immediately did the mountains own her,  
She was of big heart that could contain them all,  
The way a diamond holds the sun.  
Couriers would come as rivers to the sea,  
Always remembering to toll of her.  
Their stories of good deeds sang with our blood,  
And would arouse all to cadre work among the masses  
Of peasants and workers become power  
Terraces of the northwestern battle front.  
And the rise and fall of their cadences  
Would match the terrain of grounded imagery,  
And speak of how she and the people were one;  
Of how the Cordilleras lifted their eyes  
To whose tallness dared the soaring skies;  
Of how the pines resined the air with her  
Warm friendship and boundless camaraderie.  
And easily we would add our own  
Because we had recognized her first.

One day comrades arrived with quiet grief,  
And we understood she divided no longer  
Like the people's protracted struggle.  
Now among the heroes we place and name her,  
The mighty ranges stand at attention,  
Sound their gongs and call to dance.  
The lowlands quicken with antiphons  
Of incantatory proletarian calls.  
Silent is the mystery of her leaving  
Far from the hills that ran her laughter.  
But her spirit rises like a clear political lesson  
That patterns memories versing we are alive!  
The rhythms rush to remold our being,  
And we transform sorrows into red banners  
Of unwaried courage against the class enemies.

O the revolution is heightened by grace  
Like her in the service of the people,  
And not in a thousand years will she thin  
Into an uncertain hum of lost love.

Ka Jason

# General Ver's Sideline

Ninoy Aquino, Alex Orcullo, Demy Dingcong, Zorro Aguilar and Jacobo Amatong were all gathered for their morning chat in that Big Coffeeshop in the Sky. While sipping his brew of bitter ground, Ninoy let out his usual barrage of complaints. "Four hundred and forty-one days since that rubout on the tarmac and my goddam killers are still loose!" All the rest grumbled their assent. "Look here, I've been dead a longer time than you, and the law's still dragging its feet over the investigation!" cried Demy. And the coffeeshop club again choruses in agreement. "I suppose there's not much hope for the rest of us," interjected Zorro with a sigh. But before Jacobo and Alex could say, "Kumander Inngo," a silver-haired old man with a toothbrush comes in to join them. "Ha! You think you've been had!" he said. "Look at me! My killer's been walking around these 50-odd years scot-free, and nothing's been done about it!" "What's your name, old man?" asked Ninoy. "I'm Nalundasan!"

.....

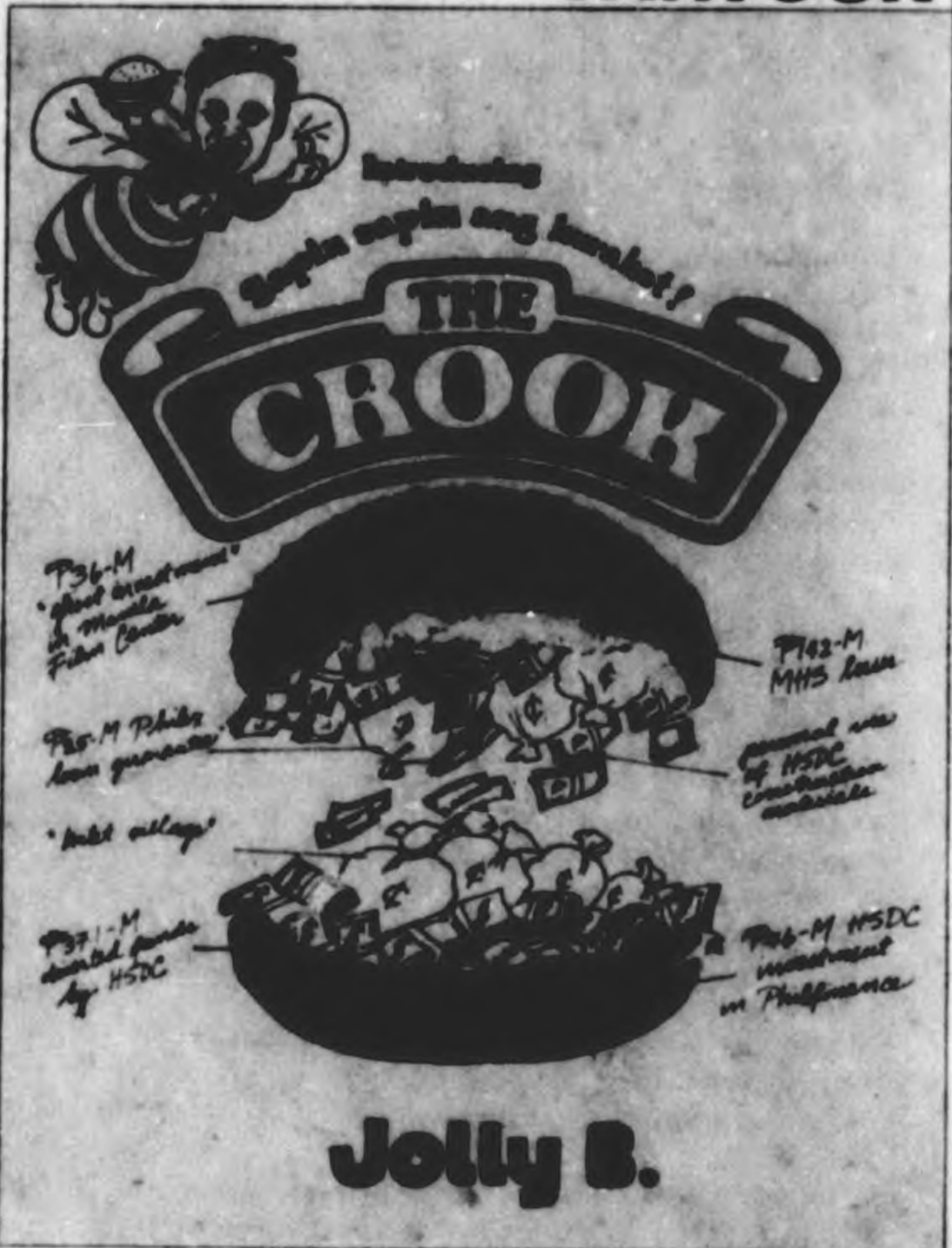
For his long, loyal years of service to the powers in Malacnang, Gen. Fabian Ver was rewarded the business monopoly of procuring ammunition supplies for all branches of the military establishment. His son, Col. Irwin Ver of the Presidential Security Command, is a managing partner. It is reported that General Ver has become so filthy rich from his flourishing "sideline" that when visiting places abroad, he chooses to be billeted in the most expensive hotels. On one occasion, the First Lady was terribly amused to find out that the general and his mistress were also holed up at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel where she was staying. Edna Camcam, Ver's mistress, is a former bank employe and many years younger than the aging and discredited general. Ver apparently took her up as another sideline.

.....

It seems that the *sentos* brought home some months ago by Imelda weren't enough to ward off whatever was causing her husband's mysterious illness. So off she went again, this time to exotic India, not just to attend Indira Gandhi's funeral, but to stack up on idols of all shapes and sizes. Sources at the Manila International Airport say she came home with two truckloads of them. Wags say if the idols still don't work, Imelda's favorite Superstore could later always feature a sale of Oriental sculpture.

.....

## WHO'S WHO IN THE JUNTA?



Nero fiddled while Rome burned. Marie Antoinette shrugged off angry Parisians demanding bread with the classic "Let them eat cake." But the First Lady's latest caper last September beats them all. This, while people starved back in the Philippines. Gossip columnists reported that the Social Butterfly found time from her "official engagements" abroad to host a classy dinner on a luxury yacht for the cream of New York high society. At the table, she graciously presided over a spirited discussion on what size pearls a person should have. At the end of the party was a visit to Imelda's private disco where she and her guests wantonly danced the night away.

.....